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BUSH’S WAR ADVISERS TURN ON HIM AND IRAQ
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MARK FOLEY’S PRIVATE LIFE
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IS AUGUSTEN BURROUGHS THE NEXT JAMES FREY?
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WHY WOMEN AREN’T FUNNY
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DAKOTA FANNING’S FAIRY TALE
By KARL LAGERFELD p.112

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82 NEO CULPA The war in Iraq is a fiasco—just ask the neoconservatives who pushed America into it. In exclusive interviews with Richard Perle, Kenneth Adelman, David Frum, and others, David Rose gets an earful of woulda, coulda, and shoulda. Photographs by Nigel Parry.

92 GIRLS GOTTA DREAM! With his Chicago screenplay, Bill Condon turned one hit musical into an Oscar-winning movie. Now he's filmed Dreamgirls, with Beyoncé Knowles, Jamie Foxx, and Eddie Murphy. Peter Biskind has the scoop. Photographs by Mark Seliger.

100 DON'T ASK...DON'T E-MAIL Once, Mark Foley was an ambitious young Democrat, testing the waters in Palm Beach's gay community. Switching to the G.O.P. eased his path to Congress, but it also pushed him deep into the closet—until his e-mails to under-age former pages hit the news. Gail Sheehy and Judy Bachrach expose what Foley's party wanted hidden.

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110 ROYAL TREATMENT Snowdon and Tamasin Day-Lewis spotlight screenwriter Peter Morgan, the brain behind not one but two of this year's top Oscar contenders.

112 CINDERELLA IN SNEAKERS At 12, Dakota Fanning is Hollywood's little princess, with a $3 million paycheck and dibs on every girl role in town. As Karl Lagerfeld snaps her fairy tale, she tells Jim Windolf about starring in Charlotte's Web and partying with "Bob"—De Niro, that is.

118 PRISONER OF KEY WEST A deadly storm marooned Peter Halmos and his 158-foot yacht in a Florida wildlife refuge. A year later, the exasperated mogul is still stuck. Bryan Burrough reports from the starboard bow, where Halmos keeps busy filing lawsuits and fending off pirates. Photographs by Cameron Davidson and Nina Bramhall.

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FANFAIR


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EDITOR'S LETTER

One Day in November

On the Friday before the midterm elections, we posted on vanityfair.com an abbreviated version of “Neo Culpa,” the story by contributing editor David Rose that appears in this issue on page 82. Rose’s report details how many neoconservative mandarins are now distancing themselves from the bungled planning and execution of the invasion of Iraq. Kenneth Adelman, who has been a member of the Defense Policy Board, told Rose that he “checked out” on the administration when President Bush awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to General Tommy Franks, Coalition Provisional Authority leader Paul Bremer, and former C.I.A. chief George Tenet. Each, said Adelman, is “directly responsible for the disaster in Iraq.” Richard Perle, a former chairman of the Defense Policy Board and one of the invasion’s principal pom-pom girls way back when, said, “At the end of the day, you have to hold the president responsible. . . . I don’t think he realized the extent of the opposition within his own administration, and the disloyalty. . . . [Bush] did not make decisions, in part because the machinery of government that he nominally ran was actually running him.” He added that total defeat—that is, the U.S. leaving Iraq in a shambles—is becoming more likely. “And then, you’ll get all the mayhem that the world is capable of creating.”

Well, the story made news everywhere, and to say that conservatives were all a-blog over our timing is to put it mildly. Circling the wagons, National Review Online held an Internet-symposium-cum-intensive-care-unit for those quoted in Rose’s story. Eliot A. Cohen, a professor of strategic studies at Johns Hopkins University, was among the indignant: “I had assumed that the interview would not be published until January, and find the timing of this release of excerpts tendentious, to say the least.” The excitable former White House speechwriter David Frum, the man who slid “axis of evil” into the president’s 2002 State of the Union speech, was flushed with rage. “There has been a lot of talk this season about deceptive campaign ads, but the most dishonest document I have seen is this press release from Vanity Fair [it was actually Rose’s abbreviated article]. . . . Rose has earned a reputation as a truth teller. The same unfortunately cannot be said for the editors and publicists at Vanity Fair: They have repackaged truths that a war-fighting country needs to hear into lies intended to achieve a shabby partisan purpose.”

My, my, Mr. Frum, your knickers really are in a twist. A lot of news leaks out just prior to important elections. Remember those Homeland Security orange alerts in the run-up to the 2004 presidential election that worked so well for the Bush-Cheney scare campaign? Or the timing of the Saddam Hussein verdict, two days before this November’s vote? A personal favorite: the Internal Revenue Service’s decision, as reported by David Cay Johnston in The New York Times in late October, to put off 2006 tax enforcement for regions hit by Hurricane Katrina until after the holiday season—and the midterm elections. A Times editorial the next day proclaimed that Mark Everson, the I.R.S. commissioner, who made the decision, was “the only person in the country who envisions Congressional campaigns as the start of Christmas shopping season.” Everson, the paper pointed out, was the same fellow who when the White House lost its fevered bid to eliminate the estate tax moved to fire half the lawyers responsible for auditing estate-tax returns. For our part, we believed that with the president using the war in Iraq as a line in the sand for voters, and with his former advisers now believing it to be a botched failure of historic proportions, it was the public’s right to hear of this neocon retreat before the election, rather than after it.

On that memorable day in November, America returned to a place where it should be and where it feels most comfortable: somewhere near the center. On K Street in Washington, Republican lobbyists were switching the photographs on their power walls faster than Tony Curtis swapped visiting-stewardess photos in his bachelor pad in Boeing Boeing. Lobbyists who didn’t have pictures of themselves with prominent or emerging Democrats walked the Capitol hallways with the ashen look presidential impersonator Vaughn Meader had following the J.F.K. assassination. The president temporarily learned a new word of the day issued by his handlers: “bipartisan.” He also trumped the strong economy, but skirted the issue of our record deficit. His economic theory: Of course you can live like a billionaire—you just have to borrow a billion dollars. And a day after Britney Spears showed her husband, Kevin Federline, the door, Bush did the same for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. At this stage in their careers, both K-Fed and D-Rum should be willing to work for food.

With the campaign over, Republican politicians could remove the American-flag pins they’ve nailed to their lapels for the past five years. To my mind, wearing an American flag on your lapel is as much a sign of patriotism as sticking a yellow “Support Our Troops” ribbon on the back of a Hummer. A few days after the election, I bumped into my old chum Michael Bloomberg at the Library Lions dinner at the New York Public Library. He was armed with an American-flag pin and a red Big Apple pin. I have certainly had my dusters with the mayor over his smoking ban in offices, bars, and restaurants—and I wish him well in his campaign to cut trans fats from the diets of his constituents. New York, once the city that never sleeps, soon to be the nicotine-free tourist mecca of no trans fats! Aside from these incursions into the private lives of New Yorkers, however, Bloomberg has been a superb mayor, a two-term leader who might go down in history as one of the city’s best. He is talked of as a presidential contender, but in a recent poll by Quinnipiac University, nearly two-thirds of voters said that they thought he might lose if he ran—a formidable problem in a city whose mantra is “win.” A lot of those polled indicated that they would prefer he stay right where he is.

His predecessor, Rudolph Giuliani, announced that he was establishing an exploratory committee prior to making any decision as to whether he’d run for the Republican nomination in 2008. Many New Yorkers are skeptical. They’re worried not so much that Giuliani would lose, but that he’d win. Up until 8:46 on the morning of September 11, 2001, he was one of the most disliked mayors in the city’s history. As with the president, 9/11 proved to be his watershed moment. Giuliani used it to cement a reputation as “America’s mayor” and build a profitable consulting business advising all manner of nefarious concerns. Bush used 9/11 to tear the nation and the world apart.

GRAYDON CARTER
An Inconvenient Truth

On November 21, the documentary Larry King considers "one of the most important films ever" arrives on DVD. An Inconvenient Truth is a compelling look at global warming from Al Gore. With an additional 30 minutes of environmental updates, the DVD, presented by Paramount Home Entertainment, is packaged in 100 percent post-consumer-waste recycled paper.

Karl Lagerfeld

Fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld put his own spin on the Brothers Grimm when he photographed Dakota Fanning in a fairy-tale spread for this month's profile of the wunderkind actor. "We all have our vision of fairy tales, but we also try to avoid commonplaces in that concept. A story like this has to show a face, a spirit, a personality, a talent," says Lagerfeld. In between designing for Chanel, Fendi, and his eponymous labels, Lagerfeld Collection and Karl Lagerfeld, the illustrator, photographer, writer, and antiques collector has published more than a dozen photo books and has shot for Vogue, Visionaire, and Photographie. Lagerfeld, who let Fanning keep clothes from the shoot, was pleasantly surprised by her maturity. "I am used to working with children. I often photograph the children and grandchildren of friends. It's easy," he says, "because I don't treat them like children. I hated that when I was a child. Dakota has a personality like a grown-up person, with the sweetness of an unspoiled child—which is not easy for a star."

Gail Sheehy

This month, contributing editor Gail Sheehy writes about Mark Foley, the former Republican congressmen from Florida who sent sexually explicit instant messages to young men who had worked as congressional pages. "Everyone knew Foley was gay, and everyone with a stake in his success conspired to keep it hidden, until it blew up in their faces," says Sheehy. No stranger to dissecting the corridors of power in Washington, Sheehy has also written about Newt Gingrich, George W. Bush, and Hillary Clinton for Vanity Fair. Co-writing "Don't Ask...Don't E-mail" with Sheehy is contributing editor Judy Bachrach, whose August 2006 piece, "Washington Babylon," explored the reach of political favors in our nation's capital.

Nicholas Gage

Nicholas Gage began covering the murderous activities of November 17, the Greek Marxist terrorist organization, in the late 1970s, when he was working in Athens as a foreign correspondent for The New York Times. In the following years, friends of Greece became increasingly dismayed at the lack of progress made in tracking down the killers, at a time when other European terrorists were turning in their guns. "When it was announced, in 1997, that Athens was getting the Olympics," Gage recalls, "it had the makings of a tragedy because everyone remembers what happened in Munich in 1972." Gage was in Greece in 2002 when a botched bombing attempt put authorities on a trail that would lead to the arrest of November 17's main operatives as the countdown to the Olympics began. His revealing account of how November 17 was finally eliminated starts on page 64.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

JANUARY 2007
David Harris

Since 1993, design director David Harris has navigated the tricky territory between art and text, designing a story as many as a half-dozen times to create the optimum solution. "It's a balancing act," he says. "You have to act with the reader's interests in mind, and yet remain loyal and supportive to your photographers and illustrators. Like the writers, they want to feel their voice is heard, and being artists, they are sensitive about how their work is presented. It can make for some stressful days, but it's also one of the most satisfying aspects of my job." A onetime illustrator, Harris expresses enthusiasm about Sketchbook, a feature added to the magazine in the last year. "I graduated with an illustration degree, and guys like Ed Sorel, Brad Holland, and Paul Davis [all Sketchbook contributors] were my heroes." Harris's work has been recognized by the Society of Illustrators, the Society of Publication Designers, and American Photography.

David Rose

This month, contributing editor David Rose's article "Neo Culpa," which was previewed on vanityfair.com days before the 2006 midterm elections, gives blockbuster testimony from Washington's neoconservative masterminds, indicating who they believe is really to blame for the Iraqi debacle. "I had known some of the neocons, including Richard Perle, for several years," Rose says. "I'd never known them to be so pessimistic or gloomy about the likely outcome of the situation in Iraq. I must say, the strength of their views did take me by surprise, and it was clear that what they were saying was very newsworthy." Rose's book The Big Eddy Club, an investigation into the prejudice and injustice in Georgia's notorious Stocking Strangler case, will be published by the New Press in May.

Nigel Parry

While photographing the Iraq war's neoconservative architects for David Rose's article "Neo Culpa," which begins on page 82, Nigel Parry encountered an unexpected veil of secrecy among his subjects. "No one would share his views until after I'd finished the shoot," Parry says. "They felt that they would be colored by what they were going to say, and would be shot in a different light." Parry, who has been snapping pictures for Vanity Fair since 1990, thinks it's fascinating trying to capture personalities that are being kept under wraps. "It's always very different shooting politicians, who are very much on guard," he says, "and the speed and cloak-and-daggerness with which this whole story was executed was quite intriguing and exciting."
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CALLING THE SHOTS ON 24

The most action-packed show on TV, “24” careens from crisis to cliffhanger in nearly every scene. The FOX-TV drama was recently recognized with five Emmy Awards, including two for its director and executive producer, Jon Cassar. A former camera operator, Cassar approaches the set of this counterterrorism drama with a knowing eye. Here he reveals what goes into producing a series that looks its best on HDTV.

Is there a director who informed your style?
CASSAR: I've always liked the work of François Truffaut and Akira Kurosawa. They use extreme close-ups to dig for a performance, and they understand storytelling and character. That's what makes their films so rich.

What makes “24” so visually exciting?
CASSAR: We never do the same shot twice. We change the angle every single take, and the zooms are going all the time. The uneasiness of the visual style adds to the suspense.

Part of the show's distinctive look is its split-screen boxes. What are their functions?
CASSAR: The boxes energize the feel of a scene and remind viewers that the action is happening at the same time. It also helps remind them of the different story lines.

Does broadcasting in HDTV affect your work?
CASSAR: When we started, only a few people had widescreen HDTV. That's not true anymore. Now so many have that format that the ones who don't catch up with us.

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What's it like filming action sequences for HDTV?
CASSAR: It's more exciting. Compared to action scenes that used to get lost in a little TV box, having HDTV is almost like CinemaScope. I'm happy to be shooting scenes that people will see with such clarity and detail that make it worth all the effort we put into them.

How does watching “24” in HDTV change the viewer's experience?
CASSAR: The show looks more like a movie. And if you're watching “24” DVDs on HDTV, you're not limited to what a broadcaster spits out. It's virtually a pristine picture. With HDTV, you get to see an episode the way I do when I'm cutting and editing. It looks exactly how we shot it.

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HELL AND HADITHA
A Marine's mom sounds off; the politics of anti-Semitism; and Leila Hadley Luce, according to her friends

William Langewiesche’s “Rules of Engagement” [November] illustrates, perhaps unwittingly, a profound truth about the American way of war since World War II. The habit of empire building requires boots on the ground, and the Marines have done an excellent job adhering strictly to the “rules” of war, which attempt to provide a legal fig leaf to cover the obscenity of killing people in foreign countries.

If American soldiers cannot distinguish between combatants and noncombatants in a country which they have invaded, resulting in the massacre of civilians, then it is proof enough that they should not be there. I am old enough to remember another imperial adventure, called Vietnam. I assumed my country had finally learned a lesson about trying to control people who don’t want you in their country. However, a noncombatant from that era named George W. Bush learned nothing from our folly in Southeast Asia, as he now zealously leads our nation into similar disaster, dishonor, and defeat in Iraq.

Frank H. Wallis
Monroe, Connecticut

As the mother of a marine, I cannot fathom why Vanity Fair would publish an article complete with pictures, names, and the hometowns of Marines who have fought for the U.S. with all their might and who now sit awaiting their fate (from an investigation that is not even complete) while potential jurors become tarnished by reading articles such as this one! These Marines have not been charged, yet you have hung them out to dry, ignoring the principle of “innocent until proven guilty.” They serve for little pay and live the harsh realities of war to keep terrorism from our shores and to allow people freedom—the same freedom your magazine blatantly exploited. You should be ashamed of yourselves; these men deserve better than that.

Laura Fly
Lathrop, Missouri

William Langewiesche’s “Rules of Engagement” is replete with inaccuracies and errors. The fact that the article effortlessly flows from facts to opinion to pure conjecture without any distinction is equally disturbing. I’d like to address two of Langewiesche’s most fundamental errors.

First, his declaration that the Marine Corps was forced to accept the findings of two independent investigations is simply false. There were actually four investigations initiated after the allegations were brought forward. Rather than being forced into action, as suggested in the article, the Marine commander acted quickly to initiate both a criminal and an administrative investigation once the matter was brought to his attention. Marine Corps leadership was immediately informed of his decision.

Second, Langewiesche tries and convicts the Marines of Kilo Company without access to facts and evidence that are still being developed in the ongoing criminal investigation. His article does a great disservice not only to the military men and women serving with honor and courage throughout the world but also to the constitutional principles of due process and the presumption of innocence, which are guaranteed in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Robert E. Milstead Jr.
Brigadier general, United States Marine Corps
Washington, D.C.

William Langewiesche replies: I do not wish to debate General Milstead over semantics. The reality, as the article states, is that two significant military investigations into the Haditha killings were launched, and only after it was learned that questions about the killings would soon be raised in the press. Despite General Milstead’s charge, the article is scrupulous in distinguishing among what is known, what is not known, what is speculation, and what may never be known about the events in Haditha on that November morning.

Furthermore, it tries and convicts no one and takes pains, repeatedly, to explain that such responsibilities lie in other hands. I have come to know, admire, and trust a great many American soldiers and Marines in Iraq. They have been thrust into circumstances, by woeful policies, that make episodes like Haditha inevitable. My article sought to place Haditha in this larger context. The private communications I received from readers in the armed forces, which have been overwhelmingly positive, show that ordinary soldiers fully understand the situation I described, even if some of their superiors do not.

The Elephant in the Room

It is refreshing to find a journalist of Michael Wolff’s stature who has not retreated to default positions on the subject of anti-Semitism (“Slurs and Arrows,” November). But I don’t know whether to commend Wolff for broaching what is practically a taboo topic in public discourse, or to fault him for corroborating the notion that one can criticize Israel only by special permission.

Regardless of how one feels about Israel, it is a nation-state, and, as such, its behavior can be objectively compared with that of other nation-states. If such an exercise reveals Israel to be wanting, in what way is it anti-Semitic to point this out?

Wolff is careful to say that he is committed to the survival of Israel. So am I. But which Israel? The moderate, religiously tolerant democracy we’d all like it to be? Or the bellicose, theocratic republic it has become? The loss of Israel’s moral authority, after years of erosion, is nearly complete. Yet our government, opting for tactics over ethics, hegemony over humanity, continues to provide unequivocal support. In certain parts of the world, this makes America a collaborator and a target. If we are to reverse Israel’s spiral to the right, and survive this dark path in history with our own morality intact, we simply must get beyond the “anti-Semitic” canard and take a long, sober look at an untenable situation.

Steph Beckly
Los Angeles, California

A Case for Leila

As a nonfiction writer who has extensively interviewed Leila Hadley Luce—a woman whom I now consider a friend—for a book unrelated to the subject of “The Luce Family War” [November], I am appalled by Vicky Ward’s scurrilous and unbalanced reporting.

Along with its mean-spiritedness, the article is thinly researched and remarkably irresponsible. Where are those who might have offered some skepticism of, and perspective on, the daughters’ claims of child sexual abuse? One reads this story with the impres-
My name: **ELLEN DEGENERES**

Childhood ambition: **TO WORK WITH ANIMALS.**

Fondest memory: **I CAN'T RECALL, BUT I'M SURE I'M FOND OF IT.**

Indulgence: **DOING NOTHING.**

Last purchase: **BUTTER.**

Favorite movie: **WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP + OUT OF AFRICA.**

Inspiration: **KINDNESS.**

My life: **IS PERFECT, EVEN WHEN IT'S NOT.**

My card: **IS AMERICAN EXPRESS.**

My life. My card.

800thecard.com
sion that Ward simply accepts the daughters’ devastating accusations and their one-sided view of Leila’s marriages—including her marriage to their adored father, who deserted his wife and family—no matter how silly or unsubstantiated.

Leila is a brilliant, refreshingly (if sometimes stunningly) frank, loving, generous, and supportive woman, even to someone she rarely sees. I am sickened by this piece of journalism that Vanity Fair has allowed.

LINDA H. DAVIS
Harvard, Massachusetts

PERHAPS THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS aspect of Vicky Ward’s shoddy and inaccurate article is that she does not quote any of Leila Hadley Luce’s many old friends, while giving endless print space to the vengeful fantasies of her daughters.

I have known Leila for 25 years and do not recognize in the portrait Ward has painted the brilliant, extraordinarily honest, loyal woman who is my dearest friend, staunchest ally, and richest inspiration.

Why did Ward not seek any balancing truth from the friends who know and love her deeply? I can only assume that Ward preferred the sleazy pleasures of slanderous character assassination to the more rigorous joys of impartial inquiry. Shame on her, and shame on you for publishing her.

ANDREW HARVEY
New York, New York

I WAS INTERVIEWED by Vicky Ward, but nothing I said was used in her article. I have known Leila Hadley Luce for 28 years. I have always thought her to be one of the great women of New York City. She is involved in so many wonderful causes and has been a big supporter of Tibetan Buddhist centers. She is an extraordinarily generous, wise, and compassionate friend. I consider myself lucky to have her in my life.

JEANNETTE WATSON SANGER
New York, New York

VICKY WARD REPLIES: The introduction of my piece states clearly that when I met Leila Hadley Luce, I found her to be fascinating, energetic, and charismatic. When I subsequently interviewed her three youngest children and many of her friends and read not just her legal depositions but the scions letters which she had written to her children over the decades (and which may not be reprinted without her permission, since she owns the copyright), I found a far more complicated picture. It is doubtful that Mr. Davis, Mr. Harvey, or Mr. Sanger has seen these letters, describing a lurid sex life as well as an obsession with money, and appearance, or read Mrs. Luce’s testimony, which she tried in vain to have sealed. In writing the piece, however, I went out of my way to point out that people who suffer from mental illness do things they would not do if in full possession of their faculties.

FOR THE RECORD: The drawing on page 143 of Vanity Fair’s August 2006 issue was a parody of M. C. Escher’s Ascending and Descending, © the M. C. Escher Company, Baarn, the Netherlands; all rights reserved; www.mcescher.com.

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Mission Control_2.0

The Next Nissan Maxima

*2007 Maxima shown. Nissan, the Nissan Brand Symbol, "SHIFT_," tagline and Nissan model names are Nissan trademarks. Always wear your seat belt, and please don't drink and drive.

2006 Nissan North America, Inc.
Actually, he's my boyfriend.

My son is slightly older.
NIGHY TIME

Bill Nighy, currently performing on Broadway in The Vertical Hour, also stars on-screen this month opposite Cate Blanchett and Judi Dench in Fox Searchlight Pictures' Notes on a Scandal, and he will reprise his role as Davy Jones in Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End, due out later this year. Nighy was photographed in New York City.
MAP OF THE COMMONWEALTH of The BAHAMAS
After my Bahama vacation:
my road to a golden bronze recovery.

DAY 1.
As soon as I landed on beautiful Grand Bahama Island, I found myself bathed in a mysterious and warm light, which a local explainedclass was called "SUNSHINE." My therapy had begun.

DAY 2.
I spent the second day of my "cure" boating through the amazing sea-bird sanctuary on The Berry Islands, stopping only long enough to perfect my Glazed Ham-like TAH shelling at the Sugar Beach Caves.

DAY 3.
By the time I hit Harbour Island with its charming colonial villages and powder soft, pink sand beaches, I'd completely forfeited my title of "WORLD'S WHITEST NON-ALBINO MAN!"

DAY 4.
Next, I headed to Cat Island's famous Hermitage. While lying there in the sun, I felt a strange and wonderful, yet familiar, sensation. What was that— A SMILE? Oh joy, I was healing!

DAY 5.
Day 5 found me 50 feet underwater exploring the world-famous marine life off Great Exuma, where I saw a Turtle, a Manta Ray, a pair of Dolphins, and most rare of all, the return of my old non-chalk-colored Self! As I boarded the plane home, I knew my recovery was complete when the flight attendant mistook me for a local. THANKS, BAHAMAS!
THE WORLD'S BEST MARTINI STARTS WITH GREY GOOSE.

GREY GOOSE
World's Best Tasting Vodka
“Before my Bahamavention, my nicknames were Pasty, Powder, Talcum, Whiteout, and The Chalkasian.”

My road to recovery began with a sun-drenched weekend on the beaches of Grand Bahama, and by the time I went diving and snorkeling in Harbour Island, I was cured! If someone you love is “hurting,” they, too, might need a Bahamavention. Visit bahamavention.com or call 1-800-bahamas to get them the help only the 700 Islands Of The Bahamas can give.
Honorary chair Carolyne Roehm kicks off the 31st Annual American Red Cross Designers’ Show House with an opening talk about design in the renowned Ann Norton House and Sculpture Gardens, in West Palm Beach. Interior designers and landscape architects from around the country will also lend their interpretations and personal style to the show’s 2007 theme, "From the Sea." (redcross-pbc.org)

The Kwiat Diamonds compact for L’Oréal Paris, valued at $10,000, will be included in all Golden Globes nominees’ gift bags. Kwiat’s design was inspired by Old Hollywood glamour, complete with a “red carpet” ruby embedded in the clasp. A less expensive version in rhinestones, which benefits the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund, is now available.

Swanky Retreat

THE ST. REGIS RESIDENCES NEW YORK

Bottega Veneta introduces its lush furniture line, designed by Tomas Maier, in the decadent Bottega Veneto Suite, at the St. Regis Hotel, New York. (stregis.com)

Swingular Sensation

The “Coats! Max Mara, 55 Years of Italian Fashion” exhibition traces the swingy evolution of coats as fashion statements by highlighting about 70 famous styles at the Kulturforum, in Berlin’s Staatliche Museen.

MAP QUEST Mappetite, a foldout guide for food, restaurants, and landmarks in New York City, has just launched. Perfect to take on holiday, it’s coming to a city near you. (mappetite.com)

THE CULTURAL DIVIDE

January

THE CULTURAL DIVIDE

January

Gap Inc.’s fantastic new shoe Web site, pipertime.com, offers more than 100 high-end brands and invites guest editors to give fashion tips.

Click Your Heels

The Sundance Film Festival, which has championed the work of more than 500 filmmakers, kicks off its 26th year of movies, parties, and s.w.a.g. Park City, Utah. (1/18–1/28)

ELLE OF A BODY

Boudoir, the latest collection from Elle Macpherson Intimates, with couture-inspired designs that pay homage to the classic Alfred Hitchcock heroines, is now available. If only we could all have Elle’s body as well.

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THE WORLD'S BEST MARTINI STARTS WITH GREY GOOSE.

GREY GOOSE
World's Best Tasting Vodka
ikes! Richard A. Clarke's nail-biter suspense novel Breakpoint (Putnam) irrefutably proves that there is nothing like being America's pre-eminent counterterrorism expert to goose up your book with real terror.

TERRIFYINGLY TALENTED: John Heilpern looks back with fondness at the original Angry Young Man, British playwright John Osborne (Knopf). In On the Wealth of Nations, P. J. O'Rourke mucks through Adam Smith's quintessential work (Grove). John Newhouse's Boeing Versus Airbus (Knopf) zeroes in on the high-stakes, high-flying dogfight. Kim Todd's Chrysalis (Harcourt) pins down the life of the insect-adoring naturalist Maria Sibylla Merian. Corruption! Murder! Pappadam! The Godfather goes Indian in Vikram Chandra's big, rambunctious novel Sacred Games (HarperCollins). In Vendela Vida's Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name (Ecco), a woman tracks her violent past all the way to Lapland. Photographer Jason Schmidt catches Artists (Steidl) such as Ed Ruscha and Matthew Barney in the intimate act of creation. Former jarhead Anthony Swolfsord fires off a round in his debut novel, Exit A (Scribner). By turns elegiac and bluesy, passionate and playful, poet Kevin Young's For the Confederate Dead (Knopf) prizes African-Americans' glories and grief. Novelist John Sedgwick picks the family scabs in his memoir In My Blood (HarperCollins), a hagiography of six generations of his insane Boston Brahmin clan.

IN HASTE BUT WITH ALL FONDNESS: Louis Begley's Matters of Honor (Knopf) is elegant. Tom Sancton's The Armageddon Project (Other Press) is a page-turner. Patricia Marx's debut novel, Him Her Him Again the End of Him (Scribner), is a riot. Poet Karl Kirchwey's The Happiness of This World (Putnam) is suffused with sadness. Novelist Ann Hood's The Knitting Circle (Norton) is a heartbreaker. Rupert Everett's autobiography, Red

Carpets and Other Banana Skins (Warner), is sinfully cheeky. Adria Bernardi's Openwork (Southern Methodist University) is served Italian-style. Natalie Danford's maiden voyage, Inheritance (St. Martin's), is lovely.


In Catching the Big Fish (Tarcher/Penguin), filmmaker David Lynch describes how he hooks the squirmly ideas which lurk at the murky bottom of his consciousness. I am your candy-colored clown...
An American Tragedy

SOS HELP KEEP OUR NEW ORLEANS

A SPIKE LEE FILM

When The Levees Broke
A REQUIEM IN FOUR ACTS

The critically acclaimed HBO Documentary Film.
Now with the exclusive epilogue "Act V"
Available on DVD, December 19.

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS AND 40 ACRES AND A MULE FILMINERKS PRESENT A SPIKE LEE FILM "WHEN THE LEVEES BROKE: A REQUIEM IN FOUR ACTS" PRODUCED BY SAM POLLARD AND SPIKE LEE

DIRECTOR SPIKE LEE  SCOTT ROBINSON  WRITING DIRECTION SAM POLLARD  CLIFF CHARLES  PRODUCER TERENCE GUNN  EXECUTIVE PRODUCER BETHANY LEE  PRODUCTION MANAGER GEETA NANDHUR  EXECUTIVE PRODUCER NANCY NOVACK

FOR HBO: OVERSEEING PRODUCER JACQUELINE GLOVER  EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SHEILA NEVINS
there is nothing more beautiful than the Bay
of Naples under a full moon. There are few
places more squalid than Scampia, the Na-
pies slum, where Camorra gangs control
the streets. Naples, Italy's third-largest city,
is a place of contrasts: exquisite baroque
palaces, littered streets; warm and charm-
ing people, a reputation for street crime. It
is the Cinderella of Italy, with beauty both
hidden and on the surface, and major prob-
lems almost beyond its control. For decades,
organized crime has sucked money from the
city, forcing it to take a backseat to Rome,
Florence, Milan, and Venice. Revival move-
ments have come and gone. Lately there have
been impressive signs of renewal in the Chiaia
section—once the location of country villas—
which hugs the bay and extends uphill to the
leafy Vomero quarter. In Chiaia (pronounced
"Key-eye-uh"), the streets around the stylish
Piazza del Martiri are lined with
stores like Ferragamo, Luigi Borrelli, and Prada.
There is a café in the pia-
izza populated by latter-day Loren and Mas-
Troiani types and well-turned-out Neapolitan
aristocrats. A few blocks away, especially on
Via Carlo Poerio, the crumbling façades of
Chiaia's palaces are being patched up, and new
businesses are flourishing on streets festooned
with drying laundry. Old ladies make their
market trips, passing storefronts such as Cult
SpaCafé, a design store/restaurant/spa with a
modern look heretofore unknown in Southern
Italy. By day, children skateboard on the steps
close by churches, and fruit sellers display their perfect
grapes and lemons. At night, bars attract crowds,
which spill out onto the streets. Near the sea,
there are fancy apartment blocks, command-
ing stunning views of Vesuvius and Ischia. And
in the heart of Chiaia, there are many myster-
ies: unmarked churches filled with memento
dolce, dusty antique stores, and suspicious-
looking social clubs. There are also the gardens
of the Villa Comunale, the new Palazzo delle
Arti Napoli. Naples is a challenge, with many
places you cannot walk safely and few inhab-
ants who speak English. It is also a place of great
rewards: splendid food, art, and, now, re-
polished Chiaia, which brings to the city
a much-needed injection of la dolce vita.
Special Alert: Horoscope U.S.A.

A planetary configuration not seen since 1776 is coming our way, heralding chaos, revolution, and rebirth. MICHAEL LUTIN guides you through the coming storm

All alone and more paranoid by the day, President George Bush is getting it from all sides. He can’t trust anybody—not even his mother. His detractors blame him for the state of the world. Some say the end is near. Most of us just want the dollar to go up, and America to go back to the good old days. Uh-uh. Astrologers can explain Bush’s predicament by saying that he’s a Cancer, and that in coming years Cancers will be challenged to change their whole worldview. So will America—for nations, like people, have horoscopes.

America, which was born on July 4, 1776, is a Cancer nation. Cancer is the sign of fertility, and America sees herself as the world’s nurturing mother. But because of the hostile presence of Mars and Uranus in our solar 12th house, we’re the kind of nurturer that can bomb the hell out of a country one day and send sandwiches and coffee the next. That makes the rest of the world love us and hate us. Security and home are primal drives of this sign, sometimes to the point of xenophobia. When the early settlers arrived, they took one look around and said to the Indians, “What a gorgeous place you’ve got here! Get out!” If anyone tells you the essence of the American Dream is liberty and freedom, don’t kid yourself. It’s property, taxes, and mortgage rates.

But are we ruthless imperialists doomed to be brought down by our degenerate culture? That is the question Pluto’s transit through the sign of Capricorn over the next 19 years will answer. It will challenge us as never before, but it will also reveal the secret of how we need to change.

Though we’re a Cancer nation, the sign of Capricorn has always been strong in our horoscope, and it’s going to get a lot stronger. We were born with Pluto in Capricorn, and now Pluto is coming back to the same place. The power of Pluto is so profound that it doesn’t matter if you call it a planet or not—it’s a killer. But, oddly, it’s also a healer. When you come out of a Pluto transit, you are changed forever. But during the process you don’t realize what’s going on. This is about to happen to the U.S. as we all deal with an opposition of Pluto in the sign of Capricorn to our Cancer sun.

The last time Pluto passed over the position it holds now and will hold for the next 20 years, it was the 1760s. Mother England, once the great protector, was beginning to be the great drag. She wanted payback for all the protection she’d provided. The colonists, exhibiting the traits of a budding Cancer nation, came to resent their mother’s hold on them. And so, the United States of America was born.

Something similar is happening again now. This time, however, it’s the American government that is putting the squeeze on the people. While lots of us will probably be nervous wrecks during the two turbulent decades ahead, many old hippies will joyfully embrace the revolution they quit their jobs for 40 years ago.

Our “dialogue” with radical Islam has just begun. When Pluto goes direct

in September of 2007, ushering in a period dominated by the sign of Capricorn, religious radicalism will reach a crescendo. Mean while, Capricorn always indicates power and big business, and what is America about if not that? Corporate control of government will increase. But it was Pluto’s presence in Capricorn that sparked the fight for freedom 230 years ago—as it will again

Pluto in Capricorn will demand conformity, born out of fear that is different is dangerous. The threat of attack will be acute, and the government will be so terrified that it won’t really matter who gets in in 2008—conservative or liberal. The new ideologies will bleed across party lines. Fortunately, something else will be going on at the same time. While Pluto is in Capricorn, Uranus will be crossing the sign of Pisces—at the end of the zodiac—and sometime between 2009 and 2011 the dam is going to break. People will figure “Aw, the hell with it. The end is coming anyway, so give me a dogn martini.” To the apocalypse crowd, it will seem like the wrath of God, because lots of people are going to be turning up the music and dancing, even hurrying the trash, much as they did during the 1920s—the last time Uranus reached the end of the dial.

Once Uranus hits Aries, however, people will rebel. The voice of Islam will grow even louder. It’s going to be the 1960s, in spades. The more resistance to government protection, the more protection the government will try to impose. The greatest time of upheaval will be between 2020 and 2019, when the square of Uranus in Aries Pluto in Capricorn peaks. Then, from 2023 to 2025, the final stages of the Pluto return and the Capricorn effect will reach a climax. Some astrologers believe that an empire lasts no longer than one Pluto cycle, and by 2025 ours will be played out.

The period of turmoil that lies before us is a necessary step in the evolution of this country that will result in a working of the Constitution in the last half of the 2020s. It will mark the rebirth of the United States as a more global nation—a member of the world, if not its lead. This is an affront to our Cancer nation’s cherished ideas about wealth, security, and supremacy. Luckily for us, however, the horoscope of the U.S.A. is strongly influenced by Venus and Jupiter, so we’ll never go totally broke or hungry.

America is a fabulous place to live but we’ve gotten fat and we’ve gotten lazy. So don’t blame anyone in Washington for this crisis. A country gets the leaders it deserves, and when we’re ready to rise from the ruins of empire, we will find the leaders to help us do so. It will happen, but not in 2008. We have to go through the Pluto transit first.

For your January horoscope, and an expanded version of this article, visit vanitليف.com.
Designed for Perfect Time

Dressed in Jaeger-LeCoultre’s signature classic design, the new Master Tourbillon returns the tourbillon to its original purpose: ensuring that the watch movement operates with ultimate precision. Featuring a second time zone and date, the watch’s ingenious mechanism was conceived by the craftsmen at Jaeger-LeCoultre’s workshops, where an unparalleled array of skills and crafts is gathered under one roof. For more information, call 800-JLC-TIME or visit jaeger-lecoultre.com.

John Hardy Style

On September 30, Vanity Fair celebrated the Fall 2006 John Hardy collections with a private cocktail reception at Carlyle & Co. in Durham, North Carolina. Inspired by the international appeal of John Hardy designs, the event showcased an exclusive exhibition featuring Vanity Fair images of world-renowned celebrity style icons. For more information on the John Hardy collections, visit johnhardy.com.

Stylish with Levi’s® Jeans

On September 20, Levi’s® brand and Vanity Fair hosted an exclusive evening of shopping for L.A. style insiders. Held at the Levi’s® store in Beverly Hills, the event drew V.I.P. guests to browse the latest Levi’s® collection and receive fall fashion tips from celebrity stylist Jessica Poster.

Visit VFAccess.com for news on events, sweepstakes, and offers.

Hong Kong Legend

Gains at the newly reopened Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong, can now enjoy an exquisitely refurbished property as well as the stunning views of Victoria Harbour. With luxurious guest rooms, up-to-the-minute technology, nine innovative restaurants and bars, and a Shanghai-inspired holistic spa, the acclaimed Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong, remains a favorite destination for travelers from around the world. To discover the legend for yourself, visit mandarinoriental.com/hongkong.
Why Women Aren’t Funny
What makes the female so much deadlier than the male?
With assists from Fran Lebowitz, Nora Ephron, and a recent Stanford-medical-school study, the author investigates the reasons for the humor gap

B

e your gender what it may, you will certainly have heard the following from a female friend who is enumerating the charms of a new (male) squeeze: “He’s really quite cute, and he’s kind to my friends, and he knows all kinds of stuff, and he’s so funny…” (If you yourself are a guy, and you know the man in question, you will often have said to yourself, “Funny? He wouldn’t know a joke if it came served on a bed of lettuce with sauce béarnaise.”) However, there is something that you absolutely never hear from a male friend who is hymning his latest (female) love interest: “She’s a real honey, has a life of her own… [interlude for attributes that are none of your business]… and, man, does she ever make ‘em laugh.”

Now, why is this? Why is it the case?, I mean. Why are women, who have the whole male world at their mercy, not funny? Please do not pretend not to know what I am talking about.

All right—try it the other way (as the bishop said to the barmaid). Why are men, taken on average and as a whole, funnier than women? Well, for one thing, they had damn well better be. The chief task in life that a man has to perform is that of impressing the opposite sex, and Mother Nature (as we laughingly call her) is not so kind to men. In fact, she equips many fellows with very little armament for the struggle. An average man has just one, outside chance: he had better be able to make the lady laugh. Making them laugh has been one of the crucial preoccupations of my life. If you can stimulate her to laughter—I am talking about that real, out-loud, head-back, mouth-open-to-expose-the-full-horseshoe-of-lovely-teeth, involuntary, full, and deep-throated mirth; the kind that is accompanied by a shocked surprise and a slight (no, make that a loud) peal of delight—well, then, you have at least caused her to loosen up and to change her expression. I shall not elaborate further.

Women have no corresponding need to appeal to men in this way. They already appeal to men, if you catch my drift. Indeed, we now have all the joy of a scientific study, which illuminates the difference. At the Stanford University School of Medicine (a place, as it happens, where I once underwent an absolutely hilarious procedure with a sigmoidoscope), the grim-faced researchers showed 10 men and 10 women a sample of 70 black-and-white cartoons and got them to rate the gags on a “funniness scale.” To annex for a moment the fall-about language of the report as it was summarized in Biotech Week:

The researchers found that men and women share much of the same humor-response system; both use to a similar degree the part of the brain responsible for semantic knowledge and juxtagposition and the part involved in language processing. But they also found that some brain regions were activated more in women. These included the left prefrontal cortex, suggesting a greater emphasis on language and executive processing in women, and the nucleus accumbens—which is part of the mesolimbic reward center.

This has all the charm and address of the learned Professor Scully’s attempt to define a smile, as cited by Richard Usborne in his treatise on P. G. Wodehouse: “the drawing back and slight lifting of the corners of the mouth, which partially uncover the teeth; the curving of the naso-labial furrows…” But have no fear—it gets worse:

“Women appeared to have less expectation of a reward, which in this case was the punch line of the cartoon,” said the report’s author, Dr. Allan Reiss. “So when they got...
ROY YAMAGUCHI:

- James Beard, "Best Chef"
- Author, 3 cookbooks
- Host, PBS cooking series
- Fine dining Hall of Fame
to the joke’s punch line, they were more pleased about it.” The report also found that “women were quicker at identifying material they considered unfunny.”

Slower to get it, more pleased when they do, and swift to locate the unfunny—for this we need the Stanford University School of Medicine? And remember, this is women confronted with humor. Is it any wonder that they are backward in generating it?

This is not to say that women are humorless, or cannot make great wits and comedians. And if they did not operate on the humor wavelength, there would be scant point in half killing oneself in the attempt to make them writhe and scream (uproariously). Wit, after all, is the un failing symptom of intelligence. Men will laugh at almost anything, often precisely because it is—or they are—extremely stupid. Women aren’t like that. And the wits and comics among them are formidable beyond compare: Dorothy Parker, Nora Ephron, Fran Lebowitz, Ellen DeGeneres. (Though ask yourself, was Dorothy Parker ever really funny?)

Greatly daring—or so I thought—I resolved to call up Ms. Lebowitz and Ms. Ephron to try out my theories. Fran responded: “The cultural values are male; for a woman to say a man is funny is the equivalent of a man saying that a woman is pretty. Also, humor is largely aggressive and pre-emptive, and what’s more male than that?” Ms. Ephron did not disagree. She did, however, in what I thought was a slightly feline way, accuse me of plagiarizing a rant by Jerry Lewis that said much the same thing. (I have only once seen Lewis in action, in The King of Comedy, where it was really Sandra Bernhard who was funny.)

In any case, my argument doesn’t say that there are no decent women comedians. There are more terrible female comedians than there are terrible male comedians, but there are some impressive ladies out there. Most of them, though, when you come to review the situation, are hefty or dykey or Jewish, or some combo of the three. When Roseanne stands up and tells biker jokes and invites people who don’t dig her shriek to suck her dick—know what I am saying? And the Sapphic faction may have its own reasons for wanting what I want—the sweet surrender of female laughter. While Jewish humor, boiling as it is with angst and self-deprecation, is almost masculine by definition.

Substitute the term “self-defecation” (which I actually heard being used inadvertently once) and almost all men will laugh right away, if only to pass the time. Probe a little deeper, though, and you will see what Nietzsche meant when he described a witticism as an epitaph on the death of a feeling. Male humor prefers the laugh to be at someone’s expense, and understands that life is quite possibly a joke to begin with—and often a joke in extremely poor taste. Humor is part of the armor-plate with which to resist what is already farcical enough. (Perhaps not by coincidence, battered as they are by motherfucking nature, men tend to refer to life itself as a bitch.) Whereas women, bless their tender hearts, would prefer that life be Bobbitt, but they don’t want women doing so.)

Men have prostate glands, hysterically enough, and these have a tendency to give out, along with their hearts and, it has to be said, their dicks. This is funny only in male company. For some reason, women do not find their own physical decay and absurdity to be so riotously amusing, which is why we admire Lucille Ball and Helen Fielding, who do see the funny side of it. But this is so rare as to be like Dr. Johnson’s comparison of a woman preaching to a dog walking on its hind legs: the surprise is that it is done at all.

The plain fact is that the physical structure of the human being is a joke in itself, a flat, crude, unanswerable disproof of any nonsense about “intelligent design.” The reproductive and eliminating functions (the closeness of which is the origin of all obscenity) were obviously wired together in hell by some subcommittee that was giggling cruelly as it went about its work. (“Think they’d wear this? Well, they’re gonna have to.”) The resulting confusion is the source of perhaps 50 percent of all humor. Filth. That’s what the customers want, as we occasional stand-up performers all know. Filth, and plenty of it. Filth in lavish, heaping quantities. And there’s another principle that helps exclude the fair sex. “Men obviously like gross stuff,” says Fran Lebowitz. “Why? Because it’s childish.” Keep your eye on that last word. Women’s appetite for talk about that fine product known as Depend is limited. So is their relish for gags about premature ejaculation (“Premature for whom?” as a friend of mine indignantly demands to know.) But “child” is the key word. For women, reproduction is, if not the only thing, certainly the main thing. Apart from giving them a very different attitude to filth and embarrassment, it also imbues them with the kind of seriousness and solemnity at which men can only goggle. This womanly seriousness was well caught by Rudyard Kipling in his poem “The Female of the Species.” After cleverly noticing that with the male “mirth obscene diverts his anger”—which is true of

It could be that in some way men do not want women to be funny.
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most work on that great masculine equivalent to childbirth, which is warfare—Kipling insists:

But the Woman that God gave him, every fibre of her frame
Proves her launched for one sole issue, armed and engined for the same,
And to serve that single issue, lest the generations fail.
The female of the species must be deadlier than the male.

The word "issue" there, which we so pathetically misuse, is restored to its proper meaning of childbirth. As Kipling continues:

She who faces Death by torture for each life beneath her breast
May not deal in doubt or pity—must not swerve for fact or jest.

Men are overawed, not to say terrified, by the ability of women to produce babies. (Asked by a lady intellectual to summarize the differences between the sexes, another bishop responded, "Madam, I cannot conceive.") It gives women an unchallengeable authority. And one of the earliest origins of humor that we know about is its role in the mockery of authority. Irony itself has been called "the glory of slaves." So you could argue that when men get together to be funny and do not expect women to be there, or in on the joke, they are really playing truant and implicitly conceding who is really the boss.

The ancient annual festivities of Saturnalia, where the slaves would play master, were a temporary release from bossdom. A whole tranche of subversive male humor likewise depends on the notion that women are not really the boss, but are mere objects and victims. Kipling saw through this:

So it comes that Man, the coward, when he gathers to confer
With his fellow-braves in council, dare not leave a place for her.

In other words, for women the question of funniness is essentially a secondary one. They are innately aware of a higher calling that is no laughing matter. Whereas with every woman becomes pregnant. Anyway, after a certain stage women came to the conclusion that men were actually necessary, and the old form of patriarchy came to a close. (Mencken speculates that this is why the first kings ascended the throne clutching their batons or scepters as if holding on for grim death.) People in this precarious position do not enjoy being laughed at, and it would not have taken women long to work out that female humor would be the most upsetting of all.

Childbearing and rearing are the double root of all this, as Kipling guessed. As every father knows, the placenta is made up of brain cells, which migrate southward during pregnancy and take the sense of humor along with them. And when the bundle is finally delivered, the funny side is not always immediately back in view. Is there anything so utterly lacking in humor as a mother discussing her new child? She is unbearable on the subject. Even the mothers of other fledglings have to drive their fingernails into their palms and wiggle their toes, just to prevent themselves from fainting dead away at the sheer tedium of it. And as the little ones burgeon and thrive, do you find that their mothers enjoy jests at their expense? I thought not.

Humor, if we are to be serious about it, arises from the ineluctable fact that we are all born into a losing struggle. Those who risk agony and death to bring children into this faisco simply can't afford to be too frivolous. (And there just aren't that many episiotomy jokes, even in the male repertoire.) I am certain that this is also partly why, in all cultures, it is females who are the rank-and-file mainstay of religion, which in turn is the official enemy of all humor. One tiny snufle that turns into a wheeze, one little cut that goes septic, one pathetically small coffin, and the woman's universe is left in ashes and ruin. Try being funny about that, if you like. Oscar Wilde was the only person ever to make a decent joke about the death of an infant, and that infant was fictional, and Wilde was (although twice a father) a queer. And because fear is the mother of superstition, and because they are partly ruled in any case by the moon and the tides, women also fall more heavily for dreams, for supposedly significant dates like birthdays and anniversaries, for romantic love, crystals and stones, lockets and reliks, and other things that men know are fit mainly for mockery and limericks. Good grief! Is there anything less funny than hearing a woman relate a dream she's just had? ("And then Quentin was there somehow. And so were you, in a strange sort of way. And it was all so peaceful." Peaceful?)

For men, it is a tragedy that the two things they prize the most—women and humor—should be so antithetical. But without tragedy there could be no comedy. My beloved said to me, when I told her I was going to have to address this melancholy topic, that I should cheer up because "women get funnier as they get older."

Observation suggests to me that this might indeed be true, but, excuse me, isn't that rather a long time to have to wait?...
Courage, Katie!

Savaged by the media, her ratings anemic, Katie Couric has stuck to her cozy, chirpy guns. Mistake. Those human-interest stories and apple-pie recipes obscure the fact that, when she actually does hard news, America's sweetheart is as tough as they come.
If you love skiing, chances are you love Utah. And we love Utah too, but for a different reason. For us, it's the airbags. Toyota buys airbags from Autoliv in Ogden, Utah. They're terrific partners, one of our hundreds of quality suppliers across the country.

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grabbing CBS' best numbers in eight years,'" Entertainment Weekly reported), the demographics warming the cockles of ad executives' hearts. But as with the fall of Baghdad, the exuberant afterglow soon turned to ash and recrimination. The ratings ratcheted downward like a jerk on escalator. Anchor Katie Couric Blasts Into Third Place was the sarcastic headline in The Washington Post. Couric in an unfamiliar place—3rd, chimed the Los Angeles Times, which reported tremors on the lido deck: "The falloff of the former 'Today' show anchor's audience since her debut had provoked a strong sense of unease internally, according to newsroom employees. Many are alarmed that the program isn't faring better, especially after a massive marketing push this summer." Emboldened by the declining numbers, critics of the broadcast sharpened their chopsticks, scorning Couric's invitation to the audience to furnish her with a sign-off catchphrase "Next up: Help me pick History's Sexiest Dictator!" ribbed Entertainment Weekly) and feasting upon the pretentiously labeled op-ed segment "freeSpeech," a bully-pulpit forum for guest gags such as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, and, most controversial, Brian Rohrbough, the father of a student slain at Columbine, who took the occasion of the Amish-school massacre to blame school violence on the "moral vacuum" created by, among other things, teaching evolution. Perhaps CBS was accommodating conservative kookdom to offset Couric's liberal patina and the lingering stigma of Dan Rather's "Memogate." ("Even the rumor of Katie taking the job was enough to unleash Rush Limbaugh, who pronounced her the only news talent CBS could find who was more liberal than Rather," Bill Carter writes in his recent book, Desperate Networks.) But nothing short of complete capitulation will placate the likes of Limbaugh and Hannity, and it's poor clock management to divvy up a portion of the scarce 22 minutes available each night to AM-dial Mussolinis who already hog three hours a day to hoist their opinions (with Hannity taking another hour weeknights on Fox News to comb his hair). These are hardly wilderness voices going unheard and unheeded.

Nor is the Couric-piloted Evening News a boon to the sisterhood. Couric leaving ladies on sideline, headlined the New York Post. "Katie Couric is the first female solo anchor in nightly news, but that doesn't mean she's bringing more women along with her," wrote Post reporter Holly M. Sanders. "A published report found that her fellow female correspondents at the 'CBS Evening News' are getting 40 percent less face time than they did under her predecessor, Bob Schieffer." Whereas correspondents used to do their own intros under Schieffer, Couric took them over, receiving "about 20 percent more voiceover time than Schieffer." Well, that's why she gets the big bucks, there's no point paying someone $60 million over four and a half years and not making full use of her dulcet tones, but is she truly worth such queenly sums? It didn't go unnoticed by certain meanies that the rats and company are truly doing what they want on the evening news. There's something wrong with what they want, and they'd better start undoing what they're doing before they dig themselves an insurmountable rut. If she's following her impulses, she needs to ignore her impulses and do the opposite, George Costanza-style. Because when the anchor of the CBS Evening News starts pulling fuzzy pink slippers out of a paper bag, a grown-up needs to step in and play Project Runway headmaster Tim Gunn before anyone gets hurt by this foolishness. This isn't A.M. Albuquerque. This isn't a Tupperware party. Fuzzy pink slippers will not do.

Given the grim state of world events, CBS Evening News broadcasts frequently open with the latest misery out of Iraq as reported by the courageous and charismatic Lara Logan, or an equally sobering Pentagon report by David Martin, with attention paid to the tragic repercussions at home. One indelible segment was devoted to the stunned grief of the family of Corporal David Unger, a father of two, who was killed in Iraq (his younger brother and sister looked as if they had had their youth knocked out of them.) The reporter Byron Pitts observed that the entire Unger clan, gathered in the living room, had a physical reaction watching President Bush profess at a press conference that morning that he shared the sorrow of those who had lost loved ones: "I understand how tough it is—really tough," Bush said, with an extra dash of Texas accent. Unger's

KATIE'S SEXY-LIBRARIAN wardrobe, her makeup palette—everything was second-guessed.
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mother, Diana, wasn’t buying it: “Unless he puts his daughters over there and he has that real fear every day of not wanting to turn on the television, that fear that gets into your heart and your head, he can’t even fathom what that means.” Her plain eloquence put the glib gibberings on cable-news talk shows to shame. The final detail in the story was that Unger’s body would be arriving in Kansas for burial “four days before his 22nd birthday.” For the immeasurable harm they have done, the architects of the Iraq war will not be forgiven.

Couric scored a coup with her riveting interview of Michael J. Fox following Rush Limbaugh’s mocking mimicry of Fox’s ads for Democratic candidates who support stem-cell research—Limbaugh had accused Fox of either playing cat or deliberately ditching his meds to make his Parkinson’s look more convulsive. (Waving his arms around and wagging his head, Limbaugh reminded me of the sort of wiseacre who’d make fun of the retarded kids on the school bus.) The intelligence and decency with which the physically whipsawed Fox answered his critics on the right made for an interview that was painful to watch, impossible to ignore. When Couric does hard news, she holds her own with the competition. The problem, as former CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite (in his continuing role as Father Time) gently voiced, is that there isn’t enough hard news. The show is skimping on the portions.

A s if fearful of coming on too heavy, Couric lightens the tone and sugars the lineup with human-interest inspirationalists, promising the viewer, “I really think this next story is going to knock your socks off,” or ending a piece on a fishing tournament by icky-pooping, “Eww, that looks scary.” Sometimes her chatty lobes to correspondents leave them looking flat-footed, as when she advised a political correspondent poised to hopscotch across the country to cover the midterm elections, “Be sure to pack a lot of clothes.” The smile on his face resembled a wilted petal. Following a changing-mores piece about how trick-or-treat costumes have been sexed up for the younger set, Couric signed off, “Happy Halloween, everybody, and easy on the candy,” as if she were our mom. But the most blush-warranting moment came when the evening news ran a humorous segment on the Mason County, Texas, sheriff who makes next week’s nightmares wear pink jump suits and shoesies to discourage repeat offenders. Pink apparently so offends the Alamo pride and spirit of Texas felons that they swear off a life of crime rather than risk looking minty ever again.

“Assignment America” correspondent Steve Hartman jogged in a milk-crate cell with an inmate with anger-management issues, quizzing Tino to find out if his pink ensemble had produced a faroutation with Broadway show tunes: “Les Mis…Chorus Line?” It was like a bit from The Daily Show with the timing slightly off. In the studio after the taped piece had concluded, Couric reached beside her chair into a brown paper bag and presented Hartman with a pair of fuzzy pink slippers as a gag gift. “I guess I’ll have to expense these,” he said. “No, they’re yours, seriously,” Couric said. A pause fell, and in the absence of follow-up quips, they both looked sheepish, as well they ought.

Hartman’s “Assignment America” is a poll-driven segment for a poll-driven society. Each week CBS viewers vote online to choose which of three possible stories they want to see covered on Friday’s broadcast. An outreach gimmick to tap into American Idol audience-participation fervor, it’s also part of the Couric-era CBS News Internet strategy to convert the Web site into the mother ship for Web-exclusive segments, sneak previews, extended footage from broadcast reports, podcasts, and blogs, including “Katie Couric’s Notebook.” While Couric may not be the first network-anchor blogger (NBC’s Brian Williams holds that honor), she’s got him beat on effervescence. If she sounded any bubblier, the dishwasher would overflow. Previewing a 60 Minutes interview with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Couric confides that she finds Condii “scary smart”—“She can tick off events and dates in a way that made my head spin.” The spin she’s in doesn’t stop when Condii’s not around. In squirming anticipation of an appearance on The Late Show with David Letterman, Couric confesses that talk shows make her nervous in her service, if I may quote Reverend Ike.

Normally, I’d rather try to be the “hostess with the mostess” instead of the guest that bombed. I had so much fun a few years back when I “traded places” with Jay Leno. I love Jay and all the folks at The Tonight Show. Sometimes I can’t believe I had the chutzpah (Yiddish for you non–New Yorkers) to even do that. My favorite joke: “Jay Leno this morning was filling in for me on The Today Show and interviewed General Powell. I couldn’t believe it! I thought ‘Probing Colin’ [an allusion to Couric’s on-air colonoscopy] was MY JOB! HA HA HA….” I also said I hadn’t been this nervous since Willard Scott tried to French kiss me at an NBC Christmas party! Those Tonight Show folks are FUNNY!

No, they’re NOT! Get a grip, woman! No one over the age of 30 should be resorting to all those exclamation marks and capital letters like some juiced-up Crackberry addict. Couric officially buttoned out with a post entitled “Katie’s Apple Pie: The Recipe!” in which she revealed, “Mushy apples are the most disappointing, un-a-peeling (HA HA) culinary experience there is,” and described Mutsu apples she picked from the tree as “GINORMOUS!” Perhaps Couric is trying to relate to younger viewers and readers at their own dippy level—never a good idea. Or perhaps she’s trying to prove that despite the dizzy heights she’s reached in the news business, the fame and money that have been slung her way, she’s still the same unspoiled, unpretentious batch of homemade fudge she was before she clawed her way to the top. Katie Couric is caught in a tug-of-war between her serious journalistic side and the girly side that wants to be everybody’s darling. It’s the girly side that needs to go.
Race Against Terror

As Greece prepared to host the 2004 Olympics, a terrorist group called November 17 held Athens in its violent grip. It had to be stopped before the Games could begin.

By Nicholas Gage

On December 23, 1975, Richard S. Welch, the C.I.A.’s Athens station chief, and his wife, Cristina, left a Christmas party at the American ambassador’s sprawling residence, near the U.S. Embassy. Their driver steered the Ford sedan through the jasmine-scented night toward their villa, in the residential suburb of Paleo Psychiko. Welch, a slight, balding, tweedy 46-year-old with a thin gray mustache, was a Harvard-educated classicist who looked more like a professor than a C.I.A. agent. At the high-spirited embassy party, he had chatted amiably with his fellow American expatriates. If Welch was concerned that an Athens newspaper had recently printed the names and addresses of top C.I.A. officials in Greece, he didn’t mention it. But he left at 10 p.m.—an early hour for Greece.

When his driver pulled up outside his two-story stucco villa, at 5 Vas. Frederiki Street, which had been home to every C.I.A. station chief before him, Welch didn’t notice a green Simca following them. He was getting out of the car when someone called out in Greek, and he turned to see three masked men approaching on foot. Neither Mrs. Welch nor the driver noticed that a fourth person, sitting in the Simca, had the slender build and fine features of a woman.

Gunshots punctured the silence, and Welch fell to the ground as the attackers ran back to their vehicle, which sped away.

Mrs. Welch ran to the nearby home of her husband’s deputy, screaming, “They’ve shot Dick!” Richard Welch was dead by the time help arrived.

The three Welch children spent Christmas Day preparing for the funeral of their father.

Welch’s assassination was the start of a wave of bloodletting that for the next 27 years turned Athens and its suburb into a war zone. Twenty-three men were murdered by guns car bombs, missiles, and bazookas—five of them American, one British, two Turkish, and the rest wealthy Greek businessmen and prominent politicians of the conservative New Democracy Party.

The terrorists who perpetrated these crimes called themselves November 17, after the date in 1973 when students staged an uprising against the junta that ruled Greece from 1967 to 74. After the Welch killing, the group sent a statement ful of Marxist rhetoric to three Greek newspapers and the new leftist French paper Libération, in Paris. (An editor of that paper was told to go to the home of Jean-Paul Sartre to pick up the document.) But none of the newspapers published the statement suspecting that it came from a fringe group eager to falsely claim credit for the crime.

A year later, when members of the group assassinated a former police commander under the junta, the same papers received a second proclamation, and printed both. These statements would become a hallmark...
Dear Ketel One Drinker
A half empty glass is no way to go through life.
of November 17, which would operate for nearly 30 years without a single arrest. Their goal was to inspire an anti-capitalist popular uprising against Greece’s ruling classes by showing that agents of the “Western imperialists who propped them up” could be attacked without fear of consequences.

The terrorists eventually felt so invulnerable that they began taunting the police. After two killers rode motorcycles through central Athens carrying a three-foot assault rifle, a jeering letter was sent to the newspapers: “We circulate under their nose with a weapon that is visible from a kilometer away.” Members of November 17 fired rockets at foreign companies, set off bombs at embassies and hotels, stole bazookas from the Athens War Museum, and raided a military base to seize weapons, later sending Greek newspapers a photograph of the armory they’d accumulated, arranged in front of a red-and-yellow “17N” flag.

With one brazen attack after another, November 17 achieved mythical status in the land where myths and legends began. But as the 20th century neared its end, the terrorists threatened Greece’s opportunity to reclaim its most cherished tradition—the Olympic Games. Greece, where the Olympics were born, in the eighth century B.C., had never hosted them officially since they were revived, in 1896. Then, in 1997, after decades of trying, Athens finally earned the right to hold the Games, in the summer of 2004.

But with November 17 making a joke of law enforcement, how could anyone feel safe at the Athens Games? No one could forget the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes by Palestinian terrorists at the Munich Olympics, in 1972; “Can the Greek government assure American and British athletes and visitors that November 17 won’t be part of the welcoming committee in 2004?” asked former C.I.A. director James Woolsey, in a *New York Times* article. “If they offer those assurances without breaking the group, how much are those assurances worth?”

**“Into the Lion’s Den”**

In 1999, Greek prime minister Kostas Simitis was forced to replace three members of his Cabinet who had participated in a bungled effort to hide a wanted Kurdish rebel leader. One of them was the minister of public order, in charge of security for the Olympic Games.

To fill this hot seat, Simitis turned to a young politician who had no experience in law enforcement—44-year-old Michalis Chrisohoidis. An intense, twice-divorced lawyer who had grown up on a small farm in northern Greece, Chrisohoidis had been elected to Parliament at the age of 34 and had worked under Simitis, an economist, in the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

At first, Chrisohoidis was not eager to accept his former boss’s offer. “I asked him bluntly, ‘Why are you throwing me into the lion’s den?’” Chrisohoidis recalls. “He replied that we had to eradicate terrorism in Greece before the Olympics or see our country humiliated before the world. This just increased my anxiety, because terrorism had been a priority for all administrations in the last 25 years, but not one member of November 17 had ever been arrested or even identified.”

Chrisohoidis had vivid memories of 1989, his first year in Parliament, when his fellow M.P. Pavlos Bakoyannis was killed as he entered his office building—struck by six bullets. Bakoyannis managed to stagger into the building, leaving a trail of blood until he collapsed and died.

At the time, Bakoyannis’s father-in-law, New Democracy Party leader Konstantinos Mitsotakis, had just secured a major victory in national elections. Bakoyannis’s young widow, Dora, won her dead husband’s seat in Parliament and took the lead in passing tough new anti-terrorism legislation. When her party lost power, in 1993, the new Socialist PASOK government immediately repealed the law, but she continued to speak out against her husband’s assassins. “The long struggle to turn Greek public opinion against November 17... began with the killing of my husband,” said Dora Bakoyannis, now the Greek foreign minister.

International criticism of Greece for not making any progress against November 17 had been building since 1989. The headlines in the U.S., whose citizens had been targeted as agents of imperialism, included the following: GREECE: CLIMATE FOR TERROR (The Washington Post); GREECE: HAVEN FOR TERRORISTS (The New York Times); GREECE: SACRIFICE OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM (Reader’s Digest). After Welch’s killing began the reign of terror. November 17 killed 4 more Americans and wounded more than 100.

On November 15, 1983, U.S. Navy captain George Tsantes, 53, the chief of the Joint United States Military Assistance Group Greece, and his Greek-American driver, was
ONE WOMAN'S MISTAKE IS ANOTHER'S OPPORTUNITY.

NOTES ON A SCANDAL

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was taking Tsantes to work, were ambushed at 7:30 a.m. Two men on a scooter, their faces covered by crash helmets, pulled up alongside the car at a traffic light and fired four bullets into Tsantes and three into his driver.

"It was a terrible loss for us," Tsantes's daughter, Stephanie, would tell a Greek court 20 years later. "When I returned home, my mother was curled on the floor, crying hysterically. Even today she's so afraid of this country that she doesn't dare to travel here."

On June 28, 1988, U.S. Navy captain William Nordeen, 51, who lived in the suburb of Kefalari, kissed his wife good-bye and walked out to his car. As he drove past a Toyota sedan parked down the street from his house, a bomb in the Toyota exploded, setting his car on fire and hurling his body into the yard of a deserted villa 45 feet away.

On March 12, 1991, as U.S. Air Force sergeant Ronald Stewart, 35, was walking near his home, in the seaside suburb of Glyfada, a bomb in a parked car was detonated by remote control, blowing off both his legs. He was taken to a hospital and bled to death on the operating table. He had been due to return to the U.S. in two weeks. Stewart was a purchasing agent for the military hospital in Athens and had nothing to do with military operations, but, as the head terrorist told one of his assassins, "even the small fry are to blame."

"What Took You So Long?"

That no one was arrested in connection with any of these attacks was not necessarily proof of the terrorists' criminal genius. According to a report compiled later by the U.S. Embassy in Athens, the Greek police officers who first arrived at the scene of Stewart's murder "demonstrated an egregious lack of adequate crime scene presentation/protection...and collection protocol by evidence technicians."

One of the first things Chrisohoidis did as minister of public order was to call for all the files on November 17 crimes and summon the man who had been in charge of the anti-terrorism unit in the national police: Fotis Nasiakos, a short, stocky 47-year-old, with unruly salt-and-pepper hair, a florid complexion, and the tense restlessness of a veteran field commander.

Nasiakos had spent 15 years in the anti-terrorism unit, three of them as chief, trying to make headway against November 17, but he had received little support from his superiors in the police or from the revolving cast of politicians in the ministry.

"When I met Fotis for the first time, I saw a man who was demoralized," Chrisohoidis recalls. "He put some bound papers on my desk and said, 'I know you're going to replace me in the next round of promotions, but before I go I want to leave this report with you so all my work doesn't come to nothing.' I read the report and saw that it was a comprehensive overview of November 17 attacks, with some telling insights." Even though Nasiakos didn't belong to Chrisohoidis's party, the minister kept him as chief of the unit and told him to have the intelligence section pursue the leads in his report.

"We don't have an intelligence section" came the response. So Chrisohoidis ordered Nasiakos to set one up.

To head the new section, Chrisohoidis and Nasiakos chose an earnest detective named Fotis Papageorgiou, whose dark hair, broad face, and penetrating brown eyes behind half-rimmed glasses gave him the appearance of a thoughtful Russell Crowe. Computer-savvy, with a keen memory and a passion for details, Papageorgiou, then 39, was assigned to pore over clues from November 17 attacks, make connections, and report his findings to Nasiakos.

At about the same time, the special prosecutor assigned to the anti-terrorism unit asked to be transferred. In his place came 44-year-old Yiannis Diotsis, an Athens-trained lawyer with a halo of gray hair, a boxer's nose, and perpetually frowning eyebrows. Diotsis had served in the post once before and was eager for another chance to build a case against November 17.

This new team—the minister, Chrisohoidis; the anti-terrorism chief, Nasiakos; the head of intelligence, Papageorgiou; and the special prosecutor, Diotsis—soon began to transform the campaign to bring down November 17. "Until they took over, each crime had been investigated separately and then tucked away in a file when no progress was made," says U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs R. Nicholas Burns, who was then ambassador to Greece. "They began to look at November 17 in a comprehensive way for the first time."

A study of the files revealed, among other things, that November 17's typed proclamations frequently alluded to France, echoed the thinking of French radicals, and were first sent to a French paper. Following up, Chrisohoidis asked Nasiakos to compile a list of activists based in Paris during the junta years and to find out what they had been up to since then. Working closely with Papageorgiou's intelligence unit, Nasiakos came up with some 250 names. "We tracked down all of the names except one," says Papageorgiou. "All had returned to their pre-junta interests and were easy to locate—except for Alexandros Giotopoulos, who had vanished."

Chrisohoidis decided to go to Paris and speak to the head of France's anti-terrorism unit. When he got there, the first thing the French official said was "What took you so long to come to us?"

The French described Giotopoulos as six feet two inches tall, with incipient jowls, inquisitive blue eyes, and a genial manner that could turn instantly to cold hostility. He was born in Paris in 1944, the son of a Greek Trotskyite who opposed the uprising of Greek Communist guerrillas in the late 1940s. Alexandros Giotopoulos would strive to erase this blot on his family's Marxist credentials by becoming the biggest radical of all. Even among the Greek leftists who spent the junta years plotting revolution in the smoky cafes of Paris's Left Bank, Giotopoulos stood out both for his height and for the ferocity of his plans.

"The first mention [of Giotopoulos] is
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our own files was in a junta case tried in Thessaloniki in 1971,” recalls the former anti-terrorism chief, Nasiakos. “He wasn’t at the trial, because he had fled to Paris, and his name was misspelled as ‘Alexandros Yiatropoulos,’ but he fit the description of the tall assassin mentioned by witnesses in several killings.” In one instance, a victim lived long enough to say, “The tall one got me.”

French files showed that Giotopoulos had been picked up by Paris police in 1971 for carrying false documents, but was released and disappeared. Informants reported that he had gone to Cuba to study with the Tupamaros, an urban guerrilla group founded in Uruguay that engaged in political assassinations, including the kidnapping and murder of F.B.I. agent Dan Mitrione, dramatized in the film State of Siege.

That struck a chord with Greek investigators, because the influence of the Tupamaros was evident in the November 17 flag—a yellow star with “17N” in its center against a red background. The Tupamaros’ flag includes a red diagonal band with a yellow star in the middle and a black T in its center.

Shattering the Myth

With the anti-terrorism unit now on track, Christohoidis felt confident enough to move Nasiakos out of it and make him chief of the national police. His replacement as anti-terrorism chief was Stelios Syros, a street-smart veteran of the homicide bureau. A never-married workaholic, Syros used the sources he had developed during two decades in the criminal and anarchist underworld of Athens to gather names of suspected November 17 assassins.

Syros’s efforts were complicated by the consensus among Greeks that November 17 couldn’t be stopped—certainly not by Greek police or the Greek government, which, it was widely believed, were not even trying to capture them. In one incident, in 1991, police were told to look for November 17 assassins lurking in a van near Kolonaki, the fashionable square where stylish Athenians crowd the outdoor cafes. The police tailed the van until the occupants opened the back door, revealing that they were heavily armed. The police commander immediately called off the pursuit, saying later that he didn’t want to instigate a gun battle that would likely kill innocent civilians.

Eyewitnesses to November 17 murders were afraid to testify, because the police were powerless to protect them. One passerby who saw the May 28, 1997, killing of young Greek shipowner Costas Peratikos, in Piraes, appeared on the evening news to describe the scene. Two days later, the witness found his car torched.

Even worse for the anti-terrorism team, many ordinary citizens considered the terrorasts to be heroes—assassinating rich capitalists and Western diplomats whose countries they blamed for Greece’s political turmoil and for Turkey’s 1974 invasion and partial takeover of the Greek island of Cyprus. Graffiti throughout the nation demanded, AMERICA OUT OF GREECE and DEATH TO THE IMPERIALISTS.

The November 17 assassins carefully cultivated their heroic image. Their proclamations tried to justify their killings but never mentioned the banks they robbed to support themselves. (Over 25 years, the group stole some $2 million, none of which has been recovered.) When they killed Greeks, they left statements on the scene, but when they killed foreigners they took days to issue them, because they often picked their victims at random and knew nothing about them. They would wait to get the details from news reports.

The first November 17 murder on Michalis Christohoidis’s watch occurred on June 8, 2000. British defense attaché Brigadier Stephen Saunders was driving on Kifissias Avenue when two November 17 members pulled up on a motorcycle. The man sitting behind the driver of the motorbike pumped several bullets into Saunders’s abdomen.

Christohoidis rushed to the hospital where Saunders was being treated. “When the surgeon announced his death to Mrs. Saunders, describing the damage the eight bullets had done, she collapsed,” Christohoidis says. “I was in shock but also very angry.”

Christohoidis vowed that the Greek reaction to Saunders’s murder would be very different from those in the past. “We made certain that everyone in the government condemned the killing,” he says. “We encouraged the media to show the impact the murder had on the Saunders family. Then we held two memorial services and invited politicians from all parties to attend, which they did in huge numbers.”

“The strong reaction to the Saunders murder was pivotal,” says Sir David Veness, who was sent to Athens by Scotland Yard in the aftermath of the killing. “It allowed Michalis Christohoidis to accomplish three essential things: to make his own people in PASOK stop appearing to support radicals, to break the taboo of his government against seeking help from foreign agencies, and to undermine the support November 17 had with the public.”

If the Greek public needed another reason to change its attitude toward November 17, it came with the close of the 2000 Summer Olympics, in Sydney. Suddenly, the world looked toward Athens, wondering what would happen when the Games opened there four years later. International opinion was not optimistic. A May 2000 article in Time began: “Twenty terrorist attacks against American targets in a 12-month period; a combined 40 strikes on U.S., French and British holdings; 52 anti-American protest marches, seven rocket attacks. . . . The country in question isn’t Afghanistan or Iran. It’s Greece.”

Shortly after the national elections in October 2000, in which the Simitis government retained power by a slim margin, Christohoidis went on television to denounce November 17. On December 21, the families of the victims formed a group called Os Edo—or “No More.” The group was headed by Costas Peratikos’s father, Michael; the family of Pavlos Bakoyannis; and Dimitri Momferatos, whose father, a publisher, had been murdered.

The killing of Saunders and the activities of Os Edo provoked national shame and caused a sea change in Greek public opinion. The shift moved the Simitis government to push a strong new anti-terrorism law, which was finally adopted in 2002. “The law was crucial,” says Yiannis Diotis, the special prosecutor. It allowed DNA evi-
density to be used in court for the first time, made being part of a terrorist organization a crime, provided for witness protection and lenient sentences for cooperating criminals, and called for terrorists to be tried by a panel of judges without jurors. "In previous trials of violent radicals, jurors participated and in most cases they were too frightened to convict anybody," Diotsis says.

An Explosive Lead

With the opening ceremony of the Athens Olympics now just two years away, November 17 was looming. Chrisohoidis and his team knew they had to do something to make the terrorists show their hand. In mid-June, they

Witnesses reported seeing an accomplice running from the scene as Xiros lay in a spreading pool of blood.

According to Yiannis Diotsis, "The last three fingers of his right hand were blown off and shrapnel hit him all over his upper body, slashing his eyes, breaking the tympanic drum in one ear, and smashing into his chest, causing one lung to collapse. The last was the worst of his injuries, and he could have died." Savas Xiros was unconscious when an ambulance took him to Evangelismos Hospital, and he remained so for four days. But without saying a word, he provided Michalis Chrisohoidis's team with enough information to begin the dismantling of November 17.

"Oh my God!" the officer said. "You won't believe what's in here—guns, knives, grenades, rockets, a November 17 flag."

decided to leak a false report that the leader of November 17 had been identified and that multiple arrests were imminent.

It worked. "The break we had been hoping for finally came," says Chrisohoidis, "and when it did, all the policies we had put in place began to pay off so well and so quickly that it left even us stunned."

Savas Xiros, 40, a tall, swarthy, baby-faced man who made a living as a painter of religious icons, was walking by Piraeus harbor on the evening of June 29, 2002, carrying a heavy black bag. The contents of the bag were not religious icons but a gun, a grenade, and the components of a homemade time bomb.

Xiros was to assemble the bomb and place it near a ticket office of the Minoan Ferry Lines, which had recently been accused of negligence after one of its ferries sank in calm seas with 500 people aboard, killing 82.

Police believe that the leaders of November 17, suffering from the loss of public support and perhaps fearing that the authorities were closing in on them, had decided that an attack on the ferry company would restore their image as freedom fighters avenging Greek citizens against heartless capitalists.

Xiros was an explosives expert and had been involved in the car bombings that killed Captain Nordeen and Sergeant Stewart. He usually used European-made timing devices, but this time he used a Chinese clock. As he assembled the bomb, it blew up in his hands with a thunderous explosion.

At the suggestion of Scotland Yard, Chrisohoidis sent a photograph of Savas Xiros—taken from the ID card found in his pocket—to Greek newspapers and television channels, requesting that anyone recognizing the suspect call a special phone number where they could speak in complete anonymity.

Immediately people began to call in information. "After a 24-year drought of any hard evidence, information started coming at us like a flood," says Chrisohoidis. One woman called to say that she had seen the man in the photo entering a rented first-floor apartment near her own on Patmos Street in Kato Patissia, a working-class neighborhood of Athens.

The police had found a set of keys on Xiros and a .38-caliber handgun in the street near his body. Chrisohoidis gave the gun to his forensic staff, who determined that it had been used to murder a policeman during a November 17 bank robbery. A senior officer of the anti-terrorism unit took the keys to the address on Patmos Street, then called Chrisohoidis from inside the apartment: "Oh my God!" the officer said in a shaking voice. "You won't believe what's in here—guns, knives, grenades, rockets, a November 17 flag."

A squad of police forensic experts closed off the area and examined the apartment in detail. Along with the weapons, they found the typewriter that had produced all the manifestos and a computer with several disks outlining plans for future attacks.

Three days later, acting on information they had found in the hideout, the police raided a second safe house, at 73 Damareos Street, in the middle-class Athens area of Pangrati. There they found more weapons, documents, and manifestos bearing the fingerprints of a man they believed to be November 17's founder, leader, and chief assassin—Alexandros Giotopoulos.

Meanwhile, the police took fingerprints from the intact hand of the unconscious icon painter and matched one of them to a fingerprint found on a blue plastic bag that had been left in an abandoned getaway car used in the killing of Costas Peratikos, in 1997.

On his fourth day in the hospital, still blind and attached to tubes and a heart monitor, Savas Xiros realized as he faded in and out of consciousness that there were two men sitting next to his bed: Yiannis Diotsis and Stelios Syros. They soon established a good-cop-bad-cop M.O. that would prove very effective.

"Stelios Syros was the spark plug," according to a former official in the anti-terrorism unit. "He's not a man to draft lengthy reports, but he can walk into a room, look over a suspect, and with a few minutes of chatter know what his weaknesses are. He can shift smoothly from stern father figure to concerned friend to tough cop to patient psychologist as the situation warrants. Syros got so close to Savas that Savas said at one point during the 50 days he was in the hospital, 'I love Stelios more than my father.'"

Diotis, by contrast, at one point angered Xiros so much that he refused to speak for
INVESTIGATION

made
VANITY
JANUARY

days. But the prosecutor also engineered a clever legal maneuver. Under Greek law, anyone in detention must be charged within 24 hours or released. If the police filed charges against Xiros, his accomplices would read about it in the papers and scatter.

Diotis decided that Xiros was not under arrest at all. "He was coming in and out of consciousness, so how could we charge a man who was in no condition to understand the charges?" Diotis asks, shrugging innocently. "So I decided to hold him as a material witness, not as a suspect, which gave us the opportunity to question him without the need to charge him and alert everyone to what he was saying." As he came to, according to Diotis, the first thing Xiros heard was the prosecutor telling him, "We know you're November 17, and we've got the evidence to prove it."

As Diotis recalls, Xiros sighed and nodded. "I know where I made my mistake," he said. "It was the blue plastic bag that I left in the car." He admitted he had been involved in Costas Peratikos's murder. This was the biggest breakthrough in the 27-year investigation of November 17, and the team celebrated with whiskey and cigars.

Syros and Diotis did not leave Xiros's side as he recuperated from his wounds and underwent a delicate operation that restored his sight in one eye. Police say Xiros confessed to having taken part in additional murders—those of Nordeen, Stewart, and Saunders—but he would not give up his November 17 comrades, providing only pseudonyms and false physical descriptions. (He later recanted his confession.

Xiros had nine siblings—five brothers and four sisters. His father was a priest from the island of Ikaria. His mother, Mashoula, was such an ardent Marxist that everyone called her Moska ("Moscow" in Greek), a high-ranking police official says.

As soon as news of Xiros's accident hit the front pages, he was visited at the hospital by his father and his brother Christodoulou Xiros, 44, a hulk of a man who was a maker of musical instruments. To the television reporters clustered outside the hospital door, the pair expressed shock at Savas's accident. Barred by the police from entering his brother's room, Christodoulou shouted, "Stay strong, Savas!" Inside, Diotis and Xiros immediately started asking Savas about Christodoulou's role in November 17.

On July 16, Christodoulou returned to the hospital and was arrested. That same day, Fotis Papageorgiou was dispatched to Thessaloniki, in northern Greece, to seize the Xiroses' younger brother Vassilis, 30, a wild-eyed, unkempt shepherd and sometime motorcycle mechanic.

Although Savas was reluctant to betray his accomplices, the police say, Vassilis spilled everything. "Once we got to Vassilis, we had it," recalls Papageorgiou. "He told us how he helped kill Saunders, and identified everyone he could by their rightful names. It was something! The kid can barely write his name, a real simpleton, but he gave up everyone he knew. When giving us his statement, he paused and asked, 'Is this going to take much longer? If I don't milk my goats, they're going to burst.' He thought after admitting to all those killings he would go back and milk his goats!"

Back in Athens, Diotis was questioning Christodoulou. "With what we had from Vasilis and Savas, Christodoulou didn't take long to start talking," Diotis recalls. "He's the most vicious killer of the three. He laughed as he told about all the people he killed."

As the Xiros brothers talked, officers from the anti-terrorism unit fanned out, arresting eight more members of November 17. For nearly a month after Savas blew himself up, the five-man team worked around the clock. In the evening, they would meet in the office of Michalis Chrisohoidis, who would bring out a bottle of good malt whiskey and order food from La Strada, a nearby Italian restaurant. They would smoke and talk nearly all night, discussing strategy and piecing together information about the terrorists who were still at large.

"My wife kept a record, and in one 18-day period I went home to sleep for a total of 18 hours," says Papageorgiou. The workload even prevented Nasiakos from spending time with his wife after she was diagnosed with a serious illness. "She's had health problems ever since," he says. "I worked hard, but she paid the price."

The Biggest Fish of All

Confessions and arrests were coming so fast that the police could hardly keep up. But one man, Alexandros Giotopoulos, remained at large, and there was no clue to his whereabouts. Then Savas Xiros, still in the hospital, let a name slip.

Xiros had told Diotis and Syros that the leader of the group was known only as O Psilos—the tall one—or by his pseudonym, Lambros. Exploiting the bond he had built up with the wounded ter

"I told the officers, if [Giotopoulos] made any sudden move, to just push him into the sea," says Nasiakos.
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INVESTIGATION

Savas [Xiros] has threatened to kill me when he gets out, and I'll only be in my late 60s then," says Diotis.

left Greece, they would never find him.

Nasiakos immediately called the police station on Lipsi and learned that it was staffed by two officers and that one was away, leaving a 25-year-old named Socrates Sioris as the only lawman on the island. Nasiakos asked Sioris if he knew of any Lipsi residents named Michalis.

"There's a Michalis Economou who has been battling the mayor over the color of his house," the young officer replied. "There's a rule here that all island homes must be white, but he insisted on painting his pink."

"Is he still there?"

"Yes, I saw him today."

Nasiakos asked Sioris to find out if Economou had made any reservations on the ferry. He warned that the man might have his own way of leaving—perhaps on a private boat—and that if he did slip away, as he had done before, the entire campaign to stop November 17 would be lost.

I started to panic," Nasiakos recalls. "Here we had finally located the leader of November 17 and the only one close to him was a novice police officer. But he turned out to be a palikari [brave lad] with great instincts, who checked the reservation list for the next day's ferry and found it included a Michalis Economou. It was too late for us to send officers from Athens, so our only options were Socrates and the four officers from the nearest island, Leros.

"On the following morning, the Athens ferry went only as far as Leros, and a local ferry went to Lipsi to pick up passengers for it," Nasiakos continues. "I told the Leros officers to go on the local ferry and when they got close to Giotopoulos, if he made any sudden move, to just push him into the sea because we didn't know what weapons he might be carrying—guns, grenades, explosives.

"When the local ferry landed on Lipsi, the four officers were on it, waiting, and Giotopoulos came behind Michalis as he stepped on the boat. They grabbed him in a sandwich and brought him down on the deck."

Fotis Papageorgiou hopped on a helicopter commandeered from the fire department and flew to Leros to reel in the biggest fish of all. "When I got to the police station on Leros," Papageorgiou says, "I saw that they had Giotopoulos tied to a radiator—hands, feet, chest—really secure."

"Hello, Alecko," I said to him. He looked at me contemptuously and snarled, "You're a lucky for the Americans. What kind of Greek are you to let yourself become such a stooge?"

"I let him have it: 'I didn't bring the Americans or the Brits or the French. You did with your pointless killings. Now we have F.B.I., C.I.A., S.A.S. [Britain's special forces], foreign agents everywhere we turn. And you're the one responsible, not me.'"

This outburst took the wind out of Giotopoulos's sails. He slumped, defeated, and whined, "I know what you're going to do with me. In a week I'm going to be in Guantánamo," Papageorgiou recalls.

"That's what he was most afraid of," the intelligence chief remembers. "He still is. They all are."

Giotopoulos was brought back to Athens and held in isolation. Of all the suspects arrested up to then, only Giotopoulos consistently maintained that he had nothing to do with November 17.

Investigating Giotopoulos's background, the team learned that for more than 30 years he had been using the alias Michalis Economou (taken from an early Greek Communist leader), which was printed on a forged identity card made for him by Savas Xiros. As Economou, he posed as a professor and book translator.

"He got into a university [in Paris] but never got a degree," says Diotis. "We did such a thorough check on him that we found out that he forged a high-school academic award he later boasted about. When I questioned him and mentioned the forgery, he was floored. Later he charged that we had used illegal methods to intrude in-

MERE MORTALS

to his private life. He's a piece of work!"

Both of Giotopoulos's residences, the illegally pink house on Lipsi and his Athens apartment, were registered in the name of his longtime companion, a Frenchwoman named Marie-Thérèse Peynaud. The investigating team called Peynaud in for questioning, but, like Giotopoulos, she firmly denied knowing anything about November 17. "She's very hard, very cool," says Nasiakos. "When we first brought her together with Giotopoulos, she was shocked about the charges against him and feigned igno-
rance that she even knew his real name. "Michalis," she said, "why are these people calling you Alecko?"

Peynaud signed a statement for the police saying she had met Michalis Economou in Paris in 1973 and developed a relationship with him. "We usually met at cafés in the Latin Quarter district where students gathered," her statement read. She said she had accompanied him to Greece "at Christmas of 1975 and stayed for 15 days," which would have put her in the country at the time of Welch's murder. Four years later, she moved to Greece permanently to live with Michalis and eventually found a job at the Greek-French school in Athens. In 1993 she bought a second home, in Lipsi.

Peynaud, who retired after 18 years of teaching when she learned she had cancer, did not always have a smooth relationship with Giotopoulos. While living with her, according to information given to Greek police, Giotopoulos began a relationship with another woman—a teacher at the same school who was 14 years younger than Peynaud. According to what the younger teacher told police, her affair with Giotopoulos began in the early 1990s, and he went to live with her for four months after Peynaud found out about the relationship.

"Giotopoulos loved three things: women, lobster, and cigars," says Papageorgiou. "When I arrested him in Lipsi, he was carrying a small bag that had five cigars in it, and when he saw me searching it he shouted, 'Don't take my cigars.'"

Giotopoulos's capture led to even more arrests. "When you count the number of defendants along with the criminal acts they committed," says Diotis, "it turns out that in a period of one month we completed more than 1,000 criminal investigations. That has to be some kind of record, and not just for Greece."

One of those arrested was Pavlos Serifis, a balding, bespectacled hospital worker with a thick mustache and a receding chin, who turned out to be one of the original members of November 17 and one of the four involved in the killing of Richard Welch.

In his confession, Serifis stated that the others involved in the Welch murder were his cousin Yiannis Serifis, Giotopoulos, and a woman he referred to as Anna. "She must have been about 30 years old at the time, tall, around five feet seven inches, blonde, good-looking, and well educated," he stated.

Pavlos Serifis did not divulge Anna's identity in his confession. Yiannis Serifis and Peynaud have denied any involvement with November 17, and Peynaud has not been charged with any crime.

“A Greek Achievement”

A month and a day after Savas Xiros became the first November 17 member in custody, nearly every suspect had been arrested. But there was still an important leader at large. A dark, balding, bearded man with the sad eyes of a Byzantine saint, Dimitris Koufodinas was a beekeeper and seller of honey. He was also believed to be November 17’s head of operations. Giotopoulos would select the victims, and Koufodinas would arrange the attacks. Despite a nationwide hunt, Koufodinas was nowhere to be found. But on September 5 he turned himself in.

Koufodinas, who had been living with the former wife of Savas Xiros, told police he was shocked and disappointed at Giotopoulos’s disavowal of November 17. Koufodinas said proudly that he considered the assassinations political acts of resistance against exploiters of the Greek people.

"Koufodinas took full responsibility for his actions," says Nasiakos. "But he did not say what actions and what his role was in them." Diotis intercepts, "only that he was a member of November 17 and he took political responsibility for it."
And he also said that November 17 was now finished,” adds Papageorgiou.

Although some later retracted their confessions, almost all of the suspects were convicted of multiple murders in a trial that ended almost a year before the Olympics began. Most received multiple life sentences. In Greece, however, a life term is limited to 25 years, and “lifers” are eligible for parole after 16 years, even those convicted of murder. Those sentenced to multiple life terms can apply for parole after 20 years.

The killers of the four Americans may be released from prison in 17 years, or even earlier on medical grounds, something that does not please Diotis. “Savas has threatened to kill me when he gets out, and I’ll only be in my late 60s then,” he says, noting that he travels with bodyguards wherever he goes even now.

Another disappointment is that Richard Welch’s assassination was not even mentioned during the trial, because in Greece there is a 20-year statute of limitations on all crimes, including murder.

Alexandros Giotopoulos, who Pavlos Serifis implicated in the Welch case, are walking around free does not please Michalis Chrisohoidis, who was re-elected to Parliament in 2004 but had to give up his post as minister of public order when PASOK lost to the New Democracy Party. Still, he believes that both could be convicted of November 17 crimes that fall within the statute of limitations. “My group would have done it if we hadn’t lost the election,” he says. “It can still be done.”

“We haven’t closed the books on anyone,” says his successor, Byron Polydoros. Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns has another warning for November 17 assassins: “Greece may have a statute of limitations on murder, but the U.S. doesn’t.”

What is certain is that November 17 is “finished,” as Dimitris Koufodinas declared. If you consider how long and how freely its killers operated, that’s a remarkable accomplishment for the men who brought about its destruction.

“It was a Greek achievement,” says Tom Miller, the U.S. ambassador from 2001 to 2004. “We all helped—the Brits, the French, our agencies—but the credit for dismantling November 17 belongs to the Greeks: to Michalis Chrisohoidis and his team. What they did was not only to end the reign of the most enduring and brutal terrorists in Europe, but to ensure a successful Olympic Games in 2004.”

“If we had not stopped November 17,” notes Yiannis Diotis, “and a few months before the Olympic Games began they had fired a rocket at one of the venues, how many would have risked coming to the Olympics in Athens? Would the 2004 Olympics have been held at all?”

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Please don’t call them “architects of the war”: Richard (Prince of Darkness) Perle, David (Axis of Evil) Frum, Kenneth (Cakewalk) Adelman, and other elite neoconservatives who pushed for the invasion of Iraq are beside themselves at the result. And before anyone blames them, the horrified hawks tell DAVID ROSE, here’s exactly how Bush and company screwed up a really great chance to spread democracy—from Condi’s consensus chasing to the creation of the Green Zone, to the president’s disconnect—and the price the United States is going to pay for that failure.

I

About That Cakewalk…

I remember sitting with Richard Perle in his suite at London’s Grosvenor House hotel and receiving a private lecture on the importance of securing victory in Iraq. “Iraq is a very good candidate for democratic reform,” he said. “It won’t be Westminster overnight, but the great democracies of the world didn’t achieve the full, rich structure of democratic governance overnight. The Iraqis have a decent chance of succeeding.”

In addition to a whiff of gunpowder, Perle seemed to exude the scent of liberation—not only for Iraq but for all the Middle East. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, Perle suggested, Iranian reformers would be emboldened to change their own regime, while Syria would take seriously American demands to cease its support for terrorists.

Perle had spent much of the 1990s urging the ouster of Saddam Hussein. He had co-founded the Project for the New American Century, a neoconservative think tank that agitated for Saddam’s removal, and he helped engineer the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act, which established regime change as formal U.S. policy. After the accession of George W. Bush, in 2001, Perle was appointed chairman of the Pentagon’s Defense Policy.
FOR IT BEFORE
HE WAS AGAINST IT

Iraq-war cheerleader
Richard Perle now
thinks an invasion may have
taken the wrong way to
overthrow Saddam Hussein.
Kenneth Adel who famously predicted a “cakewalk” in 1967 now says the war should have been put in “the drawer and can.”
I expect to encounter disappointment. What I find instead is despair, and fury at the incompetence of the Bush administration many neocons once saw as their brightest hope.

David Frum, the former White House speechwriter who co-wrote Bush's 2002 State of the Union address, accusing Iraq of being part of an "axis of evil," says it now looks as if defeat may be inescapable, because "the insurgency has proven it can kill anyone who cooperates, and the United States and its friends have failed to prove that it can protect them. If you are your typical, human non-hero, then it's very hard at this point to justify to yourself and your family taking any risks at all on behalf of the coalition." This situation, he says, must ultimately be blamed on "failure at the center."

Kenneth Adelman, a longtime neocon activist and Pentagon insider who has served on the Defense Policy Board, wrote a famous op-ed article in The Washington Post in February 2002, arguing, "I believe that demolishing Hussein's military power and liberating Iraq would be a cakewalk." Now he says, "I am extremely disappointed by the outcome in Iraq, because I just presumed that what I considered to be the most competent national-security team since Truman was indeed going to be competent. They turned out to be among the most incompetent teams in the postwar era. Not only did each of them, individually, have enormous flaws, but together they were deadly, dysfunctional."

Fearing that worse is still to come, Adelman believes that neoconservatism itself—what he defines as "the idea of a tough foreign policy on behalf of morality, the idea of using our power for moral good in the world"—is dead, at least for a generation. After Iraq, he says, "it's not going to sell." And if he, too, had his time over, Adelman says, "I would write an article that would be skeptical over whether there would be a performance that would be good enough to implement our policy. The policy can be absolutely right, and noble, beneficial, but if you can't execute it, it's useless, just useless. I guess that's what I would have said: that Bush's arguments are absolutely right, but you know what? You just have to put them in the drawer marked 'CAN'T DO.' And that's very different from LET'S GO."

James Woolsey, another Defense Policy Board member, who served as director of the C.I.A. under President Clinton, lobbied for an Iraq invasion with a prodigious output of articles, speeches, and television interviews. At a public debate hosted by Vanity Fair in September 2004, he was still happy to argue for the motion that "George W. Bush has made the world a safer place." Now he draws explicit parallels between Iraq and Vietnam, aghast at what he sees as profound American errors that have ignored the lessons learned so painfully 40 years ago. He has not given up hope: "As of mid-October of '06, the outcome isn't clear yet." But if, says Woolsey, as now seems quite possible, the Iraqi adventure ends with American defeat, the consequences will be "awful, awful. . . . It will convince the jihadi and al-Qaeda-in-Iraq types as well as the residual Ba'thists that we are a paper tiger, and they or anybody they want to
help can take us on anywhere and anytime they want and be effective, that we don’t have the stomach to stay and fight.”

Professor Eliot Cohen of Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies, yet another Defense Policy Board member and longtime advocate of ousting Saddam Hussein, is even more pessimistic: “People sometimes ask me, ‘If you knew then what you know now, would you still have been in favor of the war?’ Usually they’re thinking about the W.M.D. stuff. My response is that the thing I know now that I did not know then is just how incredibly incompetent we would be, which is the most sobering part of all this. I’m pretty grim. I think we’re heading for a very dark world, because the long-term consequences of this are very large, not just for Iraq, not just for the region, but globally—for our reputation, for what the Iranians do, all kinds of stuff.”

II
Let the Finger-Pointing Begin

I turn in my piece on Thursday, November 2—five days before the midterm elections. The following day, the editors phone to say that its contents—especially the comments by Perle, Adelman, and Frum—are so significant and unexpected that they have decided to post an excerpt that afternoon on the magazine’s Web site, vanityfair.com.

The abridged article goes up at about 4:45 p.m., eastern standard time. Its impact is almost immediate. Within minutes, George Stephanopoulos confronts Vice President Dick Cheney with Perle’s and Adelman’s criticisms during an on-camera interview. Cheney blanches and declines to comment, other than to say that the administration remains committed to its Iraq policy and will continue to pursue it, “full speed ahead.” By the next morning, news of the neocons’ about-face has been picked up by papers, broadcasters, and blogs around the world, despite a White House spokesperson’s attempt to dismiss it as “Monday-morning quarterbacking.”

Some of my interviewees, Richard Perle included, protest in a forum on National Review Online that they were misled, because they believed that their words would not be published until V.F.’s January issue hit newsstands—after the midterms. Posting a preview on the Web, they say, was a “partisan” attempt to score political points. In response, the magazine issues a statement: “At a time when Vice President Dick Cheney is saying that the administration is going ‘full speed ahead’ with its policy in Iraq and that ‘we’ve got the basic strategy right,’ and the president is stating that Defense Secretary Rumsfeld’s job is secure, we felt that it was in the public’s interest to hear now, before the election, what the architects of the Iraq war are saying about its mission and execution.”

Some of the neocons also claim that the Web excerpt quotes them out of context—implying, perhaps, that in other parts of their interviews they had praised the performance of Bush and his administration. That charge is untrue. Meanwhile, not all the neocons are unhappy. On Wednesday, November 8, with news of the Democratic takeover of Congress still fresh and Rumsfeld’s resignation still hours away, I receive an e-mail from Adelman: “I totally agree with you,” he writes. “Why keep Issue #1 behind closed doors until the American people have a chance to vote? That’s why I was (among the only ones) not giving any ‘rebuke’ to the [Web] release, despite being asked and pressured to do so since I think it’s just fine to get word out when it could make a difference to people.

“I Plus I personally had no rebuttal. I thought the words I read from you were fair and right on target.”

Cynic might argue that, since the Iraqi disaster has become so palpably overwhelming, the neocons are trash what is left of Bush’s reputation in the hope retaining theirs. Given the outcome of the midterms also seems likely that these interviews are the first salvos in a battle to influence how history will judge the war. The implications will be profound—not only for American conservatism but also for the future direction and ambitions of American foreign policy. The neocons’ position in this debate starts with an unprovable assertion: that when the war began, Iraq was “a doable do,” to use military planner’s phrasing cited by David Frum. If not for the administration’s incompetence they say, Saddam’s tyranny could have been replaced with something not only better but also secure. “These mistakes were made,” Richa Perle says, and I want to be very clear on this: they were not made by neoconservatives, who had almost no voice in what happened, and certainly almost no voice in what happened after the downfall of regime in Baghdad. I’m getting damn tired of being described as an architect of the war. I was in favor of bringing down Saddam. Nobody said, ‘Go design the campaign to do that.’ I had no responsibility for that.”

Some of those who did have responsibility, and were once the most gung-ho, are also losing heart. In December 2005, I spoke with Douglas Feith, the former undersecretary of defense for policy, whose Office of Special Plans was reportedly in charge of policy planning for the invasion and its aftermath. He told me then, “I have confidence that in 20 to 30 years people will happy we removed Saddam Hussein from power and will say we did the right thing. They will look back and say that our strategy rationale was sound, and that through doing this we won a victory in the war on terror.”

When we talk again, in October 2006, Feith sounds less certain. It is beginning to seem possible that America will withdraw before Iraq achieves stability, he says, and if that happens his previous statement would no longer be justified. “There would be a lot of negative consequences,” he says, adding that America’s enemies, including Osama bin Laden, have attacked when they perceived weakness. Leaving Iraq as a failed state, Feith concluded...
SIDE MAN
Former Office of Special Plans and Proliferation Provisional Authority staffer Michael Rubin.

BLUE HAWK
Defense Policy Board member James Woolsey, who was director of the C.I.A. under Bill Clinton.

RUE BELIEVER
Danielle Pletka, Middle East expert at the American Enterprise Institute.

RIGHT BRAIN
Eliot Cohen, professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.
Frank Gaffney, president of the Pentagon-sponsored Center for Security Policy, blames Bush for tolerating "pale, insubordinate..."
could wind up hurting the United States and the interests of a civilized world.” In 2005, Feith thought failure unimaginable, yet he broods on how it may occur, and envisions its results.

At the end of 2003, Richard Perle and David Frum published a book, An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror. Neoconservatives do not make up an organized bloc—much less a “cabal,” as is sometimes alleged—but the book ends with a handy summary of their ideas. When policy, write Perle and Frum, should attempt to achieve not only the realist goals of American wealth and security but also less tangible ends that benefit mankind. The neoconservative dream, they say, is similar to that which inspired the founders of the United States after World War II: “A world at peace; a world governed by a world in which all peoples are free to find their own desires.” But in Perle and Frum’s view, the U.N. and similar bodies have failed, leaving “American might” as the only force capable of bringing this Utopian world into being. “Our vocation is to support justice with power,” they write. “It is a vocation that has earned us terrible enemies. It is a vocation that has made us, at our worst moments, the hope of the world.”

Although Perle was one of the first to frame the case for toppling Saddam in realist terms of a threat of W.M.D.—in letter he sent to Clinton February 1998 whose signatories included Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Feith—he insists that the idealist values outlined in his book shaped the way he and his allies believed the war should be fought. At the heart of their program, he insists, is an insistence that, no matter how Saddam was deposed, Iraq had to be allowed to take charge of their destiny immediately afterward.

In the 1990s, the neocons tried to secure American air and logistical support for an assault on Saddam by a “provisional government” based in Kurdistan—a plan derided by former CentCom chief General Anthony Zinni as a recipe for a “Bay of Goats.” After 9/11, as America embarked on the path to war in earnest, they shed again for the recognition of a provisional Iraqi government imposed of former exiles, including Chalabi. In addition to acting as a magnet for new defectors from the Iraqi military and government, they argued, this government-in-exile could assume power as on as Baghdad fell. The neocons, represented inside the administration by Feith and Wolfowitz, also unsuccessfully demanded the tainting of thousands of Iraqis to go in with coalition troops.

The failure to adopt these proposals, neocons outside the administration now say, was the first big American error, and it meant that Iraqis saw their invaders as occupiers, rather than liberators, from the outset. “Had they gone in with even just a briefer or two of well-trained Iraqis, I think things could have been good deal different,” James Woolsey tells me at his law office, in McLean, Virginia. “That should have been an Iraqi that toppled at statue of Saddam.” Drawing a comparison to the liberation of France in World War II, he recalls how “we stood aside and saw the wisdom of having [the Free French leaders] de Gaulle and Leclerc lead the victory parade through Paris in the summer of ’44.” The coalition, he says, should have seen the symbolic value of allowing Iraqis to “take” Baghdad in 2003. He draws another historical parallel, to the U.S. campaigns against Native Americans in the 19th century, to make another point: that the absence of Iraqi auxiliaries deprived coalition soldiers of invaluable local intelligence. “Without the trained Iraqis, it was like the Seventh Cavalry going into the heart of Apache country in Arizona in the 1870s with no scouts. No Apache scouts. I mean, hello?”

If the administration loaded the dice against success with its pre-war decisions, Kenneth Adelman says, it made an even greater blunder when Saddam’s regime fell. “The looting was the decisive moment,” Adelman says. “The moment this administration was lost was when Donald Rumsfeld took to the podium and said, ‘Stuff happens. This is what free people do.’ It’s not what free people do at all. It’s what barbarians do. Rumsfeld said something about free people being free to make mistakes. But the Iraqis were making ‘mistakes’ by ruining their country while the U.S. Army stood there watching!” Once Rumsfeld and General Tommy Franks failed to order their forces to intervene—something Adelman says they could have done—several terrible consequences became inevitable. Among them, he tells me over lunch at a downtown-D.C. restaurant, was the destruction of Iraq’s infrastructure, the loss of documents that might have shed light on Saddam’s weapons capabilities, and the theft from Iraq’s huge munitions stores of tons of explosives “that they’re still using to kill our kids.”

The looting, he adds, “totally discredited the idea of democracy, since this ‘democracy’ came in tandem with chaos.” Worst of all, “it demolished the sense of the invincibility of American military power. That sense of invincibility is enormously valuable when you’re trying to control a country. It means, ‘You fuck with this guy, you get your head blown off.’ All that was destroyed when the looting began and was not stopped.”

According to Frum, there was a final ingredient fueling the wildfire spread of violence in the second half of 2003: intelligence failures that were, in terms of their effects, even “grossest” than those associated with the vanishing weapons. “The failure to understand the way in which the state was held together was more total,” he tells me in his office at the neoconservative think tank the American Enterprise Institute (A.E.I.). America assumed it was invading a functional, secular state, whose institutions and lines of control would carry on functioning under new leadership. Instead, partly as a result of the 1990s sanctions, it turned out to be a quasi-medieval society where Saddam had secured the loyalty of tribal sheikhs and imams with treasure and S.U.V.’s. Here, Frum says, another disadvantage of not having an Iraqi provisional government made itself felt: “There’s no books, there’s no treasury, and he’s distributing. One guy gets a Land Rover, another guy gets five Land Rovers. Somebody else gets a sack of gold. That is information that only an Iraqi is going to have, and this is
something I said at the time: that Iraq is going to be ruled either through terror or through corruption. Saddam knew how to do it through terror. Ahmad Chalabi would have known how to do it through corruption. What we are now trying to do, in the absence of the knowledge of who has to be rewarded, is to do a lot of things through force.” The state had ceased to “deliver” rewards to loyalists, and in that vacuum the insurgency began to flourish.

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The Trouble with Bush and Rice

As V.F. first revealed, in the May 2004 issue, Bush was talking about invading Iraq less than two weeks after 9/11, broaching the subject at a private White House dinner with British prime minister Tony Blair on September 20, 2001. With so much time to prepare, how could the aftermath have begun so badly? “People were aware in February or March of 2003 that the planning was not finished,” Frum says. “There was not a coherent plan, and in the knowledge that there was not a coherent plan, there was not the decision made to wait.” The emphasis here needs to be on the word “coherent.”

In fact, as Frum points out, there were several plans: the neocons’ ideas outlined above, a British proposal to install their client Iyad Allawi, and suggestions from the State Department for a government led by the octogenarian Adnan Pachachi. To hear Frum tell it, the State Department was determined to block the neocons’ anointed candidate, Ahmad Chalabi, and therefore resisted both Iraqi training and a provisional government, fearing that these measures would boost his prospects.

It would have been one thing, the neocons say, if their plan had been passed over in favor of another. But what really crippled the war effort was the administration’s failure, even as its soldiers went to war, to make a decision. Less than three weeks before the invasion, Bush said in a rousing, pro-democracy speech to the A.E.I., “The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq’s new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people.” But with the administration unable to decide among Allawi, Pachachi, and Chalabi, the Iraqis ultimately were given no say. Instead, L. Paul Bremer III soon assumed almost unlimited powers as America’s proconsul, assisted by a so-called Governing Council, which he was free to ignore and which, to judge by Bremer’s memoir, he regarded as a contemptible irritant.

The place where such interagency disputes are meant to be resolved is the National Security Council, chaired during Bush’s first term by Condoleezza Rice, who was national-security adviser at the time. A.E.I. Freedom Scholar Michael Ledeen—whose son, Gabriel, a lieutenant in the Marines, recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq—served as a consultant to the N.S.C. under Ronald Reagan and says the council saw its role as “defining the disagreement” for the president, who would then make up his mind. “After that, we’d move on to the next fight.” But Rice says Ledeen, saw her job as “conflict resolution, so that when [then secretary of state Colin] Powell and Rumsfeld disagreed, which did happen from time to time, she would say to [the deputy national-security adviser Stephen] Hadley or whomever, ‘O.K., try to find some middle ground where they can both agree.’ So then it would descend at least one level in the bureaucracy, and people would be asked to draft new memos.” By the process, Ledeen complains, “thousands of hours were wasted searching for middle ground, which most of the time will not exist.” Sometimes—as with the many vital questions about post-war Iraq—“it may well have been too late” by the time decision emerged.

“The National Security Council was not serving [Bush] properly,” says Richard Perle, who believes that the president failed to tackle this shortcoming because of his personal friendship with Rice. “He regarded her as part of the family.” (Rice has spent weekends and holidays with the Bushes.) The best way to understand this aspect of the Bush administration, says Ledeen, is to ask: Who are the most powerful people in the White House? They are women who are in love with the president: Laura [Bush], Con-

niestroke: “The Big Shock to Me Has Been That, Although The President Said the Words, He Just Did Not Absorb the Ideas.”

DAVID FRUM

that I served,” says Perle, who was an assistant secretary of defense under Reagan, there was a “one-sentence description of the decision-making process when consensus could not be reached among disputation departments: ‘The president makes the decision.’” Yet Bush “did not make decisions, in part because the machinery of government that he nominally ran was actually running him.” That, I suggest, is a terrible indictment. Perle does not demur: “It is.” Accepting that, he adds, is “painful,” because on the occasions he got an insight into Bush’s thinking Perle felt “I understood the basic issues and was pursuing policies that had a reasonable prospect of success.” Somehow, those instincts did not translate into actions.

On the question of Bush, the judgments of some of Perle’s ideological allies are harsher. Frank Gaffney also served under Reagan as an assistant secretary of defense; he is now president of the hawkish Center for Security Policy, which has close ties with the upper echelons of the Pentagon. Gaffney describes the administration as “riven,” arguing that “the drift, the incoherence, the mixed signals, the failure to plan this thing [Iraq] rigorously were the end product of that internal dynamic.” His greatest disappointment has been the lack of resolution displayed by Bush himself: “This president is tolerated, and the people around him have tolerated, active, ong- ing, palpable insubordination and skullduggery that translates in subversion of his policies. . . . He doesn’t .CONTINUED ON PAGE
Former Bush speechwriter David Frum fears that defeat in Iraq will push the U.S. toward isolationism.
LES GIRLS

The Dreams: Amika Noel Rose, Beyoncé Knowles, and Jennifer Hudson, who went from American Idol reject to co-star of a $75 million Hollywood musical. Photographed at Quixote Studios, in West Hollywood.
GIRLS GOTTA DREAM!

In the audience on opening night, neophyte movie director Bill Condon was blown away by the staging and the message of *Dreamgirls*, Michael Bennett’s 1981 musical, based on the story of the Supremes. A quarter-century later, Condon has made his film version of the Broadway hit, starring Eddie Murphy, Jamie Foxx, and Beyoncé Knowles. PETER BISKIND follows the action, from Condon’s pivotal meeting with mogul David Geffen to Knowles’s nerve-racking audition, to the last-minute casting of a newcomer in the linchpin role.
MUSIC MUS
Eddie Murphy, who plays a veteran R&B singer, and Jamie Foxx, who takes the Berry Gordy role. Says Foxx, "When they said Eddie Murphy was in it, I said, 'I don't care if you pay me 50 cents, I'm down!'"
"If you had your druthers, what musical would you do?"
Without missing a beat, Condon said, "Dreamgirls!"

Watching Dreamgirls-the-movie, slated for release December 25, is like stepping onto a bullet train and seeing the world outside the windows pass by in a breathless blur, one that doesn't end until the film's last frame. Starring Beyoncé Knowles, Jamie Foxx, Eddie Murphy, Danny Glover, Tony Award winner Anika Noni Rose, and newcomer Jennifer Hudson in a performance begging for an Oscar, Dreamgirls is a musical for people who love and hate musicals. It struts all those spectacular songs from the original Broadway show, virtually a pop opera, but, in a miracle of cinematic cold fusion, it melds musical elements with straight drama to become something else altogether.

The film opens with a dazzling light show, flashes of color and form dancing across the screen in a fantasia of movement until they slowly resolve themselves into recognizable shapes. This represents director-screenwriter Bill Condon's homage to the abstract staging of the original Dreamgirls, which opened exactly 25 years ago, in December 1981. That Dreamgirls was directed and choreographed by Michael Bennett, already a near-mythic figure in theater circles for his staging of shows such as Company, Follies, and A Chorus...
SUPREME PERFORMANCE

Beyoncé impressed director Bill Condon with her audition for which she was equipped with a wig, low-cut bustier, beaded go-go boots, and some shimmery girl-group moves.
"What no one wanted was Beyoncé Ross. He had to become something very, very different."
“Vocally, I had to completely hold back,”

Line. Dreamgirls, the story of a girl group, the Dreams, loosely based on the Supremes, was an instant hit and ran for nearly four years. It was admired for its book, by Tom Eyen, its score, by Henry Krieger, and in particular for a showstopping number at the close of the first act called “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going,” sung by Jennifer Holliday, which never failed to bring audiences to their feet.

In the audience on opening night was Bill Condon, a 26-year-old struggling filmmaker just back from New Zealand, where a B movie thriller he had written, Strange Behavior, had just wrapped. Condon was a devotee of musicals. Bob Fosse in those days was the form’s reigning monarch, breathing the dark spirit of the movies of the 70s into song and dance with biting shows such as Chicago, but Michael Bennett was the new generation. He was, as Condon puts it, “like George Lucas coming along. It was the return to an embrace of showbiz, in a more loving and innocent and naïve way, but with incredibly brilliant savvy and a modern sensibility. That moment in Star Wars when they go into hyperspace? That’s what seeing Bennett shows was like. Dreamgirls was one of the major stagings of that era. It was completely abstract. It was just a bunch of lighting towers that moved around to create different settings. Like a movie. It was always described as ‘cinematic’ staging. Your eye was constantly being drawn to something else, as fluid a theater experience as anything I’d seen.”

Condon wasn’t in the audience just for Bennett; he was equally mesmerized by the Supremes. “When I was eight years old, in 1963, I convinced my father to take me and my two sisters to the Brooklyn Paramount to see them,” he continues. “They were the first people I discovered in music.”

ut to 1998. Condon, now 43, his short brown hair just beginning to be flecked with gray, was still struggling in the low-budget vineyards of Hollywood, but now Gods and Monsters, his indie biopic on the last days of Frankenstein director James Whale, had made an unexpected splash and won him an Oscar for best adapted screenplay. That, and his encyclopedic knowledge of musicals, encouraged Miramax to assign him the famously difficult task—many had tried and failed—of adapting Chicago for the screen.

When that film opened, just before Christmas 2002, and went on to win the best-picture Oscar, everyone associated with it, particularly Condon and Rob Marshall, who directed, was golden. Harvey Weinstein, co-chairman of Miramax, knew a good thing when he saw it, and went after Condon to adapt another musical. Condon recalls, “You know Harvey. It was ‘Let’s make 20 more of these things.’ There was Guys and Dolls, there was Promises, Promises, even Pippin, all these things he kept suggesting. It was like a door opening.”

That holiday season, Condon found himself at a Christmas party where he ran into producer Larry Mark, whose credits included As Good as It Gets and Jerry Maguire. Always on the lookout for new projects, Mark grabbed Condon and sat him down in a corner, where they ate their dinners together. Mark asked him, “If you had your druthers, what musical would you do? Is there one that’s in that old Broadway trunk that you think should be filmed?” Without missing a beat, Condon said, “Dreamgirls!” He adds now, “I didn’t even have to think about it. Because it was, to me, the great unmade musical.

Dreamgirls had some personal resonance for Condon beyond having seen it opening night. Like Gods and Monsters and Kinsey, film he would make just before Dreamgirls, it focused on a marginalized culture and the drama—and costs—of crossing over. “This show was about the African-American experience, written and created by a group of gay men,” he explains. “There’s something about being outsider, and what you do to be accepted, the way you negotiate with your own authentic self—who you are, and how you have to be careful about not betraying that just to be accepted—that I responded to.”

Surprisingly, perhaps, Mark thought that Condon should only write it but direct it as well. A studio-size musical—and a pod one at that—would represent a giant step up for Condon; all he had done up to that point was a string of B movies, some television, a couple—Gods and Monsters on a tiny, $3 million budget. (Dreamgirls would eventually come in at $75 million, relatively cheap for a studio film with an A-list cast.) “It’s true,” admits Mark, “if you were to bring your decision solely on your résumé, you might think, Oh, dear, my god, be not! But if you knew him, you knew that he is unflappable and knows his stuff. Every once in a while, a producer does have to go on faith. His screenplay for Chicago was written like a director felt like he was someone who had seen the movie in his mind. So never for a moment thought that he couldn’t lick it.”

Condon was game, even eager. “I sort of felt like I had done the writing thing, and the reason for pursuing this was to direct it, yeah,” he says. He felt he was ready, but he knew that David Geffen, one of the original producers of Dreamgirls, controlled rights. (Bennett had died of AIDS in 1987.) Geffen had sanctioned a few attempts to adapt it for the screen, but they had never panned out, and he had more or less decided that filming the show successfully was impossible. “It’s going to be very difficult to get him part with the rights,” Condon told Mark, who replied that he was a friend of Geffen’s and asked, “Would you mind if I called David and let’s see what he has to say about it?”

The next day, Mark picked up the phone and made the call. Turned out that Geffen was an admirer of Gods and Monsters, and had been impressed by Chicago. But, recalls Mark, “he spent about 15 or 20 minutes telling me why it was just never going to happen. It was just not going to happen because he felt very protective of Michael Bennett’s legacy, as well as the legend of Dreamgirls.”

Make matters worse, Geffen was still smarting from the failure A Chorus Line, Richard Attenborough’s clumsy attempt to bring that show to the screen, which Bennett hadn’t liked when he saw it in 1985. Continues Mark, “David also knew that when a term Broadway show is turned into a movie that doesn’t work, somehow the movie can tarnish the legend of the show, as was the case with A Chorus Line.” Undeterred, Mark plowed ahead: “Look, Bill, it’s a six- or seven-minute kind of spiel about how he would do Dreamgirls, so if you’re ever in the mood to hear it, because I think you’d be impressed by it, just let me know.”

“How about lunch tomorrow?”

“Done!”

Condon and Mark met an hour before at the Beverly Hills Hotel to rehearse the pitch. Condon was enthusiastic, a veritable cluster bomb of ideas. Mark recalls, “It was like, I’m going to take this! I’m dying to explain how I think this show
ays Beyoncé. “I had to whisper things.”

open.” Mark told him to keep it short, under 10 minutes, and warned against starting with the first scene and plodding bad from there. Then it was up the road to the old Jack War-mansion, nearby in Beverly Hills, which Geffen had bought in 1990 and refurbished at great expense. Condon had never met him, and driving up to the house, the director was nervous. He saw how many people had preceded him and failed; he could just see them swirling from the low-hanging branches of the 80s that lined Geffen’s driveway. He calmed himself with the thought that, most likely, nothing would come of the meeting. Geffen and Mark chatted, while Condon kept his mouth open and listened, trying to avoid saying anything stupid. Geffen entertained them with stories about Bennett and the Broadway production. He then explained that he had always been protective of the show because he felt he had to live up to what Bennett had created, especially since Bennett wasn’t around to defend himself.

Finally, as Mark put it, somewhere before dessert, “Bill got to his ‘Well, here’s how I see this.’” He started with: Why both? Why do it? “There are very few musicals that really should be de into movies,” explains Condon. “A crucial thing with making jump from stage to screen is whether the play can translate, or enhanced. In this case, I felt that here was an abstract story that could benefit from becoming more rooted in reality. It didn’t need that abstraction. It wouldn’t be diminished by the implacable reality of movies. Obviously, the social upheavals of the 60s, and the art that happened to the music, too, seemed endlessly fascinating.

Because the Broadway Dreamgirls came so closely on the heels he events it was portraying—the show probably takes place from to ’75, and it opened in ’81—it seemed to me that now there was a chance to take a step back and put it in an historical context.”

Movie directors, whenever they adapt a piece of theater for the screen, whether it’s a musical or a drama, automatically “open” p. Condon, who has given a lot of thought to the relationship between movie musicals and stage musicals, learned from his experience on Chicago to go the other way. And once he forgot to be intimidated by Geffen, the words flowed. “When you have something like Dreamgirls, which is a backstage musical, it often becomes more cinematic if you stay close to its theatrical roots. When started to get inside Dreamgirls, I realized that every number took a leap on either a stage or next to a stage—they were all in quasi-performance spaces. There’s no reason not to do that in a movie, as long as you can. Where movies often go wrong is that the director is, ‘Because we can show a character at home, we should do it.’

If you stay within the constraints of theater and figure out how to shoot that stuff in a way that’s completely exciting—because the relationships between the lights and the sets and the actors and the audience are more powerful in movies—it will work.”

Midway into Condon’s pitch, Geffen’s phone—one of those old reds with the illuminated buttons—rang. It was Alan Horn, president Warners Bros., the studio with which Geffen had been working on one of the failed Dreamgirls scripts. Geffen told him, “Well, I’m not with Bill. And he’s got a good idea.” Says Condon, “So I knew David was interested by what he said to Alan. But he never did it to me. Then he told Alan, ‘I’m sure Bill will do it for nothing because we’ve already got so much money against it.’ It felt too convenient almost. It was a bit like he’d actually begun the negotiation.” Geffen hung up, and Condon continued where he’d left off. As in a case in point, he brought up “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going” because it was the signature song of the show. “That is the great big mountain you have to climb,” he says. “You have got to figure out how cinematically to make that the equal of what it was on the stage. On the stage it takes place in the dressing room. It’s an abstract setting, just done with mirrors and see-through stuff. But, on film, my point was it should take place on a stage—which is really where it happened, because we were all in the audience experiencing it. It was all about watching Jennifer Holliday work that stage and rule it. Those ideas seemed to excite David.” Indeed, Geffen said, “Take a shot.”

“I have a movie to do first,” Condon replied, because his next picture, Kinsey, was finally coming together.

“This thing isn’t going anywhere,” Geffen replied. “It’s been sitting there for 20 years. It can wait another year.”

Condon had entered the house walking on eggshells; when he left, he was walking on air. But he was also well aware that Geffen was entrusting him with the family jewels. He thought to himself, Don’t fuck it up, and not only that, make it work, make it worthy of the trust. Then he put it aside for a year and a half to do Kinsey, a stunning achievement that showed Gods and Monsters was not accidental. Kinsey should have won the best-picture Oscar for 2004, but, inexplicably, wasn’t even nominated.

Kinsey showed Condon’s many strengths as a writer-director, including one that would stand him in good stead on Dreamgirls—even though that was a very different kind of movie—namely, his ability to keep several balls in the air at once and ultimately arrange them into a richly satisfying dramatic whole. Kinsey was that rare thing in American movies, independent or studio, a cerebral picture that worked on a visceral level as well.

Dreamgirls was even more of a challenge. It not only had to tell a complex story with a multitude of characters, but had to do so against a broad canvas—a social and artistic upheaval that still lived in contemporary memory—and do justice to the themes that made the story breathe: the successful attempt to engineer a black sound that could cross over to white audiences, as well as the consequences of that success. All wrapped up as a musical, a genre that, until Chicago, had for decades repeatedly failed on film. Moreover, the original Dreamgirls was history; it ruled Broadway when Ronald Reagan was president. A lot had changed since then.

As if to acknowledge our passage into more parlous times, Condon’s Dreamgirls, despite its buoyancy, is considerably darker than its predecessor. His version is, in a sense, a hybrid of Fosse and Bennett. Dreamgirls is an ensemble piece, but one prominent strand is devoted to the character Effie White, who in the first half of the show is involved with the group’s manager, Curtis Taylor. Effie was based on Florence Ballard, who started the Supremes and was the lead singer until she was shunted into the background and replaced by the more photogenic Diana Ross. Condon further amplified Effie’s story and added material inspired by Ballard’s post-Supremes downward spiral. He also enhanced the character of James CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

FOR EXCLUSIVE VIDEO FROM THE DREAMGIRLS PHOTO SHOOT. GO TO VF.COM.
BOY TROUBLE

House Speaker Dennis Hastert, former representative Mark Foley, President Bush, House majority leader John Boehner, and Representative John Shimkus.
When Mark Foley's sexually explicit instant messages to former congressional pages were leaked in September, plenty of people helped him toward self-immolation, not least the G.O.P. leadership. The half-open closet in which the Florida Republican spent his life was a recipe for disaster, say those few who tried to intervene. Investigating Foley's pre-teen seduction by a priest, the "ladies' man" mask he wore in Palm Beach society, and his love-hate relationship with the gay community, GAIL SHEEHY and JUDY BACHRACH uncover the ambition, delusion, and hypocrisy that corroded both the politician and his party.
Everyone knew Mark Foley was gay. Everyone. And everyone who had a stake in his success—party, press, parents, staff, supporters, and pages—conspired for their own purposes to keep the closet half closed.

Born at the peak of the baby boom, in 1954, he grew up near Palm Beach, in the scruffy little town of Lake Worth, Florida, which in recent years has become a popular refuge for gay retirees. That subculture most likely did not enter into the consciousness of his parents, Irish Catholics from Massachusetts. “One of the biggest psychological problems for him was he was never able to be who he was with his parents, and they were his No. 1 campaigners,” says Eric Johnson, the openly gay chief of staff for Florida congressman Robert Wexler and an old friend of the Foley family’s.

In the early 70s, Foley developed the veneer of a charming, heterosexual party boy, and a high-school yearbook caption depicted him as “noted for—being a ladies man.” But the formative experience of his passage through puberty, as the world now knows, was his seduction by an authority figure whose attentions may have been a guilty pleasure. A priest at the Sacred Heart Catholic School took him biking and skinny-dipping and massaged him in the nude, often bringing him to saunas for fondling. Unlike a peer of his who ran away from another priest’s overtures, young Foley apparently did not resist. The Reverend Anthony Merceica, who was 17 years older than Foley, claims they became “attached to each other ... almost like brothers.” Foley’s mother welcomed the priest into their home for Christmas dinners and his parents allowed him to take their adolescent son to the beach and on sleepover trips to New York and Washington.

The priest rejects Foley’s latter-day charge of abuse and defends their relationship as one of “naturalness... For some people, it’s fun, you know?” This arrested sexual development, with its titillating mix of secrecy and shame, Foley would reproduce in his adult years. And just as his parents had been totally unaware of the sexual advances to which their son was surrendering, right under their noses, so, years later, were Foley’s “girlfriends” and his longtime gay partner unaware of his adult addiction to fraternizing with and fantasizing about sex with teenage boys. Foley was able to juggle a triple life—as a political chameleon, a semi-closeted gay power broker, and a secret sexual predator.

Trapped in the Closet

Mark Foley’s ambition to be a politician became the family dream. He was always in a hurry. His doting parents had no problem with his dropping out of Palm Beach Junior College at age 20; they helped him open a diner in downtown Lake Worth and turn it into the platform for his grandiose goals. “Mark never actually did any work at the Lettuce Patch, no cooking or busing. He was the face, while Mom worked like a slave in the sweaty kitchen, making pies: Eddie, his older brother, worked the cash register; and his dad managed the business,” according to Rodney Romano, who twice presided over Lake Worth as mayor and knows the Foley family well. In his early 20s, even before he won his first local election, Foley was telling people he planned to be a U.S. senator by age 50. He joined a circle of idealistic progressive Democrats, all under 30, who became known as the Kiddie Car Gang. “I also see myself married with a family,” Foley proclaimed publicly back then, in 1976. But his personal life took a very different course.

Mary McCarthy, a Palm Beach County commissioner, remembers first hearing about Foley’s sexuality back in the 80s, when “the rumor mill already had it that he was gay.” At the time Foley was close to a very well-known man, Roy Talmo, the chairman of First American Bank and Trust in Lake Worth. Talmo, like Father Merceica, was a powerful man, more than 20 years older, who lavished attention on Foley. “Mark was known as one of ‘Roy’s boys’ in his 20s,” says a friend of Talmo’s. “Roy was the go-to guy in this county for whatever you needed, either financial or political,” says André Fladell, a well-connected chiropractor in Delray Beach. Talmo put young Foley on the board of his bank, which became the largest stockholder in Cenvill Development Corporation, builder of Century Village, a chain of the biggest retirement communities in southeast Florida. Talmo’s bank went under during the savings-and-loan debacle of the late 80s, and Cenvill went bankrupt. But not before Talmo reportedly put Mark in a number of high-stakes real-estate deals and taught him the art of the quick flip. Foley’s more spectacular land shuffle was in 1986, when Talmo lent him $2.45 million to buy an abandoned golf course to turn around and sell to the school district for $2.8 million. In a matter of hours, Foley walked away with nearly a half-million dollars.

Before he turned 30, Foley was already driving a Mercedes and offering to be the gofer and fund-raiser for Democrat Denver Koehler, who was running for Congress. Sean Strub, Koehler’s campaign manager, welcomed Foley as a fund-raiser because he had lucrative social connections. “Mark’s campaign manager invited me to fancy society parties,” Strub recalls. “I’m very much driven by my passion for issues and wanting to change things. Mark had a very different set of values. He wore gold chains and liked to go to parties. He was about his ambition and his Mercedes.”

In 1984, when Foley ran for county commission, despite proclaiming he was committed Democrat and outspend his primary opponent, the party slapped him down and told him, “It’s not your time,” according to Rand Hoch, a Democratic Party activist. Months later, Foley switched opportunistically to the Republican Party, accepting the price to his private life. At a gay party in Palm Beach Gardens...
In the late 80s, Foley recognized Hoch. He said the room, according to Hoch, and said, “I wish I could be out like you are [still] involved in politics. But I can’t use I’m a Republican.” Hoch told him of course he could come out, but Hoch himself didn’t believe it. “Palerm Beach is what accepting of alternative lifestyles, you don’t talk about the gay elephant in the room,” he says.

Foley collected an A-list of rich Palm Beach supporters, some of them Democrats, who spent lavishly to throw him fund-raising events. He always wanted to be in the picture. In his picture was seldom missing from the Shiny Sheet (as the Palm Beach Daily News calls itself), in which he cozied up to signing celebrities, from Sly Stallone and Eastwood to the Clintons and President George H. W. Bush. He started quietly building a wealthy and attractive dermatologist, Dr. Layne Nisenbaum, who owns a popular anti-aging institute in Palm Beach, he was always careful in the early years to appear at events with beautiful women.

Robin Bernstein, a vivacious socialite, who worked on Foley’s fund-raisers in the 90s, accompanied him to many political functions. “He was the perfect date—debonair, articulate, and there wasn’t a charity he didn’t help,” she says. Another favorite was a gorgeous former Miss Georgia, Petra Levin. “Mark thought it was useful to take me out as a mask,” but he didn’t make me feel like that,” says Levin, a nearly bald slender blonde, in her mid-40s, who rises like a model and drives a sapphire-Aston Martin convertible. “The moment I met Mark, there was an instant chemistry,” she says emphatically. They were introduced by Dr. Nisenbaum, who was a new neighbor. Immediately she and they were talking and laughing, and he beginning to ask if she would like to “go out” to some of his political events. “I’d say, ‘Is it one of the boring ones?’ He’d say, ‘No, this one might be exciting.’” She had a strong interest in politics, but as a divorced woman to a town, she welcomed invitations to the Red Cross Ball and glamorous nights at Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago. When Foley was elected to Congress, she would stay over at his Washington town. “He didn’t want to be seen with her fashionable restaurants or at parties with celebrities. “He talked from the beginning about wanting to be a senator,” says Levin. She was really politically ambitious.”

On the rare occasions when Foley took Nisenbaum to a dinner event, they sat discreetly at separate tables. Appearing as handsome single men, they were always welcome additions. When they were photographed, there was usually a buxom babe between them. This fiction was duly noted and appreciated by local Republican Pooh-Bahs, including the current chairman of the Palm Beach County Republican Party, Sid Dinerstein, who says, “If Mark Foley had his boyfriend and lived a committed monogamous life, she could have been elected until he couldn’t walk anymore.”

The Secret Lives of Congressmen

In 1994, Foley was swept into Congress with Newt Gingrich’s right-wing revolution, and he worked hard at making a mentor of Gingrich. It would be 10 years before Florida senator Bob Graham’s seat would open up, but Foley hired a chief of staff to help...
Running with Scissors, Augusten Burroughs’s memoir of a shattered childhood, has spent more than two years on the New York Times best-seller list, spawned a Hollywood movie, and earned him literary stardom. It has also drawn a lawsuit from the Turcotte family, with whom he lived, and who are challenging the truth of his brutal, shocking portrait of them. In exclusive interviews, the Turcotte children—called the “Finches” in the book—tell BUZZ BISSINGER why they feel exposed, humiliated, and betrayed, even as Burroughs sticks to his version
IN THE DOGHOUSE

Augusten Burroughs, photographed with his French bulldogs, Bentley and the Cow, in his home office in Amherst, Massachusetts.

JANUARY 2007

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONAS KARLSSON

www.vanityfair.com  VANITY FAIR  105
n the summer of 2002, when Theresa Turcotte found out that Augusten Burroughs had written a book that was already a best-seller, she was happy for him. They had grown up together as teenagers in western Massachusetts, in the 1970s and 80s, and Burroughs had spent a great deal of time at her family’s house. It was no secret, to either Theresa or her family, that parts of his childhood had been wrenchingly difficult, that he had been caught in the middle of his parents’ volatile marriage and subsequent divorce. She also says she knew of Burroughs’s obsession with fame back in those days, so she assumed that the success of the book, a memoir called _Running with Scissors_, must have made him especially pleased. Critics all over the country were hailing Burroughs as a genius. Carolyn See, writing in _The Washington Post_, suggested that his book might well be the best modern memoir ever, and it hit the _New York Times_ best-seller list shortly after it was published.

Her curiosity piqued, she went in search of the book on the Internet. It was then that she got her first inkling that it contained enormous amounts of information about her family. She would ultimately discover that her parents, herself, and her four sisters and one brother, renamed the Finches, were actually a major focus of the book. And, she says, Burroughs had never told her he was writing it, despite his phone calls to her in the late 1990s.

She went to a bookstore in Springfield, Massachusetts, where she lives, to buy a copy of _Running with Scissors_. As she thumbed through it, she could feel her anxiety heighten. But because she still had obligations that day at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, where she works as a public-health practitioner, it wasn’t until that night at home that she began to read it.

The character based on Theresa is named Natalie, and in her first appearance she is described as a “ratty” 13-year-old. In the next reference she has “long, greasy stringy hair and dirty clothes.” In the next five pages she is described “spilling crumbs down the front of her striped halter-top” from a tube of Pringles and wiping “her hands on her bare knees” and using the word “cunt.”

As she continued to read, Theresa says, she found it difficult to fathom the book’s malice toward her and her family. It was filled with things that she believed were categorically false or had been wildly embellished. She also could not believe that Burroughs had revealed details about events in her life that had occurred 20 years earlier and had been horribly painful for her—so painful that she had spent years in therapy trying to overcome them and had never told her own daughter about them.

She continued to read that night, occasionally stopping because she simply could not bear to read anymore, she says, only to pick the book up again several minutes later. Sometimes she had to stop to run to the bathroom and vomit. “I have never vomited so much in my life,” she says.

And it was only the beginning of what she says she would be forced to grapple with as a result of how Chris Robinson, as she had known him before he changed his name to Augusten Xon Burroughs, had portrayed her in _Running with Scissors_. Of the beginning of the shame and humiliation and unwanted exposure and helpless rage and sense of betrayal that, in roughly 35 hours of interviews with _Vanity Fair_ members of the real family that Burrough wrote about say they experienced. The story they tell is just as disturbing and shocking as Burrough’s story, perhaps even more so.

In the genre of the growing-up dysfunction memoir, _Burrough_ book rises to a new level. The narrator, who has grandiose visions of being the next Anne Sexton, gives him away so she can pursue her own life. He lands in the Addams Family—household of a bizarre and manipulative Northampton psychiatrist whose wife, children and grandchildren are depicted on page after page as being crude, disgusting, profane, and utterly lacking in rational judgment. Burroughs is quite candid about himself in the book, particularly about affair as a teenager with a former male patient of the psychiatrist’s who was 20 years senior. To a certain degree, he leaves the utter blackness with quick and clever humor, reflecting the years he spent a successful advertising copywriter prior to becoming a literary writer. He also shows some tender moments of affection. But any standard, the portrait of his mother and the Turcotte family is brutal.

During their interviews, members of the Turcotte family cited numerous instants of what they believe to be fabrications and embellishments, including almost all of the sensational scenes that have made _Running with Scissors_ so popular.

It is the fact that these stories are
The betrayal
the Turcottes say they felt was monumental, since they had opened up their
hearts to Burroughs in the 1970s.

Running with Scissors launched Burroughs into the literary stratosphere. Since it was published, he has become one of the country's most commercially successful memoirists, with three other best-selling titles to his credit: Dry, Magical Thinking, and Possible Side Effects. His books have been published in more than 25 countries, and his aggregate sales certainly reach into the millions. A major Hollywood film version of Running with Scissors, starring Gwyneth Paltrow, Annette Bening, and Alec Baldwin, was released in October, and the book has re-

mained on the New York Times paperback best-seller list for more than two years. Readers all over the world have been both moved and inspired by him.

During an interview with Vanity Fair last March, Burroughs stood by the veracity of the book, just as he stood by the right of every individual in a free society to tell his story. "This is my story," he said. "It's not my mother's story and it's not the family's story, and they may remember things differently and they may choose to not remember certain things, but I will never forget what happened to me, ever, and I have the scars from it and I wanted to rip those scars off of me."

Theresa Turcotte doesn't dispute Burroughs's right to recount his experiences. "Everybody has a right to write a book about their lives," she says. "It's O.K. He could have written a book about living with our family that I might not have liked, but I wouldn't have hated it. It didn't have to have all that stuff in it...all the sexual stuff, the made-up stuff."

The Turcotte home was hardly perfect, given that the family included six children. Money was frequently an issue, and the house wasn't as fixed-up as it perhaps should...
Burroughs “missed the best part of living with us,” says Theresa Turcotte, “which was that we were [a] family.”
have been, but, family members maintain, it didn’t sink to the level of dilapidation that Burroughs describes. Her father did go through difficult periods and did make mistakes, Theresa says. She and other family members remember him as compassionate, and some acknowledge that he was controversial and eccentric. But Burroughs, she says, “missed the best part of living with us, which was that we were [a] family. We had our ups and downs, but we cared about each other.”

Alleged fabrications and embellishments are a key source of the family’s pain. But the issues at stake go far beyond those that became fodder for national debate regarding James Frey’s A Million Little Pieces and his famous admission on The Oprah Winfrey Show; in January 2006, that he had in fact changed certain details in his book. The Turcottes’ story raises new questions about memoirs in general and the type that Burroughs wrote in particular—what one New York editor calls the “genre of appropriation,” in which it’s not just the writer’s life that’s up for grabs but everyone else’s as well. The more shocking it is, the more sensational it is, the greater the prospect of fame and fortune. This kind of memoir occupies an uncertain perch between candor and cruelty, sincerity and sensation, and raises the issue of whether the memoirist is obligated to let his subjects know that he is writing about them.

Turcotte family members say that Burroughs never informed them of this, as is the habit of some of the country’s leading memoirists. They say none of them knew about the book until it was already a bestseller and reviews were already calling Burroughs a genius and a hero while condemning them for the foolishness they, along with their parents and Burroughs’s mother, had allowed him to rot in until he somehow escaped. “It was like someone robbing you,” says Barbara, the eldest, echoing the feelings of her siblings.

The Turcottes say the betrayal they felt was monumental, given that in their estimation they had opened up their hearts to Burroughs in the 1970s and 1980s when he was lonely and afraid and suicidal, had loved him, had seen the seed of something brilliant in him, had laughed at the stories that came from his vivid imagination and his propensity to exaggerate, had given him money, and had provided him with the sense of connection that Burroughs himself, in a letter to a family member, had said he hungered for, only to read about themselves years later—in a book they say they knew nothing about—portrayed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 148

Spotlight

ROYAL TREATMENT

If Helen Mirren and Forest Whitaker are nominated for Oscars this season for their respective roles in The Queen and The Last King of Scotland, they will be thanking the same screenwriter: the dazzlingly talented Peter Morgan. “It could be my big-fat-cigar moment,” says the 43-year-old Englishman. “I’ve never smoked one, so I’m slightly dreading it, but I will feel obliged to smoke something the size of a safe!” Both films depict heads of state: The Last King of Scotland, which Morgan co-wrote, begins just after Idi Amin has seized power in Uganda, and focuses on his relationship with a naive young Scottish doctor; The Queen reveals the back-and-forth between Queen Elizabeth II and Tony Blair in the days following the death of Princess Diana. When Morgan stalled while writing The Queen, he called director Stephen Frears and said, “I can’t do what you’ve asked me to do.” Then, he says, “I started to write Blair into it and it flew out. There was a natural dialectic: a lost old woman, a fearless young man untainted by failure, and a constitutional analysis of how Great Britain is put together. A quirky mongrel!”

Meanwhile, Frears had gone off to direct another movie, and Morgan started to think about what to write next. “I thought, What’s the biggest folly I could embark on?” Morgan says, laughing, and wrote his first stage play, Frost/Nixon, "entirely as an exercise for myself. I was quite prepared for it to end up in a drawer." Frost/Nixon, Morgan’s take on the 1977 televised interviews Richard Nixon granted David Frost, starring Frank Langella as Nixon and Michael Sheen as Frost, has just opened at London’s Gielgud Theatre to excellent reviews. It moves to Broadway in April, and the film rights have been snapped up by Ron Howard for Universal Pictures. Now Morgan is busy writing “a love story, my first non-factual piece for a few years.” The self-deprecating Morgan does not appear to have considered that it is he who may be up for one Oscar, if not two, this season. Then he will really have earned his fat-cigar moment.

—TAMASIN DAY-LEWIS
TRIPLE THREAT

Peter Morgan, who wrote The Queen and Frost/Nixon and co-wrote The Last King of Scotland, photographed on St. James's Street in London.
She's the kind of actress who gets thrown a surprise birthday party by Robert De Niro, loves killing time with the grips and can't wait for the next Harry Potter book. As Dakota Fanning brings to life Fern Arable, heroine of the children's classic *Charlotte's Web*, KARL LAGERFELD puts the 12-year-old star in fairy-tale perspective, while JIM WINDOLF hears about her modern-day Cinderella Jr. story.
Dakota in a Chanel riding hood meets a wolf on the shortcut to Grandmother's via Karl Lagerfeld's backyard in Paris. "He had an area where a bunch of leaves were piled up, and it looked kind of woody. I had this basket with a checkered tablecloth, and inside it were four bell peppers to give it some weight, so it didn't fly around. So I had my bell peppers and a big coat and this wolf was coming at me—a stuffed wolf from, like, 400 years ago. Like the only stuffed wolf in Paris. They got it from an antique dealer. I don't think anybody would stuff a beautiful wolf now. So these guys were throwing the wolf at me and I was jumping back. I loved that coat."
Dakota Fanning picked the place. A little Mexican restaurant called Casa Vega, on Ventura Boulevard, in the San Fernando Valley. The waiters wore black bow ties. The light was dim. A few people were drinking at the bar, although it was four o'clock in the afternoon. They looked like characters out of a B movie.

“It’s the greatest restaurant ever. I usually get a chicken enchilada and a beef taco, or two beef tacos, but I get beef and cheese. I’m very simple. I don’t get the sour cream like most people. My dad had a burrito last time. A lot of people, like my uncle, get an appetizer that’s pretty big. I guess—Mexican pizza.”

Dakota is 12 years old but doesn’t look a day over 11. On-screen, in movies such as Dreamer: Inspired by a True Story and War of the Worlds, she’s striking, her big eyes suggesting Bette Davis, but in person she has a normal appearance, with nothing sophisticated or racy about her look or manner. At Casa Vega she was wearing a modish button-down shirt and a funky necklace. She ordered the tacos and a regular Coke. Her agent, Cindy Osbrink, and her mother, Joy Fanning, were seated a couple of tables away.

Dakota made her debut at the age of four, in a small playhouse in her hometown of Conyers, Georgia, a leafy city 25 miles from Atlanta. Two years later, she was working with Sean Penn. Now she makes a reported $3 million per film. That’s as close to a Cinderella story as it gets.

“It was just this one-week thing,” she says of her first performance, “and we did the play in front of our parents at the end of the week. It was The Rainbow Fish. I was the little blue fish who wanted one of his scales, and the rainbow fish yelled at me. I used to play around the house and do things like that, so it didn’t feel any different from when I did it by myself at home. It still feels like I’m playacting at home, but in front of a camera. The head of the playhouse talked to my mom and said I should get an agent in Atlanta. I got a Tide commercial and then I did a Georgia Lottery commercial with Ray Charles. I sat on the piano with him while he played ‘Georgia on My Mind.’ I said, ‘Is that Beethoven?’ And he said, ‘That’s pure Charles, little lady. What do you know about Beethoven?’”

She didn’t imitate Ray Charles, exactly, but she did morph into him for a moment there. It was a little scary.

Dakota has braces on four teeth. She’s home-schooled. Or, rather, she spends her school days at her teacher’s house when not taking classes with the same teacher between scenes on movie sets. She knits for fun and has lately been working on a scarf for her eight-year-old sister. Elle Fanning, a fellow actress, who starred in Because of Winn-Dixie. In music Dakota likes the Black Eyed Peas, Queen, and the Beatles, and she watches American Idol and Dancing with the Stars on TV. Like almost everyone else of her generation, she’s well versed in Harry Potter. She says she can wait for the next one.

“My dad stands in line till midnight the day it comes out. My God, I cried when Dumbledore died. It was so sad. Some people think he’s not dead. Some people think he had a deal with Snap. I don’t know, it’s so weird. There are so many weird theories.”

Another of her favorite books, Charlotte’s Web, the 1952 classic by E. B. White, is the basis of her next movie. It’s a combination of live action, computer-generated imagery, and animation, directed by Gary Winick, who made Tadpole and 13 Going on 30. Dakota, playing farm girl Fern Arable, is the lead live performer. Oscar winners and nominees Julia Roberts, Oprah Winfrey, Kathy Bates, Robert Redford, and Thomas Haden Church give voice to the animals. Paramount Pictures teamed with Walden Media (The Chronicles of Narnia) to make it, and will release it, with blockbuster fanfare, just before Christmas.

For Dakota a movie set is a schoolhouse, playground, and summer camp combined. “I had my birthday on Hide and Seek, the 2005 horror thriller she made with Robert De Niro. ‘My 10th birthday. Nobody would tell a happy birthday until it was technically after my birth time, because I was born at, like, 10 in the morning. I think. And everybody was like, ‘Happy—oh, it’s not yet.’ We were at Silvercup Studios in Queens. Bob De Niro gave me a surprise party at lunch.”

Bob?

“Everybody calls him Bob. I’ve never heard anybody call him Robert. They brought in my favorite restaurant. It’s Panda Express. It’s, like, fast-food Chinese, but good. They don’t have or in New York City, so they brought it in special from New Jersey and they had cupcakes that spelled out ‘Happy Birthday, Dakota.’ I walked into lunch, and they had all these pamphlets with pandas on them. Do you know the scene where Bob is in the yellowy bloody raincoat? I turned around and there were all these Panda Express people with their spoons, ready to give me chicken and stuff, and I turn around, and Bob’s in this bloody raincoat, like ‘Happy birthday.’”

For an instant, she’s De Niro.

Spencer Tracy famously said actors get paid not to act but to wait around on movie sets, but Dakota doesn’t mind any part of the process.

“I can always find something to do. I can sit behind the monitor and...
“Bob De Niro gave me a surprise party at lunch. Everybody calls him Bob. I’ve never heard anybody call him Robert.”

CINDERELLA

In a photograph taken at Lagerfeld’s Paris home, opposite, Dakota plays the cinder-stained princess-in-waiting. “I was poor Cinderella by Karl’s fireplace,” she says. “I was sad. I was just sweeping sticks and twigs.” The dress was put together out of Chanel fabric. “When I tried it on,” Karl said, “You need to wear it to a party! Get some boots and leggings and you’re ready to go!” He gave it to me.”
Dakota has had a charmed run so far, from the Tide commercial, through appearances on *ER*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Spin City;* and on to her A-list film work with Reese Witherspoon (*Sweet Home Alabama*), Glenn Close (*Nine Lives*), and Tom Cruise and Steven Spielberg (*War of the Worlds*). She hit her first patch of scandalous press last summer, soon after she had filmed a rape scene for an independent movie, produced by and co-starring Robin Wright Penn, tentatively titled *Hounddog*. Her publicist said the scene was not untoward, and warned me that the actress would not take questions about it. “I don’t really know when that’s coming out,” Dakota says of the film.

It’s impossible to predict which child actor will emerge unscathed from the business. For every Ron Howard or Jodie Foster, there are seemingly 10 Danny Bonaduces. Given Dakota’s enthusiasm, not only for acting but for filmmaking itself, it seems as though she may continue to have success without losing herself along the way. Asked if she would like to direct movies when she grows up—a trick pulled off by Howard and Foster—she replies, unequivocally, “I would.”

Her next acting job will be in *The Secret Life of Bees*, if all goes according to plan. “I think I’m going to do that next summer. It’s something that I definitely want to do and I’m attached to do it. Maybe the beginning of next year, maybe next summer. I want to do one at the beginning of next year and not wait eight or nine months. That would be a little long for me. I’d miss the grips.”

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*SLEEPING BEAUTY*

“Karl was like, ‘Put your finger on the spindle,’ and I was like, ‘O.K., I’ll put my finger on the spindle.’ And he was like, ‘We need some blood,’ because she pricks her finger on the spindle, and I was like, ‘O.K.’ So we had this red cheek gel—blush. So we put the ‘blood’ on my finger, and I was on this chaise, and it was so fun. It was nice and relaxed.”

And if you’re going to sleep 100 years, you might as well do it in Dior.
She's well versed in Harry Potter. “My dad stands in line till midnight the day it comes out,” she says. “I cried when Dumbledore died.”
Peter Halmos's yacht, Legacy, on the muddy shelf of the Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge, a few miles off the coast of Key West, Florida, where it has been stranded since October 2005.
How Peter Halmos's
$16 million yacht ended up marooned
on Key West tidal flats makes for a gripping tale.
Why both Legacy and its rifle-wielding owner
are still there—more than a year, one pirate attack,
and several legal skirmishes later—
is an even better one. Accompanying Halmos from
his new aquatic compound to the shipwreck itself,
BRYAN BURROUGH learns about the
eccentric Palm Beach tycoon,
the vicious hurricane that nearly killed him
and his crew, and his battle to salvage
a 158-foot gem of the ocean.
from the docks on the north side of Key West, a few blocks from the honky-tonks of Duval Street, Man of War Harbor sparkles blue and pale green, its deep channels etched in navy, the flats a shimmering swath of turquoise and aquamarine. Step onto a boat and within minutes you are in another world, out on the silky water, passing catamarans packed with tourists from Ohio and Illinois, as well as a fishing boat or two with sunburned captains hunched over their outboards.

Two miles north you cross an invisible boundary and pass into the Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge, one of three federally protected parks in the immediate area. The refuge, established in 1938 as a haven for herons, ospreys, and bald eagles, stretches east toward Miami, 200,000 acres of pristine open-water tidal flats, much of it knee- or even ankle-deep at low tide. Everywhere you look, game fish are leaping, gulls diving, pelicans gliding effortlessly over sea grass waving in the current. Dozens of wooded islands dot the horizon, and at first glance the largest of them resembles nothing so much as the Rock of Gibraltar, a great shadow in the distance.

As you approach, though, it’s clear this is no island: it’s some kind of ship, a big one. From a mile away you can see the taut white mooring lines that keep it upright. Get close enough and you realize it is a vast sailing yacht, 158 feet long, its masts missing. Beached and sitting high on the flats, its beautiful, midnight-blue hull is hideously scraped and scarred, as if it had done battle with a sea monster. The yacht’s name is Legacy, and when it was launched, in 1995, it was one of the 10 largest sailing yachts in the world, the sister ship to Rupert Murdoch’s fabled Morning Glory, on which Murdoch married his third wife, Wendi Deng, in a 1999 Hudson River ceremony. (Later that year, Morning Glory was sold to Italy’s two-time prime minister Silvio Berlusconi.)

Legacy has been stuck here on the tidal flats north of Key West for well over a year. Most folks around town have no idea how it got here, much less all that’s happened since. The curious don’t get too close, and neither should you. Because right now, up there on the aft deck stands the shadowy multi-millionaire who owns it. His name is Peter Halmos, and he is holding a rifle with a banana clip jutting ominously from its gut. If you come any closer, Halmos swears, he will shoot you.

**Straight off the Boat**

I like the guy, he’s a nice guy, but he’s a little …” Robert Siegfried lets the sentence die. On the flight down to Key West, Siegfried, the elfin Madison Avenue public-relations man who has kept Halmos out of the headlines for a decade, is trying to explain his client. “I mean, some people think he’s nuts. He’s not. But I guess he’s kind of the next-best thing to Howard Hughes.” How so?, I ask. Well, Siegfried says, Halmos is so afraid of listening devices that, before relocating to Legacy, several years ago he moved his entire office into a huge marble bathroom—complete with copy
Halmos picked up the gun and pointed it. “Don’t you come any closer!” he hollered. “I swear, I’ll blow your heads off!”
machines and computers—of his Palm Beach home, because he figured all the echoes and running water would foil any bugs.

Idiosyncratic as he may be, Peter Halmos, in his early 60s, turns out to be a classic immigrant success story. He is the son of a lawyer who smuggled his family out of Hungary in 1951, a journey on which young Peter hid in a hay wagon, dodging pitchforks thrust by Communist soldiers, before wiggling beneath a border fence to freedom. The family settled in Oakland, California, where the elder Halmos started an equipment-leasing company. When Peter was a teenager, his father relocated to South Florida to work for the Ryder truck-rental company. By his own lighthearted estimation, he was a lazy student, drinking his way through seven years of college before earning an M.B.A. at the University of Florida and, eventually, a starter job on Wall Street in 1970.

He quit inside a year, after an early mentor told him his headstrong ways were suited more for entrepreneurship. On a lark, Halmos and his younger brother, Steven, founded a company they called SafeCard, which sold credit-card insurance; for a few dollars a month, anyone who held any kind of credit card could buy insurance from Halmos in case the card was lost or stolen. SafeCard grew like wildfire during the 1970s and 80s, went public, and by 1987 had reached a market capitalization of just under $2 billion. When Barron’s questioned SafeCard’s accounting practices in 1981, Halmos sued for libel. The suit was thrown out, but over the next few years, he became famously litigious.

In 1987, Halmos stepped down from day-to-day supervision of SafeCard—he remained chairman for several more years—to start new companies. Barely a year later, however, Internal Revenue Service agents barged into SafeCard’s Fort Lauderdale headquarters in a tax-fraud investigation. The raid initiated a decade-long fight between Halmos and the I.R.S., the Securities and Exchange Commission, an army of attorneys brandishing class-action lawsuits, and, eventually, SafeCard’s new management. Halmos sued almost everyone. In time his life became a never-ending battleground, his soldiers a succession of law firms and detective agencies he hired and fired at will.

Ultimately, Halmos emerged victorious, actually paying a public apology out of the I.R.S., but the long years of warfare left him with a new identity, that of an independently wealthy investor who lends his combat skills to companies, and in some cases countries, that find themselves wrongly embroiled in complicated litigation. Sometimes working...
During a decade of war, assassination and racial fear, *Esquire* editor Harold T. P. Hay and his talented staff brought a revolutionary barrage of literary and visual firepower to American newsstands. There was the December 1964 cover of scowling heavyweight champion Sonny Liston as Santa Claus, the first hardheaded analysis of J.F.K.'s legacy, Michael Herr's peerless dispatch from Vietnam. Listening to Gay Talese, Tom Wolfe, and other stars of the nascent New Journalism, FRANK DiGIACOMO recaptured Hayes's rise and reign, which cracked the code of a changing culture.

Opposite, Harold Hayes, 1965. Inset, the December 1963 cover, with Sonny Liston, "the last man on earth America wanted to see coming down its chimney."
Along with the heat, the summer of 1963 brought a palpable tension to the so-called United States. The May images of black demonstrators terrorized by fire hoses and police dogs in Birmingham still resonated on June 11, when President John F. Kennedy sent the National Guard to Tuscaloosa to thwart segregationist governor George Wallace’s attempt to block two black students from enrolling at the University of Alabama. That night, Kennedy appeared on national television to announce that he would introduce a civil-rights bill in Congress the following week, but the hope that his speech promised was undercut the very next day by the murder of N.A.A.C.P. field secretary Medgar Evers in the driveway of his Jackson, Mississippi, home.

By late June, race was Topic A in America. But up on the fourth floor of 488 Madison Avenue, in a corner office with a wraparound view of the Midtown Manhattan skyline, Harold Thomas Pace Hayes, the managing editor of Esquire magazine, was preoccupied with Christmas. At a time when typewriters, carbon paper, color transparencies, and hot type still constituted the primary tools of the publishing business, a single issue of a full-color monthly magazine took a minimum of three to four months to produce—"lead time" in industry parlance. This meant that, in order to get the December 1963 issue of Esquire onto the newsstands and into the hands of subscribers ahead of the post-Thanksgiving shopping rush, Hayes and his staff of editors and art directors needed to close the issue in the middle of August. There was one other factor to consider as well. The December Esquire was the parent company’s cash cow, carrying twice as many ads as a typical issue, and Hayes had been at the magazine long enough to know that the men who controlled the purse strings expected him to invoke the comforting spirit of Christmas on that year-end cover—the better to put the magazine’s readers in a receptive mood for the onslaught of liquor, fashion, and cologne pitches that awaited them inside.

So, with his ginger suede wing tips on the desk and an inscrutable smile on his face, Hayes picked up the phone and placed a call to the man who did Esquire’s covers, a Runyonesque character named George Lois who wore a longshoreman but exuded the confidence of a shipping magnate. Lois did not work Esquire, or even in publishing. He ran one of the most sought-after advertising agencies in the business—Papert, Koenig, Lois, who’d formed in 1960 after blazing trails as art director at Doyle Dane Bernbach. P.K.L. back in 1962, after a lunch with Hayes at Four Seasons Restaurant, Lois had taken the job of designing Esquire’s covers between servicing such agency clients as Xerox and Dutch Masters cigars.

To a magazine industry that, like the rest of the culture, was still throwing off the dandy mannered strictures of the 50s, Hayes’s arrangement with Lois was shocking. Ads sold soap, not magazines. But provocateur was on many levels, was exactly what Ha said he sought. Since taking the reins of Esquire two years earlier, he had pushed to make every column inch of the magazine sing with

"Hayes had the exact thing that all of the great editors have, which is tha absolutely trusted his gi
Adman George Lois, who designed and produced Esquire's provocative covers, 1964. Opposite, the May 1969 cover, with Andy Warhol, and Lois's initial sketch of the image.
NEW JOURNALISTS

brash authority that made news and upset the powers that be. In Lois, he had struck gold. Here was someone who could articulate that irreverence—in visual terms—on the most important page of the magazine.

Once a month, Hayes provided Lois with the editorial lineup and his thoughts about what that issue’s cover story might be. And then Hayes did what he did with his writers: he stepped back and let Lois do his thing.

**G**iven that December was the biggest issue of the year, however, Hayes exerted a little extra finesse once he got Lois on the phone. “George? Hey, buddy, I could really use a Christmas cover for December,” he told Lois in his elegant North Carolinian accent. The ad-sales guys were putting his feet to the fire.

“You got it,” replied Lois, who, after some brainstorming, got on the phone with photographer Carl Fischer. According to the soft-spoken Fischer, the conversation began as it usually did when Lois called with one of his *Esquire* cover concepts: “I got a wild idea! Listen to this crazy idea!” the adman told the photographer in his staccato Bronx growl.

The idea required that Fischer and an assistant grab a plane to Las Vegas, where they turned a room at the Thunderbird Hotel into a makeshift studio. When the knock at the door finally came, world heavyweight boxing champion Sonny Liston stood in the doorway with a little girl, who Fischer guesses was eight, and another boxer, former heavyweight champ Joe Louis, the Brown Bomber.

Louis had been enlisted by George Lois to get Liston to the shoot and facilitate his cooperation, which began to evaporate around the time Fischer presented the hulking fighter with a Santa hat and suit to wear before the camera.

In 1963, Sonny Liston wasn’t just the heaviestweight champ; he was, as Lois says, “the baddest motherfucker” ever kissed by fame. Frightening in and out of the ring, Liston—who had beaten the gallant Floyd Patterson in the fall of 1962—was an ex-con who had done time for armed robbery and assaulting a police officer. His ties to organized crime weren’t alleged; they were fact. The N.A.A.C.P. perceived his dark past to be a liability to the civil-rights movement.

Christmas would never be the same.

Liston didn’t exactly channel the spirit of Saint Nick when he learned what was expected of him. “[He] was very cranky,” Fischer says. “He was not going to put on any fucking hat”—let alone a velvety red tunic trimmed in white. But by the end of the shoot, using Louis and the little girl as a persuasive Greek chorus, Fischer had the image Lois wanted—and it landed like a stick of dynamite in Harold Hayes’s lap. Beneath the droopy Santa hat, Liston’s dead eyes stared sullenly at the reader. His festooned apparel seemed only to accentuate his ill-tidiness. Writing about the incident years later, the editor recalled showing the cover to executives who worked in *Esquire*’s business department. The magazine’s advertising rector suggested that *Esquire* refrain from putting a black Santa on its cover until 55th Avenue put one in its stores. The magazine’s circulation director was stunned.

“Jesus Christ, Hayes,” he said. “You that Christmas? What the hell are you ing to do to us?”

“It is Christmasy,” Hayes told the executive. “Look at the Santa Claus hat.”

Ultimately, nobody at *Esquire* tried to stop Hayes from running the cover. A flair, under his leadership, the magazine clearly thriving and would hit all-time high circulation of just under 900,000 a month. More important, Hayes didn’t seem to guess himself. “He had the exact thing all of the great editors and producers had to do. I mean, he absolutely trusted his gut,” Nora Ephron, who worked with Hayes, said.

**Pages of the Times** were affixed to corkboard in Hayes’s office, and darts were flung at them.
Muhammad Ali, as pictured by Sebastian, posing for the April 1968 cover, comment on his refusal to serve in Vietnam and the subsequent loss of his heavyweight crown.

Opposite, photographer Earl Fischer, center, recting the shoot, and the finished cover.
Above, the editorial staff, circa 1968.

Be "Telefax" from Hayes to correspondent Sack in Saigon, June 16, 1966, and the October 1966 cover, featuring Sack's distu story of an army unit he followed from boot at Fort Dix, New Jersey, to combat in Viet

“Oh my God — we hit a little girl

The true story of M Company.
From Fort Dix to Vietnam.
Hemmingway’s “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s “The Crack-Up” series, along with a formidable list of writers who need be identified by only their last names: Dos Passos, Salinger, Camus, Huxley, Steinbeck, Waugh, Mencken, and Pirandello, to name just a few. Still, by the 1950s, the magazine had grown as dull as the Eisenhower administration. Enter Hayes, who, after a brutal four-and-a-half-year contest for control of the magazine, emerged—hardened and battle-ready—to lead Esquire into a new era. And what an era it was.

The Magazine of the New

Hayes’s Esquire would identify, analyze, and define the new decade’s violent energies, ideas, morals, and conflicts—though always with an ironic and, occasionally, sardonic detachment that kept the magazine cool as the sixties grew increasingly hot. Esquire would become the magazine of the New: “The New Art of Success,” “The New Seven Deadly Sins,” “The New Sophistication,” and, ultimately, the New Journalism, the fancy term given to nonfiction that’s written like a novel.


Measured against the streamlined, A.D.D.-friendly magazine writing of today, not all of Esquire’s 60s canon has aged well. Some of the prose is excessively woolly, some exceedingly self-important, and in a publication where articles in excess of 10,000 words were not uncommon, some stories come off as just plain inerminable. There is also the sense that, toward the end of the decade, the magazine struggled with its own success—particularly when it came to finding new ideas and writers to top its previous achievements. For example, as smart as it may have sounded for the magazine to include author and political activist Jean Genet and macabre Beat author William Burroughs on the Esquire team that covered the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, their contributions, today, seem more wacky than worthy. Genet’s piece was titled “The Members of the Assembly” because he spent several sentences focusing on the crotches of Chicago’s police force.

But what’s really remarkable about Esquire’s coverage of the 60s is how much does still hold up. Get past the goofy wave of nostalgia that reading old magazines inevitably delivers and the writing, photography, and art still crackle with telling details, unexpected insights, and laugh-out-loud humor.

As Nora Ephron says, Esquire and the 60s were “the perfect moment of a magazine and a period coming together—not trying to say the period was something other than what it was, but telling us everything about it.” And though the decade climaxed in violence and hysteria that no monthly magazine could stay ahead of, Harold Hayes and his troops at Esquire not only cracked the code of the new culture but also engineered the genome for the modern magazine. Traces of its DNA can still be found in today’s magazines, including this one.

Harold Hayes died in 1989. Like the chapters of his unfinished book, Making a Modern Magazine, the clues he left behind about his life and his work at Esquire are frustratingly incomplete and, like the man himself, hard to fathom. They—the chapters and the clues—are filed, along with a career’s worth of correspondence, notes, and clipplings, in the rare-manuscripts department of the Z. Smith Reynolds Library, at Hayes’s
Esquire and the 60s were “the perfect moment of a magazine and a period coming together,” says Ephron.

alma mater, Wake Forest University. The files show that Hayes was born April 18, 1926, in Elkin, North Carolina, but spent roughly half his childhood in coal country, Beckley, West Virginia, before moving, at 11, to the considerably more cosmopolitan environs of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The middle child of three, Hayes was the product of a nurturing, culture-loving mother—who, Hayes once said, wished her children “would be middle class gentility”—and a strict fundamentalist Baptist-minister father who insisted his offspring attend prayer meetings and revivals, and wouldn't let Esquire magazine into the house during Harold's childhood. This dogmatic upbringing left Hayes with what he called a lasting “moral hangover” that he resented by the time of his adolescence. He was somewhere between a hick and a naif when he landed at Wake Forest—and as square as the trombone he had played in his high-school band.

He did not exactly catch fire at college. Hayes characterized himself as a “happy-go-lucky” C student whose education was interrupted by a stint in the navy reserve. He worked on student publications and after graduating, in 1948, headed for Atlanta, eventually landing at United Press where he covered the Georgia legislature and rewrote wire copy. When the Korean War flared in the summer of 1950, Hayes enlisted in the Marines, where he rose to the rank of first lieutenant but never saw action. Once his hitch was up, a mutual friend helped arrange his first audition with Arnold Gingrich, the founding editor of Esquire, who, after years away from the magazine, had just returned as its publisher. Gingrich, an impeccably dressed Renaissance man who collected rare violins and played them badly, didn’t have a p
for Hayes and sent him on to a publisher developing a new magazine called "Time Week." Hayes was put in charge and promptly ran the show until, about two years into the job, he produced an end-of-the-year feature that foreshadowed the reverse point of view that would come to distinguish Esquire from its competition, as most editors used their year-end issues to recap the highlights of the last 12 months, Hayes had astutely sensed that there was much more entertainment value looking at the low points and put together a piece that in an interview years later he called "The Hundred Bombs of the Year." The publisher took one look at the layout and fired the entire editorial staff.

Hayes was soon back on Esquire's doorstep, and this time Gingrich took him on as his assistant—hardly an illustrious title, but Esquire's publisher had plans for this new hire. Between 1933 and the end of that decade, Gingrich and a group of Chicago-based businessmen, led by a cunning hypochondriac named David Smart and his partner William Weintraub, had turned Esquire into one of the great magazine success stories of the early 20th century. (They also created Gentlemen's Quarterly, now owned by Conde Nast.) Their Esquire was an innovative mix of high and low culture—akin to "having Thomas Mann or Ernest Hemingway read their work aloud at a burlesque house," according to one critic of the time—delivered in a big, 13-inch-by-10-inch format and presided over by "Esky," a pop-eyed dandy with a walrus mustache who appeared on every cover and bore more than a passing resemblance to Gingrich.

But Esquire's original luster had long since faded by the early 50s, when the magazine moved from Chicago to New York to take
advantage of the resurgent city’s new status as both the center of the advertising universe and the clearinghouse of American culture. The appearances in 1953 of *Playboy*—founded by former low-level *Esquire* employee Hugh Hefner—and, the following year, *Sports Illustrated* only worsened matters. Management eventually realized that the magazine’s future would have to be deted mined by someone younger and more in tune with the times. And so, in 1957, Gingrich began ushering Hayes and a handful of young, ambitious editors he called the “young Turks” into his cramped office, where he referred one of the most vicious weekly story meetings in modern journalism. “I’m turning the magazine over to you,” Gingrich told the Turks at one of those first meetings, which really meant that he would preside over them as they battled one another to place their respective story ideas in *Esquire*. Though it wasn’t exactly stated that the last man standing would ascend to the top of the masthead, the combatants couldn’t help but notice that the corner office that had belonged to the magazine’s last editor—swept out in a purge of the previous regime—was being kept vacant. With this “beautiful red apple suspended way up at the top of the tree,” Hayes wrote, the editorial meetings quickly turned brutal, loud, and even personal. “They were very bloody,” said Ralph Ginzburg, another young Turk, who went on to start *Eros* magazine and push against the boundaries of the First Amendment. (Ginzburg, who spoke to *Vanity Fair* last spring, died in July.) “There was no predicting how nefarious, dirty, or low they would get.”

“The Big Change”

The contest ultimately boiled down to Hayes and a well-connected former *Life*-magazine editor named Clay Felker, a St. Louis native and Duke University graduate whose father was managing editor of *The Sporting News* and whose mother was also an editor. Felker stirred Hayes’s competitive instincts, but he intimidated him, too. In addition to possessing the more authentic-sounding title of features editor, Felker was known around the office as the “drinking editor,” because he attended so many parties. He was also a remarkably fertile source of good ideas. “He had the keenest distant-early-warning system of any editor I ever knew,” said Ginzburg. “He could spot something that was going to be a major trend six months before it happened.”

Felker could be forceful and engaging when pitching his own ideas and politically lethal when torpedoing somebody else’s. Hayes learned this early in the competition when, after he sold the idea of profiling the Communist *Daily Worker* newspaper, Felker embarked on a no-holds-barred (but ultimately unsuccessful) campaign to kill the story, and his tactics included a well-aimed swipe at Hayes’s feelings of intellectual inadequacy. “The trouble with you is, you just don’t know,” Felker told his rival. Years later, Hayes would admit, in a 1988 interview with University of Kansas student Joseph Rebello, that the remark was “the most damning and insulting thing anybody had said to me in a working relationship,” and it played a key role in his decision to apply for a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard. He was accepted, and, in 1958, left for Cambridge with Gingrich’s blessing. This time, the C student did a work and returned the following year a much more confident and connected man. (According to Felker, however, Hayes “still seemed threatened by me.”)

Hayes sometimes referred to the battle of the young Turks as “the Big Change,” and by the end of 1960 one of the last remaining vestiges of the old *Esquire* was the caricature of Esky that dotted the *i* in the magazine’s logo. A new *Esquire* had evolved, and it was a hybrid of Hayes’s and Felker’s respective editorial visions. Hayes wanted *Esquire* to be a magazine of ideas—politics, science, law, religion, sophistication. Felker saw power—and the powerful—as his unifying theme. Save for the fact that neither man wanted to share the reins, their worldviews weren’t incompatible. They were both outsider perspectives built on smart writing, strong reporting, provocative visuals, and bringing a new sensibility to old subjects. Gingrich’s mad plan had worked. Through all the infighting and backstabbing, *Esquire* had become a stronger magazine with an impressive roster of stars and newcomers. Felker had hired Gore Vidal as a political columnist and David Levine as an illustrator. He had also enticed Norman Mailer to cover the 1960 Democratic convention, from which the author of *The Naked and the Dead* produced an evocative and ground-breaking piece of literary nonfiction, “Superman Comes to the Supermarket,” which has since been heralded as one of the earliest examples of the New Journalism.

Hayes brought in William F. Buckley Jr. to write for the magazine. He was also instrumental in the production of Art Kane’s historic 1958 photo of jazz greats gathered on a Harlem stoop, and the first magazine editor to employ Diane Arbus. In the July 1960 issue, as part of a special package devoted to New York, Arbus made her first *Esquire* appearance, with a photo-essay of the city’s eccentricities called “The Vertical Journey,” as did another future Hayes favorite, *New York Times* reporter Gay Talese, whose pointillist portrait of the city, told through little-known facts and observations, was the backbone of the issue.

**Had not fate—in the form of The Saturday Evening Post—intervened, Gingrich probably would have let Felker and Hayes battle it out until one quit or killed the other. (Those who worked with *Esquire*’s publisher often described his management style “laissais-faire.”) But after Hayes received a series of increasingly enticing offers to join the *Post* as an editor, Gingrich finally pointed him managing editor in the summer of 1961, the promotion reflected on the masthead in *Esquire*’s September issue. Hayes moved into the covered corner office. Felker began to look for a new job. “I was naive,” Felker says curtly, more than 40 years after the decision. “Hayes cultivated Gingrich’s thought that all I had to do was keep coming up with good ideas.” Instead, in the fall of 1962, Felker moved on, and in 1963 replaced as a consultant at the *New York Herald Tribune*, where he eventually took over the newspaper’s Sunday magazine, which had been revamped and renamed, simply, *New York*. There, he would soon demonstrate that his rise at *Esquire* had been no fluke.

Hayes did not wait for Felker to leave before he consolidated his power and got down to the business of expanding his staff. In late 1961, he hired a preppish Harvard grad named John Berendt as an associate editor. Around this time, fiction editor Rust Hagen hired an assistant named Robert Brown, who came with a master’s in English literature from Yale (and would eventually succeed Rawlins). The following year, Hayes promoted Alice Glaser, a neurotic but brilliant Radcliffe-educated secretary, to the same station, and after Felker left, Hayes replaced him with former Time-Life Books editor Byron Dobell, his assistant managing editor. In 1963, Hayes hired a self-described North Carolina “hick,” named Robert Sherrill as an associate editor. Hayes and Sherrill had met at Wake Forest and become even closer friends when they both moved to Atlanta and lived in the same apartment complex. But when Sherrill arrived at *Esquire*, he found that his former schoolmate had changed.

“It was sort of dramatic, because the first time I saw him, he’s one character, and the next time he’s another one,” Sherrill says, pleading that at Wake Forest Hayes was simply “naïve, sweet, curious. He went wild over *Taxi Driver Is the Night*. He was almost a cheerleader. Nearly 20 years later, Hayes was “the savage person, but he’s tough,” Sherrill says. “You had a hard time moving him.”

The triple-witching effect of the Mariner, Gingrich’s boot camp, and Harvard had both hardened and emboldened Hayes, and the city had buffed him to a fine luster, an unconventionally handsome man with a face of fair brown hair and bushy eyebrows that could look as untamed as the Manhattan skyline, he moved through *Esquire*’s fakes at a forward tilt, the metal taps on shoes heralding his arrival, his mood, and his utter confidence in the task at hand.

“There was a specific Harold *clickety-clack*,” says Kitty Krupat, who in the late 60s served as the magazine’s chief editorial researcher.
Hayes edited Esquire as if he were its most bent reader. And he was. "He had an inner sense of the way a magazine should — his magazine," Sherrill says. "He loved picture and he loved the way people wrote, could read something and almost immediately say 'Good' or 'Bad' and throw it over his shoulder."

And as he tweaked Esquire to reflect his son, Hayes also indoctrinated the staff. 'I never wondered what he wanted, absolutely knew," says John Berendt. Though Hayes's Esquire retained many of hallmarks established during the young man's turf war, its irreverent tone and sense humor — "from black wit to custardburlesque," as the editor once put it — particularly with the debut of a franchise feature called the Dubious Achievement Awards that Hayes had led his art director, Robert Benton, an associate editor named David woman to pull together for the January 1962 issue. Though inspired by Harvard Lampoon staple that recognized the worst acting and movies the year, Dubious Achievements is really just another run at the hundred Bombs of the Year" piece it had gotten Hayes fired from Pt. Week. A wry look at the Bay of Pigs fiasco and other low points of Kennedy's first year in office, Dubious Achievements was built around recurring photo of the usually glowing Richard Nixon laughing manically. The caption beneath the photo read: "Why is this man laughing? Benton says the juxtaposition of image and text was simply a reference to the turmoil of Kennedy's first year. Nixon] was laughing because he isn't president," he says. And yet, a joke still seemed to be on the former vice president.

By using Nixon—an embodiment the Eisenhower era—as the high-water equivalent of Mad magazine's Alfred Neuman, Esquire had declared itself a much more of the square sobriety of the 50s, and Hayes had taken a significant step forward in defining his magazine.

Ultimately, he wanted every column inch Esquire's editorial content to reflect that. So, on Fridays, Hayes broke out the li- ter and presided over a casual brainstorms session disguised as a cocktail party at which he would be entertained by the staff and any contributors who happened to be in the building. When Berendt had started, Hayes used a copy of the day's New York Times to show him and Glaser how to convert daily news and feature stories into Esquire ideas, Berendt says, "giving articles a special slant, by getting a principal in the story to write the piece, or by assigning a well-chosen writer with a specialty that fit the story." Not long after that, the editors were having Friday drinks in Hayes's office when, Berendt says, "Harold brought up the Times thing again and said, 'It's child's play. Anyone can do it.'" This prompted one of the staffers to devise a challenge: pages of the Times were affixed to corkboard that covered part of the wall in Hayes's office, and darts were flung at them. The goal was to come up with an Esquire-worthy story wherever the dart landed. "It became very competitive," Berendt says. "People shouted out ideas and were very clever and hilarious about it, but Harold was absolutely ingenious."

"Point of view," "tone," "perspective," and "irreverence" were terms that got thrown around a lot on the fourth floor of 488 Madison. "Great P.O.V.," Hayes might scrawl on an idea memo when he came across something he liked. Or, after hearing a story idea, he might raise his hand in front of his face and rotate it, which meant that the editor needed to do the same with his idea. These qualities distinguished Esquire from the jaunty suburban earnestness of The New Yorker, or its duller competitors Harper's and The Atlantic. They also gave the magazine an urgency and a timeliness that monthlies didn't ordinarily have.

And with the July 1963 issue, Esquire made news with a feature called "The Structure of the American Literary Establishment," which was pure point of view. The focus of the feature was a two-page spread that looked like a cross between a chart and a lava lamp. Onto these pages, fiction editor Rust Hills had grouped dozens of writers, agents, playwrights, and critics into such categories as "Writers Who Get in Columns" and "The Cool World." The pinnacle was "The Hot Center," which spanned the centerfold of the magazine under a splash of red-orange ink. The chart was soothed and keenly observed — for one thing, a writer's heat seemed to have more to do with his agent than his writing — and it threw the thin-skinned literary world into a tizzy, particularly The New York Times Book Review, which had been relegated to "Squaresville" (and which then published a squarely earnest rebuttal that seemed to miss the humor of the piece). In addition to being the first of many Establishment charts to come — covering various industries and hierarchies — the feature "was an important turning point for Esquire," Berendt says. "It was Esquire taking charge and calling the shots."

B racing as the Sonny Liston cover was in a country that had gone to the barricades over racism, it was swiftly eclipsed by the shock and grief produced by another national tragedy. On November 22, 1963, about a week after the December issue of Esquire reached newsstands, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. For the first time since Hayes had taken over the magazine, Esquire's three-month lead time looked like it might become a liability. Stories and photos in the January issue made inaccurate or tasteless by the assassination — such as a forecast of the 1964 election by Gore Vidal — had to be stripped or literally blacked out of issues that had already gone to the printers, though it was too late to remove Kennedy's picture from the Dubious Achievements-themed montage cover. Worst of all, the magazine would not be able to weigh in on Kennedy's death until 1964. Its coverage would have to be original.

But as Hayes watched news reports of Kennedy's death and afterward, he sussed out the direction he needed to take. He had noticed that the excessively moist media coverage of Kennedy's life had all but defied the man. So, in the waning days of 1963, he wrote to New York Times correspondent Tom Wicker and asked him to write about "Kennedy without tears." In a letter dated December 22, 1963, Wicker responded, "Some of those myths are going to take a hell of a lot of unsentimentalizing," but he agreed to the...
Esquire in the 60s

assignment and produced a memorably clear-eyed assessment of Kennedy's political life for the June 1964 issue.

"Kennedy Without Tears" served as both headline and cover line for the story, and George Lois provided a sly riff on that thesis. A full-page, sepia-toned photograph of Kennedy stared straight out at the reader while, from the bottom of the page, a man's hand holding a white handkerchief—both depicted in full color—dubbed at a spot beneath the president's left eye. Above the handkerchief, spilled tears beaded up on the photograph. Was the man attached to the hand weeping? Or was the slain president crying for his lost legacy? Soon after the issue went on sale, the New York Herald Tribune, a newspaper known for its own brand of insouciance, threw a third question into the mix: "Has Esquire magazine leaped off the bridge of good taste?"

Actually, it had moved so far ahead of the curve that the laggards could not see it, and in the July 1964 issue Hayes published what proved to be a profoundly prescient feature by Benton and Newman. "The New Sentimentality" proposed that a new sensibility had quietly but firmly taken hold in America—an ironic, unsentimental, self-interested sensibility that had roots both in the Kennedy administration and in the French New Wave films of Godard and Truffaut. Eisenhower was "the last bloom of Old Sentimentality," Lyndon Johnson, Jackson Pollock, Frank Sinatra's Rat Pack, and the children's-book character Stuart Little were other symbols of the New Sentimentality. English model Jean Shrimpton, artist Roy Lichtenstein, the Beatles, Sonny Liston, and Charlie Brown signified the New. Marilyn Monroe and Humphrey Bogart were among the few who were relevant in both categories.

Benton and Newman did not reference Esquire in the piece, but like Monroe and Bogart, the magazine moved in both worlds without really embracing either. Esquire dwelled in the conflict between the new world that was rushing in and the old ways that were shuffling out. "With Harold, I think, it was just one big carnival," says Tom Wolfe. "I don't think he ever cared for a second who won an election, any of that stuff. I think it all seemed amusing. It all offered such great journalism. And I think that's really the only form of objectivity in journalism; that you are either having so much fun with the material, or you feel what you're doing is so important that you don't care about any political gains."

On paper, Norman Mailer sounded like Esquire's literary soul mate: the Great American Novelist who had switched to great American nonfiction in the 60s, a man who challenged political correctness with every angry breath, as well as a writer who could give perspective to a paper clip. But his relationship with the magazine was star-crossed at virtually every turn. In 1960, after writing "Superman Comes to the Supermarket," he had a public falling-out with the magazine, in part because Gingrich had altered Mailer's headline to "Superman." After Esquire apologized to the writer within its own pages in 1962, Mailer returned to write a regular column, "The Big Bite," and, beginning in January 1964, a serialized novel, An American Dream. Esquire ran the book over eight issues, with Mailer writing on deadline, and the two parties drove each other nuts. Mailer's attempts to butt through the limits of sexual and scatological language in a commercial magazine brought out the Marine in Hayes and the prude in Gingrich, who had not forgotten Esquire's bruising—though eventually successful—landmark Supreme Court battle in the 1940s; the nation's staunchly Catholic postmaster general, Frank Walker, had attempted to revoke the magazine's precious second-class mailing permit because, he claimed, Esquire was publishing obscene material. Exhausting bargaining sessions involving Hayes, Mailer, and the magazine's lawyers ensued, and Sherrill recalls the day that managing editor Byron Dobell appeared at his cubicle with a smile on his face and jerked his head toward Hayes's office. Sherrill got up from his desk and quietly joined the other editorial staffers eavesdropping outside Hayes's office as their leader haggled by phone with Mailer over expletives contained in his latest installment. When Hayes saw his staff lurking, Sherrill says, he smiled and rolled his eyes before presenting his latest offer to the novelist on the other end of the line. "Norman," Hayes said, "I'll trade you two 'shits' for a 'fuck.'"

The breaking point came that same year when Mailer wrote about the Republican convention in San Francisco. Again, he wrangled with Esquire's lawyers. Mailer wanted to call the piece "Cannibals and Christians," but the lawyers warned that the Republicans might claim malice. Mailer settled for "In the Red Light," but split again with the magazine. In later years, he seemed to carry a grudge. Hayes's son, Tom Hayes, remembers Mailer once refusing to get on an elevator with his father, and when associate editor Tom Hedley tried to get the writer to profile Fidel Castro, Hedley says, Mailer told him, "It probably could be one of the best pieces I've ever written, but I'll never do it for Harold Hayes. You know why? Because he'll put my ass hole over Castro's eyebrow on the cover." (Mailer declined to be interviewed for this piece.)

If Esquire was a magazine where novelists could apply their literary talents to nonfiction, it was also a place where a handful of journalists wrote articles that read like short stories. The writer most identified with that legacy is Gay Talese, a man whose Calabrian profile is as sharp as his tailored clothing. Having made his bones in journalism at stylistically restrictive Times, Talese found a freedom that Esquire gave its writers "na-

A Kind of Psychosomatic Nasal Drip

Sinatra—in the second decade of a comeback that had begun with the 1953 film From Here to Eternity—was Talese's kind of subject, but not long after the writer had settled into his hotel room, a call came telling him the interview was off and that in order to reschedule it Talese would have to agree to submit his profile to Sinatra's handlers prior to publication. This was unacceptable, of course, but Hayes told Talese to keep working. As the days turned into weeks, Talese laid his progress, or lack thereof, in a series of letters to Hayes that are filed at Wake Forest. They show a writer bouncing from hero to despair to paranoia and back as he was furiously trying to deliver the goods by shadowing the notoriously controlling Sinatra and talking to everyone who might be able to shine light on the entertainer without setting off security alarms. "I may not get the piece we'd hoped for—the real Frank Sinatra," Talese wrote one letter, "but perhaps, by not getting it—a by getting rejected constantly and by seeing his flunkies protecting his flanks—we will getting close to the truth about the man."

That last sentence provides the key. "Frank Sinatra Has a Cold," the piece Talese published in the April 1966 issue Esquire, after three months of writing and search. Talese built his story on the conjecture that Sinatra's attempts to record a song for an NBC television special had been thwarted because he had a head cold. "Sina with a cold is Picasso without paint, Fern without fuel," Talese wrote. It "affects only his own psyche but also seems to cut a kind of psychosomatic nasal drip with dozens of people who...depend on him, their own welfare and stability."

Talese's story doesn't just capture the sence of Sinatra, it reveals the inner workings of the climate-controlled biophiles singer had constructed around himself—a in the inhospitable atmosphere coalescing side its shell. It is clear in the reading of the late 1965 the hat-suit-and-tie culture it enabled Sinatra's 50s comeback was fast以人民 something closer to a Net jack. "In a sense, he was battling The Bat-tles," Talese wrote of the purpose behi
Tom Wolfe's relationship with Hayes was not as intense, but it did have its memorable moments, particularly the cunning way in which Hayes brokered the first piece that Wolfe published in Esquire, in the October 1963 issue—a profile of the boxer Cassius Clay called "The Marvelous Mouth."

Clay was still months away from his February 1964 heavyweight-championship upset of Sonny Liston, immediately after which he would change his name to Muhammad Ali, but, again, exhibiting his presence, Hayes placed a $50 on Friday when he finishes up."

Clay took the bet, the first $50 installment was forked over, and "off we went." Wolfe says, "He'd made a deal, and he was going to tolerate me," but just barely. On Tuesday, however, the two men were in a taxi crossing Central Park when, out of the blue, Clay "gets real chummy." As the pair were walking through Central Park, Clay "puts his arm around me and he says, 'This is a great day. It feels like Wednesday, doesn't it? I didn't catch on at first,'" Wolfe says with a laugh.

"He wanted his next $50. So, I said, 'I'm sorry. They don't give it to me until the day I give it to you.'" Even more astute than Hayes's deal with Clay was the editor's decision to use his most flamboyantly nimble writer to nail down the giddy, kinetic outlandishness of boxing's most flamboyantly nimble fighter.

In that sense, "The Marvelous Mouth" has a nice cosmic symmetry to it. It marks the Esquire debuts of two men who would bring an unmatched level of showmanship to their respective professions.

When Wolfe became a sensation at Esquire—where he would meet his wife, the former Sheila Berger, in the art department—he was already working hard for both the Herald Tribune's daily paper and its Sunday magazine, New York, where Clay Felker had taken over as editor. So, when Esquire began vying for Wolfe's byline as well, Felker reportedly was not happy. But if the ingredients were there for Hayes and Felker's earlier rivalry to turn into something more public, and ugly, that's not what happened. Though the two editors' paths would continue to cross in odd and ironic ways, any lingering tensions between them tended to be expressed—at least for public consumption—under the guise of friendly competition or blithe ignorance. For his part, Felker says, he never read Esquire much after he left the magazine. And though Wolfe doesn't recall this episode, Hayes wrote in one of the chapters of his unfinished book that, once, when Wolfe owed assignments to both Esquire and New York, "and was ducing us both," he sent the writer "a wire suggesting the pressure had eased up on his New York deadline" and that the writer should go ahead and finish his Esquire assignment.

"I signed it 'Felker,'" Hayes wrote, adding, "He still turned his piece in late."

By the end of 1966, Harold Hayes had watched approvingly as a number of his star writers established footholds in longer forms. Gay Talese was working on his
Hayes may not have grasped the cultural influence of Bob Dylan, the Beatles, or even Sonny and Cher, but in 1965 his instincts as an editor, and, perhaps, as a former Marine, established Esquire as an authority on the escalating war in Vietnam. By 1965 the U.S. had committed 200,000 troops and begun Operation Rolling Thunder, a three-year bombing campaign against the Vietcong. Esquire had run some coverage of the conflict, but nothing like the story that John Sack, a former CBS News bureau chief in Madrid, pitched in a letter to Hayes. Sack, who had been a soldier in the Korean War, proposed to follow an infantry company through boot camp and into its first battle in Vietnam and write about it for Esquire.

His story led the October 1966 issue, and, like the best Esquire stories, it was suffused with humor. But as the soldiers of M Company traded the jitters of basic training for the insanity of real, live war, Sack’s tone grew progressively darker, before finally going black when a grenade thrown, on orders, into a hut killed a seven-year-old Vietnamese girl.

From the cold horror of this scene came Esquire’s starkest cover. Against a black background, the words of the soldier who discovered the child’s body were printed in white:

“Oh my God—we hit a little girl.”

It was a knockout combination of art direction and literary journalism that brought the horror and the humanity of a distant war home in a way that no three-minute TV report could.

Nineteen sixty-six was a very good year for Esquire. The Sunday Times of London named it one of “the world’s great magazines,” circulation topped one million, and advertising revenue jumped 25 percent to $10.5 million—still a far cry from the $17 million that Playboy raked in, but remarkably good for a magazine aimed for its readers’ heads without the added value of a centerfold.

The following year, Bond girl Ursula Andress appeared on July’s cover with a Band-Aid slapped over her brow for a special issue on violence, an increasing and troubling feature of American life. The package included a photo-essay about violence in the arts called “Now Let the Festivities Proceed,” by then contributing editors Robert Benton and David Newman, who were just weeks away from seeing the premiere of their own groundbreaking contribution to the topic. The duo had written the script for Bonnie and Clyde, which was released to U.S. audiences in August 1967. Directed by Arthur Penn and starring Warren Beatty and a radiant Faye Dunaway, Bonnie and Clyde was more than just a violent movie.

It was an Esquire movie—its character dialogue, and detachment all expression of the New Sentimentality that Benton and Newman had diagnosed three years earlier. “We had written the treatment Bonnie and Clyde when we did ‘The New Sentimentality,’” Benton says. “One was expression of what we felt about the other. The film contained no traditional heroes, main characters were a couple of beauties but inept criminals who became celeb revolutionaries by robbing banks—The M in the jargon of the times—then succumb in a blood-soaked, bullet-riddled, balletic max. Along the way, people died gruesom to the madcap bluegrass sounds of Flatt a Scruggs’s ‘Foggy Mountain Breakdown. Sex was depicted with a perverse frankness. It was the seminal statement of a new, untentamental era of moviemaking. Says Benton “One of the reasons I think Bonnie and Clyde worked is that we came out of a magazine culture. We came out of the urgency and irreverence of that specific Esquire world.’

The Chinese Curse

After witnessing the carnage of the Tet fensive, in January 1968, a gifted young writer named Michael Herr wrote Hay from the city of Hue on February 5 to ple Esquire scrap two stories he’d written the war—including one on the Vietnam establishment—and let him crash a new o “Before the Tet offensive, the war had a ik of easy sameness to it, and writing again [Esquire’s] lead time was no problem.” He explained to his editor. “Now, all the ter have changed, all the old assumptions ab the war, about our chances for even the m ignoble kind of ‘victory’ in it, have be turned around.” The year had just beg and the U.S. seemed caught in a frighten ttailspin—but not Esquire. For spring, L had come up with two classic covers. An depicted Muhammad Ali, photographed Carl Fischer, as the arrow-pierced Saint’ bastian, martyred for refusing to fight in Vietnam War. For May, Lois had taken stock picture of Nixon asleep on Air For One during his vice-presidential years a merged it with a custom photo of a clus of hands wielding makeup tools, including tube of lipstick. “Nixon’s Last Chance. (TI time he’d better look right!)” read the cov line, a nod to his sweaty performance duri the 1960 debates with Kennedy.

But reality quickly became more shocki and unpredictable than any story or cover iage that Esquire’s brain trust could produc On March 31, faced with the escalating dis ter of Vietnam and the prospect of a draw out and divisive battle for the Democ nomination, Lyndon Johnson announce that he would not seek re-election. On Ap 4, while the Ali cover was still on the stands Martin Luther King Jr. was truly martyred.
Emph. And in the early morning of June presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy's shot and mortally wounded at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

America was coming unmoored, and Esquire's lead made it look slow, even calm. "What can you do when the coverage one assassination comes out after the next?" Hayes asked the writer Garry Wills. Though a number of staffers and writers who worked with Hayes in 1968 don't recall seeing him unnerved by these events, Hayes began invoking a traditional Chinese proverb—a verse, actually: May you live in the midst of testing times. "He would say that all the time, and shake his head, as if asking 'What going on?'" Hedley remembers.

In the ensuing months, Esquire muted me of its wilder satirical impulses. "The first we could provide was a bleak grin," Hayes wrote in the introduction to the magazine's aptly named anthology of 60s titles, Smiling Through the Apocalypse (which was prefaced by the Chinese curse). For the October 1968 issue—Esquire's 35th anniversary—the magazine displayed a cover picturing John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. standing together at Lington National Cemetery. The casualties of a decade condensed into one solemn image, without tears, but also without Esquire's trademark irreverence.

At the end of 1968, Hayes had sent a memo to the staff in which he'd written, "I'm tired." Newstand sales were down 20,000 from 1967, the magazine was hiring too many "hacks," and the competition was not. Allie Morris's Harper's—which had scored that year with Norman Mailer's "On the Aftermath of the Pentagon"—was surging. So was New York, which Felker had spun off into a stand-alone magazine in April 1968 shortly after the Herald Tribune folded. With Wolfe as editor, as well as Gloria Steinem and a provocative new writer named Gail Sheehy, New York was poised to become one of the fat magazines of the 70s, and the blueprint for every other city magazine that would follow it. (It would also take on a number of former Esquire employees, including managing editor Byron Dobell, assistant art director Walter Bernard, and editor-writer Aaron Thum.) And though Hayes didn't mention him, there was also an upset among the San Francisco called Rolling Stone that is using New Journalism techniques to examine the burgeoning rock 'n' roll culture.

But Hayes rallied the troops once more, deciding by 1969, Esquire was showing signs of its self. Michael Herr's fever-dream dispatches from Vietnam were the best writing on the subject. A Hayes discovery named Jean-Paul Bude had arrived from Paris with his Bentleys and was shaking up the magazine's look and its new art director. An unorthodox new fiction editor, Gordon Lish, who signed his office memos "Captain Fiction," was doing the same with Esquire's literary pages. And a sardonic writer named Nora Ephron debuted in the February 1970 issue with a profile of Helen Gurley Brown. At one point, Hayes would even assign his new associate editor, Lee Eisenberg, the impossible task of wooing New York's hot women writers—such as Sheehy (whom Felker would marry in 1984)—over to Esquire.

Esquire's resurgence could not last, of course. The economy was slumping, and Hayes would soon lose a distracting battle against the business side's move to shrink the publication to the smaller size that had become standard for magazines. August 1971 was the last oversize issue and featured a solemn, elegant sepia-toned photo of Mafia kingpin Joe Bonanno, dressed to the nines. The cover story was an excerpt from Gay Tencle's new book, Honor Thy Father. Talsie had become a best-selling book writer, as had Tom Wolfe. And though they still kept in touch, both had moved on, as had John Berendt, Tom Hedley, and Hayes's friend Robert Sherrill. Berendt would edit New York magazine and become a best-selling author, too, with the publication of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, in 1994. (His most recent book, City of Falling Angels, is dedicated to Hayes and Felker.) Tom Hedley would conceive the story and co-write the script for Flapdoodle. Benton and Newman had embarked on a successful career in Hollywood, which would include the original Superman movies, and so had Bogdanovich, who in 1971 would release his masterpiece, The Last Picture Show. All three would collaborate on the 1972 film What's Up, Doc? In 1973, Hayes moved on, too, forced out of Esquire after management bought to bump him upstairs with the title of publisher and he insisted on retaining editorial control. George Lois broke with the magazine soon afterward.

Some of the materials found in the Wake Forest archives suggest that the 70s must have been humbling for Hayes as he attempted to get back into the red-hot center of the magazine world. Though in later writings Hayes professed a begrudging admiration for Clay Felker, he didn't shy away from his former rival's old turf. There is a typed, undated one-paragraph memorandum addressed to "Rupert," presumably Rupert Murdoch, whose 1976 purchase of New York magazine and The Village Voice led to Felker's unplanned departure as the editor of the former. In the memo Hayes writes: "I don't know how you feel about New York at the moment, but it looks weak to me." Give him two years and a free hand, he adds, and "I could make it into a very strong magazine for you." It's unclear if Hayes even sent his letter; at any rate, he never got the opportunity to prove his assertion. (In 1978, Felker returned to his old stomping grounds to edit the short-lived Esquire Fort nightly, which was published every two weeks instead of monthly.) A foray into television met with mixed results: Hayes was well received as host of an interview show that ran on New York's local PBS station in the 70s, but his and art critic Robert Hughes's debut as the original co-hosts of ABC's 20/20 newsmagazine, on June 6, 1978, would go down as one of the great disasters of network television. The New York Times TV critic branded the show "dizzingly absurd," ABC News chief Roone Arledge went on record saying he "hated the program," and Hayes and Hughes were replaced the following week by Hugh Downs. In the 80s, Hayes would move to Los Angeles to take a stab at editing another of Clay Felker's creations: California magazine, which Felker had founded as New West.

But Hayes's second act would not come from editing, it would come from writing about a subject as impenetrable as he was: Africa. Hayes had ventured to the continent in late 1969 at the urging of longtime Esquire photographer Pete Turner and "fell in love with it," says his second wife, Judy Kessler. "He had to know everything about it." Beginning in 1977, he wrote three books on the subject. The last, which was finished and published after his death from a brain tumor in 1989, dealt with John Fossey, the subject of Gorillas in the Mist, a movie adapted from a Life-magazine article Hayes wrote about her murder. Africa would also become his final resting place. Late in the summer of 1989, Tom Hayes took his father's cremated remains up in a helicopter and released them over the Masai Mara game park, on the border of Tanzania and Kenya.

Hayes always had "a keen eye for the mood changes," as Arnold Gingrich once wrote, so maybe he foresaw some of the curves ahead. But back in the summer of 1970 he was still very focused on his one true ambition: editing his magazine. And the November 1970 issue was going to be a Message cocktail. Hayes had brokered a deal for exclusive rights to the story of Lieutenant William L. Calley Jr., the soldier facing trial for the My Lai massacre, in which he stood accused of murdering more than 100 villagers, some of them children. Hayes had paid Calley a lot more than the $150 he'd given to Cassius Clay—$20,000 for his participation with three exclusive articles written by M Company's John Sack; the first would run as the cover story. The cover, by the way, was a masterpiece. It made the Sonny Liston cover look like a Disney cartoon. The image showed Calley in uniform, surrounded by Vietnamese children. He was the nation's Frankenstein monster. And in the photo, he was smiling.

For Harold Hayes, Christmas had come early...
**Dreamgirls**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 92 “Thunder” Early, a James Brown-like soul singer whom Curtis tries to remake into a Johnny Mathis clone, with disastrous results.

Condon regarded Dreamgirls’ recent invisibility as a plus. “Unlike Chicago-the-movie, which grew out of a very successful revival, so that an awful lot of people knew the show to start with, Dreamgirls hasn’t been seen for 20 years,” he says. “To me that was actually an advantage, because I didn’t have to live up to anybody’s expectations.” Only purists were going to complain, then, about his other changes—the four additional songs, the re-creation of the Detroit riots, the new dramatic material, and so on. (The new songs were composed by Henry Krieger and a variety of lyricists because Tom Eyen had died in 1991.)

“Chicago was like a crash course in getting inside a musical,” Condon continues. “Just things that now seem obvious that you don’t really know until you’re in it. One of them is that musicals are all about transitions: how you get in and out of numbers is more important than what happens inside of them. In Dreamgirls, for example, the first time Eddie Murphy sings, you have him teaching the song to his three new backup singers, and suddenly he takes one step back and a curtain comes in behind him and then you swoop around and you’ve made a transition to him on the stage. You could do it in a cut, but there’s something about taking you from one place to another with theatrical devices that’s really thrilling.”

When the script was finished, Condon sent it off. As Mark remembers Geffen’s reaction, “David called me and said, ‘Well, I’ve just read this, and I think we should try to put it together, cast it, and make it.’ I was like, ‘You’ll get no argument here!’ I wasn’t surprised, because it was so good. But the definitiveness was refreshing. I didn’t have to speak to a dozen people, to marketing, to foreign, and so on. It was ‘Let’s put this together,’ because it was David. He’s the last of the great tycoons.”

Right from the start, Condon knew he wanted Jamie Foxx for the role of Curtis Taylor, the Berry Gordy–like Svengali, and Murphy for James “Thunder” Early, the older soul singer. Foxx didn’t need much persuading, but his asking price was $15 million. The studio refused. Says Condon, “There was a moment when Jamie was going to do it and then he wasn’t going to do it, and I got really freaked out, because with everything the part demands, there often aren’t second choices. Jamie was someone who feels comfortable in a musical environment, who could sing, who was a major actor.” Fortunately, Murphy had long been Foxx’s idol, and as soon as he came in, Foxx followed. As the younger actor explains, “When they said Eddie Murphy was in it, I said, ‘I don’t care if you pay me 50 cents, I’m down!’” Foxx and the other leads ended up cutting their prices to accommodate the budget.

Murphy hadn’t done that much singing—the impressions of James Brown in his salad days at Saturday Night Live 25 years ago, and three albums nobody but Condon remembered. “Bill and I were concerned, nervous,” says Murphy. “While I thought The Nutty Professor was one of the most amazing performances of all time, there was a lot of hair and makeup. Here it’s only a pompadour.” Adds Condon, “I knew from the albums that he could sing, but the only proof I had going into this, as opposed to testing him, was a lunch at Mr. Chow, where he said, ‘I can do everything that I need to do to play the role.’ But it was simply him saying it, that’s all we were going on, until we got into that recording studio.”

Mark told Murphy, “You need to commit to this role. You can’t peek from behind it.” But inwardly the producer was confident; he knew there was no way Murphy would put himself in the role were he not able to pull it off. “Because, let’s face it, it was risky,” Mark says. “Singing and dancing up a storm, which he had never done in a movie—if it didn’t work, it could have been embarrassing. So if he said he could do it, that was sufficient.”

Casting Deena Jones, the Diana Ross–like diva, proved trickier. “Be'yonce’s folks were the most aggressive,” recalls Mark. “They said, ‘She wants a shot at this.’” The role had some personal resonance for her: like Ross, she had emerged from a three- woman group—Destiny’s Child—that had suffered some acrimony and a breakup. And like Deena, whose struggle to escape the clutches of Curtis takes the form of wanting to branch out into acting, Beyoncé is herself becoming a movie star. Says Condon, “Right now Beyoncé is living the second act of the story, which is basically that kind of craving to express herself in a new medium, in movies, you know? And to kind of go beyond what people’s idea of her is.”

But unlike Foxx and Murphy she wasn’t yet an actor. She had had roles in Austin Powers in Goldmember and the Steve Martin remake of The Pink Panther, but they didn’t amount to much. “I looked at everything she’d done on film,” says Condon, “I got the videos, and I still didn’t have the answer about what she could do it or not, and it just felt to important, first of all, in the musical sense really see if she could take that very kind in-your-face, powerful, contemporary person she projects, and really shed it, to create a stage persona, performance style, singing style. Because what no one wanted was Yoncé Ross—or, rather, Beyoncé Jones, I had to become something very, very different. And, secondly, did she have the chops?”

Beyoncé understood their questions: “usual performance style—the energy and dancing and my growling—is the complete opposite of Deena. They didn’t know could be understated, and if I could play part, basically.” She readily agreed to action. The deal struck was that she would be the only person the filmmakers would and that they would agree to let her keep within a week or two whether she got the part. Condon and Mark tested her in N York, and asked her to read two drama scenes and sing a number. “She was completely charming, and the great thing ab her is she was just right up-front and much she wanted to play this part, which always nice,” Condon recalls. “No games. She was very strong in the acting scenes. Her e were really alive, too, which is always what y look for—expressiveness.” One of the scene Beyoncé had to do occurs early in the mov where Deena, just starting out in her career performs at a talent show. “I was terrific” Beyoncé says of the audition, “which work out great because I was supposed to be and I was nervous and I’d never done a talent show, so it helped.”

Beyoncé had asked if she could do I own hair, makeup, and wardrobe—parti larly tricky in the case of a 60s film; the qui hair and big Afro that were on the height of chic look ridiculous tod way over the top. “You have to pull back” explains Mark. “She had that instinct, I sure, with the hair in particular,” showed up for the audition in a relatively restrai and. “When she came out to do the song she was also wearing this amazing bl low-cut, bugle-beaded gown that was ve Supremes. We said, ‘Oh, my God,’ because she was leaving for Japan to perform the next day. So, we said, ‘Is that gown in yo act?’ She said, ‘No, no. I was at Bergdor over the weekend and found this, and th tailored it for me. It’s for this.’ We were li ‘Whoa, O.K., great.’ And then Bill sa to her, ‘You don’t have to bother with a moves, any choreography—for heaven’s sa don’t worry about that. We have a pi and you’ll sing the song.’ She said, ‘No, r actually, I’ve been watching girl-group tap over the weekend, so I have some moves I you.” Explains Beyoncé, “I looked at eve Cher video, Barbra Streisand, and of coup Diana Ross and the Supremes. And Mar
The most difficult actor to find was a latter-day version of Jennifer Holliday, who had so wowed audiences on Broadway as Effie White, for which she won a Tony, in 1982, and then a Grammy the same year for recording of the song “And I Am Telling You…” (She subsequently has had a very successful recording career and done television.) Holliday’s were very big buses to fill indeed, not only because of her size performance but because Effie is the essence of the piece, its center of moral gravity. She is the performer with the fabulous voice, the vast ambition, but also a diva with hip on her shoulder, an ugly duckling, the one who’s not subtle and glamorous enough prime time, the Mama Cass of the group, who has to sit in the back of the bus to make for Deena so that the group can cross into white clubs, big arenas, and network television. She can’t come across solely as a victim; she has to be attractive, smart, and spunky enough that Curtis falls for her the first place. The audience has to be able to rejoice in her talent when she’s on top, and with her when she goes into a tailspin in second half of the movie.

The casting agents saw 784 women in an on call, put them on tape, winnowed them down, and passed a couple of hundred on Condon and Mark. Condon watched the ones over and over and over. Only the dozen or so finalists were asked to sing “And I Am Lining You…” because the director and producer were afraid of getting tired of it.

As was the case with Beyoncé, Jennifer Hudson’s C.V. resonated with the movie’s stars. She had appeared on American Idol’s 3rd season, and was eliminated in an early round—and so precipitously, in fact, that guest judge Elton John complained to the press that she had not been given her due. But Si

ning, one of the regular judges, told her back stage, in her words, “You only get one chance at it, and the people who don’t win will never be seen again.”

“When I saw her in New York, she was nervous,” Condon recalls. “She knew the song, but for some reason she couldn’t get through it all. Effie needs to have an innate confidence and strength, and I was worried about not seeing that, but there was something there that was really strong.” He and Mark invited her out to L.A. “It was just a question of her getting in touch with that confidence that had been beaten out of her,” Condon continues. “We put her on tape, and it was ‘Oh, my God—there’s Effie.’ It was ironic: the thing that made her a little tentative was the part of her life that so exactly mirrored Effie’s, and that turned out to be very useful for the second half of this movie, because that’s what happened to her too.”

In Hudson’s telling, the decision-making process took a bit longer. She had been in Orlando, Florida, recording an album. When she was called to L.A. for the screen test, the filmmakers told her to bring all her things with her in case she was selected and wouldn’t be returning. (The cast was just weeks away from rehearsals.) But after the audition she was sent back to Orlando. She didn’t bother to unpack her suitcase, though, because she was still talking herself into the part, repeating to herself, “I’m Effie, I’m Effie!”

“I was in the studio when they called,” she remembers. “My producer said, ‘Some lady’s on the phone—she wants to speak to you’ and he’s getting ready to hang up, and I went, ‘Oh my God, oh my God!’ I was terrified, because this has been a roller coaster. One minute I got the part, I’m the best. The next minute they’re going in a different direction. Then I’m being considered again. So at this moment I’m not knowing what to expect. So Bill gets on the phone and says, ‘Congratulations, Jennifer Hudson. You’re Effie White.’ I lost my mind. I had a fit. I hit the floor—‘Oh, thank you, God!’”

Fox felt comfortable playing Curtis because, he says, he has met many people like him in the record business. Every once in a while, someone would remark, “Wouldn’t it be better to lighten up, make Curtis nicer?” Fox would have none of it, didn’t mind being disagreeable. “When you always play the characters that are likable,” he says, “there’s only so far you can go. But when you have demons the way Ray Charles had demons, when you have demons like Curtis had demons, they become these black holes that all the other characters have to pull themselves out of. The performance had to be relentless, it had to be real, because that’s the way some of these characters you meet in the record business are.”

Beyoncé had a different challenge. “The hardest thing was trying to make sure that I did not see any of my usual performing style in the movie,” she says, “I treated all of the singing like acting. I acted out the words with my coach, and treated them like scenes. Not like performances. ‘Cause it was all the small, intricate things that made Deena stand out. She was very passive, and everything she did was really, really subtle. Voically, I had to completely hold back. I had to whisper things—I couldn’t sing anything in my full voice—and the simpler I sang it, the happier the director was.”

Beyoncé shouldered the special burden of playing a character clearly modeled on a well-known star, but she insists that while she studied Diana Ross’s performance style, Deena is a very different character from Ross—who had voiced some resentment of Dreamgirls when it was on Broadway and is rumored to be no more pleased about the movie. As it happens, the two stars ran into each other while the film was in production, but the encounter went swimmingly. “I saw Diana Ross [at a party],” Beyoncé says, “and I was so nervous to say hello, just completely star-struck, because I have a shrine of her—my whole trailer is covered in her pictures. It was almost like she wasn’t real. I guess she figured that out, because she said hello to me. She was so sweet to me, it made me feel great.”

The shoot was particularly tough on Hudson, who had had very little acting experience. Before principal photography began, this past January, she recalls, “I would go from acting class to choreography, to fittings that lasted forever, to vocal, all day every day—it felt like school all over again. Everybody else got a week off for Christmas. I got 48 hours. I felt I was a whole other person. I had to dress a different way. I had to eat a different way. I had to live in a different time. Effie has an attitude. She’s rude, she doesn’t care, she wants to run the show. She wants to do what she wants to do when she wants to do it. She will tell you what she thinks in a hot second, and doesn’t care how you feel about it. She has no respect for anyone. She doesn’t follow the rules.” Condon wanted her to stay in character off the set. “Bill would tell me, ‘Jennifer, you’re too sweet. Get angry. Walk in here late.’ We’re in vocal rehearsal. They’re telling [the rest of the cast], ‘Sing this, sing that.’ They’re singing, and I’m sitting there, and they’re like, ‘Jennifer, you’re not singing.’ ‘I’m Effie—I don’t have to sing. I don’t have to rehearse.’ ‘Excuse me?’ ‘I don’t need to rehearse—I’m perfect.’ I’m Jamie and Beyoncé’s biggest fan, and I’d tell them, ‘Bill told me to do this. This is my homework assignment. I have to be mean to you guys.’”

Condon had his own stresses. He had gone directly from Kinsey to the $75 million Dreamgirls. He had shot Kinsey in 34 days, on an $11 million budget. How did he take to being thrown into the deep end of a studio pool? “For me it was Titanic. There’s all...
Dreamgirls

the people around, and the movie-star thing. But I found it to be amazingly similar to making the smaller movies. I felt as much in control. Every so often there would be questions raised, like 'This person's never done this before,' or about a particular thing, like 'Is there too much sung dialogue?' The musical is its own form, its own world, and if you're not inside it, it's a little hard to comment on it and judge it. I always remember one thing Rob Marshall said—which I used a few times—that there are three magic words when you're dealing with movie people and having a conversation about how you do things in a musical. There were times when I used those words in an intimidating way, or in an attempt to be intimidating. The three words were 'In a musical . . . ' delivered in a patient voice, as if spoken to a child.

The most difficult scene, needless to say, was Effie's "And I Am Telling You . . ." Condon thought he could get it in the can in one day, but it took four. Recalls Hudson, "I was so worried about doing that scene, because it was, Oh wow, this is the big test. If you're a real actress, you can cry on cue—so all this about me being an amateur was in the back of my head. Oh, my God, am I going to be able to cry? But that turned out to be the least of my problems. There were takes where we had to stop because I was crying too hard. I was able to pull that emotion out of me just by connecting to Florence's story. To start this group, get kicked into the background, get kicked out of the group, go broke, get sick, die? That made me angry. It was, 'You didn't get your justice, you didn't get to tell your story, but you know what? I'm going to get it for you.'"

Dreamgirls is a passion project, and it could only be made by a studio, but I don't know how many of those films there are," says Condon, with an eye to his own future. "In terms of big studio things, I look around and think, What would I like to have made? And I don't see a lot. I don't feel so seduced by the toys to think that I want to do that studio thing over and over again. With movies now, it's so much like the theater model, where it used to be Broadway that encompassed all of theater—nothing really mattered unless you got to Broadway—until the 60s, when Broadway became the venue for great big products, and then there was also a world of theater happening Off Broadway, regional theater, everywhere else, the stuff that never gets to Broadway. My fantasy is that if Dreamgirls does well it'll help get movies at the S15, $20 million level easier for me to make for a bit of time, you know?"

Dreamgirls has "hit" written all over it, and if it does the kind of business it should, Condon will enter the magic circle of A-list directors, at the late-breaking age of 51, with three fine films in a row. A preoccupation of Dreamgirls is the high cost of crossing over, or, in more general terms, success, which is what crossing over for these films meant. The film adumbrates the several ways this journey savages talent and curdles the soul. In one memorable shot that catches the seesaw relationship between power and vulnerability, the yin and yang of cautionary tales like this one, Curtis and Deena, at the apex of their careers, dine alone in their glass bubble of a house at opposite ends of a long table—only marginally longer than the one in Citizen Kane—separated by a distance less physical than emotional. Curtis's ruthless manipulation of Deena's career has estranged them. "To me, the whole story is a progression of people who fall away from him, a each one falls away at the moment when they aren't able to relinquish their own pathetic selves," explains Condon. "Deena, the last one. It takes her all that time to finally realize that she's abandoned who she should be." Condon started writing movies on cop of the 80s, the tipping point where directors' decade turned into the producer decade. He had a front-row seat at the ad-cattle that ended the 70s, where one tower talent after another sparked, flickered out, and faded to black in a long, dark night mayhem and drugs. He is determined now to let it happen to him, and maybe it won't, cause his ambitions are more modest. "I'm on vacation after Kinsey, this incredibly girding shoot, was like 10 days in New York where I saw 12 plays that I hadn't been to see," he says. "To the frustration of partner and friends, if I ever had more than I knew what to do with, I would fulfill a dream of getting a place in New York small apartment there, so I could see plays. My fantasies are more like the embarrassment wall of DVDs. They don't run to islands in Caribbean."

Besides, his brush with A-list success concludes relatively late in life, which was not the case with most of the movie brats of the generation before, who were transformed from frogs into princes before they were 30. "I remember going to Sundance with Gods and Monsters' first time, and I was amazed by seeing you filmmakers sort of full born, who were totally confident," he says. "It took me a long time to feel that. My model wasn't Cassavetes, who was John Carpenter, it was Halloween—a kind of indie film. I didn't confidently come someone who felt he had something contribute until my 40s. I'm 50 now. I'm surrounded, I'm set, I'm done." 

Neocon Turnaround

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 90 In fact seem to be a man of principle who's steadfastly pursuing what he thinks is the right course," says Gaffney. "He talks about it, but the policy doesn't track with the rhetoric, and that's what creates the incoherence that causes us problems around the world and at home. It also creates the sense that you can take him on with impunity."

In 2002 and '03, Danielle Pletka, a Middle East expert at the A.E.I., arranged a series of conferences on the future of Iraq. At one I attended, in October 2002, Perle and Chalabi were on the platform, while in the audience were a Who's Who of Iraq policymakers from the Pentagon and the vice president's office. Pletka's bitterness now is unrestrained. "I think that even though the president remains rhetorically committed to the idea of what he calls his 'freedom agenda' it's over," she says. "It turns out we stink at it. And we don't just stink at it in Iraq. We stink at it in Egypt. And in Lebanon. And in the Palestinian territories. And in Jordan. And in Yemen. And in Algeria. And everywhere else we try at it. Because, fundamentally, the message hasn't gotten out to the people on the ground. . . . There is no one out there saying, 'These are the marching orders. Follow them or go and find a new job.' That was what those fights were about. A true believers lost. Now, that's not to say they had won, everything would be com up roses. But I do think that we had a window of opportunity to avert a lot of problems that we now see."

For Kenneth Adelman, "the most disappointing and awful moment of the whole administration was the day that Bush gave the President's Medal of Freedom to [former C.I.A. director] George Tenet, General Tommy Franks, and Jerry [Paul] Bremer—the most incompetent people who've ever served in such key spots. And they get the highest civilian honor a president can bestow on anyone! That was the day I checked out of this administration. It was then I thought, There's no seriousness here. The are not serious people. If he had been serious, the president would have realized th
the three are each directly responsible for disaster of Iraq."

The most damning assessment of all comes from David Frum: “I always believed speechwriter that if you could persuade president to commit himself to certain details, he would feel himself committed to ideas that underlay those words. And the shock to me has been that, although the aident said the words, he just did not abcite the ideas. And that is the root of, maybe, ything.”

IV
Was Rumsfeld Lousy? You Bet!

Having started so badly, the neocons say, America’s occupation of Iraq soon got se. Michael Rubin is a speaker of Persan Arabic who worked for Feith’s Office of Civil Affairs and, after the invasion, for the Provisional Authority (C.P.A.). He is back in the Bush administration, but in that vital year the only Iraqi leaders with the ability to make a difference were those who coninued armed militias.

The creation of the fortified Green Zone, Rubin, who chose to live outside it durin that year in Baghdad, was “a disaster wait- to happen.” It soon became a “bubble,” he says. Because Bremer and the senior C.P.A. staff were lost completely detached from the wors- ne realities, including the swelling assistance programs. "The guys outside—for example, civil-affairs officials, some of the USAID States Agency for International Development] workers—were so refined that they Enrollment, and the administration had no way of taking territory and defending it. “There’s never been a successful anti-insurgency cam- paign that operated according to scare- and-destroy, because bad guys just come back in after they’ve passed through and kill the people that supported you,” Woolsey explains. “How the U.S. government’s post- fall-of-Baghdad planning could have ignored that history of Vietnam is stunning to me.”

But Rumsfeld and Bush were never willing to provide the high troop levels that Woolsey says are necessary for clear-and-hold.

Adelman’s dismay at the handling of the insurgency is one reason he now criticizes Rumsfeld so severely. He is also disgusted by the former defense secretary’s claims that the mayhem has been exaggerated by the media, and that the whole war is better P.R. “The problem here is not a selling job. The problem is a performance job,” Adelman says. “Rumsfeld has said that the war could never be lost in Iraq; it could only be lost in Washington. I don’t think that’s true at all. We’re losing in Iraq.”

As we leave the restaurant together, Adelman points to an office on the corner of Washington’s 18th Street Northwest where he and Rumsfeld first worked together, during the Nixon administration, in 1972. “I’ve worked there three times in my life. I have great respect for him. I’m extremely fond of him. I’ve been to each of his houses, in Chicago, Ga, and Las Vegas. We’ve spent a lot of vacations together, been around the world together, spent a week together in Vietnam. I’m very, very fond of him, but I’m crushed by his performance. Did he change, or were we wrong in the past? Or is it that he was never really challenged before? I don’t know. He certainly fooled me.”

V
A Huge Strategic Defeat

Though some, such as James Woolsey, still hope against hope for success in Iraq, most of the neocons I speak with are braced for defeat. Even if the worst is avoided, the outcome will bear no resemblance to the scenarios they and their friends inside the administration laid out back in the, grad, confident morning of 2003. “I think we’re facing with a range of pretty bad alternatives,” says Eliot Cohen. “The problem you’re now dealing with is sectarian violence, and a lot of Iranian activity, and those I’m not sure can be rolled back—certainly not without a substantial use of force that I’m not sure we have the stomach for. In any case, the things that were possible in ‘03, ‘04, are no longer possible.”

Cohen says his best hope now is not something on the way toward democracy but renewed dictatorship, perhaps led by a former Ba’athist: “I think probably the least bad alternative that we come to sooner or later is a government of national salvation that will be a thinly disguised coup.” However, he adds, “I wouldn’t be surprised if what we end up doing instead of some sort of withdrawal at some sort of timetable and leaving the place in a pretty ghastly mess.” And that, he believes, would be “as bad as an outcome as one could imagine…. Our choices now are between bad and awful.”

In the short run, Cohen believes, the main beneficiary of America’s intervention in Iraq is the mullahs’ regime in Iran, along with its extremist president, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad. And far from heralding the hoped-for era of liberal Middle East reform, he says, “I do think it’s going to end up encouraging various strands of Islamism, both Shia and Sunni, and probably will bring destabilization of some regimes of a more tradi- tional kind, which already have their problems.” The risk of terrorism on American soil may well increase, too, he fears. “The best news is that the United States remains a healthy, vibrant, vigorous society. So, in a real pinch, we can still pull ourselves together. Unfortunately, it will probably take another big hit. And a very different quality of leadership. Maybe we’ll get it.”

Frank Gaffney, of the Center for Security Policy, is more pessimistic. While defeat in Iraq is not certain, he regards it as increasingly likely. “It’s not a perfect parallel here, but I would say it would approach to losing the Battle of Britain in World War II,” he says. “Our enemies will be emboldened and will re-double their efforts. Our friends will be demoralized and disassociate themselves
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from us. The delusion is to think that the war is confined to Iraq, and that America can walk away. Failure in Iraq would be a huge strategic defeat.” It may already be too late to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, Gaffney says, pointing out that the Manhattan Project managed to build them in less than four years from a far smaller base of knowledge. “I would say that the likelihood of military action against Iran is 100 percent,” he concludes. “I just don’t know when or under what circumstances. My guess is that it will be in circumstances of their choosing and not ours.”

Richard Perle is almost as apocalyptic. Without some way to turn impending defeat in Iraq to victory, “there will continue to be turbulence and instability in the region. The Sunni in the Gulf, who are already terrified of the Iranians, will become even more terrified of the Iranians. We will be less able to stop an Iranian nuclear program, or Iran’s support for terrorism. The Saudis will go nuclear. They will not want to sit there with Ahmadinejad having the nuclear weapon.” This is not a cheering prospect: a Sunni-Shia civil war raging in Iraq, while its Sunni and Shia neighbors face each other across the Persian Gulf armed with nukes. As for the great diplomatic hope—that the Iraq Study Group, led by George Bush Sr.’s secretary of state James Baker III, can pull off a deal with Syria and Iran to pacify Iraq—Perle is dismissive: “This is a total illusion. Total illusion. What kind of grand deal? The Iranians are not on our side. They’re going to switch over and adopt our side? What can we offer them?”

If the neocon project is not quite dead, it has evidently suffered a crippling blow, from which it may not recover. After our lunch, Adelman sends me an e-mail saying that he now understands the Soviet marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, who committed suicide in the Kremlin when it became clear that the last-ditch Communist coup of 1991 was going to fail. A note he left behind stated, “Everything I have devoted my life to building is in ruins.” “I do not share that level of desperation,” Adelman writes. “Nevertheless, I feel that the incompetence of the Bush team means that most everything we ever stood for now also lies in ruins.”

Frums admits that the optimistic vision he and Perle set out in their book will not now come to pass. “One of the things that we were talking about in that last chapter was the hope that fairly easily this world governed by law, the world of the North Atlantic, can be extended to include the Arab and Muslim Middle East,” he says. “I think, coming away from Iraq, people are going to say that’s not true, and that the world governed by law will be only a portion of the world. The aftermath of Iraq is that walls are going to go up, and the belief that this is a deep cultural divide is going to deepen.” This is already happening in Europe, he adds, citing the British government’s campaign against the wearing of veils by women and the Pope’s recent critical comments about Islam. As neoconservative optimism withers, Frum fears, the only winner of the debate over Iraq will be Samuel Huntington whose 1996 book famously forecast a “clash of civilizations” between the West and Is.

Reading these interviews, those who always opposed the war would be just feeling a sense of vindication. Yet even the future turns out to be brighter than neocons now fear, the depth and intractability of the Iraqi quagmire allow precious room for Schadenfreude. Besides the sole who continue to die, there are the Iraqis, especially the reformers, whose hopes were cruelly raised. “Where I most blame George Bush,” says the A.E.I.’s Michael Rubin, that, through his rhetoric, people truly him, people believed him. Reformers c. out of the woodwork and exposed themselves. By failing to match his rhetoric action. Bush has betrayed them in a way is “not much different from what his fans did on February 15, 1991, when he called Iraqi people to rise up, and then had second thoughts and didn’t do anything once they did.” Those who answered the elder Bush call were massacred.

All the neocons are adamant that, however hard it may be, stabilizing Iraq is the option. The consequences of a precipitous withdrawal, they say, would be far worse. Listening to them make this argument cannot avoid drawing a deeply disturbing conclusion. One of the reasons we are in mess is that the neocons’ gleaming pre-promises turned out to be wrong. The horrifying possibility is that, this time, may be right.

Augusten Burroughs

continued from page 110 in a way they felt was cruel and remarkably malicious and false in close to two dozen instances.

Both during interviews and in the lawsuit, members of the Turcotte family challenge a cornerstone of the book: the amount of time Burroughs lived in the house and the circumstances under which he came to be there. The chronology of the book is extremely hard to follow, as there are a few specific dates. But a synopsis on the back cover states that Burroughs started living at the house at the age of 12 (born in 1965, he turned 12 in 1977), when his mother gave him away to Dr. Turcotte. The book suggests that Burroughs lived primarily there until he was about 17. According to the family, Burroughs had a room in the house for roughly a year and a half, beginning in 1980, when he was 15. Even during that period, says the family, he was going back and forth between the Turcotte home in Northampton and his mother’s apartment in Amherst. In addition, the family said that Burroughs’s mother assigned guardianship to Dr. Turcotte so that Burroughs could attend public school in Northampton.

“It was just so devastating for me,” says June, who plays a large role in the book. “I just didn’t see it coming. Why would he humiliate me in that way, and my family? Why would he target us and say that we were harmful to him?”

“I never would have caused that kid any harm, just never would hurt him in any way. Every time he was in trouble and I was asked to help, I helped. I did my best to make sure that he was never humiliated. He was a shy kid a lot of the time. His parents went through a lot and he told me that I was the one person he trusted.” June continues. “Why would you do that to the only person you trusted?”

Theresa may be wondering the same thing. In a public appearance before people at the Hilbert Circle Theatre, in dianapolis, in October, Burroughs fielded question from the audience about what he had maintained any contact with the family. Burroughs, who is now 41, answered that the only person he had kept up with for period of time was Natalie (Theresa), that they had spoken “a few times” when was in his 20s.

But, according to Theresa, they spoke after that. In the mid-1990s, after an invitation from Burroughs, she and daughter visited him in New York, as she remembers it, he went on and about what a wonderful person she was, what a kind person she was, how she had gotten it together, how she had gone...
Burrroughs and his publisher did what is often done in potentially controversial memoirs to avoid issues of invasion of privacy—they changed the names and other identifying characteristics. But the attempt to disguise them is haphazard at best. Most editions state that the family resides in Northampton, in Massachusetts. Smith College, which is in Northampton, is mentioned throughout the book. The name of the Turcotte's street is not given, but street names in their neighborhood are specified. So are characteristics that make it easy to identify Dr. Turcotte, given his notoriety in the community, including the fact that he wore a Santa Claus hat and had lost his license to practice medicine. Family members cited instances of people identifying them as the "Finch" family.

It was so easy to figure out who the Finches were that Burrroughs himself, in a 2003 interview with the online publication Booksline, essentially told reporters how to do it. "The doctor was notorious in that area, absolutely notorious, so I always felt it was laziness on the part of reporters to question [the veracity]," he was quoted as saying. "All you have to do is search western Massachusetts doctors in the '70s, in Northampton area—how many psychiatrists were there—and you can access a lot of stories, lots and lots of stories." In September of 2002, the real name of the family was used in a People magazine profile of Burrroughs. When I interviewed Burrroughs, he said that he had not given People the name and has never revealed it publicly.

When I asked Burrroughs if he wished in hindsight that he had done a better job of disguising the identities of the family, he said, "No. I think I did a good job of disguising them. I didn't out them. I didn't reveal their names to the press."

Instead, he said, it was the family that made itself public by filing the lawsuit and attaching real names to the pseudonyms that he had used.

"But the world knew before," I pointed out.

"No," he said emphatically.

"People magazine. Didn't they mention the name Turcotte?"

"They did," he then acknowledged. "They didn't respect. They didn't respect the efforts that I made to conceal their identities. It was surprising."

What upset Theresa so terribly, she says, what contributed to months of nausea and overwhelming anxiety and repeated trips to the emergency room, not to mention an inability to work and hours of psychotherapy, was the book's revelation that she
Augusten Burroughs

had been the key witness in a statutory-rape case. As a young teenager she had entered into a relationship with a man 21 years her senior, who became her legal guardian. He was convicted of statutory rape in 1982.

Burroughs knew how difficult that period had been for her, she says. Every day, he had waited for her outside the courtroom, and he was the only one she talked to about the ordeal, how exhausted and afraid she was.

"I really loved him and he helped me a lot," she says. "At least I felt that way."

She says she spent years in therapy working to move beyond what had happened. She subsequently graduated from Smith, got her master's degree, found a job she liked, and developed a close-knit circle of friends. But, she says, she had never told her own daughter, Emerald, about the episode.

The references to what happened are roughly a page in the book. Certain details, she says, were twisted. But the outline is still there, in black and white. "It really devastated me to see it in print," she says. "It was really hard … extremely hard. Extremely, extremely, extremely hard," she says, becoming visibly upset. In the past few years, as she has tried to cope with what has been written about her, she has said to herself "over and over again, This is not about you. This is not about you. This is definitely not about you. Because this is not about me. It's just not about me. I wish that you could just step back in history and see who I was back then. It's not me. It just wasn't my family and it wasn't me."

B arbara Turcotte Weene says she avoided reading the book because she could see what it was doing in particular to June and Theresa, emotionally tearing them apart and, in the case of Theresa, inflicting physical damage as well. On two occasions, Theresa says, she went to the emergency room of the Baystate Medical Center because of overwhelming anxiety and nausea, only to be sent home. She says she then went to a hospital emergency room a third time, on this occasion Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, after repeatedly vomiting. According to her account, she begged medical personnel to give her Xanax and was transferred to the psychiatric ward of Holyoke hospital. When she woke up the next day a doctor, after examining her, said that there might actually be something physically wrong with her. She had emergency gall-bladder surgery later that day, and Weene believes that her sister's physical suffering was related to her psychological reaction to the book.

"I thought there was something toxic about [the book] and I did not want to be upset. … I could tell my sisters were in a lot of pain and I thought that it was taking up a lot of their lives and I wanted to stay above it and I was hoping it would go away," says Weene. But in 2004, after hearing from family members that a film version of the book was in development, and reading about it herself online, she knew that the book was not going to go away.

At first, as she read it, she said, she found it light and funny, if also sick and false, with its now famous references to Dr. Turcotte's Masturbatorium (the family believes that Burroughs may have created this from the fact that Dr. Turcotte maintained what he called the Institute for the Advancement of Maturation) and the scene in which Theresa and Liese invite the young Burroughs to play with an old electroshock machine that is kept under the stairs of the Turcotte house. In interviews, the six Turcotte children stated that it was not an electroshock machine that was kept under the stairs but, rather, an old Electrolux vacuum cleaner that was missing a wheel.

Weene herself is a minor character in the book. She wasn't living in the house when the events in the book took place. The description of her is barely a page, but compliments Burroughs pays ("She was slim, sophisticated and listened to Laura Nyro and fusion jazz") are almost immediately countered by his writing that other family members thought she was a "stuck-up cunt." Burroughs writes that Weene dated black men and kept "African fertility icons" in her apartment. The objects Burroughs referred to were not African fertility icons but gifts given to her from all over the world, says Weene, including a musical instrument.

To prove her point, she brought them into a class on the memoir at the University of Massachusetts, after being invited to speak on the impact of Running with Scissors, and showed them to the students. She says when she told them these were the "African fertility icons" she believes Burroughs had referred to, they were dumbfounded.

Weene was upset by the reference, but she could handle it. What she could not handle, what nauseated her and prevented her from getting out of bed for two days, was the reference to the statutory-rape trial and the characterization of her daughter, Rebekah. Burroughs states that, after leaving Northampton, Rebekah became a massage therapist, "who gave hand jobs." Both Weene and Rebekah said emphatically during interviews that the characterization was false.

"I was, like, a little girl who was his friend [at the time of the book]. I had never been unkind to him in any way," says Rebekah in a phone interview from California, where she is a licensed massage therapist. "I just didn't understand. And then I read the part about my cousin and I understood. Because I thought, O.K. He's on an all-out attack and he's going to take two little children and attack them and make it as disgusting as possible, and that when it sort of hit me that we were being attacked."

Her cousin John Turcotte was called "Poo Bear" in the book, a seemingly intimate scatological reference. He did have such a nickname as an infant, say family members, but it was spelled "Poo Bear," based on A. A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh books, a three different captioned photos and captions supplied by the family clearly identified him as "Poo Bear."

Burroughs describes John Turcotte, a six years old, running into a room of house naked, with his penis jiggling and the odor of his feet so strong that Burroughs could smell it from across the room, squats beneath the grand piano in the living room, "shitting," says, "Poo can poo," a he were still a toddler, then lifts his finger his nose so he can sniff it.

Theresa and Liese, who according to book witnesses the defecation incident, that it did not happen. Married with children, John Turcotte says he has been unable to ever discuss the book with his wife because of the pain it has caused her. He was a police officer at the time the book came out, and he says the description was so devastating to him that he quit the force out of fear that members of the department would read it and make the link to him. He imagined that everybody was thinking that somehow he was carrying a sign around my neck [that said], 'Look at me, everybody. I'm Poo Bear.'"

When I interviewed Burroughs in March, it was understood that likely could not comment on the lawsuits because it was pending. There were reasons for the interview. The first was Burroughs's new book, a collection of personal essays called Possible Side Effects. The second was the cloud that Burroughs had come under as a result of the controversy over James Frey's A Million Little Pieces, a Frey's admission of fabrications. In the aftermath of the Frey incident, St. Martin's sent out advance copies of Burroughs's new book for reviewers with a disclaimer to read. "Some of the events described happened as related, others were expanded and changed. Some of the individuals portrayed are composites of more than one person and many names and identifying characteristics have been changed as well."

"It looks like I was scared shitless my publisher was," said Burroughs of disclaimer, but he indicated that it had already been in the works before the Frey controversy, and he correctly pointed o
all of his nonfiction books carry dis- mers. He did not seem concerned that Frey incident would affect him: “I just don’t believe that there’s a huge percenti- on of memoirists and nonfiction writers in general there who are deliberately lying inventing huge elaborate tales. I just d believe it.”

When I did ask questions about the law- s, Burroughs addressed at least some them. After interviewing members of Turcotte family in September, I made ed requests to interview Burroughs in, and contacted representatives at St. rinn’s as well. Both Burroughs and St. rinn’s were informed that the family had in. The requests were turned in, citing the pending litigation.

“Mr. Burroughs and St. Martin’s both y the allegations asserted in the law,” Paul Steven, the general counsel of Martin’s, wrote in an e-mail. “Our de on not to comment does not mean t we or Mr. Burroughs agree that any what the Turcottes may have told you is urate.”

Neither the Turcotte family nor the law’s representing them, Howard M. Cooper and Tyler Chapman, of the Boston law firm Ik & Weld LLP, have seen Burroughs’s trial. A request by letter to Burroughs in Vanity Fair, urging him to produce the trial, was never responded to. One small ce of his writing kept by the family may d some light on the nature and tone of it in them: “Sometimes I just want sit in my very own world and think of naughtiest of things with no one to tell what not to think about. My own world very important to me. I need it but too ch is dangerous. I guess I sit in my own ld so much because the surgeon general determined that this world is dangerous my health.”

There is no doubt that Dr. Turcotte was a troublesome presence in Northampton ill his death, in 2000. He had distinct no sobre psychiatry, including allowing jents to live in the Turcotte house at es. He also had distinct notions about free will of children, the right of young ose to make their own choices. d with a wife and six children and an house in Northampton, he had financial blems. His license to practice medicine revoked by the Massachusetts Board Registration in Medicine for “gross mis- duct,” which included allowing a male dent, Jonathan Frey, to assume guards- ship of Theresa when she was 13; not coming properly suspicious after there abundant evidence that they had been ing sexual relations; and soliciting mon- from Frey in the form of requests for fans.” (It was Frey who was convicted, in 1982, of the statutory rape of Theresa.)

John Robison, Burroughs’s older brother, has been a vigorous advocate for him, attest- ing to the truth of what Burroughs has w written. In an interview with The Boston Globe last March, Robison said that he had wit- nessed some of the more sensational scenes described in the book, such as Dr. Turcotte’s examing his own feces; his wife’s eating dried dog food; the placement of the living- room furniture in the front yard; and the predatory behavior of the former patient of Dr. Turcotte’s, who, according to the book, had an affair with Burroughs. “Anyone who reads the available public record about Turcotte will conclude that my brother’s book is eminently believable,” Robison told the Globe.

Because of the constraints Burroughs said he was under, I limited my questions about the alleged fabrications. But I did ask him about a famous scene in the book the family has asserted is false, in which he and Theresa, bored and not liking the low ceiling in the Turcotte home, spontaneously decide to take it down.

“And you have proof, right? Is it in your journals?”

“Um … yeah, that’s something that can be proved.”

“Through the journals?”

“Look at the ceiling. Just look at it.”

The ceiling of the kitchen of the Turcotte home was indeed removed while Burroughs lived there, exposing the original vaulted beams. The work was done as part of a re- modeling of the kitchen by someone living in the home who had carpentry experience. Theresa said, “Chris and I never tore down that ceiling. That’s the plain, simple fact,” she says. “We never did.”

I also asked Burroughs about another pivotal moment in Running with Scissors— when his mother allowed Dr. Turcotte to become his legal guardian. It is a crucial point in the book that his mother signed over guardianship of him to her psychiatris because of her struggle to find herself both creatively and personally. The act was seized on by reviewers as one of almost monstrous selfishness—a mother giving her child away.

The family’s suit says Dr. Turcotte’s guardianship had to do with schooling is- sues. And Burroughs conceded during our interview that a change in schooling from Amherst to Northampton was “one of the reasons,” although it was never specifically cited as a reason in the book. “That was one of the reasons. You know, that would en- able me to hopefully go to a Northampton school… But the truth is my mother could not raise me and she believed that when you were 13 you were a free person and you were an adult.”

But the documents provided by the fam-
Augusten Burroughs

the name Finch. But, unlike the book, the film makes no mention of Massachusetts or Northampton.

Burroughs said he was “dumbfounded” and “incredible” when he read the suit. “You’ve got to be kidding me” was his reaction. “I couldn’t believe it.”

“It is very painful,” he said, his voice dropping, as if he too had been betrayed. “And it’s also painful to have your childhood questioned, to have the experiences you went through, you talk about, questioned.”

He used a tellingly dramatic anecdote to explain his feelings. “I used to have nightmares all through my 20s and 30s that I was in the [Turcotte] house again, in the TV room, but no one else was there—they were in the next rooms. [I] felt the worst panic that I have to get out of here. [I’d] wake up and I’d be like, ‘Ah, it was just a dream.’ And then they went away after I wrote the book. Now they’re back.”

 “[The suit] felt like ‘Oh no. When am I going to get away from this family? When am I going to be able to get away from this childhood? When can I get out of the house?’ It was a remarkable statement, given to me by Burroughs who chose to make personal history public by writing *Room with Scissors*, not the family. Just as remarkable as when he looked at me with utter sincerity and said this of the family he had written about: “I hoped that they would recognize themselves and love it,” he said. “I hoped [Theresa] most of all would love it. Then, once again came the low and wistful tone, the aggrieved memoirist: ‘But this isn’t what happened.’”

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Foley Scandal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 101 him begin long-range planning for ascension to that higher body. Kirk Fordham, who was openly gay, found his new boss to be “notoriously friendly all across Capitol Hill. I was always conscious of the fact because he was gay; if he struck up a conversation with a younger staffer or intern or an assistant in Congressman DeLay’s office and lingered too long, I would nudge him.”

“I did see him with younger men; riding bikes or at the gym,” realizes Petra Levin in hindsight. “It angered him that his lives had to be so separate.”

The earliest complaint by a page was in either 2000 or 2001, when a young man went to Arizona Republican congressman Jim Kolbe’s office to describe an e-mail from Foley that had made him uncomfortable, and asked that something be done. Kolbe has said he recalls notifying both Foley’s staff and the page clerk’s office, but saw no evidence of any follow-up. Fordham recalls that “Foley never, ever went to gay bars in Washington. He had a limited number of gay friends in D.C. My suspicion is that part of the reason he engaged in some of the late-night instant-messaging is because he could never have a healthy, out gay social life.”

A very different picture is suggested by Eric Johnson, who says, “Kirk was a not-want-to-know-about-it conservative. It was common knowledge Mark was very flirty and promising in Washington; it was only gossip fodder because everybody knew he had a partner in Florida. But I didn’t know his interest went to 16-year-olds.”

In a later interview, Fordham expressed his own frustration: “Mark is a caring, compassionate, real guy, but there was also a dark underside that he never let anyone see.”

Foley often held fund-raisers at his Washington town house. Once, when Fordham showed up early to check on the caterer, he found Foley hanging out in the kitchen with two good-looking young guys. One of them, Fordham says, was the head of the College Republicans at his school and clearly gay. “I gave the congressman that You-oughta-know-better kind of look. Lobbyists were already arriving. He gave me that sheepish grin—half See-what-I-found and half I-shouldn’t-be-doing-this. Stuff like that was stupid, reckless, and unnecessary.” Fordham says he was aware that Foley continued to be friendly with the student, “but I have no idea if there was any physical contact.”

Foley also resisted repeated exhortations from his gay political friends to declare himself honestly. Fordham explains, “He was always concerned about being referred to as ‘Mark Foley, comma, openly gay Republican congressman,’ much like he perceived [Massachusetts congressman] Barney Frank and Jim Kolbe as being identified first as being gay rather than by what issues they were advancing.” Voters and colleagues have long since seen beyond Frank’s sexual orientation, but Foley’s folly was to hide his sympathies by voting for the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996. Perhaps cowed by threats from some in the gay community to expose his hypocrisy, Foley went on to support various pro-gay measures, voting to expand health benefits for homosexual couples and include gays in federal hate-crime legislation, among others. “It became a love-hate relationship between Mark and the local [Palm Beach] gay community,” says Hoch.

Romano, the former Lake Worth mayor, who is revolted by the dishonor Foley has brought to his town, acknowledges, “He didn’t stand for anything—he toed the party line—but you couldn’t beat him as a politician. Plus he had a built-in campaign team for his family. His parents never missed a local event.” Foley’s married sister, Donna Watters, 60, spent every weekend during campaign seasons traveling around the state with him, employed as his paid political director, after years of working for him on a volunteer basis. “She liked seeing him successful,” says Levin. “That was her success.”

While Foley was still deliberating whether to run for the Senate, Fordham says he wrote him a long memo warning him to expect people going through his garbage, and private investigators hired to follow him hon and hunt for men he may have had encounters with. “He came back to me saying, ‘Do you really think they would do that all? I think part of him was still in denial that the story really is going to go those lengths.”

The Kids Aren’t All Right

In 2002, Congressman Foley was re-elected with an astounding 79 percent of the vote and appeared to be on top of the world, which he traveled both freely and for free. As a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and a popular speaker, he was royally entertained by private organizations and interest groups that paid for his travel to destinations such as Scotland and Pebble Beach, California. “I don’t feel any embarrassment about doing the trips,” he has said. Since he never took Nisenbaum, he would take his parents. He was especially proud of bringing them to see the Vatican.

With a wealthy boyfriend and without the burden of the bills of a family man, Foley enjoyed two houses of his own—a prized historic town house a short walk from his Washington office, and a condominium near West Palm Beach, which was perhaps for appearances only, since most weekends he stayed over it at Nisenbaum’s luxurious Palm Beach home. Sources say the couple was recently considering buying a summer home in the gay-friendly resort of Ogunquit, Maine.

By now, apparently believing he was to
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founded in 1997. He referred to pedophiles as “America’s most depraved.” Psychologists see reactions like Foley’s as classic—publicly criticizing the selfsame unacceptable behavior he was committing, which he could not personally control. More recently, he helped to write the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, which President Bush has said would “make the Internet safer for our sons and daughters.” It became law two months before Foley’s downfall.

By the time, in 2003, Foley began full-time campaigning to unseat Senator Bob Graham, the periodic threats from his opponents to out him reached a peak. After a Florida alternative newsmagazine reported he was gay, some conservative Republican state officials on board. Then, it seems, national G.O.P. officials got wind of Graham’s intention to retire, so the seat was more seriously in play. Out of the blue, at summer’s end, Foley stunned just about everyone by withdrawing from the race. He called political editor Brian Crowley at The Palm Beach Post and gave as his reason the health of his father, who was in the hospital with prostate cancer. (Edward Foley died in November.)

“For the real political types, it just didn’t ring true,” says Sid Dinerstein, the chairman of the Republican Party in Palm Beach County. “The reason he wound up with a couple of million dollars in campaign money was because we [the state party] were funding his Senate bid. He barely had opponents.” Even this passionate party man is among many who speculate that the White House shut down Foley’s campaign. “Maybe there’s a belief by the powers that be, which is code for Karl Rove, that a gay couldn’t win a Senate seat in Florida,” says Dinerstein. (A spokesperson for Karl Rove says, “Not only did Karl never say that, he doesn’t believe that to be true, either.”) “One could argue it’s untrue, since there’s plenty of rumors about Charlie Crist. [Crist, Florida’s governor-elect, has publicly denied he is gay.] But there were enough whispers that the Foley campaign could have produced embarrassments—and maybe the same embarrassments that we just saw, maybe exactly the same.” Commissioner McCarty goes even further: “I believe somebody took him into a room and showed him a videotape or something pretty definitive, because without a smoking gun, he would have denied it.” Eric Johnson believes the White House possibly knew something about the messages to pages and cut a deal with Foley and Fordham. “Then Foley could stay in the House. Martinez would run in his place [Mel Martinez, who later won the Senate seat], and Kirk could move into a Senate race [by becoming Martinez’s finance director].” Fordham, however, says, “No one ever called—the president, or Karl Rove, or the head of the Republican Party—to discourage him in any way from running.”

After 25 years in public life, Foley had hit the glass ceiling, and he still couldn’t be himself. Within a week, back in his office on the Hill, after the summer recess, he began brooding on the scuttlebutt that he

UP-HILL BATTLE
Kirk Fordham, ex-chief of staff to Foley. “I was trying to be the loyal Republican and do this behind closed doors,” he says.

he called an unusual press conference in May of that year specifically to address the issue, but refused to reveal his sexual orientation. He suggested that Democratic activists were behind the mounting rumors. The Palm Beach Post chose not to make mention of the press conference. Later writing that their policy was to report on a politician’s sexual orientation only when it was “relevant to a news story.” Eric Johnson was astonished. “I thought the media made a real mistake in keeping Mark’s secrets for him. They played into his sense of invulnerability.”

That summer, Foley’s Senate primary campaign looked like a sure winner. A statewide swing with his sister in August brought even
Foley Scandal

The Foley Scandal had dropped far because he couldn’t deal with the gay rumors. In front of his sister and Fordham, he broke down. He sobbed out the story of “repeated abuse that he had received from the priest at his church,” not in anger, according to Fordham, but in shame. One thinks of the priest’s version: For some people, it’s molestation. Maybe for other kids it’s fun, you know? That conflict is precisely what breeds the toxicity of shame, and shame is what spilled out 35 years after Foley’s first gay encounter, when the psychological barriers between his public self and his shadow self began to dissolve. He reportedly tried to tell the story to his parents. His mother could not believe such a thing of a Roman Catholic priest. His father refused to acknowledge the conversation. “[Foley] went into a funk,” says Fordham. “He was disen- gaged from life. He had in some ways lost his purpose for living—his purpose having been to get to the top of the power structure.”

Foley was struggling. Fordham, his chief of staff and confidant, had deserted him. Some in his party were shunning him. “I think it started unraveling for Mark when the White House didn’t support him in running for senator,” says Robin Bernstein. Petra Levin, now remarried, says she noticed that Foley was drinking a lot around this time, privately, when he would be at his home playing cards with Nisenbaum. “I don’t know if the drinking stopped when he went home,” she says. Foley had always liked a glass or two of red wine, says Fordham, and kept a wine-storage cooler in his kitchen. But Levin, who is on the board of the Renaissance Institute, an addiction-treatment center in Palm Beach, was keenly aware of alcoholic patterns and at this point she thought of suggesting to her friend that he needed help.

The E-Mail Trail

A t the end of August 2005, a 16-year-old page forwarded e-mails Foley had sent him to Danielle Savoy, a 29-year-old scheduler for Louisiana representative Rodney Alexander. As the page had worked with her in Alexander’s office, the two were friendly. Savoy says the e-mails’ style was not really lurid, but alarming enough that the page called them “sick.” “Send me an email pie of you as well,” suggested the 52-year-old congressman. “What do you want for your birthday coming up? What stuff do you like to do?” There was talk of Foley’s intended visit to the gym, as well as of the excellent physique of another teenager. Savoy says simply that Foley’s language made her “curious.” She forwarded the e-mails to another friend, with the note, “Hey, what do you think about this?”

In early November, the St. Petersburg Times of Florida, received Savoy’s e-mail. “From that day to this I have no idea how the media got to see it,” says Savoy. “Who knows?” Adam C. Smith, a St. Petersburg Times reporter who was working on the story with Bill Adair, phoned the office of Representative Alexander, but, as executive editor Neil Brown would later point out in an oblique letter to readers, “We were unsuccessful in getting members of Congress who were involved in the matter . . . to acknowledge any problem with Foley’s ambiguous e-mail.” The Miami Herald, which also received the e-mails, barely touched the story. “We didn’t go as far as attempting to reach out to other pages,” its executive editor, Tom Fiedler, later admitted, because the e-mails were “too ambiguous to lead to a news story.” (Fox News also got the e-mails, but chose not to share them with its viewers.) Nonetheless, the newspaper’s calls to congressmen had their effect.

After Representative Alexander was contacted by the St. Petersburg Times, he demanded to see exactly what his former page had sent Savoy—and he wanted it very quickly, judging by his staff’s next actions. Savoy, who was home ill, was phoned by Alexander’s press secretary, Adam Terry, who roused her from her sickbed so she could come to the office at once. Instead, she gave him her pass- word, and the Foley e-mails were promptly ripped from her computer. (Savoy is quick to acknowledge that she is a registered Republican—contradicting Hastert’s early response when the scandal erupted this past September, blaming “a lot of Democratic operatives” for the leak.)

A wave of panic swept through Congress as Republican leaders and staffers suddenly realized that Foley’s predatory activities were attracting attention. As one deeply knowledgeable source tells V.F., “In November [2005], why did the whole issue of Foley come up at all? Was it self-enforcement on the part of Congress? No! The St. Petersburg Times was calling around, asking tough questions! It created the spark. Even though they didn’t publish [the story], the act of reporting was the only oversight there.” Within days of the calls from reporters, everyone went into action. Royal Alexander, chief of staff (but no relation) to the Louisiana congressman, swiftly informed a lower-level Hastert aide about the e-mails, although, citing the concerns of the boy’s family, he did not reveal their exact contents. The Hastert aide, in turn, quickly talked to Mike Stokke, the Speaker’s deputy chief of staff, as well as to his chief counsel, Ted Van Der Meid.

Foley’s new chief of staff, Liz Nicolson, asked her boss for the e-mails, but she was out of luck, too. “I delete all my e-mails,” he told her. So Nicolson called Representative Alexander’s office for a copy of her own boss’s e-mails. The response she got, according to one knowledgeable source, was odd.” First Alexander replied, “Sure, someone over right away, and we’ll give you a copy of the e-mail,” according to the source. “Then they said, ‘No, we’re not going to give you the e-mail.’

“My what?” asked Nicolson.

“The congressman doesn’t want to be involved,” Nicolson was told. “(Appar- ently) Representative Alexander’s office had advised by an attorney not to show the tents.” Fordham says. Royal Alexander declined to comment.)

Jeff Trandahl, the House clerk and Con- trolof official who was most concerned about the pages, and Representative John S- kus, a tall West Point graduate and Illi- Republican who heads the five-men House Page Board, confronted Foley in Cannon House Office Building office, the tenor of their dispute was swiftly com- nicated to various staffers, one of whom was Bill Adair, who received the e-mails, but chose not to share them with its viewers. Nonetheless, the newspaper’s calls to congressmen had their effect.

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After Representative Alexander was contacted by the St. Petersburg Times, he demanded to see exactly what his former page had sent Savoy—and he wanted it very quickly, judging by his staff’s next actions. Savoy, who was home ill, was phoned by Alexander’s press secretary, Adam Terry, who roused her from her sickbed so she could come to the office at once. Instead, she gave him her pass- word, and the Foley e-mails were promptly ripped from her computer. (Savoy is quick to acknowledge that she is a registered Republican—contradicting Hastert’s early response when the scandal erupted this past September, blaming “a lot of Democratic operatives” for the leak.)
That July afternoon, Sloan says, she contacted Leanna Saler, of the F.B.I.'s Washington, D.C., public-corruption office (“because I had once been in touch with me and said I knew of things that might interest her if I could let her know”). She then forwarded Saler eight pages of e-mails. Saler called back an afternoon simply to inquire if Foley had sent those e-mails. That was the last Sloan heard from the F.B.I. Then, on September 28, ABC’s chief investigative correspondent, Brian Ross, posted excerpts from the e-mails on the network’s Web site.

A few days after the ABC scoop, an F.B.I. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, informed The Washington Post that the F.B.I. had opened an investigation into Foley all summer long because the e-mails “did not rise to the level of criminal activity.”

“And that’s true—it didn’t rise to that level!” Sloan concedes. “But that’s why you have an investigation. To see if there’s anything else to find.”

Next, the F.B.I. and Justice department officials, again speaking on condition of anonymity, informed The Washington Post that another agent in the bureau couldn’t investigate Foley because he had heavily redacted e-mails and may have sat on the document for months before sending it their way. “They are lying,” Sloan says. “And I think the reason they’re lying is because the F.B.I. is a cover-your-assency, and they don’t want to be responsible if, in the intervening months, something got hurt while they did it.”

V.F. received a copy of the e-mails Sloan submitted to the F.B.I., but from a different source. It is all the same, unedited: Danielle Sa y, the distressed boy whom Foley was wooing, and the page with the excellent physique. “This is an issue that’s being investigated, it’s not going to be debated in the press,” says F.B.I. spokesman Richard Kolko.

Getting to the Bottom

Toward the end of September 2006, Foley’s staff heard that ABC was investigating the e-mails received by the Louisiana governor. (Stoppsexpredators.blogspot.com was usually posting them, but at least this outlet took a more contained, less influential stance.) ABC’s Ross was appealed to on various levels not to go with the story, the investigative journalist recalls. One Foley aide, he says, informed him, “This is bad judgment on your part. Other media outlets have those same e-mails and no one’s using it.”

In addition, Ross was told, “Foley was just being friendly. He liked kids. Brian should meet Mark. They’d like each other and then he’d understand.”

At this recollection, Ross laughs. “Yeah, I’d understand all right.”

Foley’s staff began organizing consulting sessions with Foley pollster Dave Sackett and media adviser Sam Dawson. Even Fordham, who had quit more than two years earlier and was by then chief of staff for Reynolds, was pressed into service. After all, in two days Foley was due to fly back to his home district to start campaigning. “We decided Mark should mainly speak to local TV stations in Florida to discuss the e-mails,” says one of those present at the sessions.

On September 28, as the ABC News Web site posted its first e-mail story, Liz Nicolson sat talking to Foley about what else the media might discover. Walking into the office, Fordham observed how uncomfortable his former boss was with this line of questioning. He says he pulled Foley aside and pushed him hard. “Mark, we need to know.” He began, “was there ever any other instance of inappropriate behavior toward any other page? A dinner? Inviting someone to your house? Offering to buy them drinks? Any sexual activity with pages? We need to address the specifics, because it will probably all come out.”

“No, no inappropriate behavior like that,” said Foley. But he looked terrified, Fordham thought.

That night there was voting in the House, and Representative Ginny Brown-Waite, another Florida Republican and a good friend of Foley’s, agreed to cheer him up, walking him to the floor of the House. After the vote, Fordham recalls, she came back, looking stern. She had just spoken to Peggy Sampson, who supervises the Republican page program, and received an earful about Foley, which she imparted, unvarnished and cold, to her friend.

“Mark, there was an occasion when you showed up in front of the page dorm, late at night,” the congresswoman said evenly.

“Oh, you know—I guess all kinds of stories are going to come out now.” Foley replied. “You just never know what people are going to say.”

At noon the next day, Nicolson, Fordham, and another aide met with Foley at his D Street house to discuss campaign strategy. The house is small and compact, bordered by a pretty garden and a wrought-iron gate, its walls covered with paintings by Foley’s mother. A lunch of portobello sandwiches was interrupted by ringing cell phones. On the other end of Fordham’s was Foley’s communications director, Jason Kello, calling from Florida. “I got off the phone with ABC News, and they have 36 pages of instant messages between Mark and former pages. They’re sexually explicit” is how Fordham recalls the communications director’s opening remarks.

“What do you mean ‘sexually explicit’?” asked Fordham.

Kello glanced at his notes and began reading passages that dealt with hand jobs and lotion. But there was more.

Messages, in which Foley used the screen name Maf54, were posted on the ABC Web site. In one, he presses for details about the boy’s genitalia and his sexual habits:

Maf54 (7:46:38 PM): did any girl give you a hand job this weekend
Teenager (7:46:38 PM): lol no
Teenager (7:46:40 PM): im single right now

EARLY WARNING

Melanie Sloan, director of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, who tried last summer to get the F.B.I. to investigate Foley’s behavior.
Foley Scandal

[Teenager] (7:46:57 PM): my last gf and i broke up a few weeks ago...
Maf54 (7:47:11 PM): good so your getting horny...
[Teenager] (7:47:29 PM): lol...a bit
Maf54 (7:48:00 PM): did you spank it this weekend yourself
[Teenager] (7:48:04 PM): no
Maf54 (7:48:16 PM): been too tired and too busy
Maf54 (7:48:33 PM): wow...
Maf54 (7:48:34 PM): i am never to busy haha...
Maf54 (7:58:59 PM): but it must feel great spirting on the towel
[Teenager] (7:59:06 PM): ya
Maf54 (7:59:29 PM): wow
Maf54 (7:59:48 PM): is your little guy limp ...
[Teenager] (7:59:54 PM): eh growing
Maf54 (8:00:00 PM): hmm
Maf54 (8:00:12 PM): so you got a stiff one now...
Maf54 (8:01:21 PM): i am hard as a rock ...
so tell me when your reaches rock ...
Maf54 (8:03:47 PM): what you wearing
[Teenager] (8:04:04 PM): normal clothes
[Teenager] (8:04:09 PM): t-shirt and shorts
Maf54 (8:04:17 PM): um so a big bulge
[Teenager] (8:04:35 PM): ya
Maf54 (8:04:45 PM): um
Maf54 (8:04:58 PM): love to slip them off of you
[Teenager] (8:05:08 PM): haha
Maf54 (8:05:53 PM): and grab the one eyed stalker
Maf54 (8:06:13 PM): grab
[Teenager] (8:06:53 PM): not tonight ... dont get to excited
Maf54 (8:07:12 PM): well your hard
[Teenager] (8:07:45 PM): that is true
Maf54 (8:08:03 PM): and a little horny
[Teenager] (8:08:11 PM): and also true
Maf54 (8:08:31 PM): get a ruler and measure it for me
[Teenager] (8:08:38 PM): ive already told you that
Maf54 (8:08:47 PM): tell me again
[Teenager] (8:08:49 PM): 7 and 1/2
Maf54 (8:09:04 PM): ummmmmmmmmmmm
Maf54 (8:09:08 PM): beautiful
[Teenager] (8:09:38 PM): lol
Maf54 (8:09:44 PM): thats a great size

Another conversation, with an 18-year-old former page, took place as Foley was waiting to vote on appropriations for the Iraq war.

Maf54: I miss you
[Teenager]: ya me too
Maf54: we are still voting
Maf54: you miss me too

After apparently engaging in cybersex with the boy, Foley concludes:

Maf54: ok ... i better go vote ... did you know you would have this effect on me
[Teenager]: lol i guessed
[Teenager]: ya go vote ... i dont want to keep you from doing our job
Maf54: can i have a good kiss goodnight
[Teenager]: *
[Teenager]: <kiss>

After Kello had read Fordham only a few lines, Fordham cried. "Stop! That's all I need to know!" He heard female campaign workers weeping on the other end of the phone. When he hung up, he says he saw Foley, who was joining him on the patio, looking scared. Fordham told him the news.

"Are those instant messages authenic?" he asked Foley, who turned away, mortified.

When Foley looked back, he said, "Probably."

"Probably?"

"Yeah, i am sure they are REAL," said Foley.

Nicolson joined them. "Liz, I've been stupid," said the congressman.

"Mark. I don't know how you can go on in this race," said Fordham. "Do you really want to spend the next 40 days of the campaign running around your district explaining sexually explicit e-mails to pages to your constituents?"

Fordham thought he made it clear that his old boss needed to quit, but Foley couldn't bring himself to do that. The N.R.C.C. headquarters was around the corner, and Fordham made it his next stop. There he found Representative Reynolds and Speaker Hastert. But before he could finish relaying the awful news, Reynolds's face got purple and he began to shout, "He needs to resign, and he needs to do it right now!" The Speaker just sat there, silent, according to Fordham: "He didn't react at all. This was weeks before the election, and they're thinking how this is going to impact us."

Everyone agreed that Foley needed to resign. They weren't sure how. A lawyer was called in and advised that Foley sign a letter to be delivered to Speaker Hastert on the floor of the House. Just then, Fordham was alerted that Foley's sister Donna Winterson had arrived at the congressman's office, totally unaware of the meltdown. He ran over and found Winterson sitting on the sofa, "looking like she was in a coma." Her life, having been devoted to her brother's campaigns, would be crushed, too. It took Fordham five minutes to get her composed enough to walk back to the house, where they would finally have to swallow the bitter pill.

"You have to go out," Fordham told Foley.

"You mean I have to drop out of the re-election race?"

"No, you need to resign your seat in House. Today. Now."

Fordham says that Foley dissolved hysterics. His sister wrapped her arms around him, and they rocked together, in tears. He waited to his sister, "I'm so sorry I've done this to you." Fordham says, "He thought ruined everyone's life." Eventually, i asked what he needed to do next. "You have to sign this letter and then you both need to get out of here and go to a safe place," Fordham warned them. "Reporters are going to be staking you out." Foley and his sister five minutes to pack and headed southward Florida in his BMW. Fordham read them on his cell phone. "Neither of you in any state to be driving to Florida. shouldn't even be behind the wheel!" he said.

"Just go to a hotel somewhere in Virginia, Don't turn on the TV. Call your friends.

Damage Control

You have to be curious—you have to ask all the questions you can think of," Republican whip Roy Blunt, of Missouri, said in early October. He was focused, because, he insisted, like a num of his senior colleagues, he had not been informed of Foley's misdeeds until the day before his resignation.

Hastert, believing the leadership need to present a united front, as one by one colleagues were repudiating his foggy collections, called a Republican-leaders meeting. That same day, an ethics-committee investigation was pressed for by Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi (over the objected of those who wanted an independent counsel), its purpose to discover who knew what about when about Foley. Blunt, Boehner and Reynolds were all summoned "to basically get their stories straight for the pre-according to a knowledgeable source, w adds, "That to me is where Hastert attempts a cover-up."

Reynolds balked at having such a meeting. "This is stupid! We can’t all go and mi privately and try to get our stories straight because this matter was just referred to the ethics committee," he told Hastert, according to the same source. "In fact, none of are supposed to be talking to each other, because we are not supposed to talk to po tential witnesses." Worse, added Reynolds, can tell you anything we say at this lead ship meeting is something we have to sha with the ethics committee.

The meeting eventually became a conference call, but without Reynolds's participa tion. Days later, on October 5, the of moribund ethics committee, a subject of frequent and widespread Hill derision, open its investigation, without a lot of optimis about what would be accomplished, ess cially since practically the first utteran from ethics-committee chairman Doc Ha
larooned Yacht

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12: Robert Siegfried's tents, he has hopped into a dizzying array of complex legal fights, including a drawn-out tug between the Federal Reserve and Mexican billionaire Carlos Hank Rhon. He owns an insurance company, real estate several states, and a venture-capital business, but I gathered from Siegfried's stories at Halmos styles himself a sort of corporate crime-fighter, a Superman with superpowers, riding to the rescue of besieged parties on his floating headquarters aboard Legacy.

His latest crusade, the result of an ongoing arbitration squabble with his younger brother over the division of family assets, is signed to show that federal and state arbitrators are corrupt. Seemingly surrounded by enemies, Halmos is a tad preoccupied with curiosity, once firing a Legacy crew woman he feared of being a spy. I worried he might be some kind of nut job.

The person who meets us at the Key West dock, however, is a smiling, freckled, rolly-poly man in a white polo shirt, large round sunglasses, and an enormous straw hat. He has a soft southern drawl and a ready laugh that often rises into a strange cackle. "This is Captain Ed," he says, introducing Legacy's skipper, Ed Collins, a tall, stoic Englishman. "He's the one who got us into this mess."

"It wasn't my decision, it was yours," Collins says with a toothy grin. It's clear the two have an easy, joshing relationship.

Halmos pilots the tender out into the bay, and 10 minutes later we coast to a stop beside his new aquatic compound: four houseboats lashed together at the entrance to Man of War Harbor and surrounded by the small fleet of tenders, flatboats, and inflatables that Halmos uses to maintain Legacy. We are met by the rest of his crew, a young sailer named Brian and two attractive brunette assistants named Jen and Tatum, recent graduates of the University of Pittsburgh. Off on the horizon two miles north, Legacy itself is a merely a bulky shadow.

"Not a bad way to live, not bad at all," Halmos says as we clamber to the top of his personal houseboat, taking seats before a lunchcheon buffet the women have prepared. As he launches into one of his frequent soliloquies, I realize Halmos stutters a bit. "We swim. We fish. We scuba-dive. We look for shells," he says. Halmos turns in his chair and looks out toward Legacy: "N-now you can see her out there, all alone... All alone." He laughs. "But, all in all, it's not a bad way to live!"

A boat cruises by, its wake lapping at our hull. Halmos scowls. "One of yours?" I ask.

"No, he's an interloper," Halmos says. "There's supposed to be rules about how close you can get, but no one enforces them. I don't know whether I'll mess with this guy."

But out at Legacy, I've had to run some of them off. At gunpoint."

"What's to stop someone from stealing things from it?"

Halmos squints in the noontime sun. "Me," he says. "If you abandon it, anyone can claim it. That's why we've been living out here—what?—nine months? Ten months?"

Halmos, in fact, lived aboard Legacy until August, when hurricane season persuaded him it might be safer to relocate to the houseboats.

Smooth Sailing

Just how Peter Halmos got to this point is a long story. As we dig into pasta salad and smoked clams, he begins to tell it. Growing up in Florida, Halmos says, he always owned boats. At the time he left SafeCard, he had a top-of-the-line 46-foot Merritt fishing boat. It was his son Nick, now at Vanderbilt's law school, who was the true sailing aficionado. (Halmos has one other son, Greg, now a college senior.) One day in 1993, Nick telephoned his father and told him of a hull nearing completion at the Perini Navi yacht works in Viareggio, Italy. Halmos reluctantly agreed to have a look. He was underwhelmed, at least until he spied a photo of Murdoch's Morning Glory. "Now, that looks O.K. ..." Halmos remarked. "If we could find something like that, that would be pretty cool."

Two years and $16 million later, Halmos took delivery of what was probably the third- or fourth-largest sailing yacht in the world. The difference between sailing yachts and motor yachts is the gigantic sails. Legacy's seven sails spanned 11,000 feet. Sailing yachts, their adherents will tell you, are for sailors. Motor yachts, in Halmos's view, "spend most
Marooned Yacht

of their time tied up at a dock, people throwing parties on them. It's just a very different experience."

Halmos immediately fell in love with Legacy. Everything aboard was state-of-the-art; the decks and flooring were teak, the cabin walls mahogany. But it was how Legacy rode the waves that enthralled Halmos. "It's almost magical, just a magical experience," he says, smiling wide. "It just floats over the water. It's hard to describe. It's not pretentious, not over the top. You just, you know, when you're aboard, you feel like you're in a cocoon. At sea, you know, no one bothers you. Everything is clean. It's just perfect."

At the time, Halmos and his wife, Vicki, still lived in Palm Beach, and he kept Legacy offshore. He raced it a time or two, winning the "Nantucket Bucket" race, and sailed it to his vacation home in Maine and twice to the Mediterranean. In time, however, his attentions turned elsewhere. "The truth is, for a few years. I didn't use it at all that much," he says.

Then, in 2003, he was at the wheel of his blue Shelby Cobra, driving his friend Richard "Dickie" Scruggs, the renowned tort attorney, to the Palm Beach airport, when his vision suddenly clouded. He asked Scruggs, one of the lawyers who had forged Mississippi's historic 1997 settlement with American tobacco companies, whether a fog was rolling in. No. Scruggs said, maybe he should have his eyes checked. Halmos did, and the doctor delivered stunning news: he was slowly going blind, the result of a rare confluence of cataracts and retinal damage. The cataracts couldn't be removed, doctors said, until the retinal damage healed, if ever.

By mid-2004, Halmos was practically blind. It was then that he moved onto Legacy, taking comfort in its smooth confines. In time the damage to his retina healed, and he anchored Legacy off Miami, where doctors operated to remove the cataracts, from his right eye in late 2004 and from his left eye in early 2005. By the time he could see again, Halmos was a changed man. He realized he was tiring of business. He longed for adventure. "I'm going to start me a new life," he told Siegfried one night aboard Legacy, "and I'm going to do it on this here boat."

Halmos wasn't talking about some vague idea; he had something specific in mind. While he was still talking to Scruggs and Siegfried about the possibility of various tort suits against the American hospital industry—earlier talks about suing a once-time Ecuadorian president to recover allegedly plundered state savings had founded—Halmos was ready to begin pursuing a dream he had shelved for 30 years:

Sunken treasure.

Seriously. In the early 1970s, Halmos had met with a Florida man who was seeking investors to fund his search for a sunken Spanish galleon. Halmos laughed him off and had almost forgotten about the meeting when, in 1985, he read in the newspapers that the man, whose name was Mel Fisher, had found a lost galleon, the Atocha, on the ocean bottom off Key West. Its treasure of gold bullion and other artifacts was valued at between $200 and $400 million.

Halmos remembered that Fisher had described several other possible galleon sites. In the spring of 2005, Halmos anchored Legacy, with its crew of seven, off Key West to begin his own search for one. He decided to focus his quest on one especially promising site, which he calls, in jest, "Halmosia." He won't say exactly where it is. Still recovering from the eye surgeries, he spent most of the summer of 2005 assembling the equipment he would need to initiate a lengthy examination of the Halmosia site.

Key West sits in the heart of what meteorologists call Hurricane Alley, but storms rarely worried Halmos. When Katrina struck the Keys with 80-mile-an-hour winds, at the end of August, Legacy, anchored in shallow water beside Marker 15, a mile northwest of the Key West docks, weathered it with ease. "The shallow water kills the waves," Halmos says. "And we can handle the wind. Inside Legacy, you can't even hear a hurricane. Then you open a door and it's like the sound of a freight train, and you realize what's going on."

Halmos felt so safe aboard Legacy, in fact, that he all but ignored a Category Three hurricane named Wilma that, after scrambling itself along the Yucatan Peninsula, suddenly turned and veered toward Key West on October 23. It was a bad mistake. When it comes time to discuss what happened, Halmos rises from his chair and stares toward Legacy: "Come on," he says. "Let's go see her."

Taken for a Ride

The storm came in around midnight, I guess, and I went to bed." Halmos is saying. It's low tide, and he is sprawled in waist-deep water 20 feet from Legacy's battered hull. The ship looms over us like a stricken giant. Its mass as big as an apartment building. All around us, barracuda, stingrays, and an array of other fish scoot across the flats. Off to one side, Jen and Tatum frolic in their bikinis.

"That right, Captain Ed?" Halmos asks.

"Between midnight and one, yes, that's about right," says Collins, sitting beside me on an inflatable. The two men have just led a tour of the yacht, which one enters now by climbing a 12-foot aluminum ladder to an aft rail. Inside, it's sweltering. The furn and electronics have been covered in blue cloth: neon-blue tarps shield almost everything else. Collins and other crew daily to check on the massive dehumidifiers they keep running around the clock, per-

ed by generators mounted on flatb beside the hull.

"So, I'm in bed." Halmos goes on, "a feel this kind of a lurch, nothing really wrong, but something's not right. I start to walk the stairs and there's a second lurch, really strong. I threw me down the stairs."

"Fortunately he landed on his head," Captain Ed.

"Another fine mess you got us into," mos fires back.

Wasn't my fault, says Collins.

Recovering from his fall, Halmos right himself and found Collins in the who-house—white as a sheet. Halmos says they could feel Legacy was now float free. From all appearances, their two chors had lost contact with the sea bot. Only later would they learn that the anchors had inexplicably come apart. Halmos, con concerns about his insurance, won't say more about the failure.

This was bad—very bad. Wilma was passing through the Gulf of Mexico north of Key West, heading northeast toward Naples. It had initially been predicted: peak sustain winds would be recorded at 120 miles hour. Collins turned on the engines, attempt ing to remain in place while he tried to attach the anchors to the seafloor. But it was no use, and Collins realized, to his horror, that Legacy was being dragged backwa into the storm, at a speed of 10 knots.

"So we're calling the Coast Guard and get us," Halmos says. "We're in the channel—I mean, right at Marker The Coast Guard station is right there! But there's no answer."

Captain Collins telephoned his wife West Palm Beach, who then telephoned the Coast Guard in Miami. She relayed the dispiriting information that most Coast Guard personnel in Key West had evacuated to Orlando. They went to fucking Disney World!" Halmos exclaims.

"They basically said we were on own," recalls Collins. "They did say the would be happy to notify our next of kin."

A

mid their frantic telephone calls, Legacy was losing its battle with Wilma. Wind rocked it violently from side to side. Wave were cascading across the decks. Water beegan seeping into the lower cabins thorough the air vents. The crew yanked comforter off the beds and began pressing them against the vents. But soon seawater was slosh through the corridors. Then the galley began
A Sea of Troubles

Halmos was sitting out on the aft deck, talking on his cell phone, when he heard the sound, a strange lapping of the waves against Legacy's hull. Looking around, he saw nothing. He stood and then, to his dismay, saw two inflatable rafts about a hundred feet away, speeding across the flats directly toward him. The rafts were thronged, with eight or nine tough-looking men in wet suits, bristling with cameras and all manner of strange-looking electronics. "You guys are too close!" Halmos hollered. "You can get hurt! Move away, please!"

But the rafts didn't stop, the men aboard ignored him. "It was the strangest thing," Halmos recalls. "It was like I was Casper the Ghost. They simply didn't acknowledge I existed." A minute later the rafts came to a stop 50 feet away. The men began jumping into the waist-deep water. "Hey, guys!" Halmos yelled. "Don't come so close!"

The men continued to ignore him and, to his amazement, began wading toward Legacy. Now Halmos got a good look at them, and he didn't like what he saw. "They looked like modern thugs," he says. "One had real long hair. They were moving purposefully, you know, they were here for a reason."

In no time the long-haired man reached Legacy and, barely 10 feet below where Halmos stood, dumbfounded, placed his hand on the hull. "Get your hands off my boat!" Halmos screamed.

Long Hair looked up at Halmos in silence. Behind him, another man raised his voice. "I don't remember the exact words," Halmos says, "but it was something like 'Don't get in our way—we're FEMA salvors. We can get you arrested.'" He meant to suggest the men were salvage experts hired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "How the hell can you do that?" Halmos yelled. "This is my boat!"

They shouted at each other for a minute. "The guy in the boat was so obnoxious, he pissed me off," says Halmos. "I said, 'I don't give a flying fuck who you're with, get your hands off my boat.'"

"If you interfere with us," Boat Man yelled, "you're interfering with the U.S. government!"

Halmos didn't believe him and didn't care anyway. "I'm getting my gun," he shouted. "You've had fair warning." With that Halmos stepped into the salon and grabbed a long leather case. From it he pulled a rifle, a civilian version of the army's M1 Garand, complete with its nasty-looking banana clip. He stepped back to the rail, attached the clip, and watched as Long Hair took out a tape measure and began making measurements of the ship's hull. "Get your fucking hands off my boat!" Halmos yelled down. Long Hair and Boat Man began arguing. Other men, meanwhile, had fanned out around the...
Marooned Yacht

hull. Halmos picked up the gun and pointed it at them. "I'm ready to goddamn shoot!" he yelled.

Below, the men in the water began arguing among themselves. After five minutes or so, they piled back into the boats. As they turned to retreat, someone yelled, "We'll have you arrested!"

"Get the fuck out of here!" Halmos yelled.

Three of the men returned the next day. Halmos saw them coming and met them at the rail with his rifle. This time Collins and another crew member stood beside him, cradling rifles of their own. "Don't you come any closer!" Halmos hollered. "I swear, I'll blow your fucking heads off!" The men left without getting out of their raft.

On the third day a single figure, the obnoxious Boat Man, returned alone. From a safe distance, he began photographing Legacy. By then Halmos had had enough. "I'm going to count to 10!" he shouted. "If you're not out of here by then, I'm going to shoot you!"

The last of the "pirates" disappeared and didn't return. The incident had an unusual coda. Impressed by the speedy inflatable rafts the men had used, Halmos resolved to buy some for his own use. When he contacted the shipmaker's office in a midwestern state, he was told the president of the company was visiting South Florida. Halmos telephoned the man, and over the course of several subsequent conversations came to realize he was none other than the long-haired "pirate." Confronting him, Halmos threatened to sue unless the man named all his compatritions, who turned out to be an ad hoc collection of salvagers hoping to claim Legacy.

"Guy ratted everyone out," Halmos recalls with pride. "I may sue them. But first I got to get my boat free."

Exit Strategy

When Duane the salvager finally appeared in late March to begin extracting Legacy, Halmos sensed something was wrong. The man brought no equipment, no giant sandbags—nothing. He spent a solid week surveying the area before Halmos asked him when he expected to begin. Duane said he wasn't sure. "Conditions" had changed, he said, and they would need a new plan. Halmos simmered for a few days, until Duane came back with the revised plan, which could have cost several million dollars more than the original. Halmos went ballistic. He exploded a second time when his attorney advised that the new scheme would require a second government approval process, which could take weeks.

The revised plan involved building a thousand-foot metal sleeve around Legacy that could be flooded with seawater to float the yacht toward a neighboring channel. Halmos realized with irritation that it was one of the many plans which he had explored months earlier, and which Duane had badmouthed at the time. When he received the revised contract, he was enraged to discover that Duane proposed to subcontract the work to a firm he had earlier criticized as unworthy. Halmos fired him on the spot, then hired the subcontractor, a Missouri company named Fas-Dam, which got to work seeking NOAA's approval. This took another two months. Finally, on June 22, the new permit was issued. Almost immediately, however, Fas-Dam's president, Herb Wiseman, told Halmos that the permit didn't look right. It advised them to take special care not to damage the walls of the neighboring channel, which if breached could send millions of gallons of seawater coursing into the flats, destroying them.

Any damage could cost Halmos millions in fines. Curiously, he and Wiseman formulated a new plan that would see Legacy removed through its original, 5,000-foot channel. It would be five times more expensive, but it avoided the chance of damaging the shorter channel. To Halmos's dismay, a NOAA administrator then ordered him to go the shorter route. Halmos refused. On July 24, NOAA finally relented, promising a permit that would allow Halmos to remove Legacy via the longer route.

During the following week Fas-Dam mobilized, trucking in tons of cranes, tugboats, and barges that soon lined the Key West docks. A separate salvage crew moved in and took away Legacy's fallen mast. Expecting that work would begin any day, Halmos purchased two houseboats—he later added the other two—and moved onto them. Every day counted. Hurricane season had begun, and meteorologists were predicting an active season for storms. Finally, on August 2, Fas-Dam was ready to move. There was just one problem. While NOAA had orally approved their plan, Halmos had received nothing in writing, nothing official.

Once again Halmos sicced his lawyers on NOAA. "On August 2," he recalls, "we have no permit. On August 3, no permit. Finally, at 4:45 P.M. on August 4, we get a permit faxed to us." But instead of a simple set of authorization papers, as they had received before, Halmos says, the new NOAA permit was a four-page contract loaded with procedures and conditions, including a demand that he indemnify NOAA against the costs of any damage. Worse, the permit's terms gave Halmos no right to sue NOAA if something went wrong. He refused to sign. NOAA threatened to refer the matter to the Department of Justice. His own lawyers urged him to sign. But Halmos wouldn't do it.

"My lawyers, they mean well. The nice guys, but they don't know what they're doing," he says with a sigh.

Halmos reluctantly let the Fas-Dam salvage teams return home. He hired a lawyer, settled down to life in his new acie compound, and, when I came to visit in September, was preparing to sue NOAA a Florida federal court in an effort to Legacy the way he wants. (Of this we are still working on a settlement.)

Isn't this paradise?" Halmos is saying mean, look at this place. The water air. "He takes a deep breath, pulling the breeze down into his lungs. "Paradise I my wife, 'Sell the house in Palm Beach never going back!' " (Vicki Halmos invests Broadway plays and, according to Haln "supports my need to bust out of the d grind.)

As the sun sinks toward the western hizon, Halmos pilots the tender to a stop be the docks. He has just purchased three m scooters and wants to cruise the streets of West before heading back to the house for dinner. After a passerby shows Hal how to start the scooters, we spend an hour crossing the downtown area, passing horn men hunched over on their barstools dely couples in pastel shirts strolling arm arm down Duval, college kids in cargo sh hollering at pretty girls. By nightfall we back to the docks, and Halmos heads the ter north for dinner.

Two hundred feet into the harbor, a pot boat emerges from the darkness, lights fling. Halmos coasts to a stop. The young officer points out that we're running with navigation lights. Halmos apologizes, to turn them on, but can't find the switch. When the officer observes that the tender p plays no registration numbers, he orders us pull into a nearby jetty. "See that?" Halm mutters as the boat comes to a stop. "The just love harassing me."

Halmos slumps in his seat, the spell of gorgeous Key West evening broken. The of ficer comes aboard, pokes through the can nets, and discovers that the tender does have all its life jackets. Halmos bristles, as the officer orders him to sit down and sh up or face a night in jail. Halmos stews silence, but he's clearly seething. The officer spends a half-hour inspecting the boat, the scribbles out a fistful of tickets and hand them to Halmos. Finally, we are allowed to leave, and Halmos steers the tender out in the bay, heading toward his compound. "Ass to hole," he says aloud. "That's kind of shit I've been putting up with for a whole year."

He heaves a huge sigh. "I just want get the fuck out of here," he says. "After months, I mean, it's just too much."
Around the World, One Party at a Time

The fairest of them all... model Natalia Portman at the Giammetti dinner.

LONDON PAGE 180

An intimate evening with Giancarlo Giammetti caught on-camera.

NEW YORK PAGE 182

Natural Resources Defense Council's Robert F. Kennedy Jr. attracts a crowd with his global warning.
**What**
A private dinner at the home of Giancarlo Giammetti in Knightsbridge during the Frieze Art Fair.

**When**
October 12, 2006.

**Who**
Valentino, Gwyneth Paltrow, Benedikt Taschen, Tom Ford, Elle Macpherson, and others.
NEW YORK
GREEN IS GOOD

What
Cocktails and a discussion with N.R.D.C. senior attorney Robert F. Kennedy Jr. at the home of Kathy and Tom Freston.

When
November 14, 2006.

Who
Harvey Weinstein, Jessica Seinfeld, Bob Daly, Sandra Bernhard, and others.
What is your greatest extravagance?
Restaurants.

What is your favorite journey?
It used to be crossing the Brooklyn Bridge when homeward bound from a good dinner in Manhattan. Now it’s the sight of Provincetown as one rides up over the last rise and there is the Pilgrim Monument in all its subtle presence.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Prayer. Of all the lofty practices, it is the most abused. Church professionals lead the scurry crew who profit from pushing prayer.

What words or phrases do you most overuse?
It is not easy to construct a complex sentence without using “that.”

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
Forgive me. I’ll skip this laundry list.

Which living person do you most despise?
Well, it used to be Ronald Reagan. He was the most ignorant president we ever had. Now George W. has appropriated his seat.

Which talent would you most like to have?
There are several kinds of athletes I wouldn’t have minded becoming. There is also the ability to sing. I once described my voice in the following manner: “Mailer vocalizes with the matchless authority of a man who has never been known to hit a note on pitch.”

What is your current state of mind?
Benevolent—astonishingly so. It’s one of the few perks of old age when it’s there.

If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?
Hey, they’re perfect.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
I look to entertain the notion that it is to be found in my latest novel.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
What an idiot! God, if He or She is paying any attention, would have a wittier notion of how to punish and reward the first stages of one’s new existence.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
I would like to be a novelist who is more accomplished than the last one.

What is your most treasured possession?
I am just superstitious enough not to name it.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
Wasting my days.

Where would you like to live?
Where I have lived—Brooklyn Heights years ago and now in Provincetown. Until you get to Maine there is no more beautiful town on the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S.

What is your favorite occupation?
One always returns to writing. I resist the temptation to say that good fucking is really my favorite. One is now too old to talk like that.

What is your most marked characteristic?
I’d like to think that I know how to push the envelope. It’s become a necessary virtue. We Americans have become so uneasy, so stupid, so guilty, and so flatulently patriotic that we are in danger of ruining a fine land.

What is the quality you most like in a man?
There to stand up when called.

What is the quality you most like in a woman?
Beauty, mystery, wit, and the inner superiority to be above political correctness.

What do you most value in your friends?
Loyalty, wit, and, believe it or not, the power to come forth with close criticism.

Who are your favorite writers?
I’ll only mention the dead. Every live author you do not mention will never forgive you. So, I’ll list Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Stendhal, Melville, Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos, Proust, Zola, Mann, Goethe, and, oh yes—curses—Shakespeare!

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Let’s say not the hero but the protagonist from whom I learned the most. That might be Anna Karenina.

Who are your heroes in real life?
So few. F.D.R., J.F.K. Also, de Gaulle and Castro; yes, one must put up with the worst of these two, but they were heroic in their day. Heroism may be of greater value to civilization than political achievement.

What are your favorite names?
I have nine children. I would list their names.

What is it that you most dislike?
Overweening piety used for political purposes. Hitler and Himmler come to mind. So do a few minor American figures in high places today.

How would you like to die?
Without undue fear—which is to say die with the same confidence I have now that there is another world one enters, and so the finest of all the clichés is that death is a great adventure.

What is your motto?
That should be obvious. It has to be “Excelsior!”
Over a career that has spanned six decades, Norman Mailer has been a literary force to be reckoned with—from *The Naked and the Dead*, in 1948, to his notable presence in New Journalism, to his current and most controversial feat, *The Castle in the Forest*. In his first novel in more than 10 years, the Pulitzer Prize–winning paladin deftly blends fact and fiction to tackle his greatest villain yet: Adolf Hitler. Here, the 83-year-old reflects on inanition, Anna Karenina, and Texas Hold 'Em.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
Let the next 35 responses offer their clues. A fool draws a road map to his magic city.

What is your greatest fear?
That I will never meet Michiko Kakutani and so not be able to tell her what I think of her. She has an unseemly haste to rush into print with the first very bad review of any book I write. She does this ahead of publication. That is a strategy. If the first review of a book is dreadful, an author needs at least three good ones to change that first impression.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
Hemingway. His suicide suggested the unseen perils of my profession.

Which living person do you most admire?
Muhammad Ali.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
Inanition—it comes on me from time to time. I also detest it in others. A judge will never forgive a criminal for a crime he is capable of committing himself.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Banality. For that matter, it's a close cousin to inanition.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 165
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• EXCLUSIVE VIDEO FROM THE TYRA BANKS PHOTO SHOOT
• JIM WINDOLF ON THE HISTORY OF ARCHIE COMICS

FEATURES

130 BLUE IS THE NEW RED In a 20-page portfolio, V.F. taps the in crowd of a greatly changed Washington, from swing-state freshmen to White House hopefuls. Todd S. Purdum takes a seismic reading, while Christopher Buckley imagines a nightmare on K Street.

150 DEMI GLOSS Demi Moore left Hollywood to escape the tabloids and raise her three kids. A decade later, at 44, she's back, with one hot young husband and two upcoming movies: Mr. Brooks and Flawless. Krista Smith finds out how Demi does it. Photographs by Mario Testino.


164 BLACK MISCHIEF Accused of looting $80 million from Hollinger International, Conrad Black has nothing left but his self-regard. As the disgraced press baron prepares for his upcoming trial, Maureen Orth finds him clinging to the notion that he's an innocent “freedom fighter.”

168 A MODEL MOGUL With two TV hits—America's Next Top Model and her eponymous talk show—Tyra Banks has proved she's not just a pretty face. Nancy Jo Sales gets the former supermodel talking about guys, Oprah, and her ridiculous paycheck. Photographs by Michael Roberts.

172 MAGIC ACT Brigitte Lacombe and Edward Helmore spotlight Joan Didion and Vanessa Redgrave as The Year of Magical Thinking heads to Broadway.

174 AN EMPIRE OF HER OWN Tory Burch conquered New York society, then designed a must-wear look for its ladies who lunch, while raising six children. Will divorce threaten her phenomenal business? Michael Shnayerson explores Burch's tricky terrain: the intersection of charity balls and fashion for the masses. Photograph by Eric Boman.

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FAN FAIR

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24's Kim Raver. The Cultural Divide. Hot Tracks. Eve Epstein visits the Fivré store; New York's new boutique hotel Bruce Handy reviews Starter for Ten; Matt Tynauer's design favorites; A. M. Homes on France's film of the year Hot Looks; Christine Muhlke on Jillian Dempsey and Shu Uemura; Kenneth Cole R.S.V.P.s to Bon Jovi.

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100 BILLIONAIRES AND BRODSHEETS
As David Geffen, Eli Broad, and other moguls kick the tires of America's sputtering newspaper companies, Michael Wolff predicts they could become the industry's last subscribers.

108 ONE FROM THE HEARTLAND
For a guy who's sold almost 30 million albums, John Mellencamp takes a lot of flak. In Indiana, the anti-war rocker sounds off to Frank DiGiacomo. Photograph by Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp.

112 BLOOD OIL
Nigeria's vast oil wealth has pushed it to social collapse. No wonder Ijaw rebels want to sabotage production. Sebastian Junger forecasts global repercussions from a local struggle. Photographs by Michael Kamber.

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George Wayne licks the shoes of Imelda Marcos. Joe McKendry traces the arc from boy-band tart to R&B crooner; That Was Then & This Is Now.

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THE BOLD LOOK OF KOHLER
A Canali Happening

When cousins Elisabetta and Giorgio Canali flew in from Milan for the October opening of the new Canali men'swear boutique in Beverly Hills, it was a star-studded occasion. For the highly anticipated opening, Canali partnered with Bradley Whitford and the Clothes Off Our Backs Foundation to benefit children's charities around the globe.

Get Amped with Roy's

Roy’s Hawaiian Fusion® Cuisine and Vanity Fair invite you to visit VFAccess.com from January 9 to February 1 to enter to win a trip for two to Vanity Fair’s sixth annual Amped charity concert in Los Angeles. Trip includes round-trip airfare for two, two nights’ hotel accommodations, and an exquisite dinner for two at Roy’s in downtown L.A. For details and complete rules and regulations, log on to VFAccess.com. For information on Roy’s, visit roysrestaurants.com.

Beauty in the Details

Lord & Taylor and Vanity Fair celebrated the release of Paula Conway and Maureen Regan’s The Beauty Buybook, the ultimate go-to guide for the best beauty products of 2007, with a special evening of style on October 18. Held at Lord & Taylor in New York City, the beauty-inspired event featured on-site boutiques where guests received tips from celebrity hair stylist Mark Garrison, celebrity makeup artists Yajaira Velazquez and Maria Verel, Hollywood stylist Alisan Deyette from stylebakery.com, and health and nutrition specialists InVite Health.
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JAGUAR
I have always thought you could take the measure of a man by his sports manners—that is to say, the way in which he conducts himself on the playing field, or even over a game of chess or cards. Former president Bill Clinton was famous for taking a mulligan, or an extra try, on almost every shot, then playing the ball that had landed in the better spot. He essentially plays a two-man, two-ball "scramble"—but solo. A former employer of mine ensured that he won in tennis against family and undergrads by always calling line shots in his own favor. And so it is with our current president, who will scratch, claw, kick, scream, move the goalposts—pretty much do anything to effect a win. He is a sore winner. And a horrible loser.

I was reminded of these traits when I reread "The Accidental Candidate," Gail Sheehy's prescient portrait of the future president, published in these pages in October 2000. A sampling:

When Barbara Bush took her 13-year-old son and his best friend, Doug Hannah, to play golf at her Houston club, George would start cursing if he didn’t tee off well. His mother would tell him to quit it. By the third or fourth hole he would be yelling "Fuck this" until he had ensured that his mother would send him to the car.

"It fit his needs," says Hannah. "He couldn’t lose."

Once, after his mother banished him from the golf course, she turned to Hannah and declared, "That boy is going to have optical rectosis." What did that mean? "She said, ‘A shitty outlook on life.’"

Even if he loses, his friends say, he doesn’t lose. He’ll just change the score, or change the rules, or make his opponent play until he can beat him. "If you were playing basketball and you were playing to 11 and he was down, you went to 15," says Hannah, now a Dallas insurance executive. "If he wasn’t winning, he would quit. He would just walk off... It’s what we called Bush Effort: I don’t like the game, I take my ball and go home. Very few people can get away with that...."

Another fast friend, Roland Betts, acknowledges that it is the same in tennis. In November 1992, Bush and Betts were in Santa Fe to host a dinner party, but they had just enough time for one set of doubles. The former Yale classmates were on opposite sides of the net. "There was only one problem—my side won the first set," recalls Betts, "O.K., then we’re going two out of three;" Bush decreed. Bush’s side takes the next set. But Betts’s side is winning the third set when it starts to snow. Hard, fat flakes. The catering truck pulls up. But Bush won’t let anybody quit. "He’s pissed. George runs his mouth constantly," says Betts indulgently, "He’s making fun of your last shot, mocking you, needling you, goading you—he never shuts up!" They continued to play tennis through a driving snowstorm.

It is something of an in-joke with Bush’s friends and family. "In reality we all know who won, but George wants to go further to see what happens," says an old family friend, venture capitalist and former MGM chairman Louis "Bo" Polk Jr. "George would say, ‘Play that one over, or I wasn’t quite ready.’ The overtimes are what’s fun, so you make your own. When you go that extra mile or that extra point... you go to a whole new level."

Inasmuch as I am writing this the week before Christmas, any sort of prediction is a dicey proposition, but my guess is that Bush will double-down on Iraq. He has lost, but his past would indicate that he will figure that he can have another chance if he can just keep the game going a little longer.

Veteran Vanity Fair hands will note that our current cover subject has decided to remain clothed for this issue. Demi Moore, a woman of astonishing attractiveness and with an enviable figure, has appeared on the cover in various stages of undress in the past. But pressed by photographer Mario Testino and fashion and style director Michael Roberts to reveal more, she politely demurred, explaining that, at her age, she felt her body was not up to the sort of scrutiny she could handle 15 years ago, when she last bared all for V.F. Really, there’s no accounting for good taste these days.

Just as the year ended, two friends passed away, both icons in their own spheres. Ahmet Ertegun, the legendary, Turkish-born music-world mandarin, died at 83 following a fall in the sort of place he felt most at home: backstage at New York’s Beacon Theater during a Rolling Stones concert. He was, as they say in the recording industry, a true music man. equally nimble in the worlds of rhythm and blues, jazz, and rock. He shepherded Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin, as well as John Coltrane, Charles Mingus, Mabel Mercer, and Ornette Coleman. He signed Bobby Darin, Bobby Short, Cream, Buffalo Springfield, the Bee Gees, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones. He merged Crosby, Stills & Nash with Neil Young. He helped David Geffen establish Asylum, which became the incubator for the California sound of Jackson Browne, Joni Mitchell, and the Eagles. To the end, he was a nightlife iron man comfortable in any milieu. There were few in the business who could drink him under the table, and he felt as comfortable talking shop with a young recording artist as hitting the beau monde with his wife, the exquisite beauty and decorator Mica Ertegun.

Around the same time, a woman whose name will not be familiar to you died as well. Or at least it wouldn’t be familiar to you unless you had gone to high school in Miami at some point during the last half-century. Her name was Zelda Glazer, and when she died, at the age of 82, in an automobile accident, she was heralded in the local media as a legend in that city, an "iconic" character. And that she was. She oversaw the literature programs of the entire Miami-Dade public-school system and was a huge booster of the Miami Book Fair International. The Writing Institute of Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the University of Miami was renamed the Zelda Glazer Writing Institute when she retired. It was said that walking down the city’s streets with her was like being alongside a rock star. She was the sort of person who is the backbone of this country: smart, loving, and selfless. I didn’t go to high school in Miami, but my closest friend did. Zelda was his mother.

—GRAYDON CARTER
Christopher Buckley

Now that the dust is settling on Capitol Hill after last fall’s midterm elections, at least one lobbyist is determined to adapt and succeed in a post-Republican Washington—Rick Renard, Christopher Buckley’s D.C. alter ego. In “Panic on K Street,” page 149, Renard rallies his troops. “I have gotten to know Rick Renard intimately over the years,” says Buckley, “and I have come to think that he is either the best in the business or should be locked up with the former executives of Enron and Tyco.” Regardless, Renard’s career is booming: he will be the heart of NBC Universal’s Thank You for Smoking, the next incarnation of Buckley’s successful book turned film, which is in development for television. Buckley’s next novel, Boomsday (Warner Twelve), is due out in April. He is the editor of ForbesLife magazine.

Maureen Orth

Since she started writing for Vanity Fair in 1988, special correspondent Maureen Orth has covered numerous high-profile criminal investigations, from the Versace murder to the abuse allegations against Michael Jackson. This month she reports on fallen newspaper magnate Conrad Black, who heads to trial in March, on charges of mammoth fraud (“Black Mischief,” page 164). “It’s really sort of a curtain-raiser to what should become a fascinating trial,” Orth says of the article. There’s a Canadian attorney who has never tried a big case in the U.S. There’s David Radler, Black’s closest business associate, who has already pleaded guilty to a fraud charge stemming from the allegations against Black, and who is set to testify against Black. And then, Orth adds, “there is the inherent drama and irony of all of these society luminaries, such as Henry Kissinger, Marie-Josée Kravis, and Richard Perle, who accepted Black’s largesse and will likely have to wiggle on the witness stand facing this Machiavellian character.” Court TV must be drooling.

Platon

Fashion, portrait, and documentary photographer Platon, who shot the “Rising Republicans” feature for this month’s “Blue Is the New Red” portfolio, is probably putting it nicely when he says that “politicians are not known to be fascinating people visually.” But he enjoys the challenge of depicting what is intriguing about them, having developed this skill in his work for John F. Kennedy Jr.’s George magazine. “John really encouraged me to go beyond the conservatism or glamour of my subjects, to show what it’s like to meet and know them,” he says. He also tries to separate his politics from his work. “It’s a dangerous game to cast a shadow on your subject—you’ll probably miss something,” Platon is currently working on the second volume of Platon’s Republic, a collection of his portraits from the last 10 years, as well as a book of photographs of village life in the Greek isles, where he was raised. CONTINUED ON PAGE 56
Vanity Fair Reel Talk

On November 15, Vanity Fair and The Film Foundation hosted Vanity Fair Reel Talk at the Directors Guild of America in New York City. Presented by Baume & Mercier, the evening featured a preview screening of Emilio Estevez’s new film, Bobby, followed by a lively dialogue moderated by documentary-film maker Alex Gibney, with Estevez and cast members Christian Slater, Joshua Jackson, and Freddy Rodriguez. Guests included Julian Schnabel, Dennis Hopper, Baume & Mercier president Rudy Chavez, and friends of American Century Investments. Concluding the evening were a sweepstakes to win two tickets to Europe courtesy of Lufthansa, and a V.P. reception with specialty cocktails provided by the Jamaica Tourist Board.

Sebastian Junger

This month, Vanity Fair contributing editor Sebastian Junger writes about militant activity in Nigeria that is threatening the United States’ oil supply. “I was very nervous about going into the militants’ camp because our safety depended on the word of Jomo Gbomo—someone whom we didn’t know—and I wasn’t absolutely convinced that his influence was as great as he said it was,” Junger says. “It was an act of faith that we wouldn’t be taken hostage.” Although Junger has covered conflict in war-torn areas such as Liberia, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone, reporting from Nigeria was different. “What’s odd is that this isn’t an all-out war, but it’s also a situation that could have an enormous impact on the U.S. Most wars I’ve covered are very obviously wars, and have very little impact on the U.S. This was sort of the inverse.”

Dee Dee Myers

The 2006 midterm elections “ended up being more significant than people expected,” says contributing editor Dee Dee Myers. “One of those elections that reshape Washington.” The last time there was a major power shift in favor of the Democrats, after the 1992 presidential election, Myers was featured in the Vanity Fair photo portfolio “The New Guard” (she served as Bill Clinton’s press secretary from 1993 to 1994 and has been with V.F. since 1997). This time, in cooperation with V.F.’s David Friend, her task was to figure out who should be included in “Blue Is the New Red” and to get them in front of a camera. She feels that the photographs capture an important but ephemeral mood. “Right after elections, when everyone gets over the shock, there’s a period of hopefulness, a brief window, when everyone hopes that things will be different, better. I think we see some of that in these pictures.” Myers’s husband, Todd Purdum, is V.F.’s national editor.

Christian Witkin

Most people are familiar with the work of Christian Witkin from the nearly 100 celebrity portraits he has done for the Gap. A professional photographer for more than 15 years, he has traveled the world, including India and Thailand, capturing diverse subjects for publications such as The New York Times Magazine. Witkin is among the photographers who contributed to this month’s portfolio of Washington’s new power elite, which begins on page 130. “For me, the Iraq Study Group and the Democratic majority are playing big roles in the direction our country is going,” he says. “Photographing James Baker and Lee Hamilton feels like being part of the making of that, part of the momentum.” Witkin is currently working on a photography book, tentatively titled Women, which will explore gender.
THE GREAT DIVIDER

The trouble with Bush’s “bully”; the art-world sensation; peering inside 740 Park Avenue: casting blame for urban sprawl; the one and only Brooke; and more

I do not think that there is a dichotomy, as suggested in Todd Purdum’s thoughtful Karl Rove portrait (“Karl Rove’s Split Personality,” December), between Rove’s ruthlessness and his thin skin. Schoolyard bullies are often the loudest wailers and blamers when they are punched in the mouth themselves. They don’t hit back on the newly leveled playing field, but lurk around corners waiting for an opportunity to shove their adversaries through a plate-glass window. For years I have despaired of writers and talking heads declaring Rove “a genius” because he doesn’t find sucker-punching beneath his dignity. It doesn’t take genius, or even intelligence, to locate and exploit our worst character traits and basic fears. It seems Rove has some math skills, but it’s disturbing to imagine him hunching, gnome-like, over spreadsheets of numbers, chipping friends and enemies alike into manageable kindling he can use to fuel various arson. It’s not surprising that his reportedly vast knowledge of political history is not applied to understanding a grand painting, but organized as minutiae he ejects to support his charts and graphs. Perhaps Rove grew up as an “outsider” not because he dressed funny in high school, but because people have an innate aversion to characters who look them over as if they were livestock specimens.

The only people more discouraging than Rove are the rudderless souls who mechanically do what he says to win, win, win at any cost. Everyone suffers as they wage wars and legislate folly with the swagger and contempt of feudal lords exercising power simply because they can. If he hadn’t proved so destructive, I’d almost feel sorry for a man so familiar with, and devoted to, hatred, anger, and irrational fear. But I am comforted by Purdum’s conclusion, which I share, “‘Splitters’ like Rove do not prevail in the long run. In the long run, hope and ideas are more productive motivators than anger and fear. I’m hopeful the results of the midterm elections are evidence people will finally stop calling the schoolyard bully a genius and leave Rove to mutter over his blessed charts in obscurity.

Debra Weyermann
Navarre, Florida

Your article on Karl Rove mentioned that his 17-year-old son, Andrew, can hunt. I cannot help but wonder whether Rove has encouraged Andrew to consider volunteering for military service, since military recruiters are tracking and contacting other 17-year-olds. Todd Purdum should have asked Rove that question, no matter how uncomfortable it might have made his neighbor.

Karl Olson
Vienna, Austria

HANGING MONEY

Congratulations on the spot-on piece “Money on the Wall” [by Ingrid Sischy, December], looking at today’s art world, which
Clarins Research has revealed the link between accelerated skin aging and exposure to artificial electromagnetic waves*.

We are surrounded by artificial electromagnetic waves generated by a host of modern day devices used for the transmission of sound and images. And since they are able to penetrate walls and reach underground, they certainly have no trouble getting into our skin.

For the very first time, Clarins Research has revealed the link between accelerated skin aging and exposure to artificial electromagnetic waves. A few hours of daily exposure is enough to provoke a notable change in the skin’s natural barrier effect, which is often the reason behind skin irritations, a dull-looking complexion and early signs of aging.

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* Clarins discovery. The subject of a scientific research paper. In-vitro tests. Dermatologist and ophthalmologist tested.
TWO FLOORS ABOVE PARK

MAY I MAKE a nitpicky correction to an entry on Vanity Fair’s New Establishment list (October)? Contrary to many previously published reports, the Blackstone Group’s Steve Schwarzman does not live in a triplex at the famed 740 Park. He lives in a duplex occupying half of the 15th and 16th floors of the building, with a low-ceilinged, servants’-quarters mezzanine in between (over the kitchen and pantry) that no self-respecting member of the New Establishment would call a floor unto itself. The apartment’s second owner, John D. Rockefeller Jr., did at one point also own an apartment directly above, on the 17th floor, but they were never combined, and before it was separately sold off by his widow’s estate, he used it only for storage.

MICHAEL GROSS

THE BROAD STROKES

WHILE I AGREE on the importance of lauding art collectors, devoting 13 pages to Eli Broad without at least a nod to the fact that Broad’s business model has greatly contributed to and created urban sprawl in this country is unconscionable (“Eli Broad’s Big Picture,” by Bob Colacello, December).

As the co-founder of Kaufman & Broad, Broad invented the concept of cheap housing, far enough away from urban centers as to require significant commute times for the proud owners, which propelled the trend for two-car families. How does his aggressive and not exactly sustainable plan jibe with, let’s say, Vanity Fair’s Green Issue? If you are going to walk on the progressive side, then a little consistency would help your readers believe that you really mean it and are not just paying lip service to global warming and sustainable growth.

JOAN GELFAND
San Francisco, California

THANK YOU for the wonderful article on Eli Broad. It was refreshing and inspiring to read of his philanthropic work, both civic and cultural. While Broad’s wealth enables him to make community-altering contributions, it made me think how both an appreciation for art and acts of generosity are, luckily for the rest of us, democratic passions. A recent newspaper article told of a local artist and university professor, John Beeson, who requires students to engage in charity work as part of their final exam and is frequently sighted paying for strangers’ groceries at the supermarket. Each of us—whether we live on a budget or as a billionaire—has the ability to visit museums (thanks in large part to the gifts of art benefactors such as Broad) as well as make efforts to improve the lives of those around us.

ELIZABETH THIBAudeau
Provo, Utah

MEETING MRS. ASTOR

I ENJOYED Dominick Dunne’s article about Brooke Astor (“Saving Mrs. Astor,” October), whom I first met at an event at the New York Public Library I attended with Marietta Tree in June 1986. We had just arrived, and Brooke was halfway up the library’s steps. Marietta remarked, “Quick, there’s Brooke.” and we caught up to her. Later, Brooke gave us a lift home and said, “Do send me a postcard a bit ahead of your next visit.” I did, and upon my return to New York that November I was commanded to attend a dinner at Brooke’s apartment for Clarissa, Countess of Avon, the widow of Anthony Eden, former British prime minister, and niece of Sir Winston Churchill. The affair was grand, but not stuffy. Other guests included Pamela Harriman and her son, Winston Churchill (named after his famous grandfather), Valentino, and Jayne Wrightsman. As I was a young man, my eyes almost popped out of my head, but I felt privileged and honored to be included. We kept in touch and often lunched together at the Knickerbocker Club, in New York. I last saw Brooke in May 2005 at her apartment. She said she felt “gloomy,” and trying to cheer her up, I recounted some of the happy times we had had together. She did much to promote friendship and goodwill among people from all walks of life, and we will not see someone like her again. Her philosophy of “work hard, give back, and have fun” is to be admired. While she would be embarrassed by the publicity she has received, she would be proud that at 104 she has become the unwitting symbol of those facing possible elder abuse. Her situation received international attention, and many people commented, “If it can happen to Brooke Astor, it could happen to me.”

HENRY D. GILLESPIE
Deniliquin, Australia

REDSTONE’S PET PAINTING

I WAS DELIGHTED to see my portrait of Sumner Redstone mentioned in “Sleeping with the Fishes” [by Bryan Burrough, December] and cited as Redstone’s favorite portrait. After all, this was the Art Issue! I was not, however, attributed as the artist of this work. We all know that Redstone walks on water—can you let your readers know that I’m the one who first saw him do it?

BARET BOISSON
Los Angeles, California

ATTACKING THE CHIEF

I DID NOT HAVE a lot of time in the past week—I was too busy celebrating the breakdown of the Republican machine—so it was not until November 9 that I finally cracked open my December issue of Vanity Fair. Like a beacon, there was Graydon Carter’s biting Editor’s Letter once again hammering away at the foibles of the dangerous “dry drunk” who sits in the Oval Office and at his like-minded cronies who have made the color red forever synonymous with scandal and corruption (“The President’s Delicate Condition”). Carter didn’t wait for the election to fall into the blue. Month after month after month he has expressed his outrage and filled the magazine’s pages with, in my opinion, some of the bravest, most hard-hitting political stories that can be found in any mainstream publication. Finally we have turned a corner; maybe there will be justice, and most certainly there will be plenty of press reports boasting. “Didn’t we tell you?” Truth is they did not, but Vanity Fair and Graydon Carter did. You were there for me in sickness, and now I look forward to being with you in health.

ELAINE ARONSON
Los Angeles, California

OBVIOUSLY GRAYDON CARTER has no respect for the current president, vice president, or, for that matter, the Republican Party. Apparently Carter maintains the
perspective that a person’s intelligence level, or the quality of his reading list, somehow correlates to his leadership abilities. This is not the case, nor has it ever been.

The reality is that we went into Iraq not because the Bush administration accused it of participating in the attacks of 9/11 but because Iraq was one of the Middle Eastern nations most likely to harbor terrorists and allow terrorist activities. Yes, many of the 9/11 terrorists were from Saudi Arabia, but their country of origin was not nearly as important as their extremist views and their al-Qaeda training, which are not country-specific.

I am certain that Carter, and those of a similar liberal mind, would have preferred more deliberations and more meaningless U.N. resolutions to handle the pre-war quagmire that was Iraq under Hussein. But true leadership requires action—usually action that others are too cowardly to take. That seems to be the approach of the Democratic Party: let’s wait to see what happens, and we will take action once things have gotten really bad and the costs are 10 times what they would have been if action had been taken earlier. If Japan had not attacked Pearl Harbor and pulled the U.S. into W.W. II, how much damage would F.D.R.’s Democratic administration have allowed Nazi Germany to inflict on Europe? How many more innocent Jews would have been killed? I’ll ask similar questions regarding Iraq. How many more innocent Iraqis needed to die before we

MORE FROM THE V.F. MAILBAG

D
d you realize that [in December’s issue] you have two references to Cassandra in a span of fewer than 25 pages? That is pretty good for a mythological character from thousands of years ago,” writes Eric Heffelfinger, of San Francisco. “Keep up the mythological references, but please space them out more.

We have a letter from—hang on a second: that is pretty good for a mythological character from thousands of years ago!—anyway, we have a letter from the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce alleging “unauthorized use” of the famous HOLLYWOOD sign in our June issue (the large hillside letters instead spelled out PELICANO in the image). Well, the Pelican Chamber of Commerce said it was just fine.

Dave Aaron, the president of the UFO Audio Video Clearing House, in Yucaipa, California, is upset with Summer Redstone’s Paramount Studios and used Bryan Burrough’s article on Redstone (“Sleeping with the Fishes,” December) as an excuse to tell us he is owed $45,400 for U.F.O. footage he provided Paramount for a segment on its show Entertainment Tonight. Sadly, it appears we have misled the middle page of his fax, so we don’t understand what precisely led to his closing remarks, which we think might in fact be a poem fragment:

Pillage, pinch, plagiarize, plunder, poach, purloin, ransack, remove, and rip off, Pirate, sack, shanghai, shoplift, snitch, spirit away, stick up, swipe, and take, Thieve, swindle.

“Hey, VF, where are all the ‘fall in your lap’ subscription cards in the December issue?” asks Mary Anne Kolton, of Cuya-
hen you have nothing to hide behind, you tend not to hide anything.

Made from pure glacial spring water, untouched, untainted, and unspoiled.

Keep your judgement pure. Drink responsibly.
stepped in to unseat Hussein? How many terrorists would it have been O.K. to allow Iraq to harbor while they planned attacks against the U.S.? I would hope that Carter would say zero.

BRIAN BORGER
Oregon, Ohio

ALTHOUGH I AM AN ARTIST, I found by far the most interesting articles in the Art Issue to be “The President’s Delicate Condition,” by Graydon Carter, and James Wolcott’s “Fire in the Beltway.” While there is plenty of politics in the art world, it pales in comparison to the entire debacle created by the current president and his fellow Republicans. I won’t come back to my country of birth until those rats have abandoned ship.

JOHN WILL
Calgary, Alberta

TO BE OR NOT TO BBC

I WOULD LIKE to point out that the BBC does not own Channel 4, as is suggested in the Sacha Baron Cohen article “Hello! It’s Sexy Time!” [by Rich Cohen, December].

CATHARINE MCGUIRK
Nottingham, England

CONSUMED BY STALIN

AS A PORTRAIT PAINTER, I was fascinated by A. A. Gill’s piece “What Christie’s Won’t Sell” (December). For me, however, there’s a lot more than interest in the painting. When I was growing up, in the 50s, Joseph Stalin was one of my big heroes.

For a seven-year-old in 1952 to admire the ruthless, murderous, mustachioed dictator is not quite as strange as it may sound. During the Cold War, Russian leaders got a lot of press in America, especially in Life and Look magazines. I remember Malenkov, Molotov, and Bulganin too, so the whole gang of Soviet bureaucrats made a big impression on me. I liked the way they lined up and saluted at parades on May Day. Naturally, though, I wanted to be the head guy, so I had a habit of doing my idea

POSTSCRIPT

O n August 9, 1997, a brawl outside a Brooklyn nightclub escalated into horrific brutality back at a Brooklyn police station when volatile and mysterious N.Y.P.D. officer Justin Volpe shoved a broken broomstick into brawl suspect Abner Louima’s rectum.

Writer-at-large Marie Brenner’s December 1997 article, “Incident in the 70th Precinct,” examined evidence surrounding the then alleged assault in the station’s bathroom—a crime so unspeakable that it shocked the entire country. The case gripped New York City. Louima, a Haitian immigrant, became a symbol of powerlessness, while the event exposed a world of white cops, commuting from the suburbs, blind to the complexities of the city’s vibrant ethnic tapestry.

Nearly 10 years later, only two of the four cops implicated in the crime are in prison. Volpe, now 34, is serving 30 years without a chance of parole. This month, Charles Schwarz, 40, will complete his five-year sentence, which he accepted after striking an unusual deal two days before the start of his fourth trial, in 2002: he agreed to jail time and a gag order (barring him from publicly proclaiming his innocence and from discussing what happened ever again) in exchange for a reduction in the charges against him. The other two officers, Thomas Wiese, 42, and Thomas Bruder, 43, who had obstruction-of-justice convictions overturned in 2002, are trying to get back on the police force. The case’s biggest issue—who was Volpe’s accomplice?—will likely remain a mystery.

As for Louima? These days he’s in good health, but he rarely discusses the assault with reporters, telling Brenner, “I try to blank it out from my mind, but it is something I have to deal with every day for the rest of my life.” After accepting a settlement of $8.75 million in 2001, he moved with his wife and three children to Miami, where he now invests in real estate and small businesses. How does he feel about Volpe, who is still vivid in his memory? “He was like an evil face. His actions speak for themselves,” Louima says quietly. “I feel that justice was served. He has a long time to think about his crime.”

Is the past prologue? The tragic recent shooting by undercover police of Sean Bell on the eve of his wedding made many in New York recall the case of Abner Louima and wonder if the appalling incident in the 70th Precinct had been a catalyst for change.

Abner Louima, outside his home in Florida, after a federal appeals court overturned the convictions of three officers involved in the 1997 Louima torture case.
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—THE INDEPENDENT (U.K.)
Lift here to discover ACQUA DI GIORGIO ARMANI for men
of Soviet drag to portray Stalin in front of the mirror. I would fasten my top shirt button, moisten cotton from the aspirin bottle to use as a mustache, and posture extravagantly, giving imaginary orders to my troops and ayy tanks that happened to be rumbling past my house. On second thought, maybe it’s no accident that I’ve had a mustache since 1968. If Gill’s “Da- mien Hirst” has not yet sold, I will gladly provide a good home for it in Los Angeles.

LOUIS BREIL
West Hollywood, California

WHEN STARS EMERGE

I THOUGHT the photos and sound bites on the actors featured in “Fifteen Years of Vanities Discoveries” were the best part of your December issue. You have a good eye for talent. But I have to respectfully disagree that Zooey Deschanel’s “breakthrough role” was in Almost Famos. I consider her role as Nessa Watkins in Mumford, which came out the year before Almost Famos, to be her breakout performance. I also think you were remiss in leaving off All the Real Girls as a career highlight.

JUDY VANDER SUIS
Belmont, California

MATTERS OF BLING

I AM WRITING concerning false and defamatory statements made about Lev Leviev and Leviev-KLG Jewelry in Nancy Jo Sales’s November article, “Is Hip-Hop’s Jeweler on the Rocks?”

Specifically, the article states, falsely and gratuitously, that Mr. Leviev is a cousin of Jacob Arabo’s and that Mr. Leviev “has business interests” with D.D. Manufacturing, whose owner, according to the article, bought a controlling interest in Jacob & Co. In fact, Mr. Leviev is not a cousin of Mr. Arabo’s and is not related to him in any fashion. Moreover, Mr. Leviev has no business interests with D.D. Manufacturing.

In addition to the defamation of Mr. Leviev personally, the article is extremely damaging to KLG, a high-end diamond and jewelry line of impeccable reputation, with which Mr. Leviev is associated and which bears his name.

THIERRY CHAUVET
President and chief operating officer
KLG Jewelry L.L.C.
New York, New York

NANCY JO SALES RESPONDS: In the course of researching my story, I heard from sources in the diamond industry and law enforcement that Jacob Arabo and Lee Leviev were cousins. When I interviewed Mr. Arabo at his store, he told me that he and Mr. Leviev were not related. Since both men come from Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and have appeared together in public, including at an event in May of 2006 at which they were both honored by New York’s Bukharian community, I did not think it necessary to check their blood relation with Mr. Leviev. As for any connection between D.D. Manufacturing and Mr. Leviev’s company, K.L.G., diamond-industry publications appeared to suggest it. I regret the error.

MASSACRE OF THE MUSTANGS

THANK YOU FOR PUBLISHING “Galloping Scared,” by Kurt Brungardt [November]. It is the best expose on the plight of our wild horses that I have read in some time. For years I have been a wild-horse advocate and have commented on many environmental assessments that the Bureau of Land Management has prepared before conducting roundups.

Lawsuits and documentaries have not stopped the B.L.M. from their war against these unique horses. A public outcry against this outrage is needed. With your timely and extensively researched article, hopefully this will happen in time to save our wild horses from extinction. They are a native species and a symbol of our freedom.

BARBARA WARNER
Lebanon, Kentucky

IF I WERE A POLITICIAN or lawmaker, I would sign a proposal to have a helicopter round up President Bush, former senator Conrad Burns, and all members of the B.L.M. and confine them to a corral. This way, they would be unable to do any more harm to innocent wild animals and the little natural land we still have left in this country. However, out of compassion, I would sign a bill to protect them from slaughter because I fear that our consumption of them would result in something way more horrible than mad-cow disease.

J.N. KOZEL
Seattle, Washington

CORRECTION: On page 383 of the December issue (“Elia Braid’s Big Picture,” by Bob Colacello), we misidentified Casey Wasserman. He is Lee Wasserman’s grandson and the youngest member of LACMA’s board of trustees.

Letters to the editor should be sent electronically with the writer’s name, address, and daytime phone number to letters@vf.com. Letters to the editor will also be accepted via fax at 212-286-4324. All letters for back issues should be sent to subscriptions@vf.com. All other queries should be sent to vfnail@vf.com. The magazine reserves the right to edit submissions, which may be published or otherwise used in any medium. All submissions become the property of Vanity Fair.
Very famous amongst very few people

BEDAT & C°
RAVER REVIEWS

This season actress Kim Raver reprises her role as Audrey Raines, Jack Bauer's love interest, on Fox's 24. She will also appear opposite Julian McMahon in the independent film Prisoner later this year.
Belinda Carlisle is back—with a voice that’s deeper and sultrier than ever—on Voila, her first new album in 10 years. The Go-Go’s front woman has gone beyond the Valley (unless you count the Loire) with a collection, sung entirely in French, that pays tribute to and covers classic chansons and Gallic pop from artists such as Edith Piaf, Serge Gainsbourg, and Jacques Brel. From Rykodisc, in stores now.

An illustration from Aline Kominsky-Crumb’s Need More Love.

BOHO ON THE BOWERY

The newly opened Lafayette Hause—a bohemian, Parisian-inspired boutique hideaway—is one of many new hotels and restaurants opening along the Bowery in New York City.

"Face of Fashion: Mert Alas & Marcus Piggott, Corinne Day, Steven Klein, Paolo Roversi and Mario Sorrenti” opens at Landau’s National Portrait Gallery. (2/15–5/28)

Four Stars

Giada De Laurentiis, Bobby Flay, Emeril Lagasse, and Daniel Boulud are among the culinary superstars headlining this year’s three-day gastronomic extravaganza of the South Beach Wine & Food Festival. Wine Spectator wine seminars will feature Château Haut-Brion, Château Margaux, and others. The festival honors Le Bernardin chef Eric Ripert. (2/23–2/25)
It just breaks my heart when I see younger women look older than I do.

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A commercial partnership
Norah Jones fights for your digital rights. Fearless (and smart) enough to sell an advance, unprotected MP3 of her new single online, Jones has managed to maintain control of her career despite the fame, fortune, and Grammys earned by her astonishing 2002 debut. Her third CD release, Not Too Late, is another collection of intimate, languorous songs that showcase Jones’s extraordinary vocal talent. Lucinda Williams writes about lust, love, and loss like nobody else, and on West, co-produced with Hal Wilner, she takes on such subjects as her mother’s death, the state of the world, and yet another tumultuous relationship that ended badly. It’s her usual tough stuff, but this time, Williams sneaks in a note of hope and even redemption in the very bluesy mix. Ryan Adams, Jakob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and Queens of the Stone Age’s Josh Homme all show up on Glitter in the Gutter from Jesse Malin, who has, on his third album, combined his talents for storytelling and seductive melodies with his eternal rock ‘n’ roll heart. The Neon Bible is the more ambitious, slightly more grandiose new one from the wondrous Arcade Fire. These Streets is the debut from Paolo Nutini—a handsome, 20-year-old Scottish singer in the “blue-eyed soul” tradition of Rod Stewart and Van Morrison. A little bit Freddie Mercury; a little bit George Michael—22-year-old Mika is poised for pop stardom with Life in Cartoon Motion. Those Brooklyn darlings Clap Your Hands Say Yeah release Some Loud Thunder. Also out: Air’s Pocket Symphony, Patty Griffin’s Children Running Through, and Romance. Songs from the Heart, classics from the incomparable Frank Sinatra, just in time for Valentine’s Day. No one understands a life like Frank’s.

The Irish are coming. After dominating the Emerald Isle music scene for two decades, U2 now finds itself looking over its shoulder at a very crowded, competitive field. With the help of Grey’s Anatomy and The O.C., Snow Patrol has officially broken in the U.S. The Thrills, also heard on The O.C., are from Dublin but sound like they’d rather be in California. The Frames refer to The Cost as their “Gordon Lightfoot, 70s folk record.” Simple Kid, a singer-songwriter who’s been compared to Beck, has recorded an eight-track machine in his house and enjoys a massive underground following. Fionn Regan is a musician in the tradition of a young Bob Dylan or Nick Drake. Also compared to Drake is the multi-million-seller Damien Rice, whose terrific new CD is 9.

Paddy Casey is currently recording in Los Angeles with producer George Drakoulias. Nellee Hooper produced Andrea Corr’s solo debut. Bell X1 is the biggest band in Ireland at the moment, and there are more to come: Declan O’Rourke, The Immediate, Director, Gemma Hayes.

Erin go bragh.
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THE LONDON NYC Hotel
Reminiscent of a grand London residence, the lobby is graced with a London Clack, Wolfgang Tillmans art, and a silk tapestry of Hyde Park. At 54 floors, the London NYC is one of the tallest hotels in New York, with amazing views of Central Park.

Room service is available 24 hours a day from the Gordon Ramsay restaurant.

The mini-bars are stocked with goodies from Dean & Deluca.

The front desk at the London NYC, at 151 West 54th Street.

In the bathrooms are Waterworks fixtures and products.

Designer David Collins used a color palette of silver, blue, cream, and rose.

Guests may call London for free.

GORDON RAMSAY at the LONDON
The restaurateur’s eponymous first Stateside culinary venture seats 45 in a formal dining room designed by David Collins. Ramsay owns nine restaurants in London, a number of them Michelin-starred. Dress code: jacket required.

Signature dishes: poached lobster ravioli, cappuccino of white beans, and hand-dived sea scallops.

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Casual, and with a small-plates menu for all-day dining, the London Bar has lots of intimate tables, a lang, sexy bar, and traditional English tea service.

At the chef’s table, which is perched in the 3,500-square-foot kitchen, chef Neil Ferguson creates a special menu for up to eight guests.

QUINTESSENTIALLY
Many argue that Ben Elliot’s Quintessentially offers the best concierge desk in the city. With its unrivaled global connections, the company offers guests access to pretty much anything they can dream of.

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London years ago, when she founded the successful upscale catalogue Vivrè, Eva Jeanbart-Lorenzotti created more than a retailer of worldly, high-end goods. In offering sophisticated shoppers a vision of a lifestyle to go with the merchandise, she invented a destination of sorts—a virtual consumer getaway. So it’s no surprise that for the brand’s first real-world outpost, Escape by Vivrè, Jeanbart-Lorenzotti has partnered with a locale that inspires the same aspirational frisson: the Cove Atlantis resort, on Paradise Island in the Bahamas, opening in March. “There has been demand to bring the Vivrè concept to life,” she says. “I have dreamed about what that would look like for many years. When I was approached by [Atlantis parent company] Kerzner and shown the concept, it piqued my interest. The Cove is gorgeous and very sexy; it’s a getaway that embodies what Vivrè is about.”

The Jeffrey Beers-designed space is meant to evoke, in Jeanbart-Lorenzotti’s words, “the sensations of a home, a library, a fabulous closet, a perfect jewel box,” filled with a constantly curated and evolving roster of merchandise—which will include wares from designers as diverse as Roberto Cavalli, Tomas Maier, Lotus London, Jo de Meur, Maasai Collections, and Lenny. “The biggest difference between Escape and the catalogue,” she explains, “will be the ability to bring [the] experience to life and create an environment for the customer that is ever changing, interactive, and personalized.”

Jeanbart-Lorenzotti has set her sights on Dubai for the next boutique—specifically, the Palm, an Atlantis property scheduled to open in December 2008. But no matter how far-flung the outposts become, she insists one thing won’t change: “The point of view, type of product, and overall feeling will always be Vivrè.”

—EVE EPSTEIN
ROME

BEAUTY VEILS THE FACE OF WAR

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ver since I can remember, I've wanted to be clever.”

Those are the first words we hear in Starter for Ten, echoing the opening narration of Goodfellas and thus promising a searing, violent exploration of the clever lifestyle. Instead, what we get is a British coming-of-age/romantic comedy that shares its plot with Gone with the Wind. Manhattan, Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan, and about a million other movies. Once again, a protagonist pines for a flawed or unattainable love while the real thing—obvious from the first frame to anyone in the audience who’s seen a film before—bides its time while being ignored and/or dumped on. But there’s a reason moviemakers keep telling the same stories over and over (aside from venal desperation), and hackneyed plots only seem hackneyed, or at least glaringly so, in the hands of hacks. Starter for Ten, directed by Tom Vaughan (his first feature), with a witty screenplay by David Nicholls, based on Nicholls’s novel, triumphs familiarity with charm, understatement, a refusal to stack the deck (too much), and a winning cast led by James McAvoy (Mr. Tumnus in The Chronicles of Narnia). He is Brian, a first-year student at the University of Bristol trying to navigate the perilous line between his broadening intellectual and social horizons and what his lumox friends back home think of as wankerdom. Fortunately, as written and played, Brian has just enough calculation in his men to keep his puppy-doggedness from becoming overly Zach Braff-like. Alice Eve (in her second film, after a small part in Stage Beauty) is the posh girl he fancies, while Rebecca Hall (daughter of stage director Peter Hall, making her film debut—and not a moment too soon, given the camera’s obvious affection for her Modigliani face) is the less posh girl he ought to fancy. Bleak English exteriors and greasy English interiors add helpful exoticism, at least for American audiences. So does a subplot involving University Challenge, the real-life British equivalent of our old G.E. College Bowl, hosted by a man with the stuffy-sounding yet delightfully eponymous name Bamber Gascoigne, who, inevitably, was made fun of more than once by Monty Python.

—BRUCE HANDY

### Avenue of Dreams

Avenue of Dreams, a deftly joyful, nuanced comedy from director Danièle Thompson, is this year’s official foreign-language Oscar entry from France. Set on the infamous avenue named after French writer Michel de Montaigne—home to the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the luxe Hôtel Plaza Athénée, and the haute couture shopping parade—the film is deeply Parisian in the best of ways. “It is many different stories, depending on how you look at it,” says Thompson. “It is about a young girl from the middle of France discovering a new vision of what she thinks is the beautiful, lucky people. And it’s very much a comedy about the dissatisfaction we all live with.”

Co-written with her son and La Bôche (1999) collaborator, Christopher Thompson, the film explores what happens when disparate lives intersect. The café where the film is set is “where everyone goes—rich and poor, famous and unknown,” explains Danièle Thompson. “They all drink together; it is the only ‘normal’ place in the area. It is a film about what we all have in common, about the humanity that hides beneath our façade—the façade of success, of privilege, of talent.” Thompson’s feelings about the film’s international success? “I’m very happy. I suppose you only really discover what it is you’ve done once you’ve done it! This has been a lovely surprise.”

—A.M. HOMES

### POP UP

Dual processor or toaster? When did it become difficult to tell the difference? Siemens and Porsche Design, makers of miracles in brushed aluminum, have a new “long slot”—or, as they say in the appliance biz—toaster, which has a memory chip that recalls how you like your bread done. [Not yet sold in the U.S.; siemens.ie]
Avon Calling

Jillian Dempsey, the makeup artist behind the faces of Kirsten Dunst and Kate Winslet, is now the global creative-color director for the Avon company. Her first limited-edition collection arrives in February, distributed by five million representatives in more than 100 countries. That’s a lot of Sheer Glow All Over Face Powder.

“Growing up, I didn’t know I’d be an Avon Lady,” says Dempsey, who began her career at the Shu Uemura boutique in Los Angeles in 1989 before moving into film, music videos, and TV. (Her husband is the actor Patrick Dempsey, of Grey’s Anatomy.) She’s also the founder and C.E.O. of Delux Beauty cosmetics, which made her an even more natural fit for the company. “We share the vision of effortless, uncomplicated makeup—quick beauty,” she says. “Also, like the Avon representatives, I work one-on-one with my clients, too.”

Her spring range offers a sheer palette for lips, eyes, and nails. “It’s not masking yourself.” she says of her hues. “It’s about bringing out your natural beauty.”

The natural beauties she works with have already taken a shine to her sheer lipsticks. “My vision is that everyone’s going to be pulling Avon out of their bags really soon,” she says with a laugh.

—CHRISTINE MULKE

Shu Uemura is going to great depths to moisturize your skin. The new Depsea Therapy Moisture Skincare line uses water taken 1,000 feet below sea level off Japan’s Cape Muroto. “Water is an essential part of all living things, and it’s an essential part of skin care, too,” says the spry 79-year-old makeup artist. Rich in more than 60 minerals, the deep-sea water is supercharged with seaweed extracts, which seal in moisture and promote cell turnover. For those who can’t test the waters of Shu Uemura’s new Utoco Deep Sea Therapy Center and Hotel, in Muroto, this collection of replenishing products gives new meaning to eau de vie.

—C.M.

Kenneth Cole and Jon Bon Jovi have teamed up to raise awareness about homelessness. Proceeds from the fashion designer’s new men’s fragrance, R.S.V.P., are being donated to the musician’s Philadelphia Soul Charitable Foundation, an organization that combats poverty. The duo is also collaborating on a line of limited-edition jackets, which will benefit HELP USA, a nonprofit that empowers the needy.

—JESSICA FLINT
WHY IS THIS TOP MODEL GIVING HER FRIEND PRAVDA VODKA?
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To feel the experience for yourself, see the video at thecoveatlantis.com or call 877-COVE-VIP for reservations.
AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 19
People talk a lot about spiritual relationships, often without
the faintest idea of what one is. You, however, could probably
write a book on the subject by now. With the ruler of your
12th house deep in your 7th, you have to be compassionate, forgiving,
thankful, and attuned to the needs of others, even if it means you can’t
get all the love and help you think you deserve. The only catch in these
so-called higher-consciousness unions is that you can never be totally
sure whether you are playing on a higher level or just playing the fool.

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20
The older we get, the more we have to realize that freedom is
not about living a wild, chaotic life of abandonment. We have to be sensitive
to what is best not only for ourselves but also for others. This is especially true for you,
now that your 6th and 11th houses are so active. To make a worthwhile contribution
to humanity, you just need to pitch in and serve humbly without bitching and
moaning that you think you’re being used.

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19
Inhibitions be damned! Your reputation and public standing
hang on your ability to express yourself to the fullest now.
With the planetary rulers of your solar 5th and 10th houses
in mutual reception, you’ll find that to be truly creative you have to
carry yourself like a consummate professional instead of a temperamental
artist. So even if you suffer from stage fright, writer’s block, or
performance anxiety, get out there and show your stuff. Unrelated side
note: kids can be an awful drag, but can you live without them?

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20
A new moon at the end of your solar 9th house will fill you
with that old restless yearning to explore what lies beyond
the horizon. You’re still tied to your domestic responsibilities,
however, so it won’t be easy to take off without leaving behind a frozen
dinner or two for the family to pop into the microwave. All Tauruses
adore seeing new places and having new experiences, but you love
your creature comforts just as much. You’ll make it to the moon—just
as soon as you’re assured they’ve got nice towels up there.

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21
Before you read another word, stop for a moment and
breathe. Close your eyes and take one long, deep, calming
breath. That’s your message right now. To lower your blood
pressure, allay your anxieties, and make sure the oxygen in your
blood is flowing to all the right places at the right times, you need
to take time to inhale and exhale. Now that the rulers of your 3rd
and 8th houses are so dominant, many Geminis are having trouble
performing this simple operation. That’s right: in, out, in, out.

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22
You’re never going to get a true picture of what a real
relationship is if you sit around reading bridal magazines or
watching old romantic comedies on TV. Romance may ring
tree for some people some of the time, but you can’t fall into that sort
of fantasy when there are such powerful forces at work between
planets in your 7th house and your solar 2nd. Successful relationships
are based on mutually agreed-upon conditions, and in your case
right now they are strictly about money and who is in control. Period.

LEO JULY 23–AUG 22
Jupiter’s in Sagittarius now, so be all mean live it up and have
a ball. You’re a 5th-house person at heart, and as a Leo you
have been put on this earth to enjoy life and love to the max.
If anything happens to be bugging you, there is no sense subsisting on
pain pills when the path is as clear as it is change your life. Get rid of
anything (or anyone) who’s a drag. Make your health—physical, mental,
emotional, and spiritual—your No. 1 priority. Nobody is going to clean
up your act but you, so grab the broom and go for it.

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT. 22
In your best moments, you are absolutely unmatched as a
performer, creator, and lovelmaker. So congratulations. With Saturn
transiting Leo and the recent conjunction in your solar 2nd house, you’re at it again,
allowing yourself at last to be real, real vulnerable, and, best of all, known.

And if, when you’re all alone, you weep now and then for everything
that cannot be, well, frankly, it’s nobody’s goddamned business.

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NOV. 21
With money no longer a source of agita, maybe you can stay
focused on your career. If you’ve got the gift of gab, God
bless you, because it’s going to come in handy now that the ruler
of your 10th house is in your solar 3rd. Not only can you express your
views professionally and publicly, but you will also be able to talk
your way out of all the sticky political situations you’ve gotten mixed
up in over the past few months as you endeavored to climb to the
pinnacle of success without stepping on too many heads along the way.

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JAN. 19
Getting you to stop obsessing over the future would require
nothing less than a flock of angels flapping their fluffy white
wings and telling you there’s nothing to worry about. Even then
you’d probably demand proof that miracles can happen to Capricorns.
You are so accustomed to wincing at the machinery of life that you
can’t imagine how a transit of Jupiter in your 12th house could lift you
out of a funk brought on by an 8th-house Saturn. It absolutely could,
but only if you stop dwelling on catastrophes that haven’t happened yet.

FANFAIR

PLANTARARIUM

MICHAEL LUTIN
My name: ELENN DEGENERES

childhood ambition: TO WORK WITH ANIMALS

fondest memory: I CAN'T RECALL BUT I'M SURE I'M FOND OF IT

indulgence: DOING NOTHING

last purchase: BUTTER

favorite movie: WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP + OUT OF AFRICA

inspiration: KINDNESS

My life: IS PERFECT, EVEN WHEN IT'S NOT

My card: IS AMERICAN EXPRESS
Why Are British Sex Scandals So Much Better than Ours?

Comparing Washington sex scandals with those of Britain’s political class is enough to cause any red-blooded American to blush with shame. The fabled Profumo affair and The Spectator’s recent game of musical beds make Clinton’s desperate urges or the leering emoticons of Mark Foley look, well, limp.

When I read the flirty e-mails and instant messages from Congressman Mark Foley to assorted cuddle buns of the male denomination, I was embarrassed, truly embarrassed—not only for Mr. Foley, but for myself, as an American. This is the best we can do? This is what it’s come to? It was bad enough when the cheesy details of President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky’s bobble-head ministrations leered from the pages of Ken Starr’s report, and we learned that the former intern resuscitated the commander in chief up only to the point of release, whereupon he withdrew and finished himself off in a bathroom sink, like some unhoused broken Martin Amis character. The president of the United States masturbating into a sink—it doesn’t get more plaintive than that. Or so I believe. But the Mark Foley congressional-page scandal took the Washington sexpot to its ultimate dry point of diminution. It was a sex scandal without any actual sex. It unfurled almost entirely in the phantom zone where fantasy and virtual reality overlap. What could be more tacky or poignant than a middle-aged sad sack quizzing a former teenage page if he had spanked his Oscar Meyer that weekend—“it must feel great spitting on the towel” (further evidence of how cyberprose degrades spelling ability)—and moaning kisses from another playmate before a vote on a war-appropriations bill? When a grown man trafficks in smiley-face emoticons, it’s time to fold up the cot. From Bill Clinton seeking body warmth in Lewinsky’s pillowy embrace to Foley batting his eyelashes online, to poor old jovial chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Wilbur Mills making a ripe fool of himself with stripper “Fanne Fox, the Argentine Firecracker,” the high-profile Washington sex scandal is marked by desperate lunging, not lusty abandon. A hot flash of male menopause, it’s more of a cry for help and a prelude to rehab than a yelp of pleasure. Washington should steal a tabloid page from its closest and horniest ally, Great Britain. When it comes to whipping up a political sex scandal into a donnybrook, the Brits have us beat—they really know how to make the bedsheets billow. British sex scandals, like ours, are often rooted in a dolor of middle-aged malaise, but they’re also animated by spit, spicy details, vanity, revenge, bitter comedy, and bawdy excess—the complete Jacobean pantry.

Nearly half a century later, the Profumo scandal still retains its smoky intrigue and fascinating lore. It is, in the words of The Sunday Herald reporter Barry Diddocks, “the yardstick against which all other political scandals are measured.” The man whose name and political career were permanently nailed into notoriety was John Profumo (the Tory secretary of state for war under Harold Macmillan), who was forced to resign after lying to Parliament about his brief involvement with Christine Keeler, a teenage topless dancer and call girl who also made herself available to a K.G.B. agent and Soviet naval attaché. Given the nature of the Cold War (it was 1963), such fraternization was an impermissible breach. But what made the story
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NEARLY HALF a century later, the Profumo scandal still retains its smoky intrigue and fascinating lore.

Stephen Ward, who would later commit suicide during his trial for living partly or wholly on the proceeds of prostitution (unlawful under the Sexual Offences Act of 1956) and leave tantalizing questions unanswered as to the scope and clientele of his alleged prostitution ring. In the blaze of flashbulbs and howl of headlines, the men in the Profumo scandal crumbled and the women seized pop-star status. It was Rice-Davies who, upon hearing that Lord Astor had denied doing the dirty with her, bequeathed to posterity the snappy rejoinder “Well, he would, wouldn’t he?” and it was Keefer who furnished one of the most iconic and imitated poses of the 60s when she was photographed by Lewis Morley straddling the back of a chair in the imperturbable nude. The original print is enshrined at the Victoria and Albert Museum, its inclusion certifying its historical-pictorial value. It’s difficult to imagine Monica’s blue dress feeling up at the Smithsonian.

The grossly undying particulars of the Profumo saga now appear quaint to our jaded palate. The 1962 film Scandal, starring Joanne Woodward as Keefer, Ian McKellan as Profumo, John Hurt as Ward, and a miscast Bridget Fonda as Mandy Rice-Davies, had the musty look of an old humidor, the publishing and entertainment industries can’t let go. Last fall, David Profumo, son of the late John Profumo, brought out a memoir based on his parents’ diaries and letters, and interviews conducted with his father (who died in March 2006), called Bringing the House Down. Promoting his book, David Profumo ascribed the enduring hold of the saga of his father’s disgrace and banishment from public life to the spiky array of angles to the case. “It did seem to have established her as a minor, unavoidable celebrity annoyance, much like our Gloria Alred. She claims she and Major would whisper like conspirators in the chambers of the House of Commons, conversing in code (“Could we have a word after the vote tonight?”) before sneaking out for a bout of hokey pokey at her flat. What made Currie’s kiss-and-tell so jaw-dropping was that it overturned the engraved perception of John Major as a department-store dummy with all the charisma of aspmin. Recall that when Major succeeded Margaret Thatcher, after she had been buffalized out the door by rebels in her own party, he offered

a respite from her regal bossiness. Major was a leader of probity, modest, modulated rhetoric, and conciliatory manner—his relative dullness was a virtue after the combative psychodrama of the Thatcher regime. So to discover that this bland placeholder wore big blue underpants, had shared a bathtub with Currie, and acquitted himself in the sack with commendable zeal (“I wish he could have been as good a Prime Minister as he was a lover,” she told an interviewer from The Sunday Telegraph) played mischief with everyone’s editorial-cartoon mental picture of Major. It painted racing stripes across his executive persona. The grey man of Downing Street had suddenly acquired a dash of colour: ‘Didn’t know the old boy had it in him’ seemed to be the general response,” observed David Thomas in the Daily Mail on Sunday.

(A similar blush infused a marble figurehead when England’s Football Association coach Sven-Goran Eriksson was found embroiled in an affair with Faria Alam, a secretary at the F.A., who described him as being what all men aspire to, a “master of the art oflovemaking.” Earlier, Eriksson had extended his mastery in an affair
BIG, BIG, BIG STARS.
AND THIS GUY.

RICKY GERVAIS

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with TV personality Ulrika Jonsson, whose sexual history was scarred by trauma, giving the tabloids more feed for the trough. “In between the Jonsson and Alam affairs,” The Scotsman reported, “Eriksson was alleged to have been bombarding a former lover, Jayne Connery, 35, with telephone calls asking for a reunion.” Adopting a Juvenal attitude to these antics, FIFA—Fédération Internationale de Football Association—president Sepp Blatter—now, there’s a name—mused that the sex imbroglio had “enriched the summer non-footballing season in England.” With Sven through thick and thinner was his regal girlfriend, the magnificently maned and named Annunziata Dell’Olio, known to the commoners as Nancy, “the first lady of football,” about whom Jonsson once wondered in print, “Has that fake tan lotion started to pickle her brain?” Dell’Olio caused a Liz Hurley-esque sensation when she met Tony Blair in 2002 dolled up in a red jumpsuit with navel-plunging décolletage.)

But Major couldn’t bask in this vaunted prowess and take bows for being considered quite a goer. The disclosure of his affair was devastating to his wife, Norma, who was described as “upset, angry and humiliated,” and Major declared, “It was the one event of my life of which I am most ashamed and I have long feared it would be made public.” Why did Edwina Currie bring the ceiling crashing down with the publication of the diaries? Even a six-figure publishing advance didn’t justify that much collateral damage. (The most abused victim of Currie’s diaries was her hapless ex-husband, depicted as a fat, snotting, listless, TV-addicted loser.) No, this was a case of blowback is a bitch. According to the Daily Mail, Currie was a woman thrice scorned: “First, on becoming Prime Minister, he offered a job as Minister for Prisons, which she felt was beneath her competence and her dignity. Second, he failed to mention her in his memoirs. And third, when her diaries came out, he issued a statement saying he was ‘ashamed’ of their affair.” It was the middle item that most infuriated. “The most hurtful thing is to look at John’s autobiography and find that I wasn’t even in the index,” she fumed. (Shades of Glenn Close’s war cry in Fatal Attraction, “I’m not going to be ignored!”) The kicker is that, according to Major’s editor, Julian Glover, Currie’s omission from his autobiography was entirely unintentional, her name lost like a stray leaf “among a flurry of revisions.” But this innocent oversight seems to have simmered in Currie’s craw until the opportunity to strike back was in her grasp. Perhaps that’s why Bill Clinton followed the policy in his the plight of former home secretary David Blunkett, who was forced to resign from the Cabinet in the wake of a custody fight over a son he had fathered during an affair with Kimberly Quinn, the married publisher of The Spectator, the conservative paper founded in 1828, which has long been the home of that elegantly seedy species of English journalist known as the Gentleman Hack. It wasn’t the affair itself that sent Blunkett pack-

**THE AFTERMATH** of the Currie-Major affair resembled an altercation between an acetylene torch and a frozen fish stick.
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to the first fateful whiff of seduction between Blankett and Quinn. Writing in the Telegraph in 2004, Wyatt recalled:

Three years ago, in my capacity as a writer for The Spectator magazine, I asked Mr Blankett for an interview. He agreed on the condition that we have dinner afterwards. He specified that The Spectator’s vivacious publisher, Kimberly Fortier, as she then called herself, should be present. He had heard her on the radio and had apparently been entranced by her voice.

After I had finished asking Mr Blankett the usual questions about law and order, we adjourned to Wheeler’s in London’s St James’s. It was a small table and the seating was snug, particularly as Mr Blankett had brought his guide dog. I was struck, however, by how little aid he required. He negotiated glasses, cutlery and bread-rolls like a man who had no problems with sight.

Then Mrs. Quinn/Fortier arrived, arrayed in a diaphanous tunic with trousers. We ordered our food. Mr Blankett and I ate dinner solo. Ms. Fortier ate Mr Blankett. She began to engage him in some extraordinarily flirtatious banter (a characteristic of hers which is part of her undoubted charm). She said she had always wondered what it was like to sleep with a blind man.

Her curiosity would be satisfied.

Whether Wyatt’s affair with Boris Johnson began equally saucily, we will leave to our parched imaginations, but its exposure in the press was unburdened by any of the weary sorrow that attended Blankett’s travails in the court of opinion. Johnson’s persona was too flighty and lightweight to support serious baggage of pity or condemnation. Apart from his editorial duties, Johnson became familiar to the general public as a panelist on the comedy quiz show Have I Got News for You, a Tory member of Parliament, and the shadow minister for higher education, earning the rambunctious nickname Bo-Jo from the tabloid press. With his tousled blond hair and gift for the gag (the had to humble himself before the citizens of Liverpool after a Spectator editorial slagged Liverpudlians for wallowing in “vicarious victimhood” over the death of civil engineer Kenneth Bigley, who had been held hostage and beheaded in Iraq, and he later apologized to the people of Papua New Guinea after comparing Tory Party bloodletting over her husband’s alleged tryst with Condoleezza Rice that she temporarily checked into Washington’s Mayflower Hotel to cool her jets. Although Rice once Freudian-sliped in referring to President Bush as her husband, the rumors of an outright affair were unsubstantiated and soon receded into dormancy, occasionally resuscitated by that esteemed supermarket publication The Globe (BUSH DIVORCE DEAL; LAURA WINS CONDI LOSES!—August 14, 2006). I admit disappointment that nothing came of these salacious claims. Not only would a Dubya-Laura-Condi triangle have made for epic Potomac soap opera, with the twin Bush daughters providing a leitmotif as the Paris and Nicky Hilton of the piece, but it would have proved that his presidency had something coursing through its veins other than the pure heroin of power. I would prefer to live under a system of government where the overseers occasionally plunged into one another’s arms rather than righteously plundered the Constitution and the commonweal to feed their habit. Well, at least we can go to bed happy and content in the knowledge that somewhere out there are Fundamentalist preachers up to no filthy good. They, bless them, are keeping the sacred flame of American hypocrisy brightly lit. ☼

SHENANIGANS INVOLVING the Blair Cabinet and The Spectator proved the makings of an English farce.

W
e could use a few similar bonfires of the vanities in Washington, assuming those holding positions of trust still engage in unregulated fornication in their off-hours. It isn’t that I long to see marriages destroyed, reputations wrecked, moving vans parked in the driveways of households rent by divorce. It’s just that a dreadful piety has taken hold in American life, predicated on the notion that no one misbehaves out of choice or inclination or a simple warm itch, but because they were driven to it by drink, drugs, or childhood dysfunction (next stop: rehab), or because they lapsed from grace into the gutter lane (next stop: joining their paws in prayer with Chuck Colson). In the summer of 2006, rumors caromed through the supermarket tabloids and the gossip blogs that major turbulence was rocking the Bush marriage, with Laura so irate...
Pick a nice spot for your library. The Sony Reader holds about 80 electronic books and reads more with a removable memory card. It’s as easy to carry as a slim paperback and for kids to electronic paper, easy to read. Now you don’t have to pick a beach read based on the size of your beach bag. Are you a Reader? Read more at sony.com/reader.
Billionaires and Broadsheets

Maybe none of the billionaires lining up to buy a newspaper—e.g., David Geffen, Ron Burkle, Eli Broad, Hank Greenberg—know what they would be getting into. Maybe their motives are...complicated. Maybe they’re not even serious. But they may be the only future the industry has.

I was invited the other day to stop in for an off-the-record visit with one of the really, really rich men who are lining up to buy the country’s biggest newspapers. In addition to his own billions, he had lots of billionaire friends, he said, who were also interested in the newspaper business, and, as a benchmark, he pointed out. The New York Times had a market value of only $3.3 billion. So what if, say, the Times shareholders—this billionaire was interested as well, albeit for lesser amounts, in Newsday and The Boston Globe and the L.A. Times and The Wall Street Journal—were offered a 50 percent, or even 100 percent, pop? I mean, he said, come on.

It was just a market anomaly—the kind which opportunity is made from—that newspapers were suddenly worth much less to mere mortal shareholders than they were to a new, assertive, patriarchal class of multi-billionaires.

This billionaire—an appropriately larger-than-life character, remarkably fit (I re-evaluated my own diet and exercise regimen), in a vast office filled with knickknacks and press coverage and separate seating areas, with, like so many of his fellow billionaires, not enough to do with his great energy—immediately confused my role. In the kind of mix-up that perhaps one might see if he does take over one of these papers, he clearly saw me not as a reporter but as a helper. A collaborator. Indeed, I gossiped handily. In a way, it was good that he recognized he needed some help (and, possibly, a sign of humility), because, in fact, he knew nothing whatsoever about the newspaper business, or news. Zip. Nada. I am not sure he quite understood that it was a bleak business. I offered that there are many people who believe that the commercial viability of big-city dailies will be kaput within five years. He said, with affable certainty, and as though agreeing with me,
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Newspapers, once the singular province of big men—Citizen Kane himself—had become the land of nobodies.

probably not even be Google)—of the new-news world. Or would the whole idea of news brands die a whimpering death?

It was only happenstance that this meeting about the future of the new news was in Chicago, which is ground zero of the end of old news. That Chicago should be the scene of this last act is a masterstroke of staging. The Chicago Tribune has dominated this city for most of the last century. It is one of the city’s biggest companies and biggest employers (the entire Midwest media community seems to have worked, at one time, for a Tribune company). The Chicago Tribune’s web of power and influence is bred into the city. The Chicago Tribune is Chicago. You can’t imagine the Tribune being taken over by outsiders any more than you could have imagined the Los Angeles Times, that bastion of civic back-scratching, being taken over—although, as it happens, six years ago, the Tribune itself took over the L.A. Times. And, too, there is the great Tribune Tower, mock-Gothic, art-directed, sentimental, rising, near our new-media meeting, over downtown Chicago.

A year ago, institutional shareholders at Knight Ridder, owner of more than 30 daily papers—with Gannett and the Tribune Company, K.R. was part of what’s been known in the industry as the three bears—in a display of petulance and impatience and power, forced management to sell the business to the highest bidder (and not so high, at that—$4.5 billion). Almost immediately thereafter, the largest block of shareholders at the Tribune Company (the former shareholders of Times Mirror, the company that had owned the L.A. Times) became aggrieved, too, and in a series of push-pull maneuvers forced the Tribune Company—which, in addition to the Tribune and the L.A. Times, owns Newsday, the Hartford Courant, the Baltimore Sun, many television stations, and the Chicago Cubs—to put itself on the block, where it now teeters, entertaining offers.

Our new-media meeting adjourned for lunch to a downtown club—an odd, out-of-time, red-leather steak-and-shrimp-cocktail club—in the Wrigley Building. It was a huge room, and there wasn’t much business. We were there with some amount of irony—or mockery; observing a relic. And, indeed, one of the people in our group, a prince of new media, with heightened reli radar, suddenly singled out Dennis FitzSimons, head of the Tribune Company, among the most anonymous of the anonymous people in the room.

This was a clever celebrity sighting, because the entire point about the C.E.O. of the Tribune Company is that newspaper executives are nameless, faceless, professionally gray people. Dennis FitzSimons, with his out-of-fashion mustache and brownish suit—a former television-station executive and advertising salesperson—was not much different from any executive who ran, say, a public utility, which is what newspapers had become. Personality-less, reliable, bureaucratic, and, until very recently, throwing off lots of free cash flow.

In this public-utility age of newspapers, the institutional blindness which resulted—reporters themselves, once clever and disreputable, became something like public-service employees, seeing themselves with the beleaguered virtue of schoolteachers—helped turn newspapers into a medium for old people (newspapers are for people who remember newspapers). In some sense, newspapers became the inverse of media: designed not to be noticed. Indeed, Gannett, the No. 1 chain, had, not so long ago, spent more than a year searching for a chief executive, looking for a big deal media type (indeed, reportedly trying to get people such as Sirius Radio’s Mel Karmazin and Comcast’s Steve Burke interested in the job), but nobody with pizzazz wanted a newspaper company, so Gan-

Which, if you had a comic turn of mind, could now be seen as cyclical capitalism offering opportunity to the somebodies—this grand assortment of the biggest egomaniacs of modern capitalism, with some of its biggest fortunes. There are, among others, music and film impresario David Geffen ($4.6 billion), after the L.A. Times; supermarket king and Clinton buddy Ron Burkle ($2.5 billion) and real-estate giant Eli Broad ($5.8 billion), bidding for the Tribune Company; America’s most celebrated retired executive, former G.E. C.E.O. Jack Welch (some $720 million), going for the New York Times—owned Boston Globe; and insurance mogul—rouged up by Eliot Spitzer—Hank Greenberg ($2.8 billion), amassing shares in the New York Times. For them, money is truly no object. Attention span might be, but not money.

Of course, it could well be that none of these egomaniacs really
distilled from French mauzac blanc grapes, serve Cîroc vodka in champagne flutes and release the true flavors of every cocktail.
want to own a newspaper. The opportunity they are most attentive to might not be the actual paper but the currency of saying you might buy the paper—that in itself provides a valuable opportunity. Hard to believe that David Geffen or Jack Welch might want more publicity—but that is like saying it is hard to believe they might want more money.

Or, and this would be my preferred explanation for some of this newspaper mania, all of these ego manics are, themselves, pretty old (which partly explains their restlessness)—Geffen is 63; Burkle, 53; Broad, 73; Welch, 71; Greenberg, 81. That puts them among the more and more rarefied group of people who actually still read newspapers. And because they are billionaires they reasonably might assume that they are at the center of the world, and, accordingly, since they read newspapers, everyone else must read, or want to read, a newspaper.

Or, possibly, these guys are really, as they keep saying, civic-minded (“I believe a newspaper is a civic asset, a civic trust,” said Eli Broad recently). But it would not be civic-minded in the usual sense of providing some community virtue or service, but civic-minded in the sense of not being able to imagine the civitas without the dominating force, the everyday feel, the clairion headlines, of a newspaper. If you are above a certain age and interested in civic life and, as important, the power that determines civic life, it’s almost impossible imagining going forward without a daily paper. (The corollary for such men is the difficulty of imagining life without being in the paper.) So the idea of the rich man, the mega-rich man, in the newspaper business is likely a nostalgic idea about dominance—synergistic dominance, even: dominant paper, dominant man. His dominance is his civic contribution. The sports-team parallel is a useful one. Rich men buy sports teams as a personal expression of boosterism, and civic engagement, and personal fun. What’s more, they believe they can increase the value of these teams—and they often do—by their own energy and public face. They become the No. 1 fan. Likewise, these guys undoubtedly see themselves as cheerleaders of the news.

But the critical flaw with newspapers may in fact be this very idea of dominance. That is, if information is no longer top-down, emanating and controlled from a central source, is a newspaper, then, a little ridiculous?

The following comes from Ken Doctor, former managing editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, whom I met in my Chicago new-news meeting and who has made the savvy transition from participating in the decline of the business—there are 51,000 journalists at U.S. dailies, a number that shrinks by 3 percent annually—to profitably predicting it. In beard and sport jacket—city-room chic—he travels around the country from meeting to meeting giving one version or another of his PowerPoint lecture on the imminent end of the American daily.

Nineteen-fifty marks the high point of newspaper penetration in America: 100 percent of American homes took one or more daily papers. Fifty-six years later fewer than half of American homes get one. At the current rate of decline, no homes will get any newspapers in the not-too-distant future. Morning news, once the monopoly province of newspapers (virtually all evening papers, facing competition from network news, folded in the 60s and 70s), is now overwhelmingly the province of the networks, cable, radio, and the

News is worth more to newsmakers than to investors (and even news consumers).

So there’s cut-and-gut. Otherwise known as managing for cash. As the market deteriorates, you produce your paper ever more cheaply. Gannett has been a reliable cutter-and-gutter. Most of its papers are in smaller markets, so if there’s been a fuss it’s been hard to hear.

The Tribune Company has had a different strategy. It’s used the Web. Newspaper readers (as well as broadcast-news audiences) are old and growing ever older (on an actuarial table, you can plot the newspaper’s last day). There are, effectively, no new newspaper readers. Newspapers have worked best as a direct-marketing medium—introducing seller to buyer—but the Web is better and cheaper. The mainstay of newspaper profits—real-estate, auto, recruitment advertising—accounting for as much as 30 percent of them, is migrating almost entirely online. Shopping itself, that other elemental commerce connection of a newspaper (“The principle of free speech owes at least as much to department stores as to the First Amendment,” notes Ken Doctor in passing), is ever more an online activity. While circulation steadily drops, and as online price competition becomes fiercer, newspapers have, nevertheless, continued to charge more for ads—a kind of pyramid scheme, which, sooner rather than later, falls in on itself.

This is terminal, and yet big-city dailies, even in this latter stage of industrial decline, are still—having to do with the residual strength of their monopoly position—a mud slide of dough. Margins of more than 20 percent have been, until recently, the norm (even in this terrible year, the industry average is still 17 percent). Now, this erodes every day, and beating this horse will, at some point, become hardly worth the effort. But between now and then is someone’s opportunity. This is—one of the things billionaires understand better than the rest of us—arbitrage: the discrepancy between present value and future value.

The newspaper business is almost entirely about straddling this discrepancy. What do you do before the lights go out?
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free cash flow of its papers to buy other local media. The idea has been to balance the declining market share of newspapers with radio, VHF, cable. But this synergy play has produced less return than even the newspapers themselves. Hence, the Tribune Company has also moved toward cutting-and-gutting. But it’s harder to cut in top-tier markets than in mid-tier: you hear the fuss. This fall, both the editor and the publisher of the L.A. Times effectively went on strike when asked to make newsroom cuts—bad press that’s helped push the Tribune Company toward its dissolution. A reporter at the Tribune’s Hartford Courant, Rinker Buck, wrote a widely circulated attack on the ethics, intelligence, and competence of Tribune management: dozens of Newsday staffers have also publicly lambasted FitzSimons over newsroom cuts. Likewise, the buyers of The Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News—a local group of wealthy marketing executives who are trying to implement a version of this cut-to-size strategy—find themselves pilloried across the industry they hope to be taken seriously in, as well as faced with a strike by the Newspaper Guild.

Then there’s the more gentlemanly version of cut-and-gut, as practiced at The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. This involves literally cutting inches off the paper and from the news hole, as well as slashing budgets and staff. But the premise here is that saving these papers, helping to stabilize the health of these papers, justifies the incremental losses—pay no attention to the fact that ever more increments will need to be sacrificed to maintain stability.

And then there’s the Hail Mary Internet pass. This is the most hopeful strategy and, too, the iffiest, with The New York Times its most dedicated adherent. The premise is that technology (for which newspapers have no natural disposition) and good intentions will help create a new digital form for news and a new-news business. Since no clear form or adequate business model exists for online news delivery, it is almost impossible to handicap the chances for who might succeed here (given the uncertainty, the odds, objectively, are not good for anyone).

So without a clear program for how to get from here to when the lights go out, shareholders have been fleecing newspapers, forcing the sale of K.R. and Tribune, and cutting share prices in half over the last few years.

This leaves the billionaire option. In essence, news, or publicity, that true currency of our time, is worth more to newsmakers—and every billionaire is a newsmaker who associates with other newsmakers—than to investors (and perhaps even to news consumers). So at the end of the day theirs will be the winning bid.

For journalists, who as the industry has contracted have become ever more ethically self-righteous, this is the ultimate nightmare scenario (save only for going out of business itself). To be owned and operated by somebody who has juice in the game—who might get value out of what the paper writes or whom it writes about and how—contradicts the whole point of contemporary journalism.

And yet, as my billionaire recognized during my brief visit, there is, too, a mutuality of interest—of sensibility even—between billionaire and journalist. Newspapers may be absolutely ending, but people within an industry, any industry—and these billionaires, accustomed to being written about, are as much involved with newspapers as the people writing about them—are the last to be able to see its absolute end. (Whereas for people outside the industry, especially outside the newspaper industry, especially among the growing majority who don’t read a paper at all, the end seems to be almost inconsequential.) It’s impossible to believe that something that defines your life, something that exists as big as life—like, say, an American car—will just cease to be. (This kind of denial is one of the things that make industrial decline such a glacial process.)

Increasingly, as newspapers come to be seen more and more as a throwback, perhaps something is to be gained by acting the part—there might be a sort of re-discovered glamour. Prior to the rise of newspaper chains, papers were most always patriarchal institutions. (The title of Susan Tiff and Alex Jones’s 1991 book about the Bingham’s, the star-crossed family that bought the Louisville Courier-Journal and The Louisville Times with its fortune in the 1920s, is The Patriarch.) These were semi-feudal worlds of authority and privilege (arguably, part of the reason newspapers began their decline was that the overbearingness of the various newspaper patriarchs tended to produce ne’er-do-well sons who dissipated the patrimony). Newspapers—in rather direct contradiction to the theoretical values of the journalists who worked for them—have classically been about power and influence and settling scores (in the ideal formulation, the proprietor gets the editorial page to exercise his primal needs, while the news pages...

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One from the Heartland

John Mellencamp has for years gotten the cold shoulder from critics. More recently he’s been harassed for his anti-war views. Unfazed, he’s just made what may be the best album of his multi-platinum, 31-year career, *Freedom’s Road*—and if it takes a Chevy-truck ad to get it heard, that’s fine by him.

By Frank DiGiacomo

RUNNING a hand through his rooster comb of a pompadour, John Mellencamp lets out a raspy laugh. “I have always been at the wrong place at the wrong time,” he says in a Hoosier twang. We are sitting in the rehearsal space at his Belmont Mall recording studio, near Bloomington, Indiana, and the singer-songwriter has just rewound the master tape of his life back to the mid-70s, when he recorded under the whiz-bang name of Johnny Cougar, given to him by his first manager, Tony DeFries. With his smoldering Brando stare, Mellencamp may have looked like star material, but at 25 he was nowhere near ready for his close-up, and after DeFries pumped up his client with a preposterous load of hype, the critics shot him down. Johnny Cougar was dismissed as a bush-league Bruce Springsteen, along with his 1976 debut album, *Chestnut Street Incident*. When the record tanked, his label shelved the follow-up and, in 1977, dropped Mellencamp altogether. So the Seymour, Indiana, native dusted himself off and headed to England, aiming to redeem himself with a new record for a new label. But when he got there, he found that, once again, he was sadly out of step with the times.

“I moved to London to make a record in 1977, when all of London was ablaze with [the Sex Pistols’] ‘God Save the Queen,’” and I’m bringing out an acoustic guitar, playing ‘Taxi Dancer,’” he says, referring to an early, torchy ballad he wrote about a failed Broadway hoofer. As part of his cultural awakening, Mellencamp was also introduced to that uniquely British form of audience participation known as gobbing. After being repeatedly pelted with spit during a performance at the University of Birmingham, Mellencamp says, he stopped the show and told the perpetrators, “You guys got to knock that shit off.” When they ignored him, “I just jumped off stage and the fight was on. The fight was fuckin’ on.”

He taps the ash off the cigarette he is smoking. At 55, the juvenile-delinquent looks have given way to Marlboro Man cragginess (even if Natural American Spirit is the brand he smokes). But when he laughs at the memory of his London misadventure, flashing a gap-toothed smile, it’s evident that middle age has not quite claimed him, though the crowd in Birmingham surely would have if his burly road manager at the time, Billy Francis, had not jumped into the fracas and pulled him out.

At the end of the 70s, Mellencamp brought the fight back to the U.S. He eventually took the wheel of his career and began to co-produce his albums while honing an almost startlingsly plainspoken writing style that, starting in 1982, yielded a string of Top 10 singles, including “Jack & Diane” and the heartland anthem “Pink Houses.” By mid-decade, Johnny Cougar had become John Cougar Mellencamp, and with his next two albums, he left no doubt that he had finally come into his own. On his breakthrough 1985 LP, *Scourge:* Mellencamp established himself as an empathic voice of America’s vast and vastly misunderstood midsection by throwing a spotlight on the plight of American farmers. (He also co-founded Farm Aid that year with Neil Young and Willie Nelson.) And while revisiting the subject on his acclaimed 1987 follow-up, *The Lonesome Jubilee,* Mellencamp staked out the boundaries of his new signature sound: a rousing, crystalline mix of acoustic and electric guitars, Appalachian fiddle, and gospel-style backing vocals, anchored by a crisp, bare-knuckle drumbeat and completed by his own velvety rasp. Though the album covers wouldn’t reflect this for a few more years, the last vestiges of Johnny Cougar were dead. John Mellencamp was here to stay.

Yet, for someone who has recorded 17 albums of original material in 31 years and sold close to 30 million of them, Mellencamp has been accorded comparatively little respect from industry gatekeepers. He has won only a single Grammy—and for his first Top 10 single, “Hurts So Good,” which was named best male rock vocal performance in 1982. And though the 500 music-industry insiders who determine the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame’s roll call have inducted Petty, Seger, and Springsteen, Mellencamp has yet to be called. When I ask him if he feels slighted by this, Mellencamp smiles and rephrases the question: “Am I upset about it? Not as upset as the people around me. Because when it comes to that type of boys’ club thing, I always kind of expect the worst.”

But, as they like to say in the Midwest, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. And this month’s release of *Freedom’s Road,* his first new album of original material in five years, will make it a lot harder to ignore Mellencamp’s contribution to the Great American Songbook, or to pigeonhole him as simply a heartland rocker. His best album since *The Lonesome Jubilee,* *Freedom’s Road* harnesses the infectious reverberant surf guitar and psychedelic rock that came out of California in the 1960s—think the Byrds and Dick Dale—as a healing, unifying force for a country laid low by the war in Iraq and the vicious political gamesmanship of the last six years. Because he makes his home in a state that, at least until the last election, was pro-war and fiercely Republican, Mellencamp has paid a price for speaking out against the Bush administration’s adventurism in the Middle East, but *Freedom’s Road* sounds like the album of an artist emboldened rather than embarrassed by that experience. Its songs’ central themes are tolerance and forgiveness, as well as a frank appraisal of the political machinations that led to this depressing moment in U.S. history. As Mellencamp sings on the title track: “Freedom’s Road is a promise to the people / You’ll never fool us now.”

If Mellencamp has become inured to the chilly treatment that he sometimes gets from the music industry, he and his family were caught off guard by the undercurrent of hostility that rolled their way in Bloomington when he began to voice his anti-war feelings in 2003. Not long before the official start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Mellencamp wrote new lyrics for “Baltimore to Washington.” Woody Guthrie’s version of a traditional tune first popularized by the Carter family, and renamed it “To Washington.” Using pretty much the same plainspoken language found on *Freedom’s Road,* he
Mellencamp in his painting studio at his home in Bloomington, Indiana, where he lives with his wife, Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp, and their two sons, Hud, 12, and Speck, 11 (in doorway).
sang about the tainted 2000 election and the roll-up to the war, including this verse:

And he wants to fight with many
And he says it's not for oil
He sent out the National Guard
To police the world
From Baghdad to Washington.

The song, which was included on Mellencamp's May 2003 album of reworked blues and folk standards, *Trouble No More*, made news even before it was released. In the fall Mellencamp and his wife, the supermodel and photographer Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp, landed in the headlines again when they posted an open letter on his Web site, mellencamp.com, titled in part: “It's Time to Take Back Our Country.” The Mellencamps called for an end to what they described as the “political hijacking” of Iraq and the chilling effect on free speech that had crept into the national discourse. Though they were spared the kind of public thrashing that the Dixie Chicks got that March when lead singer Natalie Maines told a London concert audience that she was “ashamed the president of the United States” is from Texas, the Mellencamp family’s politics did not go unnoticed on their home turf. Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp recalls the time that she, her husband, and their sons, Hud, 12, and Speck, 11, were driving in town when a local radio station played “To Washington” and invited listeners to comment, prompting one man to call up and say, “I don’t know who I hate more. John Mellencamp or Saddam Hussein.” Mostly, the criticism was implied in the cold stares and whispers of some of the locals whom the Mellencamps encountered on a regular basis.

A few times, the rocker’s clan found themselves on the wrong end of some drive-by mudslinging. Because their 60-acre compound, with its stucco mansion, sits on the serene Lake Monroe, Irwin-Mellencamp says a number of boaters floated near their banks and shouted obscenity-laced tirades at the house. Irwin-Mellencamp won’t forget the time that a boat carrying a profligacy-sweating topless woman pulled close to the house while she and her family were having dinner. Irwin-Mellencamp tried to confront the group, but they eluded her. She did the same when someone slipped a nasty anonymous note into her car while her sons were working off excess energy at the local rock-climbing center. Irwin-Mellencamp says she went back into the facility and urged whoever had planted the note to come down off the wall and debate the matter face-to-face. No one descended.

Mellencamp says his neighbors have long known that he is “a liberal,” but admits he was shocked by some of the “emotional” reactions that he encountered locally after word spread about “To Washington”: “I thought, Wait a minute—you guys have known me for 30 years. You don’t know who George Bush is. This guy just showed up. You’re going to take his word over mine?”

Mellencamp considered a form of silence after *Trouble No More*. He had tired of the music-career grind, and, free and clear of any record-label obligations after leaving first Mercury and then Columbia, he says, “I had pretty much decided I didn’t want to make any more records.” He considered turning full-time to painting, a passion of his, but then, he says, he had a conversation with the old-school record executive Doug Morris, chairman of Universal Music Group, which owns the Republic label. The artist says Morris asked him, “Why don’t you go make a great record?”

Mellencamp took the bait, on his own terms. He says *Freedom's Road* is his only obligation to Universal, and he is hell-bent on having it heard. Well aware that commercial radio doesn’t play the music of middle-aged rockers anymore, he made the controversial decision to license the album’s first single, the rousing “Our Country,” for a Chevy-truck ad campaign. (He had established a relationship with the automaker in 2003 when Chevy briefly licensed a fragment of his song “Now More than Ever” for another campaign.) In a world where the latest Rolling Stones tour seems to have more sponsors than some NASCAR drivers, Mellencamp’s decision to lend his voice and image to a series of Chevy ads hardly seems cataclysmic—until you consider that in previous decades he was one of the most strenuously anti-commercial rock artists out there. In 1991, he even chided fellow midwesterner Bob Seger in print for licensing his song “Like a Rock” for—that’s right—a Chevy-truck campaign. “I guess he needed the money,” Mellencamp told the Los Angeles Times.

When I mention this to Mellencamp, he doesn’t flinch. “It was a whole different scenario back then,” he tells me. “Of course, I was [15] years younger than I am now. But there were many avenues at the time for people to get their music on the radio, and MTV was big. There were a lot of ways to get your music played then, as opposed to now.”

That defense hasn’t stopped the press from taking shots at Mellencamp and Chevy. Last October, The New York Times accused Mellencamp of having “elastic” political values. “He and his spouse once wrote a jeremiad against the Bush administration that said, in part: ‘It is time to take back our country. Take it back from political agendas, corporate greed and overall manipulation.’” The paper noted. “That was in 2003. Now he’s sitting on the fender of a Chevy truck, strumming a guitar and singing, ‘Well, I can stand beside ideals I think are right, and I can stand beside the idea to stand and fight.’ He can also stand beside a nice shiny truck, if the fee is right.”

Mellencamp looks at it another way. When Chevy handed him the creative freedom that he’s often fought for at his labels, he took it. “Pretty much, Chevrolet has been a better record company than Columbia Records ever was to me,” he says.

On my last day with Mellencamp, I see a man determined to make a great record. I meet him in the control room at Belmont Mall. For the last day and a half, he, members of his band, and veteran sound engineer Don Smith (the Rolling Stones, U2) have been huddled around a mixing board obsessing over the sound of “My Aeroplane,” one of the last tracks to be completed for the album. It’s got a guitar sound that can raise gooseflesh, and hopeful lyrics in which Mellencamp sings of escaping the bonds of the earth so that he can write the “perfect” song. “It’d be a song for the people/It’d be a song that everybody could sing along.” The men listen to the track dozens of times while Mellencamp, in jeans, sits in his inviolable space on the left side of the mixing room’s couch, his legs up on an ottoman, looking like James Dean’s Jett Rink in Giant. After suggesting a number of tweaks, Mellencamp finally yells, “Print it.” and a CD copy of “My Aeroplane” is handed to him.

Next comes a crucial test for the song. Mellencamp and Mike Wanchic, a Kentucky boy who has been his guitarist for close to 30 years, exit to Belmont Mall’s parking lot, past the space reserved for Elvis Presley, and head for a cream-colored Audi convertible—Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp’s car—which Mellencamp has driven to his studio for a purpose. The two men squeeze their middle-aged frames into the sporty car, insert the CD, crank up the volume, and once more “My Aeroplane” fills the air. After all the sweat and rhetoric, that’s what it boils down to: good friends, good music, and a pretty woman’s car. The two men sit there bopping their heads and tapping their knees, a little more creatively than they did 25 years ago, but looking like all they ever wanted they got from rock ‘n’ roll.
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Blood Oil

Could a bunch of Nigerian militants in speedboats bring about a U.S. recession? Blowing up facilities and taking hostages, they are wreaking havoc on the oil production of America’s fifth-largest supplier. Deep in the Niger-delta swamps, the author meets the nightmarish result of four decades of corruption

By Sebastian Junger

On June 23, 2005, a group of high-ranking government officials were convened in a ballroom of the Four Seasons Hotel in Washington, D.C., to respond to a simulated crisis in the global oil supply. The event was called “Oil ShockWave,” and it was organized by public-interest groups concerned with energy policy and national security. Among those seated beneath a wall-size map of the world were two former heads of the C.I.A., the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The scenario they were handed was this:

Civil conflict breaks out in northern Nigeria—an area rife with Islamic militancy and religious violence—and the Nigerian Army is forced to intervene. The situation deteriorates, and international oil companies decide to end operations in the oil-rich Niger River delta, resulting in a loss of 800,000 barrels a day on the world market. Since Nigerian oil is classified as “light sweet crude,” meaning that it requires very little refining, this makes it a particularly painful loss to the American market. Concurrently, in this scenario, a cold wave sweeping across the Northern Hemisphere boosts global demand by 800,000 barrels a day. Because global oil production is already functioning at close to maximum capacity (around 84 million barrels a day), small disruptions in supply shudder through the system very quickly. A net deficit of almost two million barrels a day is a significant shock to the market, and the price of a barrel of oil rapidly goes to more than $80.

The United States could absorb $80 oil

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL KAMBER

FEBRUARY 2007
The Power.

The Sopranos on A&E

Wednesdays 9PM/8C  Premiers January 10
Almost indefinitely—people would drive less, for example, so demand would decline—but the country would find itself in an extremely vulnerable position. Not only does the American economy rely on access to vast amounts of cheap oil, but the American military—heavily mechanized and tactically dependent on air power—literally runs on oil. Eighty-dollar oil would mean that there was virtually no cushion in the world market and that any other disruption—a terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia, for example—would spike prices through the roof.

According to the Oil ShockWave panel, near-simultaneous terrorist attacks on oil infrastructure around the world could easily send prices to $120 a barrel, and those called themselves the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta and said they were protesting the environmental devastation caused by the oil industry, as well as the appalling conditions in which most delta inhabitants live. There are no schools, medical clinics, or social services in most delta villages. There is no clean drinking water in delta villages. There are almost no paying jobs in delta villages. People eke out a living by fishing while, all around them, oil wells owned by foreign companies pump billions of dollars’ worth of oil a year. It was time, according to MEND, for this injustice to stop.

The immediate effect of the attack was a roughly 250,000-barrel-a-day drop in prices, if sustained for more than a few weeks, would cascade disastrously through the American economy.

Gasoline and heating oil would rise to nearly $5 a gallon, which would force the median American family to spend 16 percent of its income on gas and oil—more than double the current amount. Transportation costs would rise to the point where many freight companies would have to raise prices dramatically, cancel services, or declare bankruptcy. Fewer goods would be transported to fewer buyers—who would have less money anyway—so the economy would start to slow down. A slow economy would, in turn, force yet more industries to lay off workers or shut their doors. All this could easily trigger a recession.

The last two major recessions in this country were triggered by a spike in oil prices, and a crisis in Nigeria—America’s fifth-largest oil supplier—could well be the next great triggering event. “The economic and national security risks of our dependence on oil—and especially on foreign oil—have reached unprecedented levels,” former C.I.A. director Robert Gates (now secretary of defense) warned in his introduction to the Oil ShockWave study report. “To protect ourselves, we must transcend the narrow interests that have historically stood in the way of a coherent oil security strategy.”

In January 2006, less than seven months after the first Oil ShockWave conference—almost as if they’d been given walk-on parts in the simulation—several boatloads of heavily armed Ijaw militants overran a Shell oil facility in the Niger delta and seized four Western oil workers. The militants—Nigerian oil production and a temporary bump in world oil prices. MEND released the hostages a few weeks later, but the problems were far from over. MEND’s demands included the release of two Ijaw leaders who were being held in prison. $1.5 billion in restitution for damage to the delta, a 50 percent claim on all oil pumped out of the creeks, and development aid to the desperately poor villages of the delta. MEND threatened that, if these demands were not met—which they weren’t—it would wage war on the foreign oil companies in Nigeria.

“Leave our land while you can or die in it,” a MEND spokesman warned in an e-mail statement after the attack. “Our aim is to totally destroy the capacity of the Nigerian government to export oil.”

Because Nigerian oil is so vital to the American economy, President Bush’s State Department declared in 2002 that—along with all other African oil imports—it was to be considered a “strategic national interest.” That essentially meant that the president could send in the U.S. military to protect our access to it. After the first MEND attack, events in the Niger delta unfolded almost as if they had been scripted by alarmist Pentagon planners. In mid-February, MEND struck again, seizing a barge operated by the American oil-services company Willbros and grabbing nine more hostages. Elsewhere on the same day, other MEND fighters blew up an oil pipeline, a gas pipeline, and a tanker-loading terminal, forcing Shell to suspend 477,000 barrels a day in exports. The nine hostages were released after a reportedly huge ransom was paid, but oil prices on the world market again started to climb. MEND had shown that 20 guys in speedboats could affect oil prices around the world.

The problem was one of scale. The Nigerian military—as poorly equipped as it is—can protect any piece of oil infrastructure it wants by simply putting enough men on it. But Shell has more than 3.720 miles of oil and gas pipelines in the creeks, as well as 90 oil fields and 73 flow stations, and there is no way to guard them all. And moving the entire industry offshore isn’t a good option, either. Not only is deepwater drilling very expensive, but there are still immense oil and gas reserves under the Niger delta that have not yet been exploited. And—as an act of sabotage on this scale could drive Shell and the other oil companies from Nigeria for good.
The Love.

The Sopranos on A&E

Wednesdays 9PM/8C  Premieres January 10

aetv.com
but it was a clear escalation of the conflict. By mid-October, the Niger River delta was on the brink of all-out war.

**Into the Delta**

The Ijaw village was just a scattering of huts along a meager break in the mangrove, and when our boatman spotted it he slowed and circled and ran his boat up onto the shore. Dugouts had been pulled onto a narrow sand beach, and cook fires smoked unenthusiastically through the thatched roofs of the huts. Behind us, a miles-wide tributary of the Niger River unloaded a continent's worth of freshwater into the Gulf of Guinea. Village children gathered to study our arrival, and a local man saw us and walked away to tell someone that a boatful of strangers had just arrived.

After a few minutes a young man came and motioned for us to follow him, and we stepped carefully through the village and took seats on a wooden bench outside a thatched hut. It was very hot. Somewhere a transistor radio was playing Western music. The huts were sided with rough-milled planks and thatched with palm fronds, and inside women cooked on small fires.

Malaria is rampant in these villages, as are cholera, typhoid, and dysentery, and almost none of the communities have safe drinking water. The people survive—barely—off local fish stocks that have been decimated by pollution from oil wells. After a while we heard gunshots, and then a group of young men came walking out of the forest and gathered around us. “Don’t be scared,” one of them said. “Feel free.”

An American photographer named Mike Kamber and I had come to this village to meet MEND, but things had already acquired that unmistakable feeling of not going according to plan. One of the young men had a bottle of Chelsea gin with him, and he shook a splash onto the ground as a blessing and then poured himself a shot. The bottle proceeded like that around the little group. After the gin was finished they told us to follow them, and we were led back into the center of the village and told to sit in some white plastic chairs that had been set out for us. A joint was passed around. More Chelsea gin was brought out. Eventually the village chief took a seat at a small table under a mango tree and asked what we were doing in his village. It wasn’t an unfriendly question, but neither was it an invitation to feel right at home. Young men with guns started to drift into the area and position themselves around the group. I stood up and explained that Mike and I were journalists and that we wanted to document the impact of oil drilling in the area, and that a MEND contact had directed us to this village for a meeting.

The truth was a little more complicated. The official MEND spokesperson is a mysterious online entity known as Jomo Gbomo, who trades sharply articulate e-mails with foreign journalists who arrive in the delta to cover the oil wars. No one seems to know Jomo’s real name or even where he lives; according to The Wall Street Journal, his Yahoo account carries an electronic code that may indicate his e-mails are sent from a computer in South Africa. Jomo is the person whom visiting journalists turn to for permission to go into the creeks, and he has refused every single request. A few days after getting the bad news from Jomo, though, Mike and I met with an Ijaw priest named President Owei, who also has contacts with MEND. Owei said that he could arrange a meeting for us if we wanted; all we had to do was hire a boat. By noon the next day we were gripping the mahogany thwarts of a 25-foot open speedboat, slamming southward at full throttle.

Throughout most of the delta there is a weak cell-phone signal, and MEND has run its entire military campaign using a flicker of reception and S3 phones. We were later told that, as word of our arrival spread, Ijaws in South Africa began calling to warn that we might be spies, and others, in the United States, were looking up online to figure out who we were. The first sign of trouble was when one of the village boys got in our boat and drove it away into the creeks so that we couldn’t leave. Another hour went by, and dusk started to creep in through the mangrove. Finally we heard the sound of a powerful outboard motor, and then a boatload of gunmen roared past the village, plowed a couple of angry circles into the narrow creek, and came into the landing at what looked like full throttle. The women in the village fled. MEND had arrived.

They climbed out of the boat with their weapons propped upright on their hips and their faces immobile and expressionless. They didn’t bother to look at us and we hardly dared look at them. They carried heavy belt-fed Czech machine guns with the ammunition draped across their bare chests like deadly-looking snakes, and some wore plaid skirts called “Georges,” and others wore shorts or cast-off camouflage. One was naked except for his ammunition and a pair of dirty white briefs. They had painted their faces with white chalk to signify purity, and they had tied amulets around their arms and necks and foreheads for protection from bullets. Some had stuck leaves in their clothing so the enemy would see trees rather than men. One of them had painted the Star of David on his stomach to signify the lost tribe of Israel. They were a collection of walking nightmares, everything that is terrifying to the human psyche, and when confronted with them, Nigerian soldiers have been known to just drop their weapons and run.

Their leader was a slender boy wrapped in a red turban and white robe who was helped out of the boat almost like a child. Leaders are often chosen by the Ijaw god of war, Egbesu, and leadership can change.

"Their grievances are legitimate. There’s no water in these communities, no education, no medical facilities."
The Ambition.

Sopranos on A&E

WEDNESDAYS 9PM/8C  PREMIERES JANUARY 10
daily. Egbesu sometimes communicates his desires by appearing in the dreams or visions of one of his followers and instructing him to be leader for that day. If the man tells the truth about Egbesu, others follow him without question; if he lies about it, Egbesu might kill him. The followers of Egbesu refrain from sex during time of war, and fast to increase their powers. Those powers, I was told, include the ability to drink battery acid without harm. “The spirit enters them when they go into battle,” one anthropologist who had lived in Nigeria for years told me. “They don’t have the same fears as you and I.”

Mike and I were told to rise and we stood there like penniless schoolboys while the young leader approached. He handed his rifle to one of the other militants without bothering to look at us and said, “Which one of you is Sebastian?”

“I am,” I said. The boy handed me a cell phone and walked away.

It was Jomo. “I told you that you couldn’t go out into the creeks,” Jomo said. I started to try to explain, but he cut me off. “What is the spelling of your last name?” he asked. I told him. “Don’t worry,” he said. “Everything’s going to be all right.” I handed the phone to the leader and walked back to where Mike stood. A few minutes later, one of the militants strode up to me and pointed his finger at my face. He was short but extremely strong and was covered in white war paint.

“You,” he said matter-of-factly. “I am going to kill you.”

Half an hour later, Jomo told the MEND leader to release us, and we were in our speedboat headed back to town.

Poverty and Corruption

As is often the case in Africa, many of Nigeria’s problems come as much from wealth as from poverty. African countries that happen to have valuable resources—oil in Angola and Nigeria, diamonds in Congo and Sierra Leone—are among the poorest and most violent on the continent. Economists refer to this phenomenon as the “resource curse.” The resource curse holds that underdeveloped countries with great natural wealth fail to diversify their industry or to invest in education, which leads to long-term economic decline. The per capita gross national product of OPEC countries, for example, has been in steady decline for the past 30 years, whereas the per capita G.N.P. of non-oil-producing countries in the developing world has steadily risen.

According to the World Bank, most of Nigeria’s oil wealth has siphoned off by 1 percent of the population, condemning more than half of the country to subsist on less than a dollar a day. By that standard, it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Since independence in 1960, it is estimated that between $300 and $400 billion of oil revenue has been stolen or mis¬spent by corrupt government officials—an amount of money approaching all the Western aid received by Africa in those years. Former president Sani Abacha and his inner circle stole at least $2 billion. In a recent crackdown on corruption, the president of the Nigerian senate had to resign after accusations that he had solicited a bribe in exchange for pushing through an inflated education budget (which presumably would then have been plundered by others). A former inspector general of the national police, after being accused of stealing between $52 and $140 million, was recently sentenced to six months in prison for a lesser charge. And two Nigerian admirals were put on trial for trying to sell stolen oil to an international crime syndicate.

The list of wrongdoing continues almost without end. With top government officials going to God,” he explained. He is now in custody awaiting trial.

“It’s going to be tough,” human-rights activist Oronto Douglas said when I asked him about reforming Nigerian politics. “Nobody who has privilege surrenders it easily. The struggle is to get people to give up power who got it illegally.”

The problem isn’t purely a Nigerian one, either. Oil companies have long been thought to pay for the allegiance of local youth gangs, and Jomo claims that Agip offered to pay MEND $40 million in exchange for “repairs” to the company’s pipelines. (An Agip spokesman strongly denies any payment to or contact with MEND.) The American corporation Halliburton has admitted that its then subsidiary KBR paid $2.4 million in bribes to the Nigerian government and is under investigation for its role in earlier bribes totaling $180 million. And House representa-

tive William Jefferson, of Louisiana, is being investigated by the F.B.I. for allegedly accept¬ing bribes from the vice president of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar. These were said to be in exchange for help steering lucrative business contracts to Africa. (Jefferson has denied any wrongdoing, despite the fact that the F.B.I. found $90,000 in cash in his freezer.)

Because of this corruption, most of Nigerian society has been starved of money and pointed his finger. “You,” he said. “I am going to kill you.”
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the city

so brazenly violating the social contract, every-

downstream inevitably follows suit. The Nigerian constitution stipulates that under 50 percent of national oil revenue be distributed to state and local govern-

that and that an additional 13 percent goes to the nine oil-producing states of the delta. Last year that amounted to almost $1 billion for the nine delta states—money that would seem, to take care of basic services. The problem, however, is that money goes to the governors’ offices and then simply disappears. A financial commission was recently formed to inves-
tigate all of the country’s 36 governors, but it wound up accusing all but 5 of corruption.

The most apparently egregious case is that of Diepreye Alameyeseigha, who accused of embezzling hundreds of millions of dollars while he was governor of Bayelsa State. He fled to England, was arrested for money-laundering, jumped bail, and slipped back into Nigeria dressed as a woman. (The English authorities had taken his passport.) When asked how he managed to make the trip, he said he had no idea. “All the glory

and is effectively cannibalizing itself. Be-

between Port Harcourt and the delta city

sample, is so slack in its maintenance that it has seen three catastrophic plane crashes in the past 16 months, which together have killed more than 300 people. The airport at Port Harcourt was shut down in 2005 after an incoming Air France flight plowed into a herd of cows that had wandered onto the runway; it still has not reopened. Tens of
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LETTER FROM NIGERIA

millions of people live in urban slums without water or sanitation. restaurants have to hire guards with AK-47s to protect the diners, and the levels of chaos and street violence rival that of many countries at war. A dead man lay on the street near my hotel for two days before someone finally came to take him away. Even during Liberia's darkest days of civil war, the dead were usually gathered up and buried faster than that.

When Nigerians are asked about these problems, few can offer more than anger and despair—or the promise of violence. A typical Nigerian reaction came from President Owei, the Ijaw priest who tried to help with our first trip into the creeks. Owei is the head of an organization that promotes Ijaw rights and protects their communities in the delta. At first, my questions just provoked a torrent of indignation. “The people of the Niger delta don’t need theory—they need practical things,” he declared. “We need to be made to feel like human beings. There is an economic blockade of the Niger delta—they don’t want money to flow here. With the wealth that Nigeria has, the whole nation should have roads and free education.”

Owei lives in the great, seething slum of Bundu-Waterside, on the outskirts of Port Harcourt. Bundu-Waterside is a community built literally atop garbage and mud. High tide and raw sewage continually threaten to rise up over the thresholds of its thousands of plank-and-corrugated-iron shacks. People are packed into Bundu-Waterside with such desperate ingenuity that almost every human activity—cooking, fighting, eating, sleeping, defecating—seems to be observable from almost anywhere at any given moment. When I met with Owei, he and several of his assistants were seated on a wooden bench beneath a canopy of corrugated iron that serves as an open-air community center. Young boys swam in the tidal muck while, a few feet away, other young boys squatted to relieve themselves. Every 20 minutes or so, an oil-company helicopter thumped past on its way to one of the offshore rigs.

“The Niger-delta people are the new world power,” Owei informed me solemnly. “I don’t have a bulletproof vest, but I can drink acid. Can you drink acid? I can drink acid. We are a world power. We are waiting. We want to live in peace because God is peaceful, but the rest of the world is building armaments while they wait for Jesus. I don’t know.”

A History of Violence

On November 10, 1995, an Ogoni author named Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other anti-Shell activists were hanged by the Abacha government on trumped-up charges of incitement to murder. Saro-Wiwa had been a driving force in the formation of a group called the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People—MOSOP—which had taken a stand against environmental damage caused by the oil industry and the uncompensated appropriation of Ogoni land for oil drilling. Ignored by the Nigerian government, MOSOP petitioned Shell and the other oil companies directly. They wanted $10 billion in accumulated royalties and environmental-damage compensation, and a greater say in future oil exploration. Again ignored. Saro-Wiwa organized mass protests that managed to shut down virtually all oil production in Ogoniland. It was a severe blow not only to the oil industry but also to the system of corruption and patronage it had spawned, and the Nigerian military reacted with predictable brutality.

“Shell operations still impossible unless ruthless military operations are undertaken,” the commander of the Rivers State Internal Security Task Force wrote to his superior on May 12, 1994. The memo went on to suggest “wasting operations during MOSOP and other gatherings, making constant military presence justifiable.” (The memorandum was leaked to the press, though its authenticity was questioned by Shell.) Nine days later, the military moved into Ogoniland in force.

They razed 30 villages, arrested hundreds of protesters, and killed an estimated 2,000 people. Four Ogoni chiefs were murdered during the chaos—possibly by government sympathizers—and the military used their deaths as a pretext to arrest the top MOSOP leaders. Saro-Wiwa was subjected to a sham trial and condemned to death. Before he was hanged, Saro-Wiwa's last words were "Lord take my soul, but the struggle continues."

Indeed it did.

The next major outbreak of violence occurred in 1998, when several Ijaw groups tried to duplicate MOSOP's strategies by declaring Ijaw territory off limits to the Nigerian military and demanding a stop to all oil extraction. Their rebellion was called Operation Climate Change. Within days, the Nigerian military saturated the delta and Bayelsa State with up to 15,000 soldiers and commenced a series of attacks that resulted in dozens—if not hundreds—of civilian deaths. Ijaw militants retaliated by shutting off and destroying oil wellheads in their area, and over the next several years an armed militancy evolved that the government was unable to contain. Fighting also broke out between different armed factions—many of which were hired by politicians to intimidate local rivals—and in 2004 an Ijaw leader named Mujahid Dokubo-Asari retreated into the creeks to wage "all-out war" against the government and the oil companies. His statement helped drive New York oil-futures prices above $50 for the first time ever.

Asari was a convert to Islam and had briefly worried U.S. authorities by expressing his admiration for Osama bin Laden. His overriding concern, however, was control of the oil resources of the Niger delta. One form
of control, according to Asari, was simply stealing back the oil that he believes has been stolen from the Ijaw. In Nigeria, stealing oil is called "bunkering," and it is huge business; by some estimates, 10 percent of the oil exported from Nigeria every year—several billion dollars' worth—is actually bunkered.

The safest way to bunker oil is essentially to bribe people into letting you steal it. Vastly more dangerous, and common, is tapping crude directly out of the pipelines themselves. Light sweet crude is extremely volatile, so metal-on-metal contact can touch off a massive explosion. Bunkerers start by building a temporary enclosure around a small section of underwater pipe, pumping the water out and then drilling a hole into the steel casing that contains the crude. They then fit the hole with a short pipe and valve and let the creek water back in so that the apparatus is underwater, and therefore hidden from oil-company inspectors. Crude moves through the pipeline under a pressure of 600 pounds per square inch, and with such pressure it takes only a few hours to fill up a 1,000-metric-ton barge. The barge is then moved offshore to a transport ship—an operation that is vastly simplified by renting the Nigerian military.

"Most of the soldiers are paid 15,000 naira [around $100] a month, so you go to the military man and say, 'I want to make you richer.'" a bunkerer in Warri told me. He had just worked all night moving bunkerled oil; the work had probably netted his boss upwards of a hundred thousand dollars. "You say, 'This pipe will bring money; every night you will work here.' Then they will guard you. We give them five months' salary in a single night. Every time they bring in new people, we make new friends."

This man claimed that the federal government could easily stop bunkering if it wanted to, but local officials are making so much money off it that they would revolt. Ideally, he'd like to get out of the business. "There's so much risk in bunkering—fire risk, water risk, ambush risk. What I want to do is work for the oil companies as a production supervisor," he said. "I'm just bunkering until I get a job. There are plenty of people here with degrees in petroleum engineering who can't get jobs. They're offered positions by the bunkerers, so of course they take them."

Bunkering would not be possible without guns—militant groups are constantly fighting one another over access—and of course those guns are bought with oil money. The most impressive weapons I saw were Czech-made Rachot UK-68s that were new and well oiled and looked like they had just been unpacked from their crates. Rachots are highly portable general-purpose machine guns that can also be mounted on tripods for use against aircraft; they are not the sort of secondhand weapons commonly found floating around West African war zones. Someone brought those in with a special purpose in mind. "Their supplies seem to be unending," an arms expert named Dr. Sofiri Joab-Peterside told me in his office, in Port Harcourt. "The police have to count the rounds that they use—they don't have more than 10 or 15 each. The militants have belt-fed guns that can sustain action for 20 minutes. That, too, is a problem."

According to another contact of mine—a man who freely associates with the militiants—the most recent arms shipment was 300 Russian-made AK-47s, built in 1969 but never used, that came from Moscow via London. He also said that in early October a South African businessman unloaded a ship full of weapons in the creeks in exchange for bunkerled oil, which he then sold on the international market. Nigerian soldiers who have recently returned from peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone are known to sell their guns, he told me, as are soldiers currently stationed in the delta. There are even rumors of floating weapons bazaars—freighters filled with guns—ancho red off the Nigerian coast. All you have to do is pull up in your boat with cash.

However violent and dysfunctional it may seem, the convergence of bunkerled oil, smuggled weapons, and illegal layoffs has worked fairly well within the broader violence and dysfunction of Nigeria. The original concerns of activists such as Saro-Wiwa were environmental degradation of the delta from oil spills, and the extreme poverty and backwardness of the villages. Two and a half million barrels of crude spilled or leaked into the delicate riverine environment between 1986 and 1996, resulting in wholesale devastation of the fish stocks that most villagers rely on. Flaring of excess natural gas has produced a blighting acid rain in the mangrove swamps, and freshwater even around wells that have been capped for years is still so polluted with hydrocarbons that it cannot be drunk safely. But people still do.

The costs of fully protecting the delicate delta ecology are almost inacceptable. Once the militants participate in illegibilities, how compensation for environmental damage to the delta. Under the current system, everyone involved in the oil business—from corrupt government officials to military commanders to the militants themselves—makes vastly more money than he would in a transparent economy. And the bunkerled oil isn't lost to the market; it simply becomes an additional tax borne by the oil companies for doing business in Nigeria.

The brutal functionality of this system started to break down in January 2006, when MEND arrived on the scene. MEND was not simply another bunkering cartel; it renewed the grievances first voiced by Saro-Wiwa and began to seriously disrupt the flow of oil from the creeks. "We are not communists or even revolutionaries," Jomo commented by e-mail to a journalist. "We're just extremely bitter men."

The formation of MEND seems to have been triggered by Asari's arrest in September 2005. Asari had threatened to "dismember" Nigeria, which smelled enough like treason for the Obasanjo government to finally go after him. The first MEND attack came four months later and was soon followed by e-mails from Jomo demanding the release of both Asari and Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, the Bayelsa state governor charged with corruption. (Alamieyeseigha is Ijaw and was closely connected to Asa ri.) The first four oil workers kidnapped by MEND were lectured for 19 days on the poverty and environmental degradation of the delta. More than ransom money, the militants said they wanted all foreigners to leave their territory. In other words, they wanted control of their oil.

A former hostage whom I talked to (who did not want to be identified by name) reported essentially the same experience. He was a contract pilot for Shell who was taken...
The spirit enters them when they go into battle. They don’t have the same fears as you and I.
U.S. petroleum reserves would mitigate the effects of even a complete shut-in of Nigerian oil. "Look at Katrina," one oil analyst at the Department of Energy told me. "There was a spike in oil prices for a couple of weeks, but then demand shifts and there is a little bit of conservation. Two years ago we were at $28 a barrel and now we are in the mid-50s. Short-term market predictions are a fool's game."

The Oil ShockWave panel wasn't so sure. It found that a complete shut-in that coincided with another event—a terrorist attack in the Persian Gulf or even an exceptionally harsh winter, for example—could trigger a major recession. Furthermore, there seemed to be no good options for dealing with it. Opening up the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve—some 700 million barrels of oil in underground salt caverns along the Gulf Coast—would lower oil prices for the whole world without providing a long-term solution. Begging Saudi Arabia for more oil could compromise the United States politically and damage our long-term interests in the region. And sending the U.S. military into the Niger delta would be politically risky and possibly impossible, given American commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

That did not stop the U.S. government from authorizing a joint training exercise with the Nigerian military in 2004. It was reported to have been focused on "water combat."

Two weeks after our first trip to the creeks, Jomo told me by e-mail that he would arrange for MEND to take us into its camp. It was deep in the mangrove swamps, and he said that no journalist had ever been there. Allegedly, the only foreigners who have ever seen the MEND camps were hostages.

We hired a boat at the Port Harcourt waterfront and headed south into the creeks, hoping not to run into any Nigerian gunboats. We had the feeling that the authorities knew what we were up to, and it seemed like an encounter that would end badly. We passed a few fishing villages and a flow station and two gas flares, and then we swung into the broad expanse of Cawthorne Channel. Twenty miles to the east, wobbling in the heat shimmer, was the Bonny Island L.N.G. facility. The rumor in Port Harcourt was that MEND was planning to blow it up. A wind had come up, and we bangled our way southward into a hard chop and finally swerved into one of the nameless creeks and ran our boat into the village where we'd been two weeks earlier.

Calls went out, and half an hour later a boatful of militants dressed raggedly in old Western clothes pulled into the landing, and we climbed on board. We continued south for a while, almost to open ocean, then plunged back into the mangrove up a creek that got narrower and narrower until we had to duck to avoid getting hit by branches. We passed under a talisman string between two trees, and minutes later we were at the camp. Every tree, it seemed, had a man behind it with a gun pointed at our heads.

Mike and I stepped out onto land and were immediately blessed by a man who dipped a handful of leaves into what might have been palm wine and splashed us twice. No one blesses someone before killing him, I thought. The camp was a rough wood barracks hidden in the trees with a few nylon tents scattered around. There was a small generator and a satellite hookup for television. There were two Egbesu shrines, unremarkable little thatched enclosures with inexplicable things tied to them. The men had stocking masks on their faces with leaves sticking out of the eye slits, and they watched our every move through the slits, though they had stopped pointing their guns at us. Some of the militants couldn't have been 15 years old. They carried old British guns from the colonial days and ugly little submachine guns with the clips sticking out to the side—and the big belt-fed Racchot machine guns that Nigerian soldiers were so scared of. We walked through the camp rubber-kneed and weak, or at least I did. Their leader was named Brutus and he sat on a wooden bench in a clearing. He motioned me to take a seat next to him, and I opened my notebook and sat down. His men surrounded us in a semicircle with guns cocked at all angles.

"I have been instructed by Jomo to answer any question you have," he said. "And to let you take any pictures you want. The Nigerian government has been marginalizing the people who have the resources of this country. We are deprived of our rights. This time around we don't even want to wait for them to attack. When the order is given we can go ahead and crumble whoever we can crumble, because we don't die: we live by the grace of God. If one man remains, that man can win the cause—that is my own belief."

I had heard this before—that the delta was bracing for a wave of attacks. The attacks were rumored to include coordinated car bombings, assassinations, and hostage-taking. I asked Brutus what was going to happen next. "The first phase was just a test run for the equipment," he assured me. "Soon the real violence will come up and will be let loose. We are waiting for the orders from above and we won't waste an hour. This is modern-day slavery. They have killed so many people in the struggle. The government will attack us, but we are very ready for them. We are just waiting for orders from above. Then we will move." (On December 18, two explosions were reported at Shell and Agip facilities in the delta. MEND claimed responsibility for the attacks.)

Brutus looked at me through the eyeholes of his mask. "When the Nigerian man moves," he said, "nothing can stop him."
See Audrey Hepburn in Sabrina (1954), one of our favorite Academy Award-winning performances, this February.

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Hayden Panettiere

Age: 17. Provenance: Rockland County, New York. Currently Serving Humankind as... Claire, "the Cheerleader," on NBC's breakout hit Heroes. "[The show] just sort of plonked in my lap," Panettiere says. "I was walking out of a general meeting with NBC, and they were like, 'Oh, hey, by the way, read this'-this script with a cockroach running across the front of it. And I read it, and it was amazing." Look out, Mandy Moore: Panettiere's debut album, for which she co-wrote most of the songs, comes out this spring. "My [day] job is to portray people who are not myself, and this is sort of getting to portray a little bit of me." What Happens to College Plans When You Have a Hit Series at 17? "I've got 15 alumni from Duke University in my family. I absolutely want to go to college, but I don't know if it's going to work out with this series. [To her mom, Lesley] How long are we on contract? [Mom says, 'I think it's six years.'] Oh my God, I'll be 23!"

Krista Smith
The First Lady Treatment

Imelda Marcos Talks about Her New Fashion Line, Remembers Her New York Trial, and Learns That She’s a Drag-Queen Icon

Former Filipina First Lady Imelda Marcos, 77, is known as much for her shoe collection and family controversies—the Marcoses were accused of looting as much as $10 billion in assets from the Philippines before her husband’s regime was toppled, in 1986—as she is for her philanthropic heart. As Marcos releases her new fashion line, the Imelda Collection, our correspondent learns that there’s a little bit of Imelda in all of us.

George Wayne: Imelda, darling, I hope you are ready to get your freak on.

Imelda Marcos: Oh, well, it is a pleasure, because the Imelda Collection was my grandson Borgy’s idea. He is a huge Philippine idol here. on television, in magazines and movies.

G.W. Is he the ruling playa of Manila now?

I.M. He is the crush of the nation.

G.W. So here you are at 77 years old, Queen Imelda deciding that it is time to take up fashion.

I.M. I know, the nerve of this woman, Mrs. Marcos. When I was First Lady, for 20 years I was always trying to get the best—in paintings, clothes, jewelry, whatever.

G.W. Well, you certainly do have the background: 20 years as the ultimate First Lady. A truly international magnet of style, and a very controversial one.

I.M. Borgy said to me, “I want to use your name, Imelda, for a collection of ornamental beauty.” And you know, I always say you can never be extravagant with beauty. Beauty is God made real. Beauty is life. And I have a different meaning of beauty, so much so that I was truly impressed when he came up with the Imelda Collection.

G.W. You’re living now in the Pacific Plaza, in Manila. They sold off most of your old masters at Christie’s years ago, but I understand there are a few Picassos and Gauguins still hanging with you in that swanky condo.

I.M. The paintings and the jewelry they confiscated, all without any good reason. You know, I won the case of the century in New York, and so the little I have left. I will tell you, was because of some servants of mine, who were able to keep a few pieces in the slam area where they were living.

G.W. Well, how is life for you these days, Queen Imelda?

I.M. Believe it or not, George: because of my attitude, I am fine. My grandson says, with this collection, “some will ridicule you, but your fans will love you more.”

G.W. G.W. needs to know right now: where did you first develop this perverse shoe fetish?

I.M. To what?

G.W. Your love for shoes, Imelda...

I.M. Love for soup?

G.W. Shoes! Imelda has always loved her shoes.

I.M. Well, there is a little Imelda in all of us. I really had no great love for shoes. I was a working First Lady: I was always in canvas shoes. I did nurture the shoes industry of the Philippines, and so every time there was a shoe fair, I would receive a pair of shoes as a token of gratitude. But I always say, “Thank God, when they raided Imelda’s closet they found no skeletons, only shoes.” But I was well heeled.

G.W. When they raided your closets they also found vats of your favorite Christian Dior wrinkle cream and vats of the finest perfume, and tons of receipts from shopping sprees from Boulevard Saint-Germain to Fifth Avenue.

I.M. Well, I could afford it then because my husband’s assets were worth a lot.

G.W. So are you saying that the bank of Manila was your personal piggy bank?

I.M. No, no, no. Never.

G.W. What ever happened to all those bulletproof bras you supposedly also owned?

I.M. That was an exaggeration. I did not have that.

G.W. Do you remember the first time you set eyes on Ferdinand, your husband? Was it love at first sight?

I.M. Oh, yes, he proposed marriage half an hour after we met, and we were married 11 days after. It was a marriage united in heaven, a fabulous marriage.

G.W. Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos were one incredible couple, the likes of which we may never see again.

I.M. And he is more with me than ever.

CONTINUED on page 129
G.W. How often do you visit his mausoleum, his crystal sarcophagus?
I.M. My daughter is the congresswoman from that district and my son is the governor, so I visit there quite often.

G.W. One of my favorite images of you as First Lady is when you visited the White House for a state dinner. You upstaged Nancy Reagan in the most lavish gown.
I.M. Oh, gosh, but you know the Reagans were dear friends for many years, even when he was governor of California. Nancy appreciated a lot of Philippine-made things.

G.W. Imelda, you have had more acquaintances than O.J. Simpson, but when Uncle Sam acquitted you of all racketeering and fraud charges, in 1990, that had to be one of the most joyous moments of your life.
I.M. After that trial of the century in New York, when I was alone and widowed, the press asked if I was angry and bitter at America. I said I have no bitterness in my heart or anger in my soul. The system worked. God Bless America.

G.W. One of the funniest things about that trial, not that it was funny then, was you showing up in court strapped to a portable blood-pressure monitor, which would gurgle loudly in the courtroom every time your blood pressure rose.
I.M. Yes, and then finally my blood pressure rose so much, I coughed up blood and collapsed during the middle of the trial. The judge gave me one week to recover.

G.W. You always were the ultimate drama queen, Imelda.
I.M. And you know what? I won that case on my birthday. I can truly say, George, that I have had no mission that has failed. I am with God.

G.W. And the first thing you did after being found not guilty was to head to St. Patrick’s Cathedral, where you got on your knees and crept down the entire aisle to the altar.
I.M. And yes, it was only coming from heaven on my birthday. What a gift. You know, George, my dreams were always small and puny. All I ever needed was a little house with a little picket fence by the sea. Little did I know that I would live in Malacañang Palace for 20 years and visit all the major palaces of mankind. And then also meet ordinary citizens and the leaders of superpowers. And I prevailed. The world may ask, “Was she a genius?” No. “Did she have a great mind?” No. “What did Imelda have?” What Imelda had was common to all: common sense.

G.W. Imelda, have you ever visited one of your drag-queen bars in Manila? Apparently you are very popular among the innocents.
I.M. The drag what?

G.W. The drag queens, the men who dress as and impersonate women. Imelda is the queen of the drag queens.
I.M. Of the gals?

G.W. Yes.
I.M. The gals will love the Imelda Collection. They will think it “Imelda!” As I say, there is a little bit of Imelda in all of us.

G.W. God made woman, and then he made Imelda Marcos.
I.M. The message is, George, let us all make a beautiful world together. You know I have had the best, but the worst. I do believe now that I am still in paradise.

G.W. Simply fantastic. You are truly Imelda.
One of the hoariest truisms—"What goes around comes around"—is about to get a real workout in Washington as the Democrats take the Hill. In a 20-page portfolio, V.F. reflects on the new calculus of power, on both sides of the aisle, with its portents of deals to be struck, battles to be waged, and betrayals to be forgiven, while TODD S. PURDUM wonders how deep the change will go.
The Promise

Senator Barack Obama, 45 (Democrat, Illinois).

Could he be the great, bright hope who'll deliver the White House to the Democrats in 2008? Obama certainly fits the bill: brimming with youth, marquee appeal, and a common-ground spirit. Not to mention traits that foreign to many first-term senators: candor, poise, humility, style. And last fall he published The Audacity of Hope, a best-seller largely free of bombast, its echo an campaign theme of none other than Bill "A Place Called Hope" Clinton. Even so, he has twin Achilles' heels that might hobble him in the presidential marathon: a hard-to-categorize heritage (Kenyan dad, Kansan mom, Hawaiian boyhood, Harvard pedigree) and a name that induces double takes and rhymes with Osama. (For good measure, his middle name's Hussein.) Then there's his relative naiveté in the ways of Washington. But expertise isn't everything. "Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld," Obama recently remarked, "have an awful lot of experience."

Photographed by Platon at the Hart Senate Office Building, in Washington, D.C.
The Force

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, 59 (Democrat, New York).

Hillary Clinton devoted her first Senate term to proving people wrong. She won over doubters in Washington by letting First Lady-era bygones be bygones, and by deferring to her elders on both sides of the aisle (to the point where even John McCain—see profile on page 158—called her “formidable”). In her adopted home state of New York, her dogged attention to local issues made everyone forget she was called a carpetbagger. Her landslide re-election in November was all the confirmation she needed to begin hinting at a presidential bid, which, if and when announced, will startle no one. To make it past the primaries, she’ll have to balance the centrist stance she forged under the Republican majority (she voted for the war, after all) with the universal health-care romanticism many liberals hope she still harbors. She’ll also have to figure out how to stump with her husband—who, while he has yet to get comfortable in a sideman role, may be the country’s most able political strategist save Karl Rove—on with a bigger Rolodex. Ever present is her reputation for being calculating and mercurial, but that might just be a sign that she’s making all the right moves.

Photographed by Richard Phibbs in New York City.
The Speaker

Representative Nancy Pelosi, 66 (Democrat, California).

Nancy Pelosi is a woman of firsts. Anointed the new Speaker of the House, she's the first woman, first Californian, and first Italian-American to hold the post. She's also the first person to lead a major political party in either house of Congress while accessorizing an Armani suit with a strand of pearls. (Pelosi's district includes San Francisco, and her efforts reflect the blue-state concerns of her constituency: she has led the political fight for AIDS prevention, supports various environmental initiatives, and defends federal funding for abortion facilities.) As Speaker-elect, Pelosi created instant ruckus by sidestepping longtime rival Steny Hoyer, the agile House infighter from Maryland, to endorse anti-war firebrand John Murtha, of Pennsylvania, in the race for majority leader. The misjudgment may have already cost her some political capital, since Hoyer won handily. Yet, as one of the administration's most unrelenting critics, she possesses a fearless leadership style and boldly speaks her mind despite the risks of polarizing fallout—a bearing that has landed her second in the line of presidential succession.

Photographed by Jonas Karlsson at the House of Representatives entrance to the U.S. Capitol Building, in Washington, D.C.
n the eve of the election last November, Jon Stewart, the most trusted fake newsman in America, began *The Daily Show*, on Comedy Central, with an animated musical primer on the next day’s festivities, recycled from 2002. Its sing-song refrain epitomized Stewart’s fashionably wireless view of what he (or his writers) once called Democracy Inaction:

Midterm elections, they come right in the middle.
Midterm elections, they matter quite a little.

In fact, the 2006 midterms may well be one of those Washington moments that matter quite a lot—a take-stock Tuesday when weather systems that had been building for months suddenly made the wind shift. The Democrats took control of both the House and the Senate for the first time since 1994—and put George W. Bush on the defensive overnight—with the same rallying cry the Republicans had used in the 1946 midterms, which put them back in charge for the first time since before the Great Depression: “Had enough?”

By Wednesday morning, the capital was a new town, a blue town—at least on the east end of Pennsylvania Avenue. And the differences were immediately apparent. Hello, Speaker Pelosi! Secretary Rumsfeld? Bye-bye! If only for a flash, a fresh sense of possibility permeated a city that is built, after all, on a drained swamp. Might bipartisan consensus on immigration reform really be possible? Had the politics of centrist coalition-building trumped Karl Rove’s skillfully stoked appeals to the conservative base?

Looking at the bright-eyed congressional freshmen lined up on the Capitol steps for their iconic class picture, it was hard not to wonder who among them might be destined for glory, or shame. The 1946 midterms produced Representatives John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon—and Senator Joseph R. McCarthy—and the 1978 midterms first brought Dick Cheney and Newt Gingrich to the people’s house. Is there a president, or a poltroon, in the current crop?

In the accompanying portfolio, *Vanity Fair* presents some of those fresh faces, along with a few old, familiar ones—from Representative John Dingell’s to Senator Trent Lott’s—that have suddenly been revived with a shot or two of electoral Restylene. There are portraits of Young Turks and Old Bulls and Power Brokers of every stripe. And a snapshot or two of Those Who Would Be King.

If this was an election in which new media flowered (think of that YouTube clip of Representative Sue Kelly, of New York, running away from a TV news crew that wanted to question about disgraced congressman Mark Foley’s come-ons to Capitol Hill pages), it was also one in which old media flourished, tincturing those ever reliable improvised explosive devices—other, known as books—that showed how Bush’s *State of Denial* made Iraq into a *Fiasco*.

By Thanksgiving, a good deal of the good feeling had dissipated. President Bush sent a raft of controversial conservative judicial nominees back to the lame-duck Senate and vowed not to leave Iraq till the job was done, whatever the voters might have been saying. Democrats were pledging to investigate the Bush administration’s transgressions, and squabbling over proposals to reinstate the draft.

Among Republicans, the recriminations were well under way. The dwindling ranks of the party’s moderates saw in the election results a repudiation of Bush and Rove’s build-the-base electoral strategy. Conservatives and the Christian right were just as sure that the answer would be more of that Old Time Religion. No longer an expert than Newt Gingrich, the Moses who in 1994 led the Republicans out of 40 years in the congressional wilderness, warned after Election Day that his party should not assume it will be easy to win back the majority. He noted that after Republicans last lost their House advantage, halfway through Dwight D. Eisenhower’s first term, they could not manage to regain it even in the Republican presidential landslides of 1972 and 1984.

On the other hand, the Democrats may have an even harder time ahead. The fragility of their one-vote majority was undeniably in mid-December, when Senator Tim Johnson of South Dakota underwent emergency surgery for bleeding in the brain that set off immediate, and perhaps inevitable, speculation about what would happen if he should not recover. If the Democrats are seen as having “won,” but do little to change the course that the vote rejected—after all, the president still has a decided upper hand on Iraq and on foreign policy in general—the voters’ fickle fingers might point right back at them in 2008. They would do well to remember that the 1946 Republican majority that mocked the Democrat in the White House by saying, “To err is Truman,” was given hell by Harry just two years later as “the Do-Nothing 80th Congress” and was turned out on its ear.

chage—real change—is always hard to come by in hidebound Washington, and the 110th Congress may well prove that rule. A yet-to-be-revealed Republican congress will vow to overhaul ethics and lobbying rules (in response to the Jack Abramoff influence-peddling scandal) and will no doubt seek to put Democratic representative John Murtha of Pennsylvania’s 13th District out of business. Speaker Pelosi’s rejected choice as her deputy, had denounced him, might have proposed ethics-reform package as “total crap.”

The most dewy-eyed idealist could be forgiven for accepting the wisdom of Henry Fountain Ashurst, the Democrat who served as Arizona’s first senior senator, from Woodrow Wilson’s first term through Franklin D. Roosevelt’s second. “When I have to choose between voting for the people or the special interests,” Ashurst once said, “I always stick to the special interests. They remember The people forget.”

And so. Dear Voter, take a steady gander at the men and women depicted here. Take their measure. And try to remember the promises, and the spirit of promise, they represent.
To avert an epic debacle in Iraq, the Bush team took a new tack: soliciting ideas for a fresh approach. And the president, after much machination (and a serious Pentagon housecleaning), reluctantly agreed to weigh the counsel of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, a consortium of sages chaired by these two Washington heavyweights. Baker, an oil-patch Republican, is the Bush family’s longtime consigliere—Cabinet officer (Treasury under Reagan and State under Bush the Elder), campaign czar, all-around fixer. In 2000, as the presidency hung on the fate of suspect ballots and hanging chads, ace attorney Baker held Florida for Bush the Younger until the U.S. Supreme Court broke the siege. Hamilton, a heartland Democrat with all the flash of his beloved Indiana, held a House seat for 34 years, making foreign policy a specialty and overseeing the Iran-contra hearings. He warned early of a looming terrorist threat, then co-chaired the 9/11 commission, describing how threat became reality. In December their Iraq Study Group produced a patchwork compromise that drew praise and derision (reduce combat forces; alter the mission to emphasize advisory and training roles; seek Iranian and Syrian influence), the classic horse designed by a committee—a camel. Much better, however, than an ostrich.

Photographed by Christian Witkin at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in Washington, D.C.

The Pathfinders


Photographed by Christian Witkin at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in Washington, D.C.
The Engineers

Senator Charles Schumer, 56 (Democrat, New York).
Representative Rahm Emanuel, 47 (Democrat, Illinois).

Immediately after the November election, the debate began: who were the true architects of the Democratic victory that swept Capitol Hill? By most accounts, top honors went to these two brash electoral Jedi. Suddenly, the newly confident Dems had power players to rank with the best of them—expert fund-raisers, go-for-the-jugular campaigners, and savvy media hands. According to The Washington Post, "Emanuel has been described as a shark, a pit bull, a barracuda and a host of unprintable names—by Democrats!" The former Clinton adviser is now slated to head the Democratic Caucus and is mentioned as a House Speaker-in-the-making. Meanwhile, Schumer, the blustery Brooklyn boy, is the new chief of strategy and policy for the Democrats, No. 3 in the party, and the author of a new book, Positively American, out this month. In short, these two out-Roved Rove. In the words of James Carville, no shrinking violet himself, "They have the party by the neck and they're shaking it."

Photographed by Nigel Parry in the Russell Senate Office Building, in Washington, D.C.
Senator Joseph Lieberman, 64 (Independent, Connecticut).

Best known as Al Gore's understudy in their 2000 White House bid, Joe Lieberman is a rogue Democrat: a pro-military ideological wild card not averse to party philosophies. His continued support of the mission in Iraq may have cost him Connecticut's Democratic primary, but, running as an Independent, he was comfortably re-elected to a fourth term. Given the lawmaker's unaffiliated status (he's said he didn't rule out crossing party lines) and the Democrats' slim and unstable majority due to health concerns among South Dakota senator Tim Johnson, this outcast is in a pivotal position: if Joe doesn't get his way in the coming months, he could defect, single-handedly granting Republicans control of the Senate. "He is sitting there in the catbird seat," observed Senator Susan Collins, his G.O.P. colleague from Maine, "and it must be delicious for him."

Photographed by Gasper Tringale at the Stamford Fire and Rescue Headquarters, in Stamford, Connecticut.
As the new year approached, the man set to become the new Senate majority leader was the redoubtable Harry Reid, possibly the most interesting boring guy in Washington. Beneath that soft-spoken manner lies a wily tactician who has succeeded through focus, hard work, and strategic brio—and a former boxer's willingness to throw a punch.

When George W. Bush approved a plan to dump nuclear waste in Nevada (after having campaigned against the measure), Reid was quick to call him a liar. As Reid's compatriot Ted Kennedy once observed, "I think Senator Reid often says what we're all thinking but perhaps are afraid to say." The Nevadan's roots reveal much about the man. His father was a hard-drinking hard-rock miner; his mother took in laundry from the local whorehouses. The boy grew up in a tin-roofed shack without indoor toilets or hot water; he hitchhiked 40 miles to high school. In the 1970s, as head of the state's Gaming Commission, he tried to root out Mob-related corruption—and his tenacity was rewarded with a bomb planted in the family car. (It failed to detonate.)

Leading the Senate's fractious Democrats is a dicey proposition. But at least no one's out there trying to kill the guy.

Photographed by Christian Witkin in Reid's office at the Capitol, in Washington, D.C.
The Rising Republicans

Representative Jeb Hensarling, 49 (Republican, Texas).
Representative Kay Granger, 63 (Republican, Texas).
Representative Eric Cantor, 43 (Republican, Virginia).
Representative Adam Putnam, 32 (Republican, Florida).

Congressional Republicans have a simple goal: regain the majority, A.S.A.P. To do that they'll need to capitalize on the skills and enthusiasm of up-and-comers across the political spectrum, such as these four rising stars. Hensarling, a prominent fiscal hawk, is one of those consistent conservatives who'll trim $500 million in earmarks from a military-spending bill—at the expense of having members of his own party attack his patriotism on the House floor. Granger is an education-minded moderate who has devoted herself to empowering Iraqi women and rebutting calls for troop withdrawals. In November she was elected vice-chair of the House Republican Conference, the body's No. 5 elected leadership position. No. 3, the conference chair, is Putnam (above, far right), the energetic young congressman, sworn in at age 26 in 2001, whose stock has soared even faster than that of Cantor, the protégé of Minority Whip Roy Blunt. Cantor’s charm—and willingness to raise hundreds of thousands of campaign dollars for vulnerable candidates—reportedly made some insiders wish he had made a run for Blunt’s job and leapfrogged his mentor. Together with their chastened colleagues, they will try to banish the ghosts of Delay, Cunningham, Ney, and Foley and build a caucus with coattail-riding potential in 2008.

Photographed by Platon at the Cannon House Office Building, in Washington, D.C.
The Sheriff

Representative Henry Waxman, 67 (Democrat, California).

For decades Henry Waxman has been on the prowl for corporate and government misdeeds. Now the watchdog will finally add real bite to his bark. As the incoming chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, Waxman will have legislative authority to issue subpoenas and investigate waste, fraud, and abuse in federal spending. Where to begin? Waxman has already set his sights on profiteering from contracts awarded for Iraq reconstruction, homeland security, and Hurricane Katrina cleanup and rebuilding. If the investigations the G.O.P. launched during the Clinton years were ultimately petty and trivial, Waxman has noted, "when Bush came into power there wasn't a scandal too big for them to ignore." So does that mean his committee will be out for blood? Not for now, he says. "Payback," the congressman has insisted, "is unworthy." Then again, as his committee-chair predecessor, Virginia's Tom Davis, put it, "Henry Waxman, left to his own devices, is not a welcome sight for Republicans."

Photographed by Jonas Karlsson in Waxman's office in the Rayburn House Office Building, in Washington, D.C.
The Comeback Kid

Senator Trent Lott, 65 (Republican, Mississippi).

Over the course of his 33-year ascent to the loftiest ranks of Congress, Trent Lott became known as one of the most outspoken men on the Hill—and not only for his impressive bass solos in the Singing Senators quartet. Lott’s loose talk actually upended his career in 2002 when, as the then-incoming majority leader, the Mississippian let slip a bit of Dixie nostalgia for fellow senator Strom Thurmond’s 1948 segregationist presidential campaign. Even Lott’s contrite appearance on the BET Network could quell the resulting bipartisan uproar, which led him to resign from his leadership slot. Believing himself to have been “killed in the back,” he soon became outwardly critical of his own party, especially after Katrina washed away his Gulf Coast home. Now the former Ole Miss cheerleader will once again brandish the pom-poms to galvanize Senate Republicans—this time as the G.O.P. whip, alongside Kentucky’s Mitch McConnell, party leader in the Senate. That Lott was even elected to the unfortunately named position, despite his setback, is evidence of his reputation as a respected eminence, an unmatched cloakroom operator, and shrewd vote counter. (He won the secret ballot 25–24.) “To become effective again,” Lott writes in his memoir, Herding Cats, “I had to shake some of the hands that held the daggers.”

Photographed by David Hume Kennerly at Lott’s home in Jackson, Mississippi.
Paul Hodes, 55
(Democrat, New Hampshire).

Mazie Hirono, 59
(Democrat, Hawaii).

Brad Ellsworth, 48
(Democrat, Indiana).

Chris Carney, 47
(Democrat, Pennsylvania).

Kirsten Gillibrand, 40
(Democrat, New York).

Hank Johnson, 52
(Democrat, Georgia).

Patrick Murphy, 33
(Democrat, Pennsylvania).

Peter Welch, 59
(Democrat, Vermont).

Baron Hill, 53
(Democrat, Indiana).

Joe Donnelly, 51
(Democrat, Indiana).

John Hall, 58
(Democrat, New York).

Kathy Cas, 55
(Democrat).

Albio Sires, 56
(Democrat, New Jersey).

Betty Sutton, 43
(Democrat, Ohio).

Phil Hare, 57
(Democrat, Illinois).

Charlie Wilson, 64
(Democrat, Ohio).

Tim Walz, 42
(Democrat, Minnesota).

Harry Mitchell, 65
(Democrat, Arizona).

David Louie, 55
(Democrat, Hawaii).
The Freshmen

These newly minted members of the U.S. House of Representatives are a mixed lot. Among their ranks: a factory worker and a sheriff; an allergist and a rock musician; an Iraq-war veteran (Philadelphia’s Patrick Murphy) and Congress’s first Muslim (Keith Ellison, of Minneapolis). Of the 54 neophytes sent to Washington on a wave of voter discontent, 41 are Democrats and 13 are Republicans; 23 beat incumbents; 10 are women. After attending orientation on Capitol Hill, 34 members of the class of 2006 (all Democrats, it so happens, except Florida Republican Vern Buchanan) headed to Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, where they attended crash courses on subjects like the budget, terrorism, and the environment—and had their yearbook pictures taken for Vanity Fair.

Photographed by John Huba at Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Beth Dozoretz, 55.

Washington, of late, hasn’t been much of a toddling town. There’s a war going on. The Bushes aren’t exactly party animals. And many of D.C.’s power players now live out in the burbs. With the capital less festive and the entertaining less centralized, there is no longer a singular figure on the social scene in the mold of the outsized Pamela Churchill Harriman—though among the once-and-future scene-makers and kingmakers—such as cultural powerhouse Ann Jordan (wife of Clinton confidant Vernon Jordan), philanthropists and political fund-raisers Elizabeth Bagley and Beatrice Welters, and their circle—Beth Dozoretz is noteworthy. A Democratic organizer and hostess, she came to Washington, and to prominence, during the Clinton years; the 42nd president godfather to her daughter, Melanne. Though the stylish retail executive became successful enough to retire before turning 40, any plans to slow down went awry when she married a wealthy heart care entrepreneur, moved to Washington, and revealed a knack for helping fill Democratic coffers. In 1999 she became the first woman to serve as the D.N.C.'s finance chair. For the past decade, the path to her Wesley Heights mansion—once owned by Arianna Huffington—has been well-worn by the city's social and political elite. Come 2008, look for that traffic to pick up.

Photographed with her husband, Ron Dozoretz, by Jonas Karlsson at their home, in Washington, D.C.
The Old Bulls

Senator Edward Kennedy, 74 (Democrat, Massachusetts).
Representative John Conyers, 77 (Democrat, Michigan).
Senator Robert Byrd, 89 (Democrat, West Virginia).
Representative John Dingell, 80 (Democrat, Michigan).
Representative Charles Rangel, 76 (Democrat, New York).

Once upon a time, or so the story goes, Congress was a functioning legislative body whose unruly fringes were kept in check by "old bulls"—senior statesmen of both parties and in both chambers who knew how to hammer out a compromise when the nation needed one. If there's any group alive that could exemplify such an improbable species, it is the Democrats depicted here, with their combined congressional experience of some 220 years. Byrd has served across six decades—the longest run in Senate history—casting more than 17,700 votes. A phalanx of right-wingers spent the election season painting Kennedy, Rangel, and the rest as pinko has-beens who would immediately declare defeat in Iraq, raise taxes, and start letting gay couples marry in the town square. But so far these power brokers are showing signs of bipartisan pragmatism: Conyers has sworn off a divisive impeachment campaign and vowed to concentrate on electoral oversight; Dingell is pushing popular alternative-energy initiatives; and Rangel is promising bipartisan tax reform. That's as it should be. To prove that they're worthy successors to the old bulls of yore, these veteran arm-twisters will have to use their seniority to break new ground, not settle old scores.

Photographed by Mark Seliger at the U.S. Capitol Building, in Washington, D.C.
The Scion

Former representative Harold Ford Jr., 36 (Democrat, Tennessee).

He may be out of a job, but his future in the Democratic Party is secure. Having followed his congressman dad to D.C. from Memphis at the age of nine, and later taken over his House seat, Fard represents a new brand of southern Democrat. He supports universal health care and a balanced budget but also mentions Jesus more often than is politically necessary and does not shy from taking conservative stances. The best measure of the threat he poses to Republicans is the barrage of television ads (one of them downright racist) that were unloaded against him during the race for Bill Frist’s vacated Senate seat—more TV spots than in any other contest.

Although he was 50,000 votes short of becoming the first southern black senator since Reconstruction, Fard showed he can put up a fight. The message from the Democratic establishment should be clear: “Harold, call us.”

Photographed by Nigel Parry in Fard’s office in the Cannon House Office Building, in Washington, D.C.
PANIC ON K STREET

How are Washington’s top lobbyists dealing with post-election whiplash?
CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY, author of Thank You for Smoking, checks in with his wily
P.R. strategist, Rick Renard, to make a very educated guess

CONFIDENTIAL

December 7, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Staff, Renard Strategic Communications

FROM: Rick Renard, C.E.O.

RE: Repositioning in a Post-Republican Environment,
or “It’s a Dem, Dem, Dem, Dem World”

First of all, I want to welcome you all to this special emergency retreat that I called. I know that for many
of you this means giving up holiday time with your loved ones.

Last November’s elections presented the firm with a crisis. But remember that the Chinese ideogram for
“Crisis” consists of two symbols, one meaning “Danger,” the other meaning “There’s money to be made.”

Before I proceed to substance, a word or two about the locale of our meeting.

I recognize that Ecuador is not particularly easy to get to. I also acknowledge that some, even many, of you have
found the amenities here at Habitato Ecologico somewhat on the spartan side. (I’ve asked Jim to talk to the
management about the coarse bathroom tissue, which I gather is made from coconut shells and old roof tiles.)

I further recognize that the majority of you would rather be back at Rancho-Casino Superbo, in Scottsdale,
where we held our company retreat last year, playing golf and listening to former congressman Randy “Duke”
Cunningham’s fascinating presentation on the high cost of maintaining a yacht these days.

Believe me, I would rather be back there myself.

However, if we don’t want to be Exiles on K Street, we’re going to have to adapt to the new world order,
and fast. And that means being able to make greenroom small talk with Democrats about, among other
things, bathroom tissue made from recycled coconuts and roof tiles. We not only need to talk the talk, but
also to walk the walk.

Speaking of which, a number of you have inquired about Phoebe, who had that run-in with the bat or moth or
whatever the hell it was during yesterday’s twilight Eco-Walk. She’s at the hospital in Quito and doing fine, a
little groggy from the sedative. She’s got partial feeling in her left side. B.T.W., Randy, why don’t you call
your guy at The Washington Post. They might go for a story along the lines of TOP WASHINGTON LOBBYIST
GRAVELY WOUNDED BY ENDANGERED—let’s go with “BIRD,” sounds better than “BAT”—WHILE ON ECOLOGICAL
MISSION OF MERCY. Might gin up a little green cred with our new friends on the Hill. Worth a shot?

So, to business. We had a great 12-year run, starting in 1994 with the Republican sweep. By 1995 we were
helping our clients insert 1,439 earmarks in various appropriations bills. Last year, Renard clients placed
13,997 earmarks. (Give yourselves a pat on the back.) These included some real rabbits-out-of-the-hat, such
as the Great Lakes Salinization Initiative and the Grand Tetons Relocation Administration. Someday, Lake
Huron may be host to a saltwater coral reef, and lower Indiana may have its very own Rocky Mountain,
thanks in no small part to us. I will say flat out that no K Street firm outperformed us.

But enough backslapping.

Did we blow one or two opportunities? Sure we did. We’re only subhuman. (Kidding!) If we’d carried
the Social Security–privatization ball into the end zone, our financial-service clients would have thrown us
a ticker-tape parade down Wall Street, and not with toilet tissue made out
Ten years ago, at age 34, Demi Moore was Hollywood’s highest-paid actress—half of the world’s biggest celebrity couple (Bremi? Deuce?), and ready to chuck it all—which meant fleeing L.A., divorcing Bruce Willis, and raising their three daughters in Idaho. At 44, she finds her career reborn, while her romance with 29-year-old Ashton Kutcher has survived the snickers to become an enviable marriage. From redefining her family to rethinking her body image to planning another baby, Moore describes the odyssey to KRISTA SMITH...
"SHE'S BEYOND BEAUTIFUL EVERYWHERE. MARIO TESTINO SAYS. "FACE, BODY, HAIR, HANDS, FEET, THE ANKLES, THE WRISTS."
Moore escaped Hollywood in 1996 and stayed away for seven years. "I definitely took some hard knocks," she says. "And definitely I had a huge reluctance to step back in."
GOLDEN SLUMBER

Asked if she wants to have children with her husband, Ashton Kutcher, Moore replies, "Most definitely. Most definitely."
“IF SOMEBODY WOULD HAVE SAID, ‘YOU’RE GOING TO MEET A MAN 25 YEARS OLD,’ I WOULD HAVE SAID, ‘KEEP DREAMING.’”
you and having your three children as a bonus,' I would have said, 'Keep dreaming,'” Moore tells me.

Before meeting Moore, Kutcher had been busy parlaying his role as a goofball teenager on Fox’s That '70s Show into a surprisingly successful career as a film actor (Dude, Where’s My Car?: Just Married) and TV producer (MTV’s hit show Punkt). But he was not on the same level as Moore, whose beauty and up-by-the-bootstraps attitude would be intimidating to even the most self-assured man. Born in Roswell, New Mexico, and named after a brand of makeup, Moore had a chaotic upbringing marked by parental alcoholism, constant relocations, and one dark secret: her biological father had disappeared before she was born, and the man she knew as her father, who went on to commit suicide while Moore was still in high school, was actually her stepdad. As a child, Moore endured two surgeries to repair a wandering eye, as well as weight fluctuations brought on by a kidney malfunction.

She overcame all of that to become the highest-paid actress in Hollywood ($12.5 million in 1996 for Striptease), with a superstar marriage and three beautiful daughters. In 1991 she caused a national sensation by appearing naked and pregnant on the cover of this magazine. Some people found the image offensive; plenty of others found it liberating. By then she had made 15 films, including St. Elmo’s Fire, About Last Night, and the smash hit Ghost.

What followed were two blockbusters (A Few Good Men and Indecent Proposal), and two spectacles (Striptease and G.I. Jane) that were overwhelmed by their surrounding hype. In those days, Moore’s aggressive demands—for more money, private jets, studio-salaried additions to the entourage—earned her the nickname “Gimme Moore,” but she wasn’t doing anything that hadn’t been done before by some of her male counterparts. Particularly her husband, Bruce Willis, the TV star whose $5 million salary for 1988’s Die Hard struck many in Hollywood as obscene—until the film went on to gross $137 million worldwide.

They were the biggest star couple in the world. Long before Brad and Jen, Jennifer, Brangelina, and TomKat, there was Bruce and Demi. The tabloids chronicled their every move, and eventually the scrutiny took its toll. In 1996, Moore, then 34 and at the height of her career, left Hollywood. Her storybook marriage to Willis dissolved in 1998, and they divorced in 2000. “I definitely took some hard knocks and it definitely wore on me,” Moore says. “And definitely I had a huge reluctance to step back in.”

But there was another reason Moore escaped Los Angeles: she wanted to find a safe haven for her three daughters, Rumer, Scout, and Tallulah. She moved them to Hailey, Idaho, where she and Willis had long owned an expansive home on the Big Wood River. There, for almost eight years, the girls were able to live in peace, far from the glare of their parents’ stardom. (The girls are now 18, 15, and 13, respectively.) “I had parents who weren’t as present,” Moore explains, “leaving me to have a lot more responsibility at a very young age. I wanted my kids to be kids for as long as possible.” The location change also gave Moore time to reflect upon her relentless and determined journey to the top, and to confront the body-image issues that had plagued her throughout. Famous for her extreme diets and excruciating workouts (countless crunches and one-armed push-ups for G.I. Jane), Moore was also widely suspected of using liposuction to enhance her appearance, although she has never acknowledged it. “Here’s the amazing thing. When I stepped away, which was on the heels of G.I. Jane, I’d been on a long physical run of absolutely manipulating and forcing my body,” says Moore. “But I didn’t find that there was a peace that came with that, and when I stepped away I thought, I just have to stop. I actually stopped exercising and started to eat in a way that was very reasonable. And the amazing thing is, my body transformed closer to what I had always hoped for.”

Some of the transformation was the result of conscious effort. The breast implants that were so noticeable in Striptease, for instance, appear to have been removed. But the cynical view of Moore as a miracle of modern science is wrong, according to photographer Mario Testino: “She’s beyond beautiful even where—face, body, hair, hands, feet, the knees, the wrists. The whole package, really.”

Moving beyond such skin-deep concerns, Moore says her embrace of Kabbalah, a controversial brand of Jewish mysticism popularized by Madonna, helped her find the spiritual focus she had long sought. “I’ve done a lot of reading and pursuing a lot of different practices in the past,” she admits. “You know, devoted everything that kind of came along.”

The lessons she learned during her imposed exile are ones she’s intent on handing down to her daughters. “By taking time off, I was really able to get inside of my own obsessive-compulsive behavior,” she says. “I was living that idea that if I was thinner, I would be better and more accepted and more attractive.” She says, “I stopped looking at myself as being thin or skinny. I have three daughters with three very different types of bodies, and I have one that’s very skinny—always has been. Very long-limbed and more naturally thin. And then I have my other two, who are not more voluptuous and buoyant, and I just try to encourage them to find the beauty in what they are and what they have, as opposed to focusing on what they’re not. But, you know..."

“Ironically, [my] kids at a certain point casually started to ask me if I was ever going to work again.”

I can’t rescue them; I can only hope they’re spared.” If there’s one thing she wants them to understand, Moore says, it’s the idea “being thin does not equate to happiness, I mean the same as if I were trying to hold on to myself at 20 or 30 years old, as if that’s better than seeing what I am now. We live in a time when everyone would have to work to hold on to that which we are not; we’re stuck in a place that only can feel unfulfilled.” (It’s clearly that, after two decades in the spotlight, Moore has perfected the art of the measured sound bite.)

But as much as Moore tries to guide her daughters’ lives and decisions, they in turn have influenced hers. “Ironically, the kids—a certain point casually started to ask me when I was ever going to work again, and I started to realize it was an important part of the balance of me that was being missed.”

The project she chose for her comeback, Charlie’s Angels: Full Throttle, put her newfound confidence to the test. And if Moore experienced any awkwardness appearing in a bikini opposite 30-year-old Cameron Diaz, she continued on page 136.
The recently appeared actress had two movies due out the spring. "It's been more difficult than I thought, just trying to find a groove," she says.
Prisoner of Conscience

Given his popular status as a maverick war hero, John McCain has a good shot at winning the 2008 presidential election—if he can get his party to nominate him. But one minute he’s toeing the conservative line (on gay marriage, say, or immigration) and the next he’s tellin someone what he really thinks. After weeks of talking and traveling with the Arizona senator, TODD S. PURDUM explores the stumbling blocks ahead. From McCain’s position on Iraq to the perilous game he is playing with his campaign, his career, and his personal code.
Senator John McCain (with his springer spaniel, Sam) takes a break from fishing the creek on his property in Arizona.
some advice. The next question is about the pending federal farm bill, and McCain repeats his long-standing opposition to certain agricultural subsidies.

But then, out of nowhere, he adds, "Could I just mention one other thing? On the issue of the gay marriage, I believe if people want to have private ceremonies, that’s fine. I do not believe that gay marriages should be legal." There he said it, the right words for his right flank. It might seem that this audience, the sons and daughters of a socially conservative and culturally traditional bellwether state, would accept, if not approve of, what McCain has just declared. But they are the Wi-Fi wave of the future, and they can smell a pander bear as surely as they can a hog lot. They erupt in a chorus of deafening boos. "Obviously some disagreement with that last comment," McCain says tightly. "Thank you. It’s nice to see you."

Moments later, McCain remounts the stage for the program’s final segment, and he bores into Weaver, standing quietly in the wings, with a cold look that seems to mingle irritation at Weaver’s whispyed advice with regret that he took it, and demands, almost hisses, "Did I fix it? Did I fix it?"

John McCain has spent this whole day, this whole year, these whole last six years, trying to "fix it," trying to square the circle: that is, trying to make the maverick, free-thinking impulses that first made him into a political star somehow compatible with the suck-it-up adherence to the orthodoxies required of a Republican presidential front-runner. McCain opposes a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage, but supports a ballot measure that would do just that in his home state of Arizona. (It would fail in the mid-term elections.) His short-term reward for the Hardball bunt on gay marriage? Boos from the audience and a headline on the Drudge Report, the right wing’s favorite screechy early-warning system, reading, MCCAIN: GAY MARRIAGE SHOULD BE ALLOWED? McCain needs to square that circle, and the hell of it is, he just can’t.

Back in the Straddle

But God knows McCain is trying. He began this mid-October day in Sioux City, appearing at a fund-raising Siouxland Breakfast for Representative Steve King, an immigration hard-liner. Recently he had called McCain an “amnesty mercenary” for daring to work with Senator Ted Kennedy on a compromise bill that would provide an eventual path to citizenship for the millions of immigrant workers already in the United States illegally. A day earlier, in Milwaukee, in front of an audience more sympathetic businessmen, McC had been asked how debate over the migration bill was playing politically. In the short term, it probably galvanizes a base,” he said. “In the long term, if it alienates the Hispanics, you’ll pay a price.” Then he added, unable to help himself, “By the way, I think the fence is less effective. But I will build the goddamn fence if they want it.”

“I’m willing to negotiate anything,” N McCain tells the breakfast crowd in Sioux City, explaining that there is no way the millions of illegal aliens now here can be sent back to their countries of origin. But he acknowledges that anything seen as amnesty for illegals is “totally unacceptable, particularly to our Republican base.” Later, McC tells me that Congressman King “really knows this issue,” but he sounds as if he is trying to persuade himself as much as me.

A couple of hours later, McCain is in S. U.V., bound for a tour of an ethanol plant in Nevada, Iowa, just north of Des Moines. He knows the visit will be a stretch: he opposes ethanol subsidies. Six years ago, all but skipped the Iowa caucuses, in part because his scornful opposition to ethanol was a nonstarter in a state where making corn into fuel is a big and lucrative business. He turns sardonic, asking members of his small traveling party if they have had their morning glass of ethanol.

We barrel along past the flat fields, Chuck Larson, a bright young Iowa state senator, Iraq-war veteran, and former chairman of the state Republican Party, signed on to shepherd McCain’s already well-organized presumptive 2008 campaign in Iowa. He asks McCain to make some calls to local party leaders. Juggles a sandwich and his cell phone in the front seat, McCain obliges. A couple of times, I get voice mail and leaves an upbeat message, saying he is in the state and hopes to catch up soon.

Then McCain connects with Darrl Kearney, the conservative finance director of the Iowa Republican Party. Following Larson’s instructions, McCain tells Kearney, a former Steve Forbes supporter who he’d love to go to the party’s next Lincoln Day dinner. But his words come sounding as if he’s inviting himself, and the conversation seems strained. “I see,” McC says. “Well, sounds exciting.” From my perch in the backseat, it doesn’t sound exciting at all. It sounds as if Kearney is ticked McCain off somehow. McCain flips the phone closed and tells Larson, “That’s enough!”

A few minutes pass and Larson asks how the conversation with Kearney went. “Fair
John McCain has to square the circle: make his freethinking impulses compatible with suck-it-up adherence to Republican orthodoxies.

McCain says, in a tone that invites no further discussion. “Fair.”

If this awkward little day of straddling the familiar, it is because McCain has had it before. In the 2000 campaign, he stood straight into the hottest controversy in South Carolina, not long before his crucial primary showdown with George W. Bush, by offering his unvarnished opinion of whether the Confederate battle flag—the Stars and Bars—should continue to fly over the state capitol. “As we all know, it’s a symbol of racism and slavery,” McCain said. After John Weaver and others did more than whisper in his ear, McCain took to reading aloud from a piece of paper with statements that began, “As to how I view the flag, I understand both sides,” and went downhill from there.

For better or worse, McCain’s campaign as never the same again. And no one is more aware of this than John McCain himself. In *Worth the Fighting For*, his second memoir, written with his longtime aide Mark Salter in 2002, McCain reflected on what he had done:

By the time I was asked the question for the fourth or fifth time, I could have delivered the response from memory. But I persisted with the theatrics of unfolding the paper and reading it as if I were making a hostage statement. I wanted to telegraph to reporters that I really didn’t mean to suggest I supported flying the flag, but political imperatives required a little evasiveness on my part. I wanted them to think me still an honest man, who simply had to cut a corner a little here and there so that I could go on to be an honest president.

I think that made the offense worse. Acknowledging my dishonesty with a wink didn’t make it less a lie. It compounded the offense by revealing how willful it had been. You either have the guts to tell the truth or you don’t. You don’t get any dispensation for lying in a way that suggests your dishonesty.

As he embarks on his second presidential campaign, a campaign he once assumed he to begin with, and would he consider himself to be worthy of the honor if he did.

Some of McCain’s oldest friends and supporters confess that they don’t know the answers, but that they worry about the questions. Will McCain’s understandable effort to bend a little here and bow a little there—to placate the most conservative elements of his party, who play a disproportionate role in the nominating process—get him all twisted up before he ever gets to face the general electorate that polls suggest admires him so?

Torie Clarke first went to work as McCain’s press secretary when he was a freshman congressman, in 1983, and she remains a devoted friend. When I caught up with Clarke one afternoon just after the Republican rout last November, the conversation came round to the toll that the Confederate flag controversy had taken on McCain’s political prospects and his psyche. “What you see now is variations on that,” Clarke

**ADIMRA’S BOY**

A 29-year-old McCain poses with his family in 1965. From left: his brother, Joe; his mother, Roberta; McCain himself; his sister, Sandy; his father, John.

W ithout getting the chance to run, there are many questions for John Sidney McCain III. Can he bank the fires of temper for his children to put him atop insiders’ lists of the most difficult senators on Capitol Hill and become a unifying leader? Can he reconcile his unmitigated support for the war in Iraq with his unsparing criticism of the Bush administration’s execution of it—and with the electorate’s evident yearning for a new approach? Would he be, at 72—more than two years older than the oldest man ever to assume the presidency, and more battered by old injuries than most men who have held it—too damned old to do the job?

But the biggest questions of all are whether, by forcing himself to become some kind of something he just isn’t, John McCain can win the presidency.
In an age of pre-fab, blow-dried, plasticized politicians, McCain remains palpably, pungently human. I saw him up close at intervals over a period of many weeks of campaigning last fall, often with almost unlimited access, and his preferred means of controlling his image is by abandoning all the typical modern efforts at control. He is the kind of person who comes alone, without a single aide or handler, to a dinner with a dozen New York Times editors and reporters, and tells stories of the long-ago days in flight school in Pensacola when he dated an exotic dancer known as “Maire, the Flame of Florida.” He unself-consciously nurses a vodka Gibson on the rocks in an age when Diet Coke is the safer choice.

In mixed company, he does not shrink from a good “goddamn” or two, and in male company, considerably coarser discourse comes easily to his lips (cocky jet jockey that he once was). He is a man of strong opinions, strongly expressed. “Most current fiction bores the shit out of me,” he says in a small plane somewhere over New England.

In front of an audience of Republican worthies in Appleton, Wisconsin, he calls the leader of North Korea a “pip-squeak in platform shoes,” and in seconding my view that Islamabad has limited charms, he volunteers that the Pakistani capital “sucks.” At a NASCAR race in New Hampshire, he introduces Bobby Allison, “the greatest driver in the history of racing,” to one of the journalists following him that day, declaring, “This is Adam Nagourney, New York Times. They’re a Communist paper, but he’s O.K.” He introduces his friend Senator John Sununu of New Hampshire, son of the famously bumptious former White House chief of staff, to a group of supporters by saying, “You can be very proud of him, and thank God he inherited his mother’s temperament.” To a gathering of businessmen he says, “I want to keep health-care costs down until I get sick, and then I don’t give a goddamn.” He introduces his friend Senator John Sununu, of New Hampshire, son of the famously bumptious former White House chief of staff, to a group of supporters by saying, “You can be very proud of him, and thank God he inherited his mother’s temperament.” To a gathering of businessmen he says, “I want to keep health-care costs down until I get sick, and then I don’t give a goddamn.”

And to a group of college kids waiting to have their pictures taken with him, he growls good-naturedly, “All right, you little jerks!” On a charter jet above Iowa, he reads aloud a headline from USA Today:

“ACTOR [WESLEY] SNIPES FACES INDICTMENT ON TAX FRAUD CHARGES, then mutters, “All our childhood heroes—shattered!”

Moments like these help explain why the constituency that McCain sometimes jokingly refers to as his base—the press—has not already tried to derail him by highlighting the politically expedient positioning that would be regarded as standard procedure for most elected officials but seems somehow so much worse in a man with such self-defined high standards. Together with Mark Salter, McCain has built a franchise of best-selling books out of his reputation for personal and public integrity. They bear titles such as Faith of My Fathers, Why Courage Matters, and Character Is Destiny, and make John F. Kennedy’s Profiles in Courage look like a mere Hallmark card. Yet another McCain book—this one on decision-making—is due out next fall, just as the campaign is likely to heat up in earnest.

But the plain truth is that the Straits Talk Express, Version 2.008, is often a cry from the Magic Bus of 2000. “Let me give you a little straight talk,” McCain tells the crowd at a house-party fund-raiser in Sioux Falls. South Dakota, Senator John Thune, the Christian conservative and self-styled “servant leader” who defeated the Senate’s Democratic leader Tom Daschle, in 2004. The minute Thune was elected, McCain says, he became an important figure in the Republican Party and the Senate.

That’s not straight talk. That’s partisanship. Nor, presumably, was it straight talk last summer at an Aspen Institute discussion when McCain struggled to articulate his position on the teaching of Intelligent Design in public schools. At first, according to two people who were present, McCain said he believed that intelligent design, his opponents portray as a more intellectually respectable version of biblical creationism, should be taught in science classes. But then, in the face of intense skepticism from the listeners, he kept...
HUGGING FOR THE CAMERA

John McCain and his wife, Cindy, at their home north of Phoenix. Inset, President Bush and Senator John McCain mend fences during a 2004 campaign rally in Pensacola, Florida.
MY LORD
Conrad Black and his wife, Barbara Amiel—Lord Black of Crossharbour and “Lady Very Crossharbour”—in Toronto in 2005 as the Hollinger empire unraveled.
Facing trial in Chicago for massive criminal fraud, Conrad Black, once chairman of the world's third-largest newspaper group, Hollinger International, has retreated to his Toronto childhood home, vowing to take the stand and expose the conspiracy against him. As friends and colleagues dissect the 62-year-old mogul's spectacular fall, MAUREEN ORTH delves into the influence of Black's dazzling second wife, Barbara Amiel: the blow of his longtime partner, David Radler, turning prosecution witness; and the role of Hollinger's high-profile board, which allegedly let the company become a private piggy bank.
More than $100 million has been spent on legal fees in this case. Black has reportedly gone through 33 lawyers.
DECLINE AND FALL

(1) and (3) Black and Amiel in Toronto, the year after he was ousted as chairman of the Hollinger board. (2) The Cottesmore Gardens residence, in London, once owned by Conrad Black. (4) Black's current and boyhood home, in the Bridle Path section of Toronto. (5) The former headquarters of Hollinger Inc., in Toronto. (6) The Blacks at their Palm Beach estate, now collateral.
A Model Mogul
As a supermodel, Tyra Banks bared her booty for everyone from *Sports Illustrated* to Victoria’s Secret. Now she’s baring her heart and soul—as well as, on occasion, her booty—as the Oprah of the Internet generation. With Banks’s talk show soaring alongside her reality hit, *America’s Next Top Model*, she tells NANCY JO SALES all about the Jekyll-and-Hyde conflict between Daytime Tyra and Nighttime Tyra, and the romantic travails of a 33-year-old media mogul.

**SHOW GIRL**

*Opposite,* Tyra Banks as Holly Golightly, photographed in front of—where else?—Tiffany’s in Beverly Hills. *This page,* lounging in the penthouse of the Four Seasons.
I'm very gassy,” says Tyra Banks, telling Janet Jackson about her irritable-bowel syndrome. “But I feel like I can telegraph my farts…. If it is going to be funky I'll let it out and I'll be like ‘Dang! Who did that?’”

It's another day on the set of The Tyra Banks Show.

Stunning Tyra, wearing boots and jeans, a black vest cuddling her famous Victoria's Secret cleavage, and a lustrous weave—“It's looking hot,” she observed of herself before the show—starts peppering Janet with “20 Questions You've Never Been Asked.”

“Have you ever faked an orgasm?”, Tyra says.

“One on every album,” Janet purrs.

“You go, Ms. Jackson!” someone screams, and the audience—multi-ethnic young women also in boots and jeans, some of whom have flown clear across the country to see Tyra here at the CBS Television City studios, in L.A.—erupts with the sound of wild girl bonding, clapping, woo-hooing.

Tyra flashes her fierce, feline smile.

America is having a Tyra moment. From the daily girl party of The Tyra Banks Show to the weekly bitchfest of her other program, America's Next Top Model, it feels like Tyra, Tyra all the time.

“She connects with women on a very visceral level,” says Hilary Estey McLaughlin, president of Telepictures, the division of Time Warner which syndicates and co-owns The Tyra Banks Show along with Tyra's own Bankable Productions. “She plays against type for a model, and it's, like, fascinating to watch.”

“She's a fantastic producer,” says Benny Medina, Tyra's power manager. (He guided the early careers of Will Smith, Diddy, and J.Lo and now also manages Mariah Carey and Nicole Richie.) “We're owning 18-to-39—the most coveted female demographic—'knocking it out of the park. I think Tyra is the future of talk for this generation.'”

If, 10 years ago, America's real top models had participated in a competition to see who would be America's Next Top Entertainment Mogul, probably few would have bet on Tyra Banks. Then 23, she had just come into her own as a model, having appeared on the covers of Sports Illustrated's Swimsuit Issue and GQ—the first black woman to do either. In 1997 she received modeling's Michael Award for “Supermodel of the Year.”

The front-runner would have no doubt been Cindy Crawford—“a role model,” Tyra says demurely—who by 1989 had already moved from the runway to TV as host of MTV's House of Style. But “Cindy” is now a Malibu mom. “Kate” (Moss) remains one of the top models in the world but is still “just” a model. And “Naomi (Campbell), Tyra's onetime nemesis (their rivalry rated No. 16 of Esquire's 30 Most Outrageous Celebrity Feuds), though still modeling today is beset by so many legal battles involving charges of assault that she's only been to wearing a T-shirt that says, NAOMI HIT ME…. AND LOVED IT.

Meanwhile, Tyra has become America's newest girlfriend sparking the inevitable comparison to Oprah. “That's my mama. Tyra protests loudly at the buzz. She was a "youth correspondent" on The Oprah Winfrey Show between 1999 and 2000, and considers the still-reigning queen of daytime a mentor. “I’ve learned the most from watching her,” she tells me. “And Charlie Rose.”

“What are you insecure about?” asks Janet, near the end of their interview. She clearly studied hard at Oprah University.

“I never found-myself attractive,” says Jackson. (She has a newsleve body to show off and a new album—20 Y.O.—coming out and looks luminous in a skintight black dress.) “I looked in the mirror and I immediately started crying.


“She's down-home,” a woman from Minneapolis says of Tyra, after the show. “She's someone I could hang out with.”

One morning, early before a day of tapings, Tyra arrive at La Conversation, a café in West Hollywood. She's wearing yoga pants, a Windbreaker, a tight black scarf on her head—the first two are freebies, she tells me. “I'm cheap. She's often said on her show.

Her income last year was reportedly $18 million. Her Bankable Productions also owns 25 percent of America's Next Top Model, which is currently syndicated in 110 countries around the globe, but she's nowhere her net worth. Sometimes I feel guilty for how much money she's, she tells me.

She grew up middle-class in L.A.—her mom was a medical photographer, her dad a computer consultant—and now live alone in an apartment in Beverly Hills. No boyfriend at the moment. "I swear, I swear, I swear." She orders and eats a full plate of pancakes, sausage, and eggs as we chat. "Food," she says, "is like really, really important to me." Although narrow-bodied and slim, she is, as she often reminds fans. 30 pounds heavier than the average model, with a perfect ice-cream scoop of a behind. She's said she has "issues" with it.

"I have had cellulite for so long," she shared on her blog, at tyrashow.com. "I HATE IT!! Back in my modeling days, I'd be on the set with Gisele Bündchen and she'd be in a G-string with smooth thighs and a muscle booty and I'd be soooo jealous. She'd jump up and down and her booty still wouldn't..."
"You’re never going to see me coming out of the club at two A.M. with my weave all hanging off, getting in somebody’s car."
TWO-WOMAN SHOW

Author Joan Didion and actress Vanessa Redgrave team up for the stage adaptation of Didion's memoir, The Year of Magical Thinking.
It won't be billed as a comedy, but I certainly hope to hear laughter,” Joan Didion says of the stage adaptation of her 2005 memoir, *The Year of Magical Thinking*. The David Hare-directed play, opening on Broadway at the Booth Theatre next month, promises to add another chapter to Didion’s exacting self-reportage about abruptly losing her husband, author John Gregory Dunne, while coping with the illness of their daughter, Quintana Roo, who passed away a few months before the book was published. The magical thinking of the book’s title refers to Didion’s effort, during a year of tragedy, to undo what could not be undone. “None of us can control life or death, or much else in our lives,” Didion says. “I was always so much into controlling everything—not that I could—and I berated myself for my failure to do so.” The play, a monologue performed by Vanessa Redgrave (the only actress considered for the role), was drafted in an improved state of acceptance. “It’s still very personal,” says Didion, “but by the time I wrote it, I had begun to think of it as a story about love.” Redgrave says her job is to “communicate the story well enough so that each listener will find answers to Joan’s questions.” And those questions are the fundamental ones, sometimes best considered through the prism of humor. “In the same way that people end up at funerals laughing, it was to me surprising how much the sense of the absurd comes through on the stage,” Didion observes. Like the sad events in question, this also could not have been anticipated. —EDWARD HELMORE
An Empire
When you're a glamorous socialite with a white-hot fashion-and-lifestyle empire, people are bound to snipe. And when you divorce the venture-capitalist husband who helped bankroll it all, the gossip really flies. Tracing the rise of Tory Burch, who cracked New York's most exclusive circles, then designed a fresh uniform for its ladies who lunch, MICHAEL SHAPIRO examines the new breed of party-circuit entrepreneur—think Princess Marie-Chantal of Greece—to find out why Burch's success has made her both a role model and a target.

DESIGNING WOMAN

Tory Burch in her 9,000-square-foot apartment, designed by Daniel Romualdez, in Manhattan's Pierre hotel.
O ne rainy evening last November, a modern-day version of Mrs. Astor’s 400 filled Avie and Gigi Mortimer’s sumptuous maisonette, on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. It was a festive occasion—a 50th birthday for the host, a grandson of famed financier, politician, and diplomat Avrill Harriman—and most in this almost young social crowd burred with delight at being in exactly the right place that night. One couple, though, looked subdued. The other guests tried to hide their surprise that Chris and Tory Burch were there, together, at all: the usually swaggering venture capitalist and New York’s hottest new clothing designer had announced their separation the previous January, and reports from both camps had been grim since then. But here they were, putting on the best faces they could. Partly, it was that neither wanted to miss the party. But, also, it was a signal. Separated as they were, divorced as they soon will be, the Burches had decided after a torturous year that they would stay on as partners in the national fashion country and supplied her clothes to 250 others, from Bergdorf Goodman and Bloomingdale’s and Saks Fifth Avenue to Niman Marcus, Nordstrom, and Scoop. The company that she and Chris started together remains private and publishes no bottom-line figures, but the Burches claim it’s already profitable and will rattle off dazzling, if meaningless, statistics: that it’s grown 75 percent since 2004, more than doubled its sales since last year and so forth. Wall Street Journal lead fashion writer Tera Agin was confused by the lack of hard numbers as anyone else. So she says, “this is a bona fide success. They wouldn’t be getting real estate they got in Bloomin’s and Saks if it wasn’t.”

Anecdotal evidence can be found wherever ladies lunch. St. ani Greenfield, co-founder of the stylish Scoop clothing store and a keen fashion observer, says that whenever she goes to a ninth-floor eatery at the Manhattan department store Barneys, at least 10 percent of the women are wearing Tory Burch. “If clothes have become our uniform,” says Samantha Boardman, a socially prominent psychiatrist and friend. The market’s box class and mass. “I’m always calling Tory from airports to see ‘There goes another woman in your clothes,'” says Boardman. “And another… and another.”

B urch’s styles aren’t familiar just because so many women are wearing them. They’re an homage to the 50s and 60s. Picture Audrey Hepburn in Two for the Road or Breakfast at Tiffany’s. Julie Christie in Dar ling, Grace Kelly in To Catch a Thief. Imagine a st lish woman of that day who lived on the Philadelphia Main Line shopped in New York for the latest fashions from Rudi Genduch, Hubert de Givenchy, and Sonia Rykiel, vacationed every year in Europe, packing the latest French and Italian styles in her Vuitton steamer trunks for the trip home, and on her way stopped in Morocco for tunics. That woman was Tory Burch’s mother, Reva. To a great extent, Burch’s clothes are inspired by what she coveted in her mother’s closets.

The silhouette that’s become Burch’s signature as surely as the wrap dress became Diane von Furstenberg’s: the tunic; slit-necked, bell-sleeved, as ancient as the Arabic souks where Reva Robinson shopped in her youth, a new again in her daughter’s clever hands. Yves Saint Laurent had his own go at tunics in the 1960s. To Burch’s are no less sexy, but more practical, with wide appeal. Sixteen-year-old girls wear embroidered ones of the beach as bikini cover-ups, their mothers wear linen ones for Southsides at the club, and grandmothers prefer quined Tory tunics for charity dos. The genius of Burch’s ent line is how designer it looks—but how down-to-earth it sells. Wor ing women can splurge on a Tory Burch polo dress for a little over $200. Wealthy women can grab the same dress to fill out a wardrobe of far more expensive clothes. All can be members of the To Burch Beach and Country Club—no reference letters required.

How a smart young woman with no design experience cracked the American fashion market is a story in itself. More interest ing, though, is how in the process Burch took on New York Society may not exist as it did in the gilded 1890s of Carollin Astor’s day, when her social sidekick Ward McAllister drew up his list of the 400 suited to dance in Astor’s ballroom. But has its circles, and circles within those, and a woman from out of town, born to wealth but not a great fortune, had her work cut out for her. Burch breezed in with a steely charm and small moves that were, like her clothes, both classic and contempor

phenomenon of Tory Burch. She had the talent, she had the money and business savvy, and now neither one wanted to let go.

Whether the Burches can pull that off, while completing a division of marital assets in the tens of millions of dollars, even as both pursue new romantic interests, is anybody’s guess. But as everyone in the Mortimers’ circle knows by now, Tory Burch, 40, is one very determined woman who’s defied the odds before. Less than three years ago, she opened a store in Manhattan’s Nolita district—"under the radar," as she puts it—with clothes that caused near pandemonium on opening day. Many from her wide circle of friends—Upper East Side socialites mixed with magazine editors and top-tier fashion executives—striped to their underwear right by the racks to try on Burch’s remarkably pleasing tunics and bold-print pants. By day’s end, the stunned new store owner had $80,000 in sales and no more inventory. The phenomenon had begun.

Since then, Burch has opened five more stores around the

“I’m only ambitious about my career. Socially, all I need is my friends and family.”
THIS IS YOUR LIFE, TORY

"I find it so outrageous that people would say I'm hiding my religion," says Tory.
Burch is small, blonde, fine-boned, beautiful, with birdlike hands and a surprising reserve. At her 7,000-square-foot showroom, on lower Madison Avenue, she’s dwarfed by the burnt-orange and lime-green walls—her company colors—and seems happy to let her new publicist do most of the talking about her spring line. The flack holds up a short, black sequined cocktail dress with a bow at the neck before actress Catherine Zeta-Jones wore it at an award ceremony to show off her newly svete post-childbirth figure. More interesting than the dress is who is the new P.R. woman Samantha Gregory, 31-year-old daughter of New York society figure Jamee Gregory. “A brilliant hire,” says one socialite.

Along with clothes, Burch shows me weekend bags, handbags, clutch bags, beach towels and sandals and ballerina flats, most of them branded with her distinctive, Asian-looking double-T logo. She had accessories right from the start—a huge risk, each item a fashion challenge of its own—because she wanted to be, in the Ralph Lauren tradition, not just a clothing designer but a “lifestyle” designer. Though she claims not to have realized it at first, the lifestyle she was selling was her own. “Her clothes fit her lifestyle,” says David Chu, another lifestyle pioneer, who founded the brand Naomi, “and a lot of other women feel the same way.”

“Tory has been very smart about branding herself,” agrees Vogue editor in chief Anna Wintour. “I think she completely understands the power of image and marketing and branding, so women find her clothes accessible and they’re buying into her story.” What they sense, adds Wintour, is that Burch is a real person: “A lovely girl, hardworking, not a socialite who fits her name on something and goes to lunch.”

“I think women can relate to me on many levels,” Burch allows. “I’m a mother. A lot of the women I’ve met have decided to give up their careers, and it’s a really hard decision for them.” When customers flock to her stores to meet her, they identify with her struggle to keep both lives in balance, and ask how she’s feeling about the divorce. “They relate to that too,” Burch says, “and they see that not everything is perfect.” But, she adds, they see that “you can be divorced and still have a great life.”

Burch’s story is, as they say in the fashion business, aspirational: she’s glamorous, rich, and a business success, and her customers want to be that, too. But what forms the bond is learning that Burch isn’t just your run-of-the-mill mother. She has three young sons, from her marriage of 10 years to Chris—twins Henry and Nicholas, 10, and Sawyer, 6.

She’s also helped raise three older daughters Chris brought from his first marriage, to Philadelphia Susan Cole, a very pretty blonde: Pookie, 22, Izzie, 21, and Louisa, 18. The Burch brood occupies a 9,000-square-foot apartment at Manhattan’s Pierre hotel—three suites combined—down whose long halls the boys go skateboarding. Chris has since decamped to the Carlyle, but Tory and the offspring still live in this splendid maze of rooms with Central Park views. By all accounts, Tory is up every morning to get the boys to school and is there to greet them and help with their homework when they return.

“If you don’t know her, you want to hate her,” says Marjorie Gubelmann Raen, a social fixture and co-founder of Vie Luxe home products. “She wakes up and takes a shower, goes out with wet hair, and looks gorgeous—bitch! She works hard, she takes her kids skateboarding at six in the morning,… She’s not always in a tight black dress. People are quick to point fingers. They imagine she’s swanning around the Pierre getting a pedicure. But she’s not.”

Burch likes to say that she never goes out before getting the children to bed, though certainly she seems to go out nearly every night, both to the right private dinners and the A-list charity benefits: Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and American Ballet Theatre. When she walks in, says social photographer Patrick McMullan, she’s instantly encircled by friends. “She’s the popular girl,” he says. “If it were high school, she’s the one. She’s also a girl who’s a great dresser. And she doesn’t just wear her own designs, either. Mostly she doesn’t. She doesn’t want to always be in front of the camera, but she’s someone I always want to take a picture of.”

A socialite isn’t a socialite until she’s photographed, and Burch, though she professes to hate the word, is no exception. Her business gives her another, mercantile motivation to be in front of the camera, and, in that, she’s leading an increasingly large pack. Princess Marie-Chantal, married to Prince Pavlos of Greece, has a line of children’s clothes. So does Lucy Sykes, twin sister of writer Plum. Tinsley Mortimer, wife of Standard Oil heir Topper Mortimer, designs handbags. Charlotte Ronson, daughter of English mover-about-town Ann Dexter-Jones, is a clothing designer. Fabiola Hearst Beracasa, granddaughter of press baron William Randolph Hearst, sells estate jewelry, while Zani Gugelmann has her own jewelry line, and airplane heiress Lulu de Kwiatkowski designs fabrics. Party pictures sell their products. Better yet, all the expenses of readying oneself for those business opportunities—from hair and makeup to Jimmy Choo shoes—should, in theory at
least, be tax-deductible. It’s a wonderful time to be rich.

The new “business climbers,” as The New York Times recently anointed them, see Tory Burch as their role model, just as her customers see her as a role model for living. But Burch is way ahead of the party-circuit competition: five years of relentless working—not just days but into the night with three A.M. calls to China, flying back and forth to Asia, overseeing a growing staff of full-time designers—and taking a lot of chances will do that for you. Socially, she’s way ahead, too.

Burch says she’s a private person with no interest in society outside of her friends. But she strikes a lot of people as socially focused. “She always has her eye on the next thing, like the person who’s always looking over your shoulder at a party to see who she should talk to,” says one former friend. Another friend says that, on the contrary, Burch is usually quite gracious—but to an end. “I’ve marveled at how good Tory is at being nice to people. It’s partly her real personality, but it’s also very smart.” Undersneath, says this observer, is a keen ambition that far outstrips that of the business climbers. “She’s in a category by herself.”

Adds the observer, “I think the general consensus is that Tory is on a mission. What I’d emphasize is: if you want to sit at Annette de la Renta’s table, you don’t bring Chris Burch.”

These people muttering these things under the mask of anonymity—what a cop-out,” Burch says with a snort. “I’ve dedicated myself to work so many nights—for years. I’ve paid my dues. Ambitious? I take that as a compliment. But I’m only ambitious about my career. Socially, all I need is my friends and family. I’m not pretending to be anything I’m not. I want my friends to do well; it’s a shame that not everyone shares that.”

We’re in the back of a town car, on a road trip to Burch’s family home, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. I’m curious to meet Tory’s mother, her fashion muse and lately the namesake for her Reva ballerina flat, a runaway best-seller, with its round, gold-metal, double-T buckle. I also want to check out two of the more damning charges one hears about Tory Burch. Her carefully honed image of a Philadelphia Main Line Wasp—the image that helps sell her clothes—is, says critics, wrong on both counts. Burch isn’t from the Main Line at all, they claim. And she isn’t a Wasp.

“The Main Line is just the railroad,” Burch observes, slightly annoyed. “We were at the end of it.” Socially, Valley Forge was remote from the enclaves one thinks of as Philadelphia Main Line—Haverford, Gladwyne, Bryn Mawr—but, technically, Burch is right. “They didn’t want to live farther in to Philadelphia,” she says of her parents. “They could have; they didn’t want to.” One longtime arbiter of the Philadelphia social scene recalls, “Nobody would from Valley Forge,” he says. “They’re kind of part of the fabric of Valley Forge.”

But Burch says her parents wanted a fake. “We felt we were in the countyside; they didn’t want to,” she says. “Mom used to say, ‘We have to put on a dress.’” To her, Valley Forge, To Burch, our trip has just become a mission of vindication.

The rap on Burch’s religion is that she may have downplayed her Jewishness—draws a quick reaction. “I wasn’t raised Jewish,” she says, “I’m a Catholic. I don’t think people look at the clothes and think ‘Jewish.’ I don’t design clothes to look WASpish.”

Burch, all agree, has a remarkable, almost preternatural calm. (“Things don’t ruffle her,” says Gigi Mortimer. “She’s calm now, but her dander is clearly up about critics who say she’s hiding her Jewishness. The truth of the matter is, she’s a very quick temper.” When asked about this, Burch says, “I don’t have that quick of a temper. It is what it is; what I feel... But I have no problem with being a strong person. If I’m irritated, people will know it.”)

Just beyond the rolling hills and Colonial-era cabins of the Valley Forge National Historical Park grounds, we turn up a long, meandering driveway to a large, white Georgian house, 250 years old, with pillars and a commanding view. “There’s the tree when I spent most of my childhood,” Burch says. “My parents would turn us loose after breakfast, and we’d just play outside until we heard the bell for dinner.” The Robinsons had 30 acres then—a long front patio is covered with scores of pumpkins, Indian corn and life-size Halloween skeletons.

In her youth, Reva was a gorgeous aspiring actress who lived for a time in Greenwich Village and dated Steve McQueen and Yul Brynner. At 70, she’s still handsome and fit, thanks to her six-mile runs and long days spent in her two-acre vegetable garden. Tory’s father, Buddy Robinson, moves more slowly at 84, but still dresses like a dandy. “My father was sort of a designer himself,” Tory explains. “He would have his dinner jackets made and then line them with Hermès scarves.”

“He designed his own diamond-and-sapphire flower cuff links,
“Tory completely understands the power of image,” says Vogue’s Anna Wintour.
Reva adds: "They matched his embroidered tuxedo buttons."

Buddy smiles. "I thought everyone did that stuff."

Reva leads the way through a double-height foyer with a sweeping stairway and walls filled with art from the annualjaunts she and her husband once took to Europe. The dining table is set for lunch. From the kitchen, bearing a platter of food, comes a dignified black man in a white serving jacket. This is Madison, who started working for Buddy Robinson 55 years ago, in Buddy's bachelor days. (Buddy himself dated such bold names as Joan Bennett and Grace Kelly, Reva notes proudly.) Behind Madison hovers Angela, the Argentinean housekeeper, who's been with the family nearly as long. Her son, Leonard Lopez, 32, was raised in the Robinsons' house from infancy. Tory calls him her brother, with Robert and James. Over the years, more than a few friends of Tory's found themselves adopted, too, lovesorn or just lonely, at least for a while. "My parents took everyone in," Burch says over the scrreeching of Macky the Macaw, aged 60, in the dining room. "It was like The Hotel New Hampshire."

Over a first course of delicious hot sauerkraut soup—a family tradition—Buddy explains that his father had a seat on the stock exchange and passed it down, along with a paper-cup company. Early on, Buddy sold the company and settled in for a gentlemanly life of tending investments. "I was on the exchange," he says, "but I didn't really work." He had no qualms about that, nor did his children. "What's interesting," says Tory, "is that my brothers and I are complete workaholics." (Robert, 49, owns a plastic-wrap company. James, 42, owns a marketing company, while Leonard is an investment consultant at Lydian Wealth Management.) More intriguing, neither of Tory's parents appears to have had any social aspirations beyond each other's company and their children's. "What we loved to do was travel," Reva says. "One six-week cruise each year." Reva's mother tended the children while their parents were away; Madison and Angela helped. The parents weren't guilty and the children weren't glum. Everyone was delighted.

With more than her share of natural attributes, Tory appears to have simply embarked on a path of popularity that kept unfolding. At the exclusive Agnes Irwin School, she was captain of the varsity tennis team and rode horses. "She always had these gorgeous girls who were always trying to be like Tory," remembers her sister-in-law Patty Isen. "Yet she had all different kinds of friends. I don't think Tory is about making herself feel good, but about making others feel good. And when people feel like that, they want to be with you."

At the University of Pennsylvania, Tory dazzled her roommates with an emerging style all her own. "She was very bohemian," recalls Hayley Boesky, who has a Ph.D. in astrophysics, "listening to Janis Joplin, burning incense, wearing Grateful Dead T-shirts. But she also had this equestrian-Hermès thing going on as well. She was always accessorized, like a French or Italian woman." Burch laughs at the memory. "I did actually have a sort of style in dressing," she says. "They used to call it Torywear. My friend Patrick used to say, 'Half preppy and half jock—or prork.'"

Tory majored in art history, but fashion, not surprisingly, was on her mind. After lunch, Reva leads the way to the attic. She opens the door to a good-size room crammed with dress racks, the clothes of a golden-era life sheathed in clear plastic. A bit wastilly, Reva pulls one of the plastic covers up and goes through the labels: Sonia Rykiel, Mary McFadden, Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino.

And then there's Zoran, the recluse Yugoslav designer whose classic clothes were among Reva's favorites. Tory was such a good client that when she asked Zoran to give her daughter a first job out of college, he readily agreed. Within a week of graduating, Tory was working in New York. Now all she had to do was meet the right man—an ideal that might have been broadly defined but, based on her subsequent suitors, seemed to include, as a prerequisite, fairly sizable wealth.

From the start, Tory appeared to gravitate toward handsome scions who liked to party. One was Matthew Mellon, an heir to the Pennsylvania banking fortune, whom she'd met at Penn. Mellon calls her the love of his life at that time. "I commuted to New York while she worked at Zoran. We always talked about Tory starting a fashion company. She had it in her mind the whole time." Mellon later married Tamara Yardefy, creator of the Jimmy Choo shoe empire, and struggled to overcome drug addiction. (The Mellons have since divorced) Like any college graduate in Manhattan, Tory changed jobs—from Zoran to Harper's Bazaar, then to Ralph Lauren. Almost as quickly, she changed relationships. But then, rather suddenly, Tory married William Macklowe, son of New York real-estate mogul Harry Macklowe. "Briefly," she emphasizes over lunch one day near her showroom. "For, like, six months. We were, like, 22 years old."

In fact, Tory was 26. Macklowe, about the same age, was handsome and charming. "He made me laugh," Burch says. "That's more important than anything." Her sister-in-law Patty Isen, who had a high-powered job at Calvin Klein and had helped get Tory her job at Harper's Bazaar, says Macklowe's family money wasn't the draw. "Every guy that's ever met Tory has fallen madly in love with her," she says. "And a lot of them whom she had no interest in had a lot more money than Billy Macklowe. She really thought I was in love with him."

The two went bungee jumping on their honeymoon in Phuket, Thailand. But the marriage was soon over. There were, said Isen vaguely, "significant moments when significant things happened that she was prepared to deal with. The good news is she's got herself out of it." One woman Macklowe later dated describes him as "a pent-up ball of anger... a control freak who wanted to cage me." Burch says the two divided the wedding presents—and that was that. "Lo and behold, she just said that Tory wasn't heartbroken," says Burch, whose friend Hayley Boesky, with whom Tory came to live for a while when the marriage ended. "Breakups are hard, but Tory is never one to look back and have any remorse.

Tory was a copywriter by now at Ralph Lauren. "When you got your Ralph Lauren cashmere sweater, you'd find a little tag describing the cashmere and how great it was. She recalls a fellow Lauren employee. "To write that kind of work wasn't glamorous but her colleagues were. For young, social New Yorkers, Lauren and Calvin Klein were the places to get finishing-school jobs in the early to mid-1990s. "It was a real moment," says the Lauren employee. Carolyn Besselaar led the way by taking a public-relations job at Calvin Klein. At Lauren, Gigi Mortimer was an accessories designer. Whitney Furse, who married into the famous fashion publishing family, was there, and so was Delicate, beautiful brunette named Jennie Creel, whose husband, Larry, was related to the Gardiners of Gardiners Island, off the eastern end of Long Island, and the Colgate of Colgate-Palmolive.

Tory left Lauren, in 1995, to work for wedding-dress designer Vera Wang, again in publicity, not in design. It was the year that she started running into Chris Burch, who had offices in the same building as Wang and who, as it happened, had hired Tory's sister-in-law Patty Isen to help him run his sweater company. Chris was tall, with short hair and an inimitable look that belies his age: 44 years older than Tory. He, too, was from the Main Line, though he'd grown up in Wayne, a town slightly higher in the Line social food chain. He'd met Patty on the commute he made to New York. Patty and her husband, Tory's oldest brother, Robert, had become friends with Chris and witnessed the falling apart of his first marriage. They knew him well enough to be worried when he and Tory became romantically involved.

Chris and his brother Robert had followed a rather unusual course for the Main Line: they'd gone into the garment industry. Their father was a manufacturing salesman nicknamed "The Eagle," who co-signed a $20,000 loan to enable his sons to start the
wander—importing business, first at their base, then above the Wayne movie theater. In deference to their doting dad, they alerted the company Eagle's Eye and found a market with sweaters, called "novelty knits" the trade—adorned with winter scenes, deep on hillsides, spouting whales, Christmas ornaments, and other cozy icons. In 1989, when they sold a 70 percent stake to global trading company, Eagle's Eye was flooded in the tens of millions. Chris emerged from the sale with enough to live well on themain Line and maintain a small pied-à-terre the Pierre hotel, where eventually he and Tory began spending time.

In person, Chris exuded a blustery intensity that Tory found more charming than most others did. "He just talks and talks and talks," says one social observer. "And it's always the same thing. He talks about people's psychohological makeup or weight addiction. He likes to talk to people about themselves." With women, that bluster could seem slightly forward. "Chris Burch" one Philadelphia woman recalls. "Oh my God! I went out on date with him in the 70s. I'll never forget it. He put the moves on me!

Tory was unfazed by such stories. "In fairness to Chris, that's part of his persona," she says. "He liked to shock people. It was a lot about shock value and intrigue. And spicing up a conversation." The age difference bothered her not at all. "I'd never dated someone like him," she recalls. "I fell in love." The two married in 1996, after arguing, according to one source, over whether to have a pre-nuptial agreement. Tory says, "The talk may have come up, but we decided that it was not a good thing. It was mutual decision." Tory got pregnant on their honeymoon with twins. Also, Chris's three daughters spent a lot of time with their father in New York. "So my first year I was married I had five children," Tory explains. For a while I tried to manage all that, but the end I couldn't, and work too. So I copped working.

Fortunately, Chris was in on a new gambit that seemed almost unbelievably promising. The dot-com era had begun, and at a red-hot core was the concept of "B2B": Internet start-ups that would create a support network to help businesses do business with one another. The hottest of those was Wayne, Pennsylvania, company called Internet Capital Group, or I.C.G., which provided operational and capital support to its commerce partner companies."It was his sea, I think," Tory says vaguely of Chris's next big thing. Actually, it wasn't. A Philadelphia named Walter "Buck" Buckley I, whom the Burch brothers knew, stashed the notion for I.C.G. with a friend, Todd Fox. The Burches were among the first investors.

"It was a ride beyond belief," Tory recalls. "Everyone we knew invested in it. My baby nurse, family friends." I.C.G. went public in August 1999, with dot-com mania at its peak. In two days, its share price more than doubled to $30 a share. By the end of the year the stock had risen to $170 and I.C.G. was buying companies left and right. The idea was to tie the companies together and leverage their value. The profits would come when the companies were sold. That would take time.

At I.C.G., a few insiders, including the Burches, saw that profits were at best a long way off and rushed to sell when the six-month "lockup" period came to an end. "You were supposed to take maybe a little money off the table but keep the rest in the company because you wanted to stay loyal to the hope," says one I.C.G. insider. "I think the Burches sold a meaningful chunk. And remember, the stock shot up like a rocket after the I.P.O., so any money invested became hugely valuable." Tory confirms. "We took some money out before it went down." By September 2001, I.C.G.'s stock had bottomed out at $52 cents a share. Buck- ley stayed with the company—which today shows signs of a comeback—but by then the ride was over. Tory had decided it was time to start a business of her own.

With their I.C.G. windfall, the Burches had already raised their public profile. At one point, they even considered buying the duplex of former mogul Saul Steinberg and his wife, Gayfryd, at 740 Park Avenue, seriously enough to be included in Michael Gross's book 740 Park. The apartment, often spoken of as the best in New York, went instead to the Blackstone Group chairman, C.E.O., and co-founder Stephen A. Schwarz- man for a reported $37 million. Tory says today that she and Chris looked at 740 as a lark. They stayed at the Pierre but Chris's pied-a-terre grew to encompass not just other suites but hotel corridors.

The Burches did buy an oceanfront house in Southampton, on fashionable Meadow Lane, though it wasn't quite the house its address would suggest. A two-story spec house, it was in foreclosure when Chris and a business partner, Todd Morley, scooped it up for $932,000 in 1999. It sat on the far end of Meadow Lane between a helipad, on the inlet side, and a stretch of ocean beach where locals brought their trailers on weekends. Tory joked about it with friends but quickly established a Southampton social life. Chris was the one who hired interior decorator Daniel Romualdez to spruce up the place. Romualdez wasn't yet the society darling he's since become, and Tory was wary. "When I first met Tory, I was working for her husband and not for her," Romualdez recalls. "So she was a little suspicious of me." But the two soon hit it off. Sensing a rising star, Tory had Romualdez design the Burches' sprawling apartment at the Pierre and, eventually, the Tory Burch stores. By now, Romualdez is very much in Tory's camp. "Chris was just furious at the amount of money being spent on the Pierre," one friend recalls.

In a sense, says one observer, the Tory Burch brand emerged at this time, well before the company itself. "She was in WWD and Vogue—a marketed figure. If you have a different dress to wear every night and you're spending $1,000 to go to charity dinners, you'll get photographed." Tory took these appearances seriously enough, says one friend, that she'd have a professional makeup artist come to the Pierre before she went out. "The woman who does the Victoria's Secret models! I was amazed by that."

When Tory started drawing up plans for a clothing company, she sensed a market niche that no one had seen. "It was really my idea," she says. "And Chris was skeptical in the beginning. But he took a chance and went with it."

Later, some might grumble that Tory had gotten a free ride: her husband had just underwritten her company with a check. Chris did kick in $2 million—money he prepared himself to lose. But then friends and family contributed millions more. Over an intense period of eight months, Tory and a small staff of designers worked up sketches at the Pierre apartment. Every night, Tory was on the phone to Hong Kong, where her friend and fellow Lauren alumna Fiona Kotur had set up a production office. Often sleeping only three or four hours before rising to get her children to school, Tory would get migraines. "When they first started [the business] in the Pierre," says one friend of Tory and Chris. "They all would do is scream. . . . [Tory] was so abusive with Chris that sometimes the household staff would leave the room." Tory says, "I wasn't abusive to him but it was very difficult working with him. I had to be very strong with him.

The night before her first store opening, Tory got no sleep at all: she and her three stepdaughters worked for 18 hours, straight through the night. Tory went home to shower, then came back downtown to open the doors at 10 A.M. By noon she knew that all the hard work had paid off. "We were amazed," recalls Reed Krakoff, a fellow Lauren alumna who's now president and executive creative director of Coach. Krakoff and his wife couldn't get over how many categories Tory had launched at once. "Most designers start with one. She had 15, which really separated her from the pack."

For more than a year Tory did no advertising, stuck to one store, and signed up only two wholesale accounts Bergdorf's and Scoop. Then, in March 2005, Oprah called. "I thought it was a joke," Tory recalls. "I said, 'Oh, sure.'" One of Oprah's producers had given her a Tory tunic for Christ-
Tory Burch

mas; Oprah was now a fan. Tory went on her show in April, showed the clothes, and talked about starting her company with six kids underfoot. The appearance was a huge success. “She changed our business,” Tory says of Oprah. “She made it where it is today. And I can quantify that: our Web site had eight million hits.”

Tory had to tell her family to go ahead without her on a planned vacation to Buenos Aires so that she could make her Oprah appearance. She arrived in time for an Argentinian steak barbecue replete with musicians, a rope twirler, and a whip-wielding woman in leather, among other hotel festivities. The mood appeared jolly, but, as one observer put it, not all was well with the House of Burch.

With his dot-com money, Chris Burch had invested in a new hotel property in Argentina after hearing about it on a shooting trip. Alan Faena, a 40-ish former T-shirt designer from a wealthy Argentinean Jewish family, had persuaded him and other investors to help fund his dream: the Faena Hotel & Universe, a chic hotel whose interior would be designed by Philippe Starck. Tory helped organize a group to go down for the opening and invited a reporter from W to chronicle the auspicious event. Many of the Burches’ best friends went: Gigi and Avie Mortimer, Jamie and Steve Tisch, Austin Hearst, Hilary and Tony Dick, Chris and Cristina Cuomo. Also Jennifer and Larry Creel.

To close friends, the Burches’ marriage had seemed strained for some time. In social situations, Chris’s trademark bluster now seemed to embarrass Tory, especially when her girlfriends rolled their eyes. “He was a lot of fun the first two times I sat with him,” says one. “And then it got really old. He’d start talking about his sex life with her. Or telling stories about his ex-wife. [He] was trying to be amusing and provocative, but it was sort of gross.” This friend, a Tory supporter, says, “She’s so optimistic, she kept hoping he’d engage more or be there more for her. But it was like Groundhog Day.” Tory says, “I’m a very, very private person, and Chris isn’t as private as I am. Obviously we were very different, and that’s why we’re getting divorced.”

At work, tensions were high. The Burches were co-chairmen of the company, with Chris the business guy, Tory the creative force, but as its chief investor, Chris often expressed financial concerns. “When your husband is controlling your company,” observese one fashion-industry friend of Tory’s, “there are days when he’s going to say, ‘Your blouses are costing us too much, and we’re not going to do them.’” Tory responds, “He’s always done different things than I do at the company so I’m not looking at it as control.” But, she concedes, “It was difficult working as a married couple the whole time. I’m very calm, and Chris is not. He’s very creative, he can be all over the place, and I’m very focused. That’s why we hired a president. We knew we needed someone to run the company.” The Burches hired Brigite Kleine, a well-respected executive who’d worked for Donna Karan, Gucci, and Michael Kors. Kleine says that reporting to both Burches has been a pleasure. One observer has a different take. “At the office, the environment was unbearable… Chris runs the business through Brigite so he never has to talk to Tory.”

Along with control, the Burches wrangled over credit. Who was more responsible for the company’s success? Chris Burch declined to speak to Vanity Fair about either his business or personal life, but his brother Robert says, “At least half of the success—at least—is due to my brother’s efforts.” At Tory’s version that she did much of the spadework by going to Asia and talking factory owners into producing her designs, Bob Burch scoffs, “It’s a background that my brother and I have. To think he’d send his wife on her own to source apparel when he’d been doing it for 30 years is a bit much to take. My brother put up the money for the business, and he’s the one that built the organization.”

At the Faena Hotel opening, relations seemed strained to one observer. The Burches and the Creels had been close friends until the Argentina trip, but the observer sensed that this bond, too, had started to fray. (Tory and Jennifer maintain that they’re still friends.) Over the next months, Tory Burch’s sales soared, the Faena Hotel prospered, but by January 2006, the Burches were separated. The Creels reportedly followed suit not long after.

Reactions to the Burches’ breakup varied, as they always do. “We were really surprised, all of us,” says one social friend. “They seemed very happy actually, just on the social scene. It’s always strange when you see a woman who has everything and then gets divorced.”

“I think he truly let her down,” says Hayley Boesky. “She had been trying to work through things with him for a long time.”

“She left him, and she made that very clear to me,” says another friend.

“I think he was devastated,” says a third. “He was a wreck.”

Still a devoûté of hotel living, Chris moved into the Carlyle, fifteen blocks north of the Pierre. He started appearing in public with a movie-and-television executive named Jen Worthington. The two now live together, while Worthington pursues a Times Square entertainment project—American Idol—meets karaoke for the tourists—that Chris is supporting.

One evening in mid-November, Tory sits into a sofa of her Central Park–living room at the Pierre and reluctantly volunteers a few details of a wretched year. The book-lined room that Daniel Romualdez designed is like the Georgian library of a Brit country home. Outside, the lights of the penthouse, inside, the living room’s maroon-shaded lamps are turned low, the apartment quiet while a nanny tends to the boys in a distant quarter.

“It wasn’t about other people,” Tory says. “It wasn’t because he had an affair or I had affair. At the end of the day, we weren’t going to be able to spend the rest of our lives together. We had six beautiful children together, the two of them, and a wonderful family unit, and what we had together wasn’t strong enough.”

For months after the separation, Tory acknowledges, she and Chris didn’t speak. To business that both had created continued to rise. “I don’t want to make it sound like I’m not giving him credit,” says Tory dutifully. “I give him credit.” Eventually, says an observer, the two did speak again, but not happily.

Then, as sometimes happens in a divorcée’s illness intervened to lend a new perspective. First, Chris went in for an operation on a hallowed disk, only to lose, for terrifying month, partial use of one arm. One close relative became sick with cancer, then another. “You realize the pettiness has to stop,” says Tory. You had asked me two months ago if we could work together, I would have said no. Now think we can. I’ve been thinking about the solidly for two months. We talk on the phone—now—for a while we couldn’t. Now we’re putting the business and kids first.”

What this means for the company’s future is still unclear. “Everyone assumes they’ll close 15 stores and sell to Liz Claiborne the way everyone else does,” says one fashion-company chairman. Another industry observer notes that in general clothes don’t make the product—fragrances do. Unless Tory Burch comes out with a best-seller fragrance, she says, selling out is almost inevitable. “With fragrance so much is timing,” says Tory. “You need to know when your brand is ready, when it’s big enough. We’re starting to talk to different people. It’s in the future, for sure.”

Tory says she has no intention of selling—the company is her life. “She has to avoid going too fast,” cautions Diane von Furstenberg, whose own first business soared, only to plummet to the verge of bankruptcy. “To lose control is not good, to do too much licensing is a danger. But she’s a good woman, and she’ll be a right.” Anna Wintour agrees: “I would be amazed if she failed.”

Meanwhile, Tory has begun to enjoy the freedom of legal separation. She’s been dating a wealthy movie producer named Matt Palmeri. Palmeri, son of real-estate finance and corporate-turnaround specialist Victor...
mier, is putting a film company together. It’s a wonderful guy,” Tory says, but, she is, “it’s not serious. I’m not at a point right w…. My main focus is my kids.”

Last fall, Tory made “Page Six” of the New York Post when she was sighted at a restaurant with Ronald Perelman, the Revlon billionaire recently divorced from actress Ellen Barkin. Perelman grew up in a Philadelphia suburb and actually attended the Haverford prep-school with Robert Burch. He’s available, Tory somewhat bears a resemblance to Ricia Duff, Perelman’s third wife. But the latter was merely social, Tory says: she’s not Perelman’s next wife, much as some gossips would like to imagine.

At Avie Mortimer’s 50th-birthday party, Tory and Chris Burch got through the evening, their new romantic interests temporarily sidelined. Despite their own reported separation, Jennifer and Larry Credle were at the party together, too—no happier than the Burches, one observer sensed, but there all the same. Tory, as always, looked poised and beautifully put together, and talked through the evening to dozens of friends. Her grace—and perhaps her social clout—had won her more allies than Chris in this rocky year. “People very much took sides,” says one Chris sympathizer bitterly. “Chris lost an enormous number of friends.”

Life—Tory Burch’s life, at least—was moving on, her company booming, her social status intact, perhaps even enhanced. One guest that night muttered later that Tory had taken center stage in New York society so smoothly that no one could say quite when it happened, or how, only that it had. “When the Miller sisters were in New York, they were the cat’s meow,” this observer notes. “Then they moved to Europe. Then Brooke de Ocampo was the big thing. Then just at the height of her social success, her husband got a job in London and she had to go. That sort of left the playing field clear. People like Aerin [Lauder] and Marina [Rust] don’t want the spotlight on them. That left the field to Tory.” And now, despite the divorce, the center has held.

When the party broke up, most of the guests went out in pairs to a posse of Idaho limousines. It was still raining, one guest recalls, when Chris and Tory Burch bid each other an awkward good-bye. Then New York’s hottest fashion designer started walking briskly down the dark streets, away from the limousines, alone.

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Renard Memo

To that end: Remove all photographs on your walls showing you with eminent Republicans. Replace them with photos of you with eminent Democrats. If you don’t have any, Cheryl in I.T. says it’s no problem to have the Republicans Photoshopped out and Democrats inserted. (Note: Make sure the bodies match the heads. Don’t put Obama’s head on Denny Hastert’s torso.) Cheryl says she can also alter the background in the photos so a golf outing at St. Andrews can look like a conference at the Aspen Institute.

One of our clients—whose employee base, thanks largely to our efforts, was relocated from Muncie to Mumbai—said to me recently, “If you can’t get us access, we’re just going to cross the street.” There’s gratitude for you. I resisted the temptation to tell him, “Yeah, well, don’t get run over by a hybrid car.”

But clearly we need to recalibrate, reimagine. We need to repurpose.

With regard to current clients and projects:
(1) The S-26 Bullfrog-Class Amphibious Attack Submarine. (Clients: General Bloat; Plumm-Gazorsky Engineering; Clancy Corp.; Repotmax.)

Let’s not get drawn into a debate on the merits of a submarine capable of driving up on the beach and hopping around on enemy territory. Killing this program would be an easy victory for Pelosi and her “fiscal responsibility.” (I give that another week at most.)

Suggested counter-try: If we had these now, our problems in Iraq would be over. As long as we’re at it, why not pitch continuing existing appropriation levels on the basis that this is a “Quagmire-Based Fighting Platform.” (Whatever, I’m wide open to suggestions.)

The Democrats have been yammering for years about how our troops don’t have enough body armor—and now they want to cut the one program that could provide total protection and turn the tide against Islamo-Fascism? Please.

Let’s win this one. It would demonstrate that Renard Strategic Communications is still open for business.

(2) Florida Keys Biosphere Oil Drilling. (Clients: Exxon; Moboil; Asshole; Drill-Rite; Cuban-Dynamite Corp.)

Does anyone, especially the Democrats, need reminding that the solution to our energy problems is literally on our front doorstep, a few thousand feet down? No. We say: the Democrats are too smart to think otherwise. That said, I acknowledge that the words “drilling,” “oil,” and “underwater national park” are not ideal Google matches.

This isn’t an easy one, guys, but: if we can at least keep it on the table, then we’d demonstrate that Renard is the go-to K Street firm for the really tough cases.

In fact, this could be key to our whole re-purposing: Want to drill in a sensitive marine eco-system? Who you gonna call?

(Fred: Have there been any fatal attacks on humans by sea turtles in the Keys? See what your research people can find.)

(3) Health Care. (Clients: Cosmetic Surgeons of America; Botox Corp.; Lipsosux; Bosomax.)

The next two years are going to be about three things: health care, health care, health care. It’s baack, people, and it’s not going away. Hillary’s already making noises.

There are basically two positions our clients can take on this.

One: “So let’s get this straight—you want the U.S. government, whose recent huge successes are Katrina, Iraq, and a Medicare drug benefit no one can understand, to ‘fix’ health care?”

Or, two: “It’s high time that the federal
government paid 100 percent of all health costs, so that all Americans can look as good as Speaker Pelosi.

I’m still efforting this one. I’ll try to work something up on the 16-hour plane ride back home.

(4) Faith-Based Gambling. (Clients: Gambling Ministries of America; Christian Casinos Corp.)

Part of the problem is that our late, lamented colleague Jack Abramoff—did we send him a holiday card?—seems to have given gambling a bad name. (B.T.W., let’s watch those e-mails. Please don’t refer to our beloved clients as “monkeys” or “morons” or “Cro-Magnons,” O.K.?)

But, that said, let’s not overlook the fact that our new best friend, Senate majority leader Harry Reid, is from—drumroll, please—the great state of Nevada.

The problem is, our clients’ churches, with their basement slot machines and roulette tables, aren’t located in Nevada. As soon as we get back, I’m going to propose to the clients that they immediately open churches in Nevada. (Nothing big. They don’t have to be “mega,” just a chapel, as long as there’s a blackjack table or keno board.) Then let’s see how the majority leader feels about tax exemptions for church-based gaming venues. And then we hit him up for a national church-gambling policy.

So much for existing accounts.

We also need to get out there and bring in new clients. I know that I’m the chief rainmaker here, and I’m dancing as fast as I can. But rest assured that every one of you is part of the same inelement-weather system. (I’m using a figure of speech.)

Not so long ago, we could afford to pick and choose our clients. Last year I was approached by the C.E.O. of some company located in California that had devised a way of turning kelp (the stuff sea lions use to floss with) into high-protein food. He wanted our help getting NASA interested in the stuff so they could feed it to astronauts. (Three-two-one-ignition-voom, but whatever.) I said to the guy, sort of archly, “Well, that’s all really fascinating but not exactly what we do here at Renard.”

Anyway, the second thing I do after we get back from this—let’s be honest—hellhole is call him up and tell him that Renard is going to put its best team, its top thinkers, on getting his disgusting kelp biscuits to be the official food of the first manned mission to Mars. We’re going to make kelp the Tang of the New Millennium. (Joe, Marcy: see me soonest on this—must be an F.D.A. angle here . . .)

We’ve all heard a lot about the big change coming. But there’s an old French saying that goes, “The more things change, the more will need lobbyists.”

Sure it’s the Democrats’ turn up the For now. In the meantime, what’s rechanged?

The Democrats didn’t just land here in spacechips. They’re people, though Republicans are better at reaching for the dinner check.

If you prick them, do they not bleed?

Aren’t they too already running for election and in desperate need of campaign funds?

Don’t they too need bridges to nowhere?

Are the words “earnmark” and “Democratically mutually exclusive?” I don’t think so.

Somewhere up there on the Hill are Democratic Randy Cunninghams, Bob Neys, a Tom DeLays—just waiting to be introduced to our clients.

So let’s make it happen, people. If we do this then this time next year, when we hold our annual retreat, you’ll also be sucking up margin ritas somewhere in Scottsdale on your way to a hot-stone massage instead of trying to explain to someone who doesn’t speak English that you’ve just been attacked by some bat that damn well ought to be endangered and where can you find the antivenin, an

Tyra Banks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 170

I try to be as naked with my guests as possible. I try to show them what I look like without my makeup, and it’s quite different. “I even touched up myself a little bit for you so you wouldn’t be like, Oh, she walked in here, she had dark circles under her eyes.” Her green-green eyes still look tired. She does 185 shows a year.

In one episode of The Tyra Banks Show, entitled “My Breasts Are a Burden,” a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon gave women breast exams “to see what he could do to help.” In another episode, Tyra herself underwent a sonogram to “put a decisive end to the rumors” that she had breast implants. “I got fake hair, hair, I got fake eyelashes,” she told viewers.

In another episode, “Panty Party,” Tyra and her audience exuberantly stripped down to their bras and panties (a scene you probably won’t see on Oprah) to get an “expert’s” advice on their underwear selection. “The va-jay-jay—vagina—has gotta . . . breathe!” counsels the Tyra Banks Show Web site.

“I really do like going undercover,” she says of the shows where she has posed as a fat woman, a homeless person, a stripper (although she wouldn’t strip), and a man. “We’ll do a lot of things with social experiments. So it’s more social commentary right now,” she says again.

Tyra is on a “mission,” she says. She even has a “Mission Statement,” which her Endeavor agent, Nancy Josephson, later e-mailed to me: “It’s important to make people feel good, to show compassion, to be uplifting. It says, which all seems rather at odds with the message of America’s Next Top Mode still Tyra’s more successful show.

A merica’s Next Top Model, which Tyra brought to UPN in 2003, was the flagship program for the launch of the CW network (created through a merger of UPN and the WB last year). If you happen to have missed it, unlike untold millions from Minneapolis to Malaysia, it’s a reality-style contest in which a group of aspiring young models, handpicked by Tyra, live together in a plush residence decorated by Tyra with blow-up photographs of Tyra everywhere, and compete in a series of grueling and often humiliating challenges (posing with live snakes, or in freezing water, or naked), conceived of by Tyra, after which they are evaluated by a panel of judges, helmed by Tyra with the goal of becoming . . . the next Tyra.

The Tyra of A.N.T.M. is an exciting diva, styled in heavy makeup and Dynasty-style getups for whom greatness in modeling is something akin to virtuosity in piano playing. And she is Vladimir Horowitz. She has told young models, “The texture of your skin
She says she used to have contestants come over to her apartment to hang out, until her producers advised against it. "Whenever a girl was sent home," she says, "I used to go to her hotel room and talk to her for an hour."

"Sometimes on Top Model we wrap at three o'clock in the morning and then I'd have to wait for her to go to the hotel room, pack her bags. I would talk to her for an hour and hold her hand and give her advice. Then, after a while, my people told me, Tyra, you can't do this. We have therapists here that are doing this, you know. You can't. And I was like, O.K.

"I have to detach myself and I've detached myself a lot in order to survive." But why does she think she was spending too much time with these axed Top Model girls? "It's like I have to make sure she's O.K.," Tyra explains. "I felt like I created this show, I plucked this girl out of her obscure life and put her here, and it is my responsibility to make sure that she's successful." As some have modestly been, going on to middling modeling careers. And those who haven't have inspired a new reality show, now in development at Tyra's Bankable Productions; called The Glamorous Life, it's about what happens to a Top Model loser after she goes back to her "obscure life."

"It's a really fun idea," said Tyra's agent, Nancy Josephson.

"During the Ethiopian famine, when I lost all the weight, they called me 'Ethiopia.'"

But then, within a few months in Paris—despite the obstacles presented by an industry which still discriminates against women of color—she was working nonstop, "having fittings with Karl Lagerfeld, Chanel. Yves Saint Laurent—all that. My roommate would look at me like, Oh you bitch!"

A 

time when Paris modeling was a hotbed of drinking and drugs (not unlike now) and wild nights at the Les Bains Douches nightclub, Tyra was always in bed by 10.

"I was a good girl," she says. Her best friend was the model (now actress) Rebecca Romijn. "My era was Kate Moss, Amber Valletta, Shalom Harlow," she says, "but I didn't really hang out with those girls. never did." She claims never to have taken a sip of alcohol except for the "neck of a wine cooler" when she was 12, never to have smoked a cigarette or done any drugs.

"How do you unwind?" I ask her. "What do you do for you?"

"I don't know. Nothing," Tyra says after a moment, shrugging. "Maya Angelou asked me the same thing; she said, 'My God, what do you do for yourself?' I just work."

She has stayed out of the limelight as far as her relationships go. "You're never going to see me coming out of the club at two A.M. with my weave all hanging off, getting in somebody's car," she says.

Between ages 19 and 20 she dated director John Singleton, who cast her in Higher Learning (1995). "He was very encouraging," she says, but she won't discuss their breakup. For three years she had a relationship with Philadelphia 76ers power forward Chris Webber (they broke up in 2004), but has suggested on her talk show there were problems with sports groupies.

Her friends tend to be people from her school days. "I get insecure around fabulous people," she says. She goes home every night and prepares for the next day of work. She finally got a chef, although she was loath to (too expensive), but all she was eating was "popcorn and Tang. I eat it so much that my tongue started to burn."

"And what about sex, Tyra," I ask, emulating Daytime Tyra. "Everybody needs to have sex."

There's a long, long pause. Tyra doesn't answer. She just laughs.

"I've had such a hard time dating," she says. "The more successful I get, the less interested guys are. They just keep asking me these questions like 'You're a mogul now, huh? Damn.' Like successful men. Like 'I read how much money you're making. That's really—whoo. You're on TV every day? Like, really influencing people?'"

She frowns. "When I got this talk show,"
Tyra Banks

she says, “I was like, Oh my God, it’s going to be so much easier now because they’re going to see my personality and see that I’m normal and goofy and fart, and so I’ll knock down that veneer of the supermodel.”

She pauses for emphasis. “It’s worse… I always tell a guy that I’m dating: I don’t need you, I want you. But a lot of them are like”—alarmed face—“I want you to need me. I don’t want you to want me!”

I think, but don’t say, that maybe Tyra’s true romance now is with the young women of America.

She says, of her audience, “I’m trying to get them interested in issues. Things that affect their future, you know? My talk show has totally changed me and opened me. I used to just be about being a good role model and helping women, but I didn’t realize in the vast way that I could do it. It’s made me more aware.”

“I’m addicted to Jon Stewart now!” she says. “And I even watch Bill O’Reilly. And I would never in a million years watch that stuff. I wasn’t an idiot, where I was totally closed off, but this has just really opened my eyes.

“You don’t understand,” Tyra says. “Just a year ago I was a model, you know what I’m saying? Walking down the runway in my friggin’ panties for Victoria’s Secret.” (O’Reilly officially retired in 2005) “And now TV magazine is saying I’m one of the most influential people in the world?” She mugs, if taken aback.

“I’ve definitely grown up this year,” says Tyra. “I’m feeling more like a woman—don’t know if I felt like a woman before I started this talk show. I had this girl thing. But with this show, I’m like, You know what? I’m not a girl. I’m a woman and I need to start acting like one, starting opening my eyes to the world.”

And with that, she gets into her chauffeured car and goes home.

She says she still has a lot of work to do.

John McCain

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 167: modifying his views—going into reverse evolution.

“Yes, he’s a social conservative, but his heart isn’t in this stuff,” one former aide told me, referring to McCain’s instinctual unwillingness to impose on others his personal views about issues such as religion, sexuality, and abortion. “But he has to pretend [that it is], and he’s not a good enough actor to pull it off. He just can’t fake it well enough.”

When it comes to the rough-and-tumble of practical politics, as opposed to battles over political principle, McCain’s apparent compromises are just as striking. Six years ago, McCain was livid when Sam and Charles Wyly, a pair of Texas businessmen friendly with the Bush campaign, spent $2.5 million on a nominally independent advertising effort attacking McCain. He called them “Wyly coyotes,” and implored an audience in Boston to “tell them to keep their dirty money in the state of Texas.” This time, McCain accepted money from the Wylys. The Wylys gave McCain’s Straight Talk America political-action committee at least $20,000, and together with other family members and friends they chaired a Dallas fund-raiser for the PAC. (The Wyly money was later returned because the bro theters have become the subject of a federal investigation.) In 2000, McCain denounced the Reverend Jerry Falwell—and others like him—as “agents of intolerance.” Last spring McCain gave the commencement address at Falwell’s Liberty University.

Two years ago, McCain was unsparring in his criticism of the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, who slandered his friend and fellow Vietnam veteran John Kerry. Kerry felt close enough to McCain at the time to make multiple and serious inquiries about McCain’s interest in running for vice president on a national-unity ticket (and McCain basked in the courtship, even if he knew nothing could ever come of it). So the alacrity with which McCain joined in demanding an apology from Kerry—who’s “botched joke” last fall about George Bush’s intellect came out as a slur against American troops in Iraq—was surprising, if not unseemly. Once upon a time, the two friends would have talked about the issue privately, and McCain might well have given Kerry his frank advice. As of mid-November, they had not spoken since McCain’s statement condemning Kerry’s “insensitive, ill-considered, and uninformed remarks”—which McCain once again read from a piece of paper, by the way. When I asked McCain if he thought Kerry was really trying to insult the troops, he answered only indirectly, and with some annoyance: “I accepted it when he said, ‘I botched a joke,’ O.K.?”

The battle between Bush and McCain in 2000 was bitter, with Bush supporters in South Carolina spreading rumors that McCain was insane and that he had fathered a black child. (McCain and his wife, Cindy, are the adoptive parents of a girl from Bangladesh.) Bush and McCain traded insults involving each other’s moral standing. A year later, with bad feeling still so high that strategist John Weaver had been virtually blackballed from working in Republican politics, Weaver went so far as to sound out Democratic Senate leaders about the possibility of having McCain caucus with them. This would have put the Senate, then divided 50–50, into Democratic control. Aides to two senior Senate Democrats say it was never clear how serious McCain himself was about the proposal, and any possibility it might actually happen was short-circuited when another Republican, James Jeffords, from Vermont, made the move first, in 2001.

That was then, when memories of the Bowl camp’s gruesome, dishonest attacks on McCain were still fresh. When I asked McCain how a rapprochement with Bush could ever have been achieved, he began by saying “For 10 days I wallowed,” then made it clear that the best balm was his realization that the campaign had raised his stature. “We came out of the campaign, even though lagging, enhanced nationally, with a lot of opportunities in the Senate legislatively, with my influence, and eventually, if necessary, to be able to go at it again.” Whatever the psyche or political specifics, the ultimate result was the celebrated McCain-Bush campaign in 2004, in which McCain found himself enveloped in a back-wrapping embrace an upside-the-head smooth. Since that moment McCain has borrowed from the Bush political playbook, aiming to make himself the prohibitive front-runner for the 2008 primaries, and happily snipping up forms Bush aides and supporters from key states such as Iowa and New Hampshire, including Terry Nelson, an Iowaan and political director of the 2004 Bush campaign. Nelson now a private consultant in Washington approved the most widely condemned negative ad of the 2006 midterm elections, produced by a quasi-independent group financed by the Republican National Committee and aimed at the black Democratic Senate candidate in Tennessee, Harold Ford Jr. In the ad, a sultry white actress says she had once met McC at a “Playboy” party, “then cradles his outstretched thumb and little finger to her ear and coos, “Harold, call me.” After the ad sparked an uproar it was taken off the air. Given the racially charged campaign of innuendo deployed against McCain by Bush supporters six years ago, and McCain’s outrage at such tactics, the McCain camp
The Old Man

In the two years leading up to the recent midterm election, McCain kept up a residential-level schedule, with 346 appearances for Republican candidates and causes round the country. He traveled in small jets, sometimes alone, often with an aide or two; early fall, his PAC had already spent more than $1 million on air charters. On a rainy morning in mid-October, McCain, his longtime chief fund-raiser, Carla Eudy, and I are bound from Washington, D.C., to Milwaukee in a roomy Beechjet, all dark wood and soft leather, with snacks on demand. McCain, his habit, props his feet on the opposite seat and opens the newspapers.

"O.K., Carla, SEVERAL DRUGS SHOW PROMISE FOR ALZHEIMER'S," he reads from The Wall Street Journal.

Eudy smiles. "I need that."

Turning the page, McCain mutters. "It's not you that needs it.

A few minutes later, reading over his schedule for a long day ahead in Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Iowa, McCain murmurs, 'We're going from Joe Foss Field to Bud Day field! I'm getting old. I knew both of them.'

Foss, for whom the airport in Sioux Falls was named, was the World War II flying ace and governor of South Dakota. Day became nation's most highly decorated military ficer since Douglas MacArthur. He served in three wars, was one of McCain's P.O.W. cellmates, and, as a civilian lawyer, handled McCain's divorce from his first wife, Carol, in 1980: the airport in Day's hometown of Sioux City, Iowa, is named for him. (McCain did not know General Billy Mitchell, the World War I aviator for whom the Milwaukee airport, where we'll be landing tolerably, is named, but his grandfather did. Did McCain wrote about him in Worth the Fighting For.)

At 70, McCain is both matter-of-fact and amissive about his age. He may have DNA on his side. His father and grandfather, accomplished navy admirals, died prematurely—his father lived 19 years, his grandfather, 73. His mother, Roberta, a daughter of a wealthy oil wildcatter from southern California, is agile and unstoppable. She spent this past fall driving herself round Europe, and because she was too old to rent a car, she simply bought herself a new Mercedes and hit the road. McCain gets irks when he acknowledges that he is "as old as dirt, with more scars than Frankenstein"—but he always makes sure to mention is redoubtable mother.

At the end of his failed 2000 campaign, when he had not yet turned 64, McCain clearly assumed that he would be too old ever to run again. "To me, some of this last six months was to see 'Does he still have the physical wherewithal to do this?','" Mark Salter acknowledges. "Evidently so, because no one staffer can do all the travel with him. Because we burn out too quick."

Indeed, in two long stints on the road in September and October, McCain kept up a punishing pace. He is mentally sharp, verbally facile, and perpetually curious. (On one of our trips, he was rereading Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.) But he is visibly older, thinner, balder—and, yes, frailer—than he was just six years ago. Like his friend Bob Dole, he tries to minimize his disabilities, but they are serious. He suffered severe injuries when his plane was shot down over North Vietnam 40 years ago. His right knee was broken when his seat was ejected from the cockpit, and both arms were broken in the crash. These injuries were compounded by the profound abuse he endured during five and a half years in captivity.

McCain seldom talks about the details of his torture by the North Vietnamese. He has written about them in clinical depth. Despite the injuries he had already suffered, upon capture he was sharply bayonetted in the ankle and then beaten senseless. The North Vietnamese never set either of his broken arms. The only treatment of his broken knee involved cutting all the ligaments and cartilage, so that he never had more than 5 to 10 percent flexion during the entire time he was in prison. In 1968 he was offered early release, and when he refused, because others had been there longer, his captors went at him again: he suffered cracked ribs, teeth broken off at the gum line, and torture with ropes that lashed his arms behind his back and that were progressively tightened all through the night. Ultimately he taped a coerced confession.

McCain's right knee still has limited flexibility. Most of the time this is not noticeable, but McCain mounts the steps onto planes with a herky-jerky gait. A climb up dozens of steps at the New Hampshire International Speedway, in Loudon, leaves him badly winded and sweating profusely. Because his broken arms were allowed to heal without ever being properly set, to this day McCain cannot raise his arms above his shoulders. He cannot attend to his own hair. An aide is often nearby with a comb and small can of hair spray.

McCain has difficulty putting on his suit jacket unassisted. Once, as we prepared to get out of a cramped airplane cabin in Burlington, Vermont, where McCain would be greeted by the governor, I turned my back for a moment, only to find him struggling. He could sense that his collar was all bunched up, and asked me matter-of-factly to help him straighten it out. I felt the pang that those around McCain feel whenever they realize the extent of his injuries. "You comb someone's hair once," his 2000 communications director, Dan Schnur, says, "and you never forget it."

One of McCain's aides tells me that two years ago, campaigning with McCain, George W. Bush asked if the senator would like to work out with him. Told that McCain did not, could not, really "work out," Bush replied, "What do you mean?"

Just after the Republican convention of 2000, a malignant melanoma was removed from the left side of McCain's face, leaving a track of deep and angry red scars that are only now receding. Salter notes that if McCain's campaign had not died six years ago McCain himself might have, because he wouldn't have taken time out from the trail for the examination that produced the diagnosis. There has been no recurrence of the cancer, and McCain undergoes checkups every three months. At the slightest sign of direct sunlight he breaks out the baseball cap that is always kept at the ready, and slathers his face with so much sunblock that he looks like Marcel Marceau until his skin absorbs it.

And still McCain pushes himself, as if to combat any hint of diminished capacity. Last summer, he hiked the Grand Canyon rim to rim with his son, Jack, 20, now in his second year at Annapolis. He says the descent was torture on his knees, until a park ranger offered him some pills partway down.

"It was—as I saying this right?—I. W. Propen. The stuff's a fucking miracle drug! It doesn't seem fair to tell him the drug is nothing more miraculous than Advil. McCain will repeat the ibuprofen story a time or two over the course of 48 hours, and he brings it up again when I see him about a month later.

McCain tells me that he counts on Cindy, to whom he has now been married for 25 years, and a close circle of longtime aides to tell him if they ever think he is losing a step. "They watch me very carefully," he says. "They do. They keep an eye on it. And so I try to wear 'em down!' The sheer range in age of McCain's seven children both calls attention to his own span of years and testifies to an unusual willingness to stay young. Besides Jack, they include his first wife's sons by her first husband—Doug, 47, a pilot for American Airlines, and Andy, 44, who works for Cindy's family company in Phoenix; McCain adopted both of them when they were children. Then there is Sidney, 40, his daughter with Carol, who is head of publicity at V2 Records; Meghan, 22, his eldest child with Cindy, now a senior at Columbia; Jimmy, 18, who has recently joined the Marine Corps; and Bridget, 15, a ninth-grader in Phoenix, the Bangladeshi girl the McCains adopted.

Most politicians repeat themselves, in
John McCain

part because they have their rap down, and in part because they see too many people to remember whom they’ve just seen, and McCain sees far, far more people than most. Older men often repeat their favorite stories, their best tales from the trenches, and McCain certainly repeats his. He is the Milton Berle of political humor, an unrepentant thief of bad gags from friends like Bob Dole and Alan Simpson, which he delivers deadpan and repeats at every stop.

Short-term exposure to McCain is bracing. Long-term exposure can be draining—makes you want to reach for the I.V. Propen. In our travels I spent a great deal of time with John McCain, on occasion just the two of us alone on a plane. Sometimes he would talk, and sometimes he’d stay silent. Often he’d punctuate the silence by saying something like “Do you know who Barry Goldwater’s best friend in the Senate was?” and I would answer something like “You told me yesterday that it was George McGovern.” McCain may sometimes slip into autopilot, but far more often he is focused intensely, speaking to crowds large and small without a single note, addressing his questions by name after one brief meeting, sizing up the situation in a room he has just entered and saying all the right things.

On what turned out to be a late-night flight from Joe Foss Field to Bud Day Field, McCain was waxing nostalgic about Ronald Reagan, whom he’d begun to admire when, in a North Vietnamese prison, he heard scraps of news about him, and whom he then went to know upon his release. Reagan helped inspire him to leave the navy and go into politics. McCain repeats former attorney general Ed Meese’s assertion that Reagan was never the same after he was severely wounded in the assassination attempt early in his first term, when he had just turned 70—McCain’s age as we speak. In hindsight, McCain says, Reagan surely exhibited some early signs of Alzheimer’s disease while still in the White House.

“I really shouldn’t tell you this,” McCain says. “I wouldn’t want to hurt anybody.” He goes on to describe being invited to dinner at the White House as a freshman congressman in 1983 and being seated at Reagan’s table, with a woman between them. Reagan told stories, grand stories, priceless stories of Old Hollywood, California politics. He was charming. Terrific. And four years later McCain found himself as a freshman senator back at a White House dinner in just the same arrangement. And Reagan told the same stories all over again. Suddenly, McCain stops and it’s as if he can read my mind.

“But there’s a flip side to that,” Schmuel adds. “He traveled on that bus for months with four or five reporters, and one of the things about starting slow is you get to try out your act Off Broadway. There’s no Off Broadway over the next two years. It’s all spotlight. An offhand remark in 1999 vanishes without a trace. In 2007 it’s on cable television for three weeks.”

One of McCain’s great strengths—his parodistic tendency—is therefore also one of his great vulnerabilities. “There’s no bar fight he will walk away from,” John Weaver says, with a mixture of admiration and exasperation. A basic reality that makes the current Straight Talk Express seem at least an echo of the last one is that everything McCain says abroad it is on the record, day or night unless he specifically says something is off the record, and he virtually never does.

From what I can tell, McCain’s temper is not so much worse than that of many other politicians I have known, from Rudy Giuliani to Bill Clinton. He wastes no time on niceties. Each time I met him for a trip or an interview, he barely bothered to shake my hand. He no longer calls reporters “liars” and “idiots,” as he once did, when he was starting out in politics in Arizona. “Do you think we could sit and watch the damn race for a minute?” he said to an eager aide, who was escorting him around the owners’ box at the NASCAR track in New Hampshire to greet potential supporters when what he really wanted was to catch some of the action. Nothing pathological there.

What’s so different about—and potentially risky for—McCain is his perpetual willingness to think out loud, unplugged and unfiltered. On our way to Iowa for the Hardball taping in mid-October, McCain tells Chuck Larson and me that he assumes Chris Matthews will be tough on him for his recent dustup with Hillary Rodham Clinton, in which he suggested Bill Clinton’s mid-1990s horse-trading with North Korea paved the way for its recent nuclear tests. That prompted an unnamed Clinton adviser to tell Maureen Dowd of The New York Times that McCain had seemed to be doing the craven campaign-season bidding of the Bush

Anger Management

My dear friends” are words McCain often uses when addressing big crowds. The greeting is expansive, antique, almost Victorian in its exaggerated politesse, and he sometimes stretches out the words as if to heighten the affection they convey. But when he says “My friend” to a single, luckless individual, the tone is terse and tight, and the meaning is anything but philanthropic. “My friend,” when uttered through clenched teeth and frozen smile, means McCain is ready to blow.

I’ve seen it happen again and again. To an inattentive freelance photographer who happened to get between him and a Sunday-afternoon house-party crowd in New Hampshire: “My friend, I like to see people when I’m talking to them.” To a nervous technician taking too long to rig a wireless transmitter on McCain’s back before a convocation at Boston College: “My friend, I will call you if I need you.” To Tim Russert on Meet the Press; after Russert has just told McCain that “to win the Republican primary you have to move to the right, and then, to win the general election, move back to the center”: “People know me too well, my friend. I’m not moving any way.”

McCain’s temperament may be the single most discussed element of his life and career. In high school, his nicknames were “Punk” and “Mcnasty,” and a survey of senior Capitol Hill staffers by Washingtonian magazine last summer ranked McCain second for “Hottest Temper” in the Senate, just behind the famously cranky 83-year-old Ted Stevens, of Alaska. (In fairness, it should be noted that Time magazine recently ranked McCain as one of the “10 best” senators.) Twenty-five years ago, a rival in McCain’s first congressional race called his first wife, Carol, to ask if she had any “negative material” on her ex-husband; McCain later told the man that if he ever did anything like that again “I will personally beat the shit out of you.”

More recently, just last winter, McCain wrote a stinging letter—and made it public— to Senator Barack Obama, the Illinois Democrat and rising star, for what amounted to little more than a misunderstanding over how Obama intended to proceed on the issue of lobbying reform—something that could have been cleared up with a chat in the corridor. Instead, McCain let loose, writing Obama the kind of missive, lacerating in its sarcasm, that Harry Truman used to compose late at night, but then prudently put in a drawer: “I would like to apologize to you for assuming that your private assurances to me regarding your desire to cooperate in our efforts to negotiate bipartisan lobbying reform legislation were sincere. . . . I’m embarrassed to admit that after all these years in politics I failed to interpret your previous assurances as typical rhetorical gloss routinely used in politics to make self-interested partisan posturing appear more noble.”

McCain’s aides say that McCain himself was the last to recognize that he had a reputation as a hothead, and used to rail at the private office whenever a public commentator suggested he had a problem, shouting, “I don’t have a temper. I just care passionately.”

Dan Schmar says he thinks the temper sue has faded: “He’s had six years of practice. In 1999 the attention crashed down like a ton of bricks. It came out of nowhere, and there was no preparation for it. He’s had that level of attention now for seven years, which makes me suspect that his temperament isn’t going to be nearly as much an issue this time as last.”
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Scientific Breakthrough or Dumb Luck?

Although StriVectin-SD's functional components were already backed by clinical trials documenting their ability to visibly reduce the appearance of existing stretch marks (prominent because of their depth, length, discoloration, and texture)... the success of StriVectin-SD as an anti-wrinkle cream was "dumb luck," says Gina Gay, spokesperson for Klein-Becker, maker of StriVectin-SD. "When we first handed out samples of the StriVectin formula to employees and customers as part of our market research, the sample tubes were simply marked 'topical cream' with the lot number underneath," Ms. Gay explains. "As the samples were passed to friends and family, the message became a little muddled and some people used this 'topical cream' as a facial moisturizer. As we began to receive feedback from users, like 'I look 10 years younger' and 'I can't even notice my crow's feet,' we knew we had something more than America's most effective stretch-mark cream. The point was driven home as store owners began reporting that almost as many people were purchasing StriVectin as an anti-wrinkle cream as were buying it to reduce stretch marks."

Dr. Daniel B. Movrey, PhD, Klein-Becker's Director of Scientific Affairs, says, "Clearly, people were seeing results, but we didn't have a scientific explanation as to why this wrinkle reduction was occurring. However, based on the incredibly positive reports, I started using it myself — applying StriVectin to my face after shaving." Dr. Movrey adds, "On a personal note, my wife tells me I haven't looked this good in years."

Dumb Luck Strikes Again!

Then, on Tuesday, July 2, 2002, at a meeting of the 20th World Congress of Dermatology in Paris, France, a series of studies detailing the superior wrinkle-reducing properties of a patented oligo-peptide (called Pal-KTTKS versus retinol, vitamin C, and placebo, on "photo-aged skin" was presented. As "luck would have it," Dr. Movrey states, "the anti-wrinkle oligo-peptide tested in the breakthrough clinical trials turned out to be a key ingredient in the StriVectin cream." In the trials, subjects applied the patented peptide solution to the crow's feet area on one side of the face, and a cream containing either retinol, vitamin C, or a placebo to the other side.

Subjects in the Pal-KTTKS/retinol study applied the cream once a day for 2 months and then twice a day for the next 2 months. Using special image analysis, the study's authors reported "significant improvement" in the appearance of both overall skin tone and unsightly wrinkles for those women using the peptide solution. Better yet, at the 2-month halfway point, the peptide solution worked nearly 1.5 times faster than retinol (in measured parameters), and without the inflammation retinol often causes in sensitive skin. As was expected, the results of the remaining studies confirmed that the Pal-KTTKS solution's effectiveness at reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles far exceeded both vitamin C and placebo.

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Dr. Nathalie Chevreau, PhD, RD, Director of Women's Health at Salt Lake City based Basic Research's exclusive distributor for Klein-Becker, explains, "Leading dermatologists agree that Botox Cosmetic is the preferred treatment for glabellar lines, that tiny little space of moderate to severe lines between the eyebrows. But ever since it was discovered that StriVectin could reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and crow's feet... the kind of fine lines, wrinkles, and crow's feet that can add 10-15 years to your appearance and which costly medical treatments often leave behind... skin-care professionals have been recommending, and using, StriVectin. In fact, researchers believe non-invasive alternatives are better, because, Dr. Chevreau continues, 'Topical creams and gels offer gradual, continual results, while the effects of injections, facial peels, and dermabrasions are rougher on the skin and wear off.'"

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**Study References:**

P20438 "Relevance of antiwrinkle treatment of a peptide: 4 months clinical double blind study vs. excipient," 20th World Congress of Dermatology - 52 subjects, 4 mos.

P10179 "Peptide offers improvement in human photoaged facial skin," 20th World Congress of Dermatology - 204 subjects, 12 weeks.

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administration and would end up “looking similar to the way he did on those captive photos from Hanoi.” Senator Clinton called McCain on his cell phone to apologize.

“It was a very smart thing for her to call,” McCain says. “People underestimate her political intelligence and her antennae. She’s not her husband—no one’s her husband. But she’s good. And I like her. I know you’re not supposed to say that, but I do.” Both McCain’s snub and his magnanimity seem outsize for a man who once himself had to apologize to the Clintons for having made a crude joke about their daughter.

On another flight, later that day, McCain spoke to the news that Harry Reid, the Senate Democratic leader, had used campaign money to benefit the employees’ Christmas bonuses at the Ritz-Carlton in Washington, where Reid and his wife, Landra, own condominium. In legal terms Reid’s move was dodgy at best. “Who knew he lived at the Ritz?” McCain says. “Not bad for a boy from Searchlight, Nevada.” Then McCain—a former amateur boxer and inveterate gambler, whose wife is the wealthy heir to a beer-distributing franchise in Phoenix—goes on to count how the McCains and the Reids once got into another in Las Vegas and went to boxing matches. It turned out that the Reids had free tickets, while the McCains paid.

“I wouldn’t say this publicly,” McCain tells the crowd at the private Thune fundraiser, speaking of Reed, “but I came to the house with him in 1982 and he’s always given . . .” Here McCain pauses—as if suddenly realizing that what he’s saying is deeply saying publicly—and then goes on to wish the thought away: “. . . a little on the edge.”

Late that night, on the flight to Sioux City, McCain falls to musing aloud about Colin Powell, his friend and recent stalker ally opposing the Bush administration’s efforts to end U.S. compliance with provisions of the Geneva Conventions. McCain says he wishes that Powell, from the start, had put tough hardback against the Bush White House’s repeated efforts to undermine his effectiveness as secretary of state. It’s not that McCain and Powell always saw eye to eye on policy, one of McCain’s longtime aides tells me later; indeed, McCain was more hawkish than Powell on Iraq from the start. It’s that McCain wished Powell had spent more time traveling abroad, pressing aggressive efforts publicly diplomatically, making his case out loud, rather than watching his bureaucratic back in Washington. “He could have prevailed at any time,” McCain says of Powell. Instead, on issue after issue, he was rolled by Don Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney and hench’s adroit and aggressive staff, whose power grew and grew.

“He’s a great American, a great soldier,” McCain says. “But he is also very cautious.” He adds, “I’m afraid history will judge him harshly.”

**“Alone in the Room”**

History may judge McCain harshly, too, on what he himself has identified as perhaps the biggest moral challenge presented by the war on terrorism: how the United States treats its enemy detainees. No one in American public life has greater personal or political standing to argue against the use of abusive interrogation techniques, and McCain has done so, at times powerfully, and almost without political support.

But in the middle of last fall’s election campaign, McCain accepted a messy compromise in the form of a Bush-backed bill, the Military Commissions Act, that would prevent foreign terrorist suspects held by the military from challenging their imprisonment through habeas corpus petitions in federal courts. Many legal scholars and at least one prominent Republican senator—Arlen Specter, of Pennsylvania, who voted for the bill anyway, saying the Supreme Court would eventually clean it up—believe the measure is patently unconstitutional. As enacted, it set up a system to detain, question, and try suspected foreign terrorists before military judges, with only the most limited oversight by federal courts.

Many had expected McCain to put up a stronger fight, even dig in his heels. When the Abu Ghraib prison-abuse scandal broke, in early 2004, McCain had exorciated Donald Rumsfeld at a Senate hearing for his inability to concisely state the chain of command over the interrogations at Abu Ghraib—and thus to accept his own, ultimate responsibility as secretary of defense. But as McCain’s election-year rapprochement with George Bush deepened, McCain did not press for the creation of an independent commission to investigate the abuses.

In 2005, McCain led a rebellion in the Senate that forced the Bush administration to accept an amendment banning “cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment” of all prisoners in American custody. But when does treatment cross the threshold into the forbidden zone? The McCain amendment relied on an American constitutional standard of conduct that “shocks the conscience,” one that is open to some interpretation and legal dispute. (Shocks whose conscience?) But the amendment was not being passed in a vacuum—the United States, after all, is also a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, whose Common Article Three bars “outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.” So whatever protections the McCain amendment offered prisoners in American custody, Geneva could be seen as providing more, though the Bush administration was contending Geneva did not apply to what it called unlawful enemy combatants. Then, last summer, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* that Common Article Three applied to all aspects of the conflict with al-Qaeda, and to all prisoners in American custody.

This was a setback for the Bush administration, which wanted as much leeway as possible in its interrogation of prisoners. But the administration saw a way out. Why not enact legislation that interpreted Common Article Three’s “outrages upon personal dignity” as being defined by the words of the McCain amendment itself? On the surface, the move seemed almost tautological. But the consequence was in fact profound: remember, the McCain amendment was open to considerable interpretation, so if the Geneva Conventions were defined as its equivalent, they would be newly open to reinterpretation, too. The administration was proposing a legal flip. For half a century, the Geneva Conventions had been a powerful umbrella, sheltering all measures governing treatment of prisoners, including the McCain amendment. By itself, the McCain amendment would be a meager substitute.

For about 10 days in September, McCain went into full battle mode, joined by his Senate colleagues John Warner, of Virginia, and Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, fellow veterans and experts on military policy. His rebellion threatened to deprive the White House of what it saw as a potent piece of election-year legislation, one that would remind voters of the administration’s determination to spare nothing in its prosecution of the war on terror. McCain was unmoved.

“We’ve faced terrible enemies before, but the United States has always been better than our enemies,” he told a crowd at a New Hampshire house party during the height of the controversy.

McCain also knows, better than anyone else, how often torture fails to extract reliable information. After his repeated beatings in North Vietnam, he wrote, he realized that “every man has his breaking point. I had reached mine.” He gave his captors a confession under duress, referring to the “deeds of an air pirate,” a statement for which he finds it hard to forgive himself to this day. But when the North Vietnamese asked for the names of his flight squadron, McCain recited the names of the Green Bay Packers’ offensive line, knowing that false information would be sufficient to suspend the abuse.

McCain ultimately forced the administration to back down from its effort to slip out from under the plain words of the Geneva Conventions. But the final bill, which came to the floor last September, six weeks before the midterm elections, contained many other objectionable provisions, some of them grave, such as the ban on habeas corpus petitions. A person familiar with McCain’s thinking acknowledged that he had chosen not to take a stand on the question of habeas corpus rights—that
John McCain

is, the right of prisoners to contest their confinement in a civilian court—and that he was surprised by the furor the issue had generated. McCain ended up in a lose-lose situation: being castigated by much of the press and the legal community for being soft on habeas corpus, even as the Republican base went after him for his hard-line support of the Geneva Conventions. His office phones were virtually shut down by callers protesting his resistance to the White House's original bill, and conservative talk-radio hosts inveighed against him.

Torie Clarke, who has often appeared on conservative talk radio on behalf of one Republican cause or another, says that the basic attitude of the hosts toward McCain is one of watchful wariness. They would tell her, off the air, "We're being nice to McCain now because he's being nice to the president. But we haven't forgiven him."

Tom Malinowski, Washington advocacy director for Human Rights Watch, who worked intensively with McCain and his staff during the drafting of the final 2006 legislation, says, "It's a cloudy bill and he knows it. I'm not a huge fan of what happened in the end, but I do think he did lay everything on the line to prevent the administration from redefining the Geneva Conventions, and he succeeded. The problem was that once he succeeded he was no longer willing or able to essentially throw his body in front of this train over other issues—like habeas corpus. "He did not have as much support from other senators on those issues," Malinowski added. "He would have been essentially all alone in the room."

And, yet, "alone in the room" is precisely what McCain has always insisted a president must be prepared to be. In the 1999 speech announcing his first presidential campaign, there was a dark and brooding passage that some advisers tried to get him to remove, on the ground that it was not in keeping with the upbeat tone of such an occasion. "When a president makes life and death decisions," McCain said then, "he should draw strength and wisdom from broad and deep experience with the reasons for and the risks of committing our children to our defense. For no matter how many others are involved in the decision, the president is a lonely man in a dark room when the casualty reports come in."

Can God Rescue Iraq?

On a mid-October morning President Bush signed the final bill on the handling of detainee interrogations and trials. John McCain skipped the ceremony and instead got back on the campaign trail, finding himself in a meeting room at the Milwaukee Athletic Club. By his own description he was "depressed." His beloved Arizona Cardinals had lost the night before, in a game he stayed up too late watching; the Republicans' prospects in the midterms were getting dimmer by the minute; and his audience of white-haired, ruddy-faced, blue-suited businessmen was begging him for wisdom about the Iraq war, which McCain has supported unwaveringly from the beginning, even as he has offered frequent, pointed, and well-informed criticism of its conduct by Rumsfeld and others. The Iraq war is a huge albatross for McCain, and it is by no means clear that he will be anything close to free of it by the time the presidential campaign begins in earnest. Asked whether, knowing all that is known now (no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, no effective Iraqi army), McCain would have still supported the invasion, his aides say he doesn't view the question in such simple terms. Long before the war, they say, McCain believed that the status quo in Iraqi-American relations was unsustainable. Support for international sanctions against Saddam was collapsing. American pilots faced frequent attack in their overflights of the country to enforce the no-fly zones. And episodic internal Iraqi resistance against Saddam ended in crushing repression from Baghdad. "He stands by his support for doing something," one aide said. But the aide went on to emphasize that, from the summer of 2003 on, McCain had been an aggressive advocate of sending more troops to keep the country from spiraling into insurgency or civil war. McCain had also been, more generally, an outspoken critic of the administration's conduct of the war. If the situation continues to worsen, this aide said, and the Bush administration continues to make "wrong choices," the reality could change. "If you knew we were going to lose, would you still be for it?" the aide asked. "That's a different hypothetical question, that he doesn't have to answer yet." But McCain does have to answer the question: What do we do now? His own short-term prescription—more troops to stabilize the country, if that is even possible—has little public support. "The Iraq situation looks like we're in a quagmire," one man in Milwaukee says. Another adds, "It seems to be tipping." A third asks, "What should the president be doing differently?"

McCain is subdued. Like the rest of official Washington, he has been waiting for the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, the bipartisan commission on Iraq led by former secretary of state James Baker and former representative Lee Hamilton. He hopes the commission will point the way to some promising new direction, and he knows that, whatever the wise men say, he must refine his own approach to the war. But his remarks this morning are unimpressed, even vapid. "The next few months will be critical," he tells the businessmen, his critical faculties not as acute as they had been with me just a month earlier, in private, when he said, "A lot of people tell me that the next four months or so are critical... but I'd like to say that, 10 years ago, everyone said the next six months would be critical."

Finally, a questioner lays it all on the line: "The war's the big issue," he says, adding, "Some kind of disengagement—it's going to have to happen. It's a big issue for you, for the party, in 24 months. It's not that long a time. McCain replies, "I do believe this issue is going to be around in 2008. I think it's going to be even tougher."

On the way to our next stop, McCain teases me. "It's just so hard for me to contemplate failure that I can't make the next step." A that afternoon, at a roundtable with moderate Republicans in Appleton, McCain gets teed up with a woman who says that her grandchildren and granddaughter have served in Iraq and that things there are going better than they are in America media say.

The situation is not improving," McCain says shortly. "There's no bias reporting the number of casualties."

A week after the November elections, we went to have another conversation with McCain, in his Senate office. I pressed him on the war. He maintained that deploying even more American troops was "the only viable option," but added, "There are no good options from where we are today."

He went on: "My difference with these people who are saying, 'Threaten the Iraqis with leaving and then they'll do more'—that assumes they can or will do more. And there's no way that you're going to have any kind of stability without security. Political progress cannot take place unless you have the fundamental elements of a security situation. So, do we know it would be a tremendous strain on the army and Marine Corps? Absolutely. But saw the kind of impact of a broken army, a defeated army and Marine Corps, after Vietnam. And I'd much rather have 'em take a strain and have some success than be defeated."

He ticked off, and dismissed, other possible options.

"I know of no expert who believes there'd be anything but an enormous amount of bloodshed if you tried to divide them up into three states," he said of an idea that has been occasionally floated. "Every partition in history has been a bloody mess. Removal into enclaves? We're supposed to have our military enclaves while Al Jazeera is broadcasting images of people who've helped Americans being beheaded in the street in Baghdad! I don't think so. A withdrawal to bases outside of Iraq, and go in if needed? How do we get in? You fly in in helicopters? Is

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at how you do it? Right now, a good portion of the military over there is used up or committed to just maintaining the supply chain. So, suppose there’s an outbreak in amiodarone, and we’re supposed to go get it under control? How do you do that? It’s just most nonsensical. Look what it took to our initial invasion going.

McCain says he understands how little support there would be for more ops. “I read the polls all the time. But does at mean I’m not going to do what is morally right? I look you straight in the eye, my friend, and tell you: I want to be president of the United States. I don’t want to be president of the United States so badly that I’m going to do something that I know is not right for the security of this nation and the young men and women that are defending it. So, if this position makes me viewed as too militaristic, or realist, or whatever it is, I will more than apply take those political consequences, because I’ll sleep a hell of a lot better.”

The report of the Iraq Study Group, issued in early December, has done little to alter McCain’s thinking. In public hearings he described aspects of the report’s approach as “dispiriting.” He disagrees robustly with the dismissal of a significant troop increase. He is concerned about the prospect of embedding more American troops with Iraqi forces—which are deeply involved in sectarian violence—even as American combat brigades protect them are drawn down. He is skeptical about bringing Iran and Syria into the conversation, and suspicious of the quick proxys that this might entail. Clearly McCain will not be using the Iraq Study Group report as a blueprint or as political cover. On trip to Iraq in December, McCain reiterated his call for more U.S. troops.

When I asked how history will judge George Bush, McCain answered immediately, “I think it depends on the outcome of the Iraq war.” It goes without saying that his own shot at the White House—and his tenure as president if he runs and wins—will well depend on the very same thing.

The “Better Angels” and the Rat

The enduring question about John McCain is what, finally, he is willing to do to win. His favorite novel is For Whom the Bell Tolls, Hemingway’s story of an idealistic American, Robert Jordan, who goes to fight for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. Jordan is willing to risk his life but never his honor, and his dying meditation, that “the world is a fine place and worth the fighting for,” gave McCain’s second memoir its title.

But these days, McCain often seems to think and behave like the central character of a more contemporary political novel. Joe Klein’s Primary Colors, in which Governor Jack Stanton, Klein’s talented but flawed Clinton-esque hero, begs an aide disillusioned by his compromises to stick with him. “You don’t think Abraham Lincoln was a whore before he was a president?”, Stanton asks. He took to don his little stories and smile his shit-eating, backcountry grin. He did it all just so he’d get the opportunity, one day, to stand in front of the nation and appeal to “the better angels of our nature.” That’s when the bullshit stops. And that’s what this is all about.

McCain can be cold-eyed. Torie Clarke recalls how she once played a game with him in which he had to name his favorite animal. His favorite animal, he said, was the rat, “because they’re cunning and they eat well.” But McCain also holds a far loftier view of himself and his obligations than most politicians would dream of articulating. He likes not only to be liked, but to be perceived as a man of high principle.

I asked him once what standard of behavior he should be held to, the “normal” politician’s or his own. “Well, I hope you’ll hold me to no standard,” he joked, before saying he believes that much of the press—and, by extension, the public—will say, “McCain, we like him, we think he’s a good guy, we think he’s honest, but we’d better make sure that we give him a very thorough scrubbing.”

At the freshman convocation at Boston College this fall, McCain concluded his talk with a powerful warning about the costs of compromising one’s highest ideals.

“Very far from here and long ago, I served with men of extraordinary character, honorable men, strong, principled, wise, compassionate, and loving men.” McCain told the students. “Better men than I, in more ways than I can number. Some of them were beaten terribly, and worse. Some were killed…. Most often, they were tortured to compel them to make statements criticizing our country and the cause we had been asked to serve. Many times, their captors would briefly suspend the torture and try to persuade them to make a statement by promising that no one would hear what they said, or know that they had sacrificed their convictions. Just say it and we will spare you any more pain, they promised, and no one, no one, will know. But the men I had the honor of serving with always had the same response. ‘I will know. I will know.’

“I wish that you always hear the voice in your own heart, when you face hard decisions in your life, to hear it say to you, again and again, until it drowns out every other thought: ‘I will know. I will know. I will know.’

McCain’s own compromises in pursuit of the presidency may be necessary, even justified. And they may, in fact, pave his way to victory in the Republican primaries, and perhaps to the White House itself. But even if no one calls him out, and the public plays along, McCain may pay an awful price. Because, whatever happens, he will know. He will know. He will know.”

Conrad Black

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process, Black had to overcome tremendous insecurity. He has a child-like hunger that cannot be sated,” Stewart says. “He is driven by the need to be somebody, to be noticed, that is beyond the norm. He has a totally thin ear when it comes to his P.R. persona.”

Before Black was ousted as C.E.O. of Hollinger, in November 2003, he seemed to have acquired all the accoutrements of material success—residences in London, Toronto, and Palm Beach; two apartments in New York (one for servants); and two private jets. As Black’s strikingly beautiful and strikingly controversial second wife, Barbara Amiel, once put it, “It is always best to have two planes, because however well one plans ahead, one always finds one is on the wrong continent.”

Black is Amiel’s fourth husband. A fearless right-wing journalist and avid Zionist, she also served on Hollinger’s board and held the title of “vice president, editorial” at the Chicago Sun-Times, where between 1998 and 2003 she earned $1.3 million for producing a few columns and occasionally criticizing the paper. A former girlfriend of British book publisher Lord Weidenfeld and screenwriter William Goldman (Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, All the President’s Men), among others. Amiel at 39 wrote an autobiography detailing her hardscrabble youth in Canada and her former addiction to the antidepressant Elavil. Canadian gold tycoon Peter Munk, who once served on the board of Hollinger Inc., compares Amiel to the late Pamela Harriman in her ability to seduce men: “Pamela had family heritage, of course, and Barbara had brains. She had to make up for the heritage in other ways.”

Four years older than Black, Amiel was a top columnist for the London Times—fiercely opinionated, tightly wound, extremely well constructed, and just as interested in power.
Conrad Black

and influence as Black. She was a true femme fatale, and Black was swept away. When they married, in 1992, Vanity Fair chronicled their honeymoon in Maine, where David Rockefeller lent them his cabin, and the dinner thrown for them by the onetime doyenne of New York society Brooke Astor.

They became “London’s most glamorous power couple,” as the weekly Spectator later put it, known for attracting everyone who was anyone to their annual summer cocktail party and lavish Christmas party at Cotesmore Gardens, their 12,000-square-foot, 11-bedroom manse, in the Kensington section of London. Black rode around the city in a restored Rolls-Royce, cultivated Margaret Thatcher, and had Tony Blair speak at one of his advisory-board dinners. It appeared that all of Black’s dreams had come true, particularly once he was named to the House of Lords. “That meant a lot to him,” says London society figure David Metcalfe. “He could speak in the House of Lords as a way to hold forth on a bigger platform to address various subjects on which he’d be an authority. That’s different than talking to yourself in the bathroom.”

But the old hunger for more never left Black, and one of the most common theories for why he finds himself in such a pickel today is the influence of the bewitching Lady Black. “She’s part of what I call “the distraction,”’ Jeremy Deedes, the former chief executive of the Telegraph, tells me. “Barbara is a five-star girl, and she needs five-star maintenance. He was willing to do whatever she wanted, it would appear.” Deedes adds, “Barbara ruffled feathers with her views. ‘I think I better ask the little woman,’ he would say when certain subjects came up. I think she was giving orders.” According to Con Coughlin, the former executive editor of The Sunday Telegraph and now executive foreign editor for The Daily Telegraph, “The same people who were briefing Judy Miller and The New York Times were briefing The Daily Telegraph—all of that [Iraqi politician Ahmad Chalabi] nonsense was being reflected through Barbara.”

Charles Moore, a former editor of The Daily Telegraph, says, “She gave him a better understanding of journalism and supported us. What I hadn’t bargained for was her trying to influence the paper regarding individuals. It was surprising. She led him away from the company of journalists to the company of the super-rich.” Peter Munk notes, “Conrad is a starfucker—has been all his life. He got turned on physically by fame or prominence.” Before Barbara, according to Moore, an ideal evening for Black would have been dinner with “former secretary of state Henry] Kissinger, [journalist William F.] Buckley, some British columnist, Margaret Thatcher, [Iraq-war conceptualizer] Richard Perle.” Within a few years, however, according to Moore, favored guests included Donald Trump, Princess Michael of Kent, philanthropists Lily Safra and Jayne Wrightsman, “café society, Fergie, people you didn’t think of with, Joan Collins. He did want society’s acceptance. I could never quite figure out whose.”

Certainly, Hollinger International’s board, on which Barbara served, was rife with clue. Its members, some of whom were paid as much as $25,000 per meeting plus annual fees, included—in addition to Kissinger, Weidenfeld, and Perle—Marie-Josée Kravis, president of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and wife of business mogul Henry Kravis; former Illinois governor “Big Jim” Thompson; Richard Burt, former ambassador to Germany; Robert Strauss, former ambassador to the Soviet Union and former chair of the Democratic Party; Leslie Wexner, founder of the Limited; Alfred Tauman, former head of Sotheby’s, who served a 10-month jail term for price-fixing; and Dwayne Andreas, the former chair of Archer Daniels Midland, which paid a $100 million fine for price-fixing, and whose son, an executive of the company, went to jail.

Hollinger’s international advisory commission, handpicked by Black, a largely conservative enclave of mighty has-beens with more prestige than power, included Thatch- er, former French president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, former Israeli president Chaim Herzog, former secretary-general of NATO Lord Carrington, the late Fiat chairman Gian- ni Agnelli, former national-security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, and journalists Buckley and George Will, both of whom wrote favorably about Black without disclosing that they each received about $25,000 annually from Hollinger. This group would gather to dine and discuss world affairs while Lord Black showed off his photographic memory and his vast knowledge of history. (And he did all the serving himself.) Shareholders paid in excess of $1 million in expenses for the advisory commission alone.

Today, Hollinger International’s board stands accused of having drunk to much from the wizard’s poisoned chalice, approving the transfer of hundreds of millions of dollars that are alleged to have gone into Black’s and his cronies’ pockets instead of into dividends. The board routinely acted on the recommendation of the audit committee, whose members, Big Jim Thompson, Marie-Josée Kravis, Richard Burt, and Richard Perle, were at one point served by the Securities and Exchange Commission (S.E.C.) with Wells Notices—warnings that if they could not explain their behavior to the government’s satisfaction they could be permanently barred from serving on the board of publicly listed companies. (The S.E.C. has since dropped its probe into the former directors.) The board has also been excoriated by an investigative special committee within Hollinger International, a committee the board itself was forced to form in 20 in the wake of shareholders’ complaints, a scathing, 513-page report to the S.E.C., special committee chronicles in painstaking detail the alleged wrongdoing, going so far as to accuse Black of presiding over a “corporate kleptocracy.” The report cites the audit committee dozens of times for being “inept and ineffective” and for “its inexplicable and nearly complete lack of initiative, diligence, or independent thought.”

Thus, not only is Black facing serious financial trouble, but a number of the power figures brought onto his board are facing shame and possible ruin. “When you pack the board with people who don’t know the difference between business and ballet,” a big-time Washington lobbyist tells me, “when you have a phon board, part of the world—the social world thinks it’s great. The financial world smells rat.” Former S.E.C. chairman Richard Breeden, counsel to the special committee, who supervised the drafting of the report, adds, “Often, politicians and former public officials make terrible board members. There are certain things absolutely not done in business and politicians frequently don’t know that. Edward Greenspan, Black’s Canadian lawyer and his chief legal counsel, scoffs at this notion. “Just because they are luminaries does not mean they are not financially astute,” he says. “Kissinger was almost chairman of the board of the world.”

Tory, an international law firm, was accused of conflict of interest for representing both Hollinger Inc. and Hollinger International, and for standing by while funds were diverted to Black. It has settled for $30 million. So far, KPMG, Hollinger’s longtime auditing and accounting firm, though under fire for illegal tax shelters elsewhere, has been able to dodge a very big bullet. In the face of numerous alleged felonies by Black and the others, Hollinger International has decided not to sue KPMG, feeling that it was more important to bring its filings up to date with the S.E.C., which could be done only with the accounting firm’s help, than to go after it. One of the lawyers suing Black says, “The entire loss could have been avoided if the auditors had said something.” Interestingly,
edean, the special committee's chair, was sequentially named as a special monitor to address KPMG's legal woes.) Today, both Toerys and KPMG are slated to be witnesses for the prosecution.

Conrad Black's defense will doubtless lay heavily on the premise that the board, as well as the experts at Toerys and KPMG, knew exactly what they were doing every time they said yes to him—approving retroactively the purchase of $8 million worth of Franklin Roosevelt's papers. One board insider claimed to me that they had no idea at the time that Black had been writing a book about Roosevelt. The board also approved more than $200 million in excessive management fees paid to Axelton, a holding company owned by Jack and his associates, which once controlled Hollinger Inc.

To prove Black guilty, the prosecution will have to show that he lied to the board, and therefor that—since Hollinger's lawyers and editors raised no objections—the sophisticated board members were played for fools. It will be fascinating if Richard Perle, who the special committee says profited enormously from his service on the board, and Marieët Kravis, who did not, take the witness stand, and knowing that their statements could be used against them in ensuing civil suits, rich require a lower burden of proof.

What Is Black Living On? In Chicago in December 2005, when U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald first indicted Jack and four others, Black entered the courtroom slowly and ceremoniously, slithering the toe of his first shoe and then the other, almost as if he were still wearing his ermine-trimmed cape from the House of Lords. Tall, silver-haired, and commanding, he displayed a slight smirk, as if to say, "I'm putting up with this charade. For now."

Black glared at those of us in the press warily, though he had made his fortune in journalism, he once characterized investigative reporters as "snagging masses of jackals." He is referred to his enemies as "pygmies."

Bail had been set at $20 million. Among the lawyers Black has retained since 2003 are David Boies and John Warden, who faced each other in the Microsoft anti-trust case, Brendan Sullivan, who defended Oliver North in the Iran-contra scandal; and Greg Craig, Sullivan's colleague at Williams & Connolly, who has represented Bill Clinton, U.S. secretary-general of Kofi Annan, and Elán González, the sixty-year-old Cuban refugee. In October 2005, Craig filed a suit contesting the F.B.I.'s interrupting the closing of the sale of Black's New York apartment and seizing the $8.9 million purchase check, thereby depriving Sotheby's real-estate brokers of their commission (which in turn generated a suit against Black brought by Sotheby's) and Williams & Connolly of $6.8 million it was owed in legal fees. The apartment check was used by the government to help guarantee Black's bail: his Palm Beach estate, which has been on and off the market, is guaranteed the rest. To complicate matters further, the Canadian government already had a lien on the Palm Beach property as part of its $900 million tax dispute with Hollinger Inc. and Black.

A question of interest to everyone is: What is Black living on? A project manager at Black's Palm Beach house tells me that once, several months ago, he received a call from the I.R.S., the F.B.I., and the U.S. Postal Service—all on the line simultaneously—demanding information about whether company money was used to pay for renovations. In June 2006, Black made a jaw-dropping donation of $450,000 to the Canadian Opera Company from his family's foundation, ultimately setting off a series of legal fireworks over how much money Black really had and how much he should be allowed to spend. When judge Amy St. Eve found out that the Blacks were going through $200,000 a month despite having no apparent income, she wanted to know, "Where's the money coming from?"

So did multiple jurisdictions on both sides of the Canadian border, all of whom are coveting the same property. Documents disclosed that Barbara Amiel had lent her husband at least $2 million, but the money's provenance was murky. St. Eve raised the bail to $21 million. Meanwhile, Fitzgerald in August brought additional charges of tax evasion. Within days a Canadian court froze all of Black's assets worldwide because of a $700 million amended lawsuit by Hollinger Inc., and the Blacks were put on a strict allowance of about $20,000 a month each. The assets were unfrozen after Black's attorneys negotiated a secret arrangement in Ontario. Recently, three of Black's co-defendants have filed a motion to separate their trials from his. The legal plot developments become more tortuous with each passing day, and there is a point when the only sane response is to call it a complicated mess, and move on.

The criminal trial is scheduled to begin in March at the earliest, and the court has ruled that until then all discovery-related civil actions, including defamation suits Black has brought against Henry Kissinger, other members of the board, and Richard Breeden, must be halted so as not to interfere with the criminal case. (In his multi-billion-dollar defamation suits against Breeden, the special committee, and others, Black castigates them for turning him into a "social leper" and "loathsome laughing-stock.") In the meantime, prosecutors must go over more than a million documents. They will be attempting to prove that Black and others pocketed more than $80 million for agreements—allegedly made by misleading the board or without board authorization at all—that they would not compete with community newspapers they had just sold to a Canadian company called CanWest for $2.1 billion. Non-compete agreements are common, but usually the compensation goes to the company, not to individuals. In Canada, non-compete agreements are not taxable, whereas if these amounts had been labeled as bonuses they would have been.

In addition, Patrick Fitzgerald has brought charges against Black for having the company pay for a portion of his wife's $62,870 60th-birthday party, at La Grenouille, in New York; for allegedly undervaluing the price of the New York apartment he had bought from the company; and for using the company jet for a vacation on Bora-Bora, at a cost of $530,000. Black is already in a vulnerable position with the S.E.C., owing to a 1982 consent decree he has been under for questionable dealing in the purchase of a stake in a Cleveland mining company. Therefore, the lawyer mounting his defense cannot expect to have an easy time.

"Fast Eddie" for the Defense

Edward Greenspan greets me in his Toronto office on a Saturday morning, formally attired in a gray pin-striped suit and clutching three pages of single-spaced typed notes of points he wishes to make regarding his client Lord Black. Greenspan is 62 and has a pale face and wavy hair. This is not Enron or WorldCom, where investors lost life savings, he emphasizes, but mostly rich institutional investors griping about share price. Sitting at an antique desk next to a tank of tropical fish, he quickly warms to his subject. In the Canadian bar, Greenspan is known as "Fast Eddie," someone you go to when almost all is lost, someone who thrives on deadlines. He has never tried a case in the United States, but he has a special waiver for this one. He has said he hopes to drop dead on a courtroom floor someday, right after the foreman says, "Not guilty," and the Black case is his big chance to show off in a high-profile U.S. federal court. In a TV documentary about him, Greenspan declares, "I love to cross-examine. I don't stop when I have somebody on their knees—I won't stop!"

These days he has a fixation about taking down Breeden, who chaired the special investigation. "When you're on what you believe to be the moral high ground, thinking seems to go out the window," Greenspan says of Breeden, who, he promises, will be slapped with a billion-dollar libel suit as soon as Black is found not guilty. "He went hell-bent for leather in terms of com-
Conrad Black

ing after Conrad Black, who in a bunch of e-mails that have been made public has called Breeden a fascist and a crook. So that has obviously upset him, the sensitive Mr. Breeden, and zealots can be very dangerous and use expressions like "corporate kleptocracy."

Greenspan blames Breeden especially for the high bail Black had to meet, and says Breeden is trying to bankrupt his client. "Breeden, the son of a bitch, made a suggestion that Conrad Black was going to take the money and run," Greenspan says. "He created that hysteria. It is so unbelievably wrong. Anyone who knows Conrad has always understood he will stay for any fight, especially one involving himself and his reputation." He adds, "Breeden is the one that yelled, and by yelling caused the avalanche to start." Greenspan assures me that Black has never once mentioned anything other than battling to a full victory. When I later repeat Greenspan's remarks to Breeden, he tells me, "I hope you laughed." And he goes on, "An underlying sense I read into Conrad's attitude is that these laws are quaint restraints on people who don't have the vision to disregard them."

I had spoken to Greenspan before Black so fervently decided to testify on his own behalf. Clearly Black's testimony was a delicate subject, and the only point where I found Greenspan at a loss for words. When I asked him if Black would take the stand, there was a long pause and then: "I'll leave that alone." In their award-winning 2004 book, Wrong Way: The Fall of Conrad Black, Jacqui McNish and Sinclair Stewart report that Greenspan has made a deal with Black that at every point Black, who is known for his rococo vocabulary, uses big words in the courtroom he will have to pay Greenspan—$50 for five-syllable words, $40 for four-syllable, $30 for three. "He talks like that when his shoes are off," Greenspan informs me. "But also something goes with those words. There is an appearance of a pompous arrogance."

Black took the Fifth Amendment in front of the S.E.C., in 2003, and many who saw him on the stand in another case, in Delaware, in 2004, after a lot of preparation with his expensive Sullivan & Cromwell attorneys, agreed that words failed him before corporate judge Leo Strine. In this case, Black was accused of trying to re-write the company's bylaws, refusing to abide by a re-structuring agreement he had signed, and going behind the back of the board to try to sell off the London Telegraph to his own advantage. Strine issued a 134-page decision saying he had found Black "evasive and unreliable. His explanations of key events and of his own motivations do not have the ring of truth."

Greenspan admits that "that was a very serious turning point" in how Black was viewed. If Black bombed before an erudite judge in Delaware, what about tough Chicago, where juries, one native tells me, "resemble the riders on a Chicago Transit bus. Chicago is eth- nic; it's Irish, not English."

Greenspan has chosen a colorful veteran Chicago defense attorney to be at his side during the trial, another Fast Eddy—Edward Genson, who, because of a neuromuscular condition, comes to court on an electric scooter. Upon news of his appointment, he was quoted in the Chicago papers as saying, "I've never represented a Lord." That is an understatement. "Many of Eddie's people are Mobbed-up, crooked people," says well-known Chicago broadcaster and columnist Carol Marin. His last celebrity client was rhythm-and-blues singer R. Kelly, whom he defended against kiddie-porn charges.

Greenspan, who never betrays a trace of doubt about getting Black off, tells me, "I have found no smoking gun." I wonder, though, what he considers David Radler. On September 20, 2005, Radler, the onetime chief operating officer of Hollinger and publisher of the Chicago Sun-Times, and Conrad Black's closest business confidant and partner for 36 years, struck a plea bargain with Fitzgerald's office and agreed to testify against Black.

**Attack of the Germaphobe**

In his 1993 autobiography, A Life in Progress, Conrad Black mentions David Radler 28 times. They met in 1969 as young conservative activists, and along with another young conservative, Peter White, they began buying Canadian newspapers. Radler quickly established himself with newspaper staffs as a cost-controlling, union-hating "human chain saw." One reporter at the first paper the three men bought, the Sherbrooke Record, was fined two cents by Radler (as Black writes in A Life in Progress) "for wasting a sheet of paper" he had written his grievances on. The team seemed to have a winning formula. In Black's words, "None of us could foresee how far this interesting partnership would lead, but when in less than two years, we started to rack up annual profits at a rate of over $150,000, we determined to expand in the newspaper business." Black and Radler would take their company public in 1994.

For more than 13 years beginning in 1970, Black suffered paralyzing anxiety attacks, which caused him to go everywhere with a vomit bag in one pocket and Tums in another, but that did not keep him from traveling the world while Radler stayed home and minded the store. On the side, Radler actually always did run a store; in the 60s it was a native-handicrafts shop in Montreal, and later he had a jewelry business. "Black spent every dime he ever had. Radler still has his first nickel," says P. Healy, the former vice president of investigations for Hollinger International. Headquarters for Black was an elegant Greek Revival building at 10 Toronto Street, in Toronto. Radler moved to Vancouver, Brit Columbia, where he still lives, and ran the far-flung interests from a nondescript building with a cardboard sign. Ironically, until recently they continued to own a number of community newspapers together, though they do not speak. Ken Whyte told me last winter, when Black and Radler had not yet begun to dissolve their business partnership that people should not think Black is broke. "They have quite a profitable little company that makes at least $20 million a year. It's got to be worth at least $100 to $200 million. How much these assets are really worth, as the nature of the Black-Radler relationship will clearly become an issue at the trial.

Black and Radler constructed their empire with a mind-boggling complexity of financial instruments that many people now believe threw off inquiring journalists, board members, and shareholders. They became known for their acumen, their photographic memories, and their ability to fight on several financial fronts at once—swooping in to buy properties such as the London Telegraph at distressed prices and turning profit within a few years. In 1986, the year they bought the Telegraph, they were joined by J. A. "Jack" Boultbee. Black's former personal-tax lawyer, now also under indictment, who became the executive vice president of Hollinger. He is "so bright as to be unfruit for human consumption," Ken Whyte told me. "Conrad has the closest thing to a perfect recall for details of anyone I have ever met, but he still calls on Boultbee when he needs relevant details."

As Black became more flamboyant, spending company money to purchase the antique Rolls-Royce, Radler kept a low profile. "If you come across as having lots of money, he once told a subordinate, "people are going to ask you for something." But Radler uses the second jet—the planes cost Hollinger $2 million over a three-year period—and maintains an apartment at the Four Seasons in Chicago, paid for by the company, while he presided as publisher of the Chicago Sun-Times, from 1995 to 2003.

In a curious way, Radler also mimicked Black's grandiosity but chose to make his name through supporting Jewish causes. He oversaw The Jerusalem Post after Hollinger bought it in 1989, and he used company money to purchase medical equipment for the Herzog Hospital, in Israel. A wing of the hospital was named the Ronan and David Radler Trauma Recovery Unit. Under his direc-
almost every day in almost every way they could devise.... The Special Committee knows of few parallels to Black and Radler's brand of self-righteous, and aggressive looting of Hollinger to the exclusion of all other concerns or interests, and irrespective of whether their actions were remotely fair to shareholders.

Radler declined to be interviewed for this story. He is quoted in McNish and Stewart's book, before his plea agreement. as calling the special committee's report a "highly inaccurate and defamatory diatribe written more like a novel than a serious report," and he notes that Hollinger International's auditors, KPMG, had approved the various transactions that are in question.

In September 2005, Radler's plea bargain was announced. Ken Whyte and other friends of Black's told me that, though there had been a strain between the partners for a couple of years, Radler's betrayal came as a blow to Black. "David was looking at most of his life in jail—seven counts at five years a count—and there was no indication that was the end. And he still may face charges in Canada." John Cruickshank, who worked closely with Radler for three years, tells me. Also, since Radler is "deeply cynical," in Cruickshank's words, "he assumed if he didn't do it, somebody else would do it to him. And he was profoundly scared of jail.

Radler, who is said to be a germaphobe, wouldn't even swim in the Four Seasons pool. How would he survive in prison?

According to numerous attorneys I spoke with, Radler worked out quite a cozy deal with Fitzgerald. He agreed to serve 29 months in jail, and the U.S. government will allow him to serve his time in Canada, where there is an accelerated parole system. Radler must pay a $250,000 fine, and he has already paid back his share—$8.65 million—of the proceeds from the non-compete agreements. His plea bargain will remain contingent on how fully he cooperates with the prosecution. "David Radler will be a devastating witness," former Hollinger executive Paul Healy assures me. "He has a mind like a steel trap, and he never threw away a scrap of paper."

Meanwhile, Edward Greenspan says he cannot wait to have at Radler on the witness stand in order to discern which story is the real one—the one Radler told to the special committee, in which he seems to recall very little, or the one he told to the grand jury. "If he has done something wrong," Black dispassionately told reporters when asked about Radler at his arraignment, "he should have to pay for it." Black can try to distance himself, but Radler's actions must weigh on him heavily. As one of Canada's top political leaders tells me, "The center of everything here is David Radler—his testimony, the perception
Conrad Black

of him, the deal he took upon himself with Fitzgerald, and the cross-examination of him by Edward Greenspan. There in a nutshell is the entire future of Conrad Black.

Rader's testimony could also have an impact on Richard Perle, the only outside member of Hollinger International's three-man executive committee (Black and Rader were the other two) from 1996 to 2003. Except for a few months of that time, Perle also served as the C.E.O. of Hollinger Digital, in what the special committee, which is suing him, calls an obvious conflict of interest. The committee's report accuses Perle of "head-in-the-sand" behavior that breaches a director's duty of good faith and renders him liable for damages under Delaware law. According to the committee, Perle has said he generally did not bother to read the papers that were passed along for him to sign, papers that are alleged to have cost Hollinger millions. Perle was also one of the beneficiaries of an unusual Hollinger Digital bonus plan, which handsomely awarded him and Black and other executives bonuses on investments that paid off, but which made no deductions for investment losses. (Digital's investments generated $68 million in losses from 1996 to 2003.) Perle's total compensation by Hollinger International from 1998 to 2003 was $5.4 million. While serving as chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, Perle also set up Trireme Partners, a venture-capital fund focused on homeland security and defense, and he got a $2.5 million investment from Hollinger for Trireme, which was never reported to the audit committee. Both Black and Kissingler were on Trireme's board. At one point Perle was even charging groceries to Hollinger. Perle chose not to provide a statement for this article, other than to tell me that the special committee's report was "filled with inaccuracies." So far, Perle's legal fees exceed $4 million.

Hero Versus Pariah

If only as insurance against the possibility of conviction, it is not surprising that Lord Black is currently trying to get his Canadian citizenship back, with the help of an immigration lawyer. Should Black be found guilty in an American court and be sentenced to time behind bars, then theoretically he would have to serve his sentence in a tougher, U.S. prison. Canadian immigration experts, however, have stated that in all likelihood nothing will move forward until the criminal charges are dealt with. In any case, many Canadians will never forgive him for renouncing his homeland. Even Greenspan says, "My view is that I would not have done it."

One day last year, I lunchted at the Waspyn Toronto Club, of which Black became a member on his 21st birthday. I was the only woman in the dining room. "They're really snobby," Hal Jackman, a prominent businessman and former lieutenant governor of Ontario, tells me about the members' attitudes toward Black today. "They say, 'We hope Conrad won't embarrass us by coming in.'" Jackman used to be on the Hollinger Inc. board, but he quit, he says, because Black's ego got in the way of sound business decisions and led him to buy properties such as The Jerusalem Post and the now defunct Canadian magazine Saturday Night. He adds, "He is not a natural chief executive; he should be in the academy or in your world." Jackman, who hopes Black's dilemma will help strengthen what he considers the weak securities regulatory system in Canada, echoes what others told me motivated them to serve on Hollinger's board. "Conrad is entertaining, a person of extremes. I said to one guy I know on the board, 'Why are you still hanging around? Nobody ever knows what he's doing." My friend said, "It's better than anything on TV!" Conrad says things like 'The last time I spoke to Shimon Peres ...' He remembers conversations you had three years ago—he knows where all the ships were in [the Battle of] Trafalgar.

"Something I have never seen written about is the pattern in Conrad's life going back to school days," says his boyhood chum John Fraser, master of Massey College, at the University of Toronto. "One day he's a hero, the next a pariah." Fraser mentions the well-known story of Black's being expelled from Upper Canada College, the prestigious boys' school in Toronto, for selling exams. "For a 15-year-old it was a daring caper. He knew what the parents were worth, so he sold them on a rising scale. If you go through how he took over Argus [a major investment company]; the widows of two of its founders endorsed Black initially but then changed their minds and Hanna [the mining company, over which he received the consent decree in 1982], you see the same pattern of daring and maybe overreaching. His creative instincts are for acquisitions, not mergers." The business atmosphere that Black grew up with was fairly lax—Canada is the only Western country except for Bosnia and Herzegovina that still does not have a national S.E.C.—and his company did not go public until 1994. "Conrad was enabled his entire career," Jacquie McNish says, "by shareholders, by the media, by regulators. Many questions were raised about Black's corporate moves for years. The media, as a result of litigation, was gun-shy. Anyone who interfered got served with a lawsuit.

For many young Canadian conservatives, however, Black is a hero, particularly for founding the National Post newspaper in 1998 as a lively, right-leaning antidote to traditional, liberal-dominated press. He raised more than $150 million and sold it in 2002. In an e-mail response to questions I posed, Black said he considers his most significant contributions to journalism to be "resurrecting the Daily Telegraph and making it greatest newspaper franchise in Europe, a founding the National Post and giving Canada an alternative national newspaper that raise the quality of every newspaper I think anything directly to do with."

"He does have some very loyal friends," Rudyard Griffiths, one of the founders of Toronto-based Dominion Institute, tells me. "Conrad—love him or hate him—manages to stir up the debate in the country about what Canada means and where it is going." The younger friends credit him not only with shifting the paradigm of the political debate and helping contribute to the election of a conservative prime minister for the first time in 12 years but also with forcing the competition—The Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star—to get better. Adam Daifallah, 27, who co-authored Rescuing Canada's Right: Blueprint for a Conservative Revolution, tells me "Black made it socially acceptable to be conservative in the media. Before, it was unheard of." Edward Greenspan says that number of law students have volunteered to help him prepare Black's defense and that he began giving them documents to read. "Conrad does not admit he's done anything wrong," Hal Jackman says. "He thinks it will all come out great in the end. He always had a sense of entitlement as a proprietor."

The Cleopatra of Kensington

Ownership of a major conservative daily in London conferred entrance to the be tables and most discriminating salons. Ever since Prince Charles was interested in meeting the new owner of the Telegraph when Blair arrived in 1989, The Prince "was very concerned about his P.R.," says Peter Munk, who introduced them. Black knew every branch, every twig of the Prince's family tree and recited "every ancestor, every battle, according to Munk. "I don't know if Conrad charmed him—he lectured him. Conrad knows everything, and he wanted to make sure Prince Charles understood that." Black arrived in England with his first wife, Shirley, the mother of his three children, who are now in their 20s. By 1991, however, Shirley, who had changed her name to Joanna, was back in Canada. The marriage crumbled when she fell in love with—and later wed—a Catholic priest.

Meanwhile, Barbara Amiel entered the picture. "Conrad was never a sexual being," a longtime acquaintance of his says. "Then he met Barbara. Welcome to the N.F.L!"

Most disconcerting for those who dealt with Barbara were her sudden mood swings.
One day she'd fix you with the big laser aim, the big smile, big charm," a London friend of the Blacks' tells me. "But she tried it on and off. When you got it upon you, it was very bright. When it was not upon you, it was very dark." Charles Moore adds, "One day she is kind, warm, helpful, when she'll turn her head around and barely ok at you. In social relations, she was definitely giving orders to him—it was not the way her around.

Barbara's friends say that she is totally misunderstood. Amiel suffers from an uncommon autoimmune disease called dermatomyositis. According to Dr. Lawrence Tierney, senior editor of Current Medical Diagnosis & Treatment, 2006, "Patients typically are unable to gain appropriate strength, specially in the thighs and upper arms, so mptoms include inability to climb stairs, arm hair, or even rise from a sitting position without help. As it is an inflammatory condition relating to the immune overactivity, persons often feel poorly as well, with fever, fatigue, and inability to concentrate. Treatment includes suppression of immune activity with steroid hormones. These latter are well known to cause a variety of side effects, including central-nervous-system abnormalities simulating various mental illnesses."

In his highly regarded biography, Hades of Black, Richard Siklos reports that Amiel claimed that blood treatments took her out of commission several times a year. People in London and everywhere are very gen to laugh at or dump on rich, powerful, odd-looking women who make the most of their riches and powerful positions," says Hilary Gross, the former literary editor of the Sunday Telegraph and a close friend of Amiel's. "She's a very serious columnist, one serious than many in England. She is very kind to her sister, and she is very good with illness—she certainly knows illness!" he historian Andrew Roberts says. "There are unbelievable buckets of envy. Envy is the definitive characteristic of London newspapers. The Blacks' parties, Roberts tells me, were a heady combination of "goodtingham, beautiful, powerful women, men, and women from—what we'd all do if we were rich enough."

Amiel herself has recently addressed the issue of the burdens of high society, using her column to offer a stirring defense of Marie Antoinette. The pretext was the Sofia coppola movie about the French queen; the actress was obviously her own life. "The one-tal talent all so-called Marie Antoinettes are with the real one," Amiel wrote, "is kindess to the dangers of any social generosity may display." In the same column, she observed that women and men are judged very differently: "This is not gender bias, only recognition that men usually earn, cobble together or steal the money they spend. Women very often don't. They spend the money that some man cobbles or steals for them."

"I don't even know the woman I'm reading about—some dreadful shtarrer," Amiel's friend Leon Freda tells me. The irony, according to Freda, is that Barbara did not really even like the parties, and soon tired of having to tend to the great names and run the grand houses. "I think she's unbelievably shy," Freda says. "She was tortured" many times during those parties and would "disappear down staff stairs hidden in the paneling," taking a glass of vodka with her. "Do you think I can have this [party] without a drink?" she said, and it's the only time she really drank." Another writer, Sarah Sands, paints a different picture, describing her after a party holding court in her boudoir, "where she lay on cushions surrounded by her women friends... Kensington's Cleopatra."

Apparently the grand lifestyle became so overwhelming that, when something did not fit the picture perfectly or became difficult to cope with, it was simply removed. Jack Valenti, the former head of the Motion Picture Association of America, tells me that he is still astonished and hurt at the way he was treated one night at the Blacks': "I was invited for dinner, and called several days ahead to say my plane would be landing at eight P.M. and I would pick up a family friend and come directly to the dinner a little late." When Valenti and his friend arrived, however, they were taken not to the dining room but to a dark waiting room downstairs, where they sat for more than half an hour without even being offered a drink. Only when the dinner was over did Valenti encounter his hosts. "They behaved as if nothing had happened, and made no apologies," his friend says.

Brian Stewart feels that Barbara was not at fault. "He's the one most driven to create this world," Stewart tells me. "The rich-and-famous functions could help his publications—that's the way a publisher should act. I never bought Barbara as the reason for the Versailles-ization of their existence." Rather, according to Stewart, "he is so enamored of Barbara, he loved to show her off. His pride in Barbara is absolutely intense. He found a soul mate."

Whatever their misgivings about Black, almost all of the people I spoke with who had worked for him at the Telegraph agreed with Charles Moore, who considered him a 'fantastic proprietor' because "he liked a good paper." Black loved to discuss world affairs with his editors. "I got into a debate on powerful people, and he always stood up for me and took the flak," says Dominic Lawson, who was the editor of The Sunday Telegraph. "But no matter how well the paper did, the editorial budgets did not increase; in fact, they were cut. "It was slightly soul-destroying," Con Coughlin says. The staff suspected that the National Post, in Canada, was bleeding a lot of the profit, but no one really knew. "Boulbette and Radler were very secretive and not interested in delegating," Jeremy Deedes tells me. "They would only tell other people what they needed to know. It was a completely alien culture."

More than anything, those who worked closely with Black in London came to feel that their boss was not paying enough attention to the business. "There is no question, his eye came off the ball. If I put my finger on when it happened, it was when he started to write the Roosevelt book," says Deedes. Moore agrees: "Conrad became more detached. He had a slight detachment from reality in general. All of these great figures follow their own star, and he'd always done that. But in retrospect I see that Conrad never really had a strategy for his empire. He had tactics," Jeremy Deedes adds, "He had no grand vision. It became largely a game of manipulating money, wheeling and dealing." According to Moore, "Conrad got seduced by all the fun you get by being the owner—he was so interested in politics, meeting famous people, flying all over." The main thing Black seemed to forget was that, after 1994, when the company went public, he was no longer the owner.

The "Holy War" Option

Times have changed in England for Lord and Lady Black since their heyday. When they returned to London in July 2005—after the special-committee report had come out but before Black was indicted—the London papers had a field day. One ran the headline RETURN OF THE PARIAH, and certain doors were closed to them. "I think Conrad feels the Jews and Catholics have been very loyal and the Episcopalians less so," Dominic Lawson says. "The Jews and Catholics are more accustomed to persecution." It was not as if the Blacks were not entertained at all; Lady Annabel Goldsmith, Lord Weidenfeld, Princess Michael of Kent, and Drue Heinz all hosted them. "You don't just turn against friends when adversity hits them," Goldsmith says. However, their once close friends Elton John, Jacob Rothschild, and Lord Weidenfeld all declined to talk to me about the Blacks. Margaret Thatcher has issued a strong statement: "Lady Thatcher always had a good personal relationship with Conrad Black. She does not cut and run just because someone gets into difficulties. Conrad is innocent until proven guilty. Lady Thatcher will let the courts decide."

Apparently Amiel felt the poisoned atmosphere most keenly. "She thinks that had Conrad approached things differently in London this experience in London society would have been a lot different," Ken Whyte
Conrad Black

tells me, "She thinks it's a big mistake to care about how you are received in this circle, because if they notice you care to be accepted, they're sure not to accept you." In David Metcalfe's words, "You entertain a lot, you've got a big flat, you give big dinners, you have lots of money, then it all goes away and so do the people." Amiel may get her revenge, however. She is said to be furiously writing her memoirs.

In any event, London was only one slice of Black's world, and not necessarily the one that mattered most. "I was always puzzled by a real oddity about Conrad," Charles Moore says. "He was indeed very important in London, and he had the capacity to be very important in Washington. What he wanted to be was important in New York. New York is not political, it's financial, and he and Barbara decided to be in the society of quite stupendously rich people."

"No Canadian in history has ever loved America like Conrad," Brian Stewart says. But New York was Black's downfall. There the jury-rigged empire he had constructed to satisfy his need for cash and to service the company's debt began to be scrutinized. Beginning in the mid-90s, the Blacks set out to conquer the Big Apple the way they had conquered London, attempting now to keep up with billionaires instead of millionaires and to penetrate the innermost sanctums of high society. And New Yorkers tripped all over themselves to make the newly minted Lord and Lady Black welcome. Barbara reportedly took her old paramour George Weidenfeld's advice and concentrated on the ladies, particularly Annette de la Renta, the wife of fashion designer Oscar de la Renta, Mercedes Bass, the wife of financier Sid Bass, and Jayne Wrightsman. "Will you take me shopping?" she would ask her fashionable friends. She and her closets were featured in Vogue, while Conrad ingratiated himself with members of the Council on Foreign Relations—a guaranteed stepping-stone to gravitas. In Manhattan's celebrity melting pot, under the patronage of the Kissingers, the Blacks fit right in. "I was present at her 60th birthday," a onetime close friend of the couple's says, "and she had herself seated next to Donald Trump. That told me everything."

Their Park Avenue apartment, bought by the company and now part of the dispute, featured a custom-made steel door between the dining room and the pantry to keep out the kitchen noise, and plaster-of-Paris plates of U.S. presidents on the dining-room walls. Though the Blacks rarely entertained at home, between 1997 and 2003 Hollinger paid $1.4 million in wages to their servants in New York and elsewhere. The Blacks were out every night, and Barbara's women friends often commended on how brave she was to go to all those dinner parties when her illness sometimes made it hard even to get up from the table. "She is making such an effort," they would say. Black dazzled the upper crust with his vast stores of random knowledge, which exerted an unpredictable appeal. "I always look forward to sitting next to him," Judy Taubman, the wife of board member Alfred Taubman, tells me. "He can recite entire chapters of Cardinal Newman's writings."

The Blacks also purchased a 17,000-square-foot mansion in Palm Beach, where they posed for this magazine in the winter of 2003, with Barbara kneeling on the lawn beside the seated press baron. By then, however, the dénouement of their story had been set in motion by Hollinger investors such as Tweedy, Browne, which demanded that the board take action and alerted the S.E.C. The first blow came in October 2001, when Laura Jereski, a former Wall Street Journal reporter working as an analyst for Tweedy, Browne, questioned Hollinger's non-compete payments and exorbitant management fees, and pointed out the coinciding lack of growth in the company's share price. Other institutional investors, such as Cardinal Capital Management, in Connecticut, also expressed concern. Cardinal made the first overture to Herbert Denton, of Providence Capital Inc., an outspoken shareholder activist whose firm uncovered more alleged improprieties by researching Hollinger International's public documents. In the spring of 2003, after getting no satisfactory response from Black nor seeing any action from the board for 19 months, Tweedy, Browne, using Denton's research, filed a 13D complaint with the S.E.C., which included a demand that Hollinger International's board explain the non-compete payments. "What we did was to write a bill of particulars of the depth, frequency, and variety of suspected malfeasances led by the star witness, because 100 percent of the non-competents went to the management and not to the company," Denton says. "We saw $73 million diverted into Conrad's pocket, yet the signature on the contract was the corporation and he signed it as C.E.O." Alarm bells started sounding. "When you join a board, you assume they are not engaging in massive fraud," an insider tells me. "And Conrad was seen as somebody who knew the newspaper business—how to run it and run it properly. The people he had assembled were the people he liked to hang out with—it established a real sense of a certain legitimacy." In addition, Black's overpowering personality seemed to make everyone defer to him, especially in regard to his ultimate control of the company. Because of a dual voting structure of two different classes of shares, Black, who owned 30 percent of Hollinger International's equity, was able to control over 70 percent of the company's voting interests.

He allegedly abused this cushy arrangement by diverting nearly $200 million in excess management fees through his holding company, Ravelston, to his and his associate's own pockets. Someone close to the board told me, "When he listed in the U.S., he wanted to ride up the stock with the shareholders, and he was going to make money and everybody would make money."

In the wake of the 13D filing, however, three new board members were to be installed on the recently formed special committee, and Richard Breeden, who charged $800 an hour, was hired, assisted by a legal team from O'Melveny & Myers. For more than 30 years Black and Radler had gotten their way, Breeden says. "In their career, they had never, ever encountered anyone who would pursue facts until you got to the bottom. It induced great confidence of their part." In October 2003 the investigation turned up the shocking revelation that the specific details of the non-competes had never been disclosed to the board, while other non-competes allegedly had been totally mischaracterized. "Your first instinct is: there has got to be some innocent explanation, because it looks like a crime," one of the investigating team tells me. "I remember sitting in Breeden's office being stunned by what I saw," says Raymond Seitz, former U.S. ambassador to Great Britain and a member of the special committee. "I think they thought they were onto a good thing, a great way to siphon off money."

As the mystery unfolded, Black was given many chances to control the damage, but he refused. Today the fancy New York friends who feted the Blacks back then sit around their dinner tables speculating about what kind of jail sentence he might get, if convicted. But in the beginning even the board, who felt that an accommodation could be made regarding the Roosevelt papers and the jets and that the whole issue would blow over quickly, "He could have settled," a member of the legal team says, "but he wanted to wage a holy war." Breeden tells me that Black could have quickly paid back what he owed, resigned as C.E.O., and remained as chairman, adding, "Would he be where he is today? I wouldn't think so." Robert Pirie, a lawyer and bibliophile who met Black when Pirie was affiliated with the Rothschild banking group and Black was a client, urged him on several occasions to settle, telling him, "These guys are too tough." According to Pirie, Black would say either "I have done nothing wrong—these people are scoundrels" or "Everything is under control." Once, Pirie says, driving back from the Kissingers' country home in Connecticut with Black, he told him, "Conrad, you need a Dutch uncle. I am going to be your Dutch uncle." He basically urged Black to quit suing people. "Even
of you're innocent, it looks foolish. This is a case where you shut up, hunker down, and out a deal." In the summer of 2004, after Black had lost almost everything, Pirie recalls, "we sat in my garden till three A.M., making cigars and drinking brandy, I still couldn't get through." The next day Pirie saw Black in his shirtsleeves on Park Avenue, "looking lost" and trying to hail a cab. For the first time in years Conrad is alone in a street in New York. That to me sums up the collapse of Conrad." Pirie would later tell me, "I find him mystifying. All of his friends—nobody understands why he didn't fix this three years ago. Look, he's not a mass murderer. At this point it's tragic, and a little more tragic because it's of his own making."

The Consolations of History

Today, even the Hollinger name is gone. Black's once powerful newspaper empire is now known as the Sun-Times Media Group Inc. The share price has declined 31 percent in the last six months, and no dividend was issued for the last quarter of 2006. The old Hollinger International and Hollinger Inc. are mired in cannibalistic, internecine lawsuits. Investigators are still trying to ascertain whether Black squirreled money away in foreign places. Black's attorney, Edward Greenspan, says, "We're not hiding assets at all. They have all the information." And he adds, "The person who knows exactly what they're worth is their star witness—David Radler." As for those investors who hoped the indictment would clear the way for the sale of the remaining assets, which so many were confidently predicting a year ago—well, they are still waiting. ("The natives are getting restless," says Chris Browne, of Tweedy, Browne.) Now a self-proclaimed freedom fighter, Black last fall went on the offensive. He began speaking—performing—in public once again, using words like "fissiparous" (another $40 for Greenspan) from the podium and wowing Establishment audiences in Canada who are meant to feel that he is being picked on by Uncle Sam. He and Barbara Amiel both have regular columns, hers in Maclean's magazine, his in the National Post (where his Web biography says that he considers the charges against him "unfounded and scurrilous." and that he "looks forward to a complete acquittal and vindication and the full resumption of his financial career"). Meanwhile, in the U.S., the legal battles continue over who has the right to the Blacks' many acquisitions. The antique Rolls has been auctioned off, but the $2.6 million 26-carat-diamond ring Black bought for his wife soon after receiving an $11 million non-compete payment, in 2000, is the subject of a U.S. restraining order; it is also property, along with other jewelry and antiques, that Canadian litigants want to acquire. Black's attorneys maintain that neither can have the Black diamond, because it belongs to her, not to him. According to the London Daily Mail, Barbara recently went on one of those former-life shopping sprees in Toronto, buying $25,000 worth of clothes, bags, and shoes in a single excursion. The next day, the Daily Mail reported that every bit of it was returned, without a word of explanation.

Conrad Black remains in residence at the Old Family Home, the very place he grew up, behind that weeping-willow tree and under the watchful eye of the faithful Bern. "I have no aspiration to any public life anywhere after repulsing this attempted destruction of me," he wrote in response to a question I had e-mailed. "I will be ready for a quieter life. I would not presume to claim that I confer any importance and benefit on the larger society," other than possibly, to a slight extent, as a historian, and through whatever modest charitable contributions I can make. I will return to the House of Lords, but that is hardly a position of great influence in itself." Conrad Black is now concentrating on writing his next book, about the tragedy of Richard Nixon, another man who didn't understand, until too late.

Demi Moore

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 116 didn't show. If anything, the younger women were a little jawed by Moore. After all, Diaz owed her reported $20 million salary for the picture in no small part to Moore's hard-won paydays almost a decade earlier. And years before Charlie's Angels producer Drew Barrymore started her company, Moore was producing films—Now and Then, G.I. Jane, If These Walls Could Talk, and Austin Powers. Next came a provocative advertising campaign for Versace, and a deal to be the first celebrity face of Helena Rubinstein cosmetics. But only recently has Moore begun taking on substantial film roles, starting with a formidable performance as an alcoholic, over-the-hill singer in Bobby, directed by her former fiancé Emilio Estevez. Moore broke off their engagement in 1987—"It was the most mature step I could have made," she told V.F. in 1991—but they have remained friends ever since.

The Golden Globe-nominated movie, which takes place in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles hours before Robert F. Kennedy's assassination, paired Moore up with another Hollywood grande dame, Sharon Stone. "She has a great deal of subtlety," Stone says of her co-star. "She's at a place in her career where she's just doing the work that's satisfying and fulfilling and interesting to her.... She's really devoted to being her better self." Moore has two films due out this year. The first is Mr. Brooks, with Kevin Costner and William Hurt, which MGM Studios will release on March 23. In what she calls "a twisted, twisted tale," Moore plays an obsessive detective who hunts serial killers. "She understands the camera and how to carry a scene," Costner says of Moore. "She looks beautiful and she's very strong. I found that I liked her personally, too, and that doesn't always happen."

After that comes Flawless, a Pierce Williams Entertainment film, which re-unites Moore and Michael Caine, 23 years after they starred together in the guilty-pleasure sex comedy Blame It on Rio. Moore describes Flawless, directed by Michael Radford (Il Postino), as an "intrigue mystery" set in London in 1960. "I'm playing a very brittle woman. It was an interesting, complex, different character for me, because it was not playing to my youthful side."

When I ask if she enjoys being back in the workforce, Moore admits that it's sometimes a challenge: "It's been more difficult than I thought, just trying to find a groove, looking for interesting characters to play. My criteria is if [the role] terrify me enough, then that's what I should be going after."

One obvious move would be to take a part opposite Kutcher, but even though they both had ensemble roles in Bobby, Moore seems hesitant to pursue a more intimate collaboration. "We've teased each other recently about doing The Graduate on Broadway"—in which the middle-aged Mrs. Robinson seduces college grad Benjamin Braddock—"but, you know, historically, real couples being on-screen together never seems to work," she says. "But a project that we create, that we're maybe more behind-the-scenes? I couldn't think of anything better, because there isn't anybody that I would rather spend my time with." Kutcher already has a reputation as a serious producer. Punk'd is one of MTV's highest-rated shows, and Beauty and the Geek, his oddly endearing reality program, is in its second season. He's CONTINUED ON PAGE 209.
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AROUND THE WORLD, ONE PARTY AT A TIME

February 2007


LOS ANGELES PAGE 206
Tom Ford and friends celebrate at a Beverly Hills hotel.

MIAMI PAGE 207
The international art scene's cognoscenti, in town for Art Basel Miami Beach, dine at the Raleigh Hotel.
Tom Ford hosted a dinner party for 100 close friends at Cut, Wolfgang Puck's new steak house in Beverly Hills. Guests toasted Ford's new fragrance, Black Orchid.

**What**

November 16, 2006.

**Who**

Darren Star, Camilla Belle, Macy Gray, Dennis Miller, Leonard Goldberg, Jim Watt, Adrien Brody, Catherine O'Hara, Alex von Furstenberg, and others.
A dinner table full of Leonidas roses in the penthouse of the Raleigh.

Cocktails and dinner hosted by Leonard Lauder at the Raleigh Hotel, in celebration of Art Basel Miami Beach.

Amy Cappellazzo, Larry Gagosian, Calvin Klein, Brooke de Ocampo, Giuseppe Cipriani, Mary Boone, Bob Colacello, Katherine Ross, Victoria Hopper, and others.
Demi Moore

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 208 CURRENTLY WORKING ON ANOTHER PROJECT WITH HIS PARTNER, JASON GOLDBERG. KUTCHER ALSO HAS A STAKE IN TWO SUCCESSFUL L.A. RESTAURANTS, DOLCE AND GEISHA HOUSE.

Next to motherhood, Moore says, marriage to Kutcher is the best thing that’s ever happened to her. It was also totally unexpected. “I thought it caught us both by surprise, and particularly him,” she says. “He was in this real rise of his career just as we met, which for a young man is prime opportunity for heavy-duty play.” But Kutcher hadn’t come to Hollywood to chase skirts. He grew up in Iowa, the son of two factory workers, and has a twin brother with a mild form of cerebral palsy. Like Moore, he hasn’t had an easy road. “At the risk of sounding really clichéd, he’s really an old soul,” Moore says. “And for us the age was never even a thought, because it was really just like meeting somebody I’ve always known.” Kutcher’s openness to Kabbalah helped things along, and on September 24, 2005, Rabbi Eitan Yardeni married the couple in a Kabbalah ceremony at their Willis attended the wedding, and Demi’s daughters have taken to calling Kutcher “Mom”-for “My Other Dad.” “We’re a family, just in a different form,” Moore says. “Even prior to meeting Ashton, I adopted the perception about Bruce and I and the children that we will always be a family, and that we can carry the love that we shared into this different form and have something far more genuine than where it was starting to go.” The husband-and-wife dynamic between Willis and her had reached a stage where it was “not what I want to teach my girls, because that’s what they will go out and replicate.”

Rumer, Scout, and Tallulah are remarkably grounded and well mannered, but Moore is the first to admit that parenting can be a daunting challenge. “I say to Rumer all the time, ‘Bear with me,’ and I’m sorry you’re my guinea pig,” because I’ve never been right in this place before. This is my first time.” Now that her daughters are approaching young adulthood, a period that can be fraught with excess and self-abuse even if you don’t live in Hollywood, Moore is stressing communication as the key to a happy home life. “When your kids see an honest interaction between the primary adults in their life, where there is mutual respect,” she says, “how could it not be comforting?”

That mutual respect becomes especially important when say, Rumer is socializing with her friend Lindsay Lohan. “I’m definitely a bit overprotective, maybe because I have girls. When they go out, I have them check in continually the entire night.” Moore says. “One of the nicest things I share with the kids—and it’s not just me: they have it with Ashton and with Bruce—is an openness to communicate and share their experiences. The fact that they are happy to check in and let me know how they are and where they are, that they don’t see it as a drag, is a real gift.”

“When you see her with her daughters, you think she’s a sister to them,” says Testino. “You never really think. This is the mother and those are the daughters. It’s sort of makes sense, being with somebody younger than her (Moore and Kutcher) have a very loose, light relationship, which is probably anybody’s dream.” Costner, who worked with Kutcher on The Guardian, assures that he and Moore make a good couple. “They’re really joined at the hip, those two. They really have a lot of trust in each other, and that’s nice to see. I think they depend on each other, in a positive way.”

As a present for Moore’s 41st birthday, in 2003, Kutcher invited Testino to come to their home and take a series of intimate portraits. “Of course Ashton said, ‘No dudes,’ and the first thing [Testino] said to us is ‘Let’s get naked,’ ” Moore recalls. “Mario has an incredible sense of play, which makes the experience comfortable and enjoyable.” Testino used one of the shots for the cover of his new book, Let Me In. Meanwhile, for her 44th birthday, this past November 11, Kutcher chose a more conventional gift. Moore says—the “most incredible Cartier diamond disc necklace.”

Since that chance encounter in New York City, Moore and Kutcher have gone from Hollywood’s least-likely-to-succeed celebrity couple to partners in a happy, if unorthodox, family. And when I ask Moore if she and Kutcher plan to have children of their own, her response is unequivocal. “Most definitely,” she says. “Most definitely. Once you hit three, where you’re outnumbered, it’s really, like, What’s the difference between [three or] four or five? For me, the most important thing that I’ve contributed is my children.”

Whether the couple will stay in Hollywood remains to be seen. “Ashton was shooting on location in Louisiana,” Moore says, “and we realized we had been together three years and it was the first time we’d been able to go to a grocery store and share that experience together. I think that there’s a lot that gets compromised when you live in Los Angeles. Ashton already says now every time we go up to Idaho, ‘I’ve got to figure out a way we can live up here full-time.’ Because once you really get the bug of how amazing it is, which is exactly what got me, it’s such a peaceful existence.” And as Moore has discovered once already, Hollywood will always be waiting to welcome them back.
her nails, CHINA GLAZE Nail Lacquer in Ooh La La Pink Pearl; Marsha Blaho for China Glaze/ jambymeophiroiano.com. PAGE 80: EYA JEANBART-
RENZOTTO'S hair and makeup by Christina Reyna Photo/raybrownpro.com. PAGE 84: Left, top and
later: (1) L'OREAL PARIS Wrinkle De-Crease Collagen Eye Illuminator from chain drug, food,
and ss-market retailers nationwide; (2) GIVENCHY Pure
Illumage Solution and Pro-Collagen Emulsion from
tested Saks Fifth Avenue stores, or call 212-940-2555;
ANNICK GOUTAL Cendre Slimppest
overselected from favorite Barneys New York stores;
ELIZABETH ARDEN Intense Prote & Effect
Nutrice Cream and Lotion S.P.F. 15 from Elizabeth
Arden counters nationwide; (3) Dior L'Or de Vie
extract from Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue
res nationwide. PAGE 125: HAYDEN PANETTIERE's
styled with BIOLAGE Curl Defining Creme, and
complete Control Hairspay; Serena Radesihi for
jngatourancenymagazine.com. On her face, Dior
Éclat in Ivory, and Diorskin Poudre Libre in Transparent
No. 1b made within eight weeks after receipt of order.
Blush, and Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks,
One Harmonie de Blush in Sunset Party; her lips,
Addict Plastic Gloss in Electrifying Red; in
Henri for Dior/artmixbeauty.com. On her
hair, OPI Nail Lacquer in Red, Red, Race; Melissa
Grummett for artmixbeauty.com. PAGES 35-36: Susan
ydt for T.H.E Artist Agency. PAGES 42-43: Coco
Ennis for Wall Group. PAGES 144-45: Sarah Perdoma
in Demi Moore's, S chats: the makeup
Shimmering Lipstick in 13; for other beauty details, see
this story. PAGES 152-57: See credits for cover. PAGES 168-71.
A BAANK'S hair styled with KIMBLE HAIR CARE
SHAPES and Hold Spritz; Kimberly Kimble
Kimble Hair Care Systems/margaretmaldonado.com.
her face, Dior Dior Éclat Satin in Honey
and DiorSkin Poudre Libre in Transparent Deep;
his eyes, 5-Color Eyeshadow in Night Dust,
Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks,
Orchid in Contour; on her lips, Addict Ultra Gloss in
Fase of Strawberry; Francesca Tolot for Dior/
tourbeauty.com; on her nails, CHINA GLAZE Nail
Lacquer in Ooh La La Soft Pink Pearl; Marsha
lo for China Glaze/artmixbyjambymeophiroiano.com.
PAGE 74: TORY BURCH's hair styled with KENNETH
Bosco Boost, and Shine; Kevin Lee for the kenneth
on her face, BOBBI BROWN Luminous
nurturing Foundation in Sand, Sheer Finished
Pressed Powder in Pale Yellow, and Bronzing Powder in
Medium; on her eyes, cheeks, and lips, Violet Face
Palette; on her eyes, Glamour Mascara in Black.
WHERE TO FIND BEAUTY PRODUCTS:
BENEFIT, to beneficities.com. BIOLAGE, selected
hair salons, or go to matrix.com. BOBBI BROWN, go
to bobbi.brown.com. CHINA GLAZE, go to china.glaze.com.
Dior, Dior boutiques and major department stores
nationwide. KENNETH, go to kennethalon.com.
KÉRASTASE, selected hair salons, or go to kerastase.com.
KIMBLE HAIR CARE SYSTEMS, kimblehaircare.com.
MATRICE, selected hair salons, or go to matrix.com.
OPI, go to opi.com. SHISEIDO, Barneys New York,
Bergdorf Goodman, and Saks Fifth Avenue, all in .N.Y.,
or go to shisido.com.

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ON THE COVER
Dami Moore wears
shoes by Christian Louboutin,
a hat by Philip Treacy for
Alexander McQueen, and
earrings by Bulgari.
Hair products by Kerastase.
Makeup products by Shiseido.
Hair by Orlando Fino.
Makeup by Tom Pecheux.
Stylisted by Michael Roberts.
Photographed exclusively
by V.F., by Mario Testino
in Paris.
SIDNEY POITIER
The definition of a perfect gentleman, Sir Sidney Poitier has beguiled audiences for more than 50 years. The eternally debonair leading man not only inspired through his performances but also broke social barriers as the first African-American to win an Oscar for best actor and has continued a lifelong crusade dedicated to human rights. As he turns 80 this month, Poitier reflects on discipline, his shyness, and Thurgood Marshall.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
When my consciousness, my instincts, and my values are in tune with the universe.

What is your greatest fear?
Mankind's unwitting extinction by its own misdeeds.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?

Which living person do you most admire?
Nelson Mandela.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
The frequent wars between my shyness and my social tendencies.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Impoliteness.

What is your greatest extravagance?
Books.

What is your favorite journey?
The one that started with my conception, roughly 80 years ago.

On what occasion do you lie?
First, let me disarm that loaded question. I know how easy it is for one to stay well within moral, ethical, and legal bounds through the skillful use of words—and to thereby spin, sidestep, circumvent, or bend a truth completely out of shape. To that extent, we are all liars on numerous occasions.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
Are you trying to tell me something I don’t know? Far as I can tell, I still have most of my hair, my gut is not hanging over my belt, and I still have all of my teeth.

Which living person do you most despise?
Generally, I tend to despise human behavior rather than human creatures.

What is your greatest regret?
I cannot recall what that might have been, but whatever it was, I survived it. And I have no regrets about that.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
My wife, my six children, my five grandchildren, my one great-grandchild, and Sproutie, the family dog.

When and where were you happiest?
I was happiest making films, writing books, and surviving prostate cancer.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
I wouldn’t change a single thing, because one change alters every moment that follows it.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
I leave that judgment to others and to history.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
I don’t want to come back. What for?

What is your most treasured possession?
The love of family and friends.

What is your most marked characteristic?
Discipline.

What do you most value in your friends?
Honesty.

Who are your favorite writers?
Bill Bryson, Carl Sagan, Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Timothy Ferris, Toni Morrison, and Walter Mosley.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Jason Bourne.

Who are your heroes in real life?

What is it that you most dislike?
The callousness with which poor people are deceived, ignored, and dismissed.

What is your motto?
“To be ever respectful of the forces of nature that designed our entrance and our exit.”
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BY MICHAEL WOLFF

PHOTO EXCLUSIVES:
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F E A T U R E S

401 HOLLYWOOD 2007 With a star corpse, and suspects ranging from Helen Mirren, Judi Dench, and Kate Winslet to Forest Whitaker, Alec Baldwin, and Robert De Niro, Annie Leibovitz and Michael Roberts create a "film noir" masterpiece to die for.

438 DAY INTO NOIR In the 1940s, "noir" movies began to challenge America's can-do ethos with a new kind of hero: the cynical, alienated, and romantic loser. Ann Douglas explores the lasting pleasures of a "feel-bad" genre.

444 PAT DOLLARD'S WAR ON HOLLYWOOD Former talent agent Pat Dollard quit Hollywood in 2004 to film a pro-war documentary in Iraq, where his extreme behavior shocked even some Marines. Back in L.A., as Dollard careens from pitch meetings to crystal meth binges, Evan Wright shadows the right wing's answer to Hunter S. Thompson.

450 THE NAKED EYE Mario Testino has captured the world's most glamorous at their least guarded. As the photographer's new book hits shelves, Michael Roberts explains how Testino got these candid shots of Demi Moore, Scarlett Johansson, and Gisele Bündchen.

458 IT WAS A SWINGIN' TIME Off the stage and behind the camera, Sammy Davis Jr. captured an era and its greats: Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra, Bobby Kennedy, et al. Now Davis's friend Burt Boyar shares previously unpublished photos from the entertainer's astonishing archive.

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SPECIAL SECTION FOLLOWING PAGE 204

COUNTING DOWN TO OSCAR Punch Hutton does all the prep work for the big night, with experts' tips on everything from getting fit to picking the right gown, to partying after hours.

COLUMNS

228 AN UNFORGETTABLE FACE As A Face in the Crowd Elia Kazan’s dark tale of a drifter who becomes an all-power TV guru, turns 50, it still has a hold on James Wolcott.

236 THE TROUBLE WITH JUDITH O. J. Simpson’s “confession” was to be Judith Regan’s hottest deal ever. Instead, the controversial publisher found herself jobless. The mystery, says Michael Wolff, is how she lasted that long.

248 THE QUEEN AND I Dominick Dunne recaps his history with the incomparable Elizabeth Taylor, from a movie set in 70s Italy to a dustup over this very piece.

254 THE KID AND J.F.K. With an excerpt from his next memoir, Robert Evans recalls looking for trouble—and action—as a 19-year-old actor. To hear it read by the maverick himself, visit VF.com. Photographs by Art Streiber.

262 MY LUNCH WITH HARVEY When best-selling crime novelist Linda Fairstein heard that Harvey Weinstein wanted to have lunch, she dreamed of a career-changing movie deal. Reality was very different.

272 KITTY CONFIDENTIAL At 96, Kitty Carlisle Hart can sell out her nightclub act, with memories of such friends as Cole Porter, Harpo Marx, and George Gershwin. Michael Feinstein gets a private performance. Photographs by Todd Eberle.

278 PIRATES OF THE MULTIPLEX Internet file sharing terrifies Hollywood, which has had $7 billion worth of content plundered in a single year. An illegal-downloading neophyte, Steven Daly learns why the industry is walking the plank. Photographs by Jonas Karlsson.

290 STARDUST MEMOIRIST Bruce Feirstein and Gasper Tringale spotlight producer Walter Mirisch, the quiet, multi-Oscar legend behind such classics as Some Like It Hot and The Pink Panther.
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BILL BLASS FRAGRANCE AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY AT SAKS FIFTH AVENUE
292 FROM THE WONDERFUL FOLKS WHO BROUGHT YOU IRAQ Though Iraq is a bloodbath, President Bush sounds ready for another neocon-backside war. Craig Unger finds evidence suggesting that an air attack on Iran is already in the works.

310 THE MOST HAPPENING FELLA Brett Ratner talked his way into N.Y.U. film school, a phenomenal directing career, and friendships with such heroes as Al Pacino, Quincy Jones, and Steven Spielberg. Nancy Jo Sales takes a crash course in his winning technique. Photographs by Brigitte Lacombe.

328 TAKING ON GUANTÁNAMO When navy lawyer Charles Swift was assigned to defend a Guantánamo detainee, no one expected him to sue the president—and win. As Swift and partner Neal Katyal continue to contest Bush’s military tribunals, Marie Brenner reveals what the four-year fight has cost them. Photographs by Jonas Karlsson.

342 WASHINGTON’S $8 BILLION SHADOW For decades, the many-tentacled Science Applications International Corporation has quietly supplied brainpower to Washington—including intelligence for the Iraq war. Donal L. Barlett and James B. Steele investigate SAIC’s unsettling record as one of the government’s largest contractors.

361 MASTERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY: HERB RITTS Before his death, in 2002, Herb Ritts immortalized a parade of Oscar winners. With 14 pages of Ritts’s V.F. portraits, Ingrid Sischy recalls the heart behind his art.


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Pravda Celebrates Film

In July, Pravda Vodka hosted a cocktail soiree at Soho House, in New York City. V.I.P. guests watched Ellen von Unwerth’s short film, Wendybird, starring Kirsten Dunst and featuring the Autumn/Winter 2006 collection by fashion designer Erin Fetherston. Guests also enjoyed the Pravda Summer Blush:

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For the Kids

On November 17, the Lucky Brand Foundation hosted its 10th annual Black Tie & Blue Jeans gala in Beverly Hills, which raised $900,000 for children's charities. More than 600 guests, including Jon Stewart, Rena Sofer, Neil Young, and Rickie Lee Jones, turned out to enjoy the evening, which was hosted by Damon Wayans and featured musical performances by Joe Walsh and Joe Cocker.

Damon Wayans (center) with Barry Perlman and Gene Mantesano of Lucky Brand Jeans.

Bolthouse Productions SBE

Led by Brent Bolthouse and partner Jenifer Rosero, Bolthouse Productions SBE is a full-service event production and marketing company with an unparalleled reputation for creating truly innovative experiences. The company, a division of SBE Entertainment, has staged some of the country's most talked-about events, from intimate birthday parties to full-scale corporate launches. Working within a vast range of budgets, Bolthouse Productions tailors every detail to the individualized needs of their clients, which have included T-Mobile, Chrome Hearts, and Target. For more information, visit bolthouseproductions.com.

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A Literary Occasion

On October 19, Cole Haan, Accompanied Literary Society, and Vanity Fair hosted a celebration for the new book Century Girl, by Lauren Redniss from HarperCollins Publishers. Held at the Cole Haan store at Rockefeller Center in New York City, the event kicked off with a reading by actress Heather Graham. Guests, including Cole Haan VIPs and Accompanied Literary Society members, enjoyed 1920s-inspired bathtub-gin cocktails while shopping to benefit Accompanied’s literature-preservation efforts.

Samsonite and Vanity Fair teamed up on December 14 to celebrate the new Samsonite Black Label store, at Copley Place Mall in Boston, with a special evening of holiday shopping. Guests enjoyed festive cocktails while viewing the newest Samsonite Black Label collections. In addition, they received a discount on purchases and took home an elegant Samsonite Black Label leather journal.

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Island Style

To get into the spirit of giving, Indigo Palms, a Tommy Bahama Company, and Vanity Fair hosted an evening of holiday shopping, on December 13, to benefit the Garden of Hope and Courage, a sanctuary for terminally ill patients. Guests gathered at the Indigo Palms Newport Beach store at Fashion Island to enjoy cocktails and festive fare from Tommy Bahama’s Tropical Cafe. They also received a special discount on purchases and shopped the Indigo Palms collection for a very good cause.
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EDITOR’S LETTER

It’s a Noir, Noir, Noir World

The race is on in Los Angeles and Washington for two of the great brass rings of contemporary American society—the Oscar and the presidency. In this celebrity-crazed culture, it’s a toss-up as to which is the most aspired to. My money would be on Oscar—he attracts fame, riches, and really good-looking members of the opposite (or same) sex. Plus, the victor never goes anywhere without those rose-petal words “Academy Award winner” decorating the path ahead. The presidency bestows all the legal levers of power available to the person charged with safeguarding the most powerful nation on earth—and following the rise of the “unitary presidency” under President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, a lot of illegal levers as well.

In this our 13th annual Hollywood Issue, we have news of both reel and real worlds. And thanks to the efforts of our publisher, Edward Menicheschi, and his league of loyalists, this is not only the biggest Hollywood Issue ever, but also the biggest single issue in the magazine’s history. We have veered from the traditional portfolio this year, and, inspired by a plan of fashion and style director Michael Roberts’s and executed by photographer Annie Leibovitz with the help of cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond, we have crafted a storyboarded noir film, featuring many of this year’s Oscar contenders. “Killers Kill. Dead Men Die.” on page 401, is a visual and literary tour de force that pays tribute to the noir films of the 40s and 50s—a genre that, as Ann Douglas, author of the acclaimed Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s, states in an accompanying essay, remains vital as an antidote to American self-infatuation and is especially evident at times when a “take-sides, either-or mentality” is in force. Two superb films this season, Martin Scorsese’s The Departed and his longtime colleague Robert De Niro’s The Good Shepherd, continue the noir tradition. As does the life of someone you’ve probably never heard of. Two and a half years ago, Pat Dolland, a moderately successful talent agent, checked it all to make a pro-war documentary in Iraq. As Evan Wright recounts in “Pat Dolland’s War on Hollywood,” on page 444, he took a detour off the grid of life that makes for one of the more amazing tales you will ever read.

Elsewhere in the issue are three major reports, all having to do with the unchecked powers of the sitting administration: “Taking on Guantanamo,” by Marie Brenner, on page 328; “Washington’s $8 Billion Shadow,” by Donald Barlett and James Steele, on page 342; and “From Those Wonderful Folks Who Brought You Iraq,” by Craig Unger, on page 292. In the president’s January 10 speech, in which he announced his plan for a troop surge in Iraq—“surge,” or “augmentation”—being White House shorthand for escalation—he mentioned Iran no fewer than six times. Incredible as it might seem, a massive air strike against Iran is still on the table.

In his report, Unger traces the neoconservative appetite for regime change in Iran back more than a decade. He also reveals that the Bush administration rebuffed Iranian offers in 2003 to curb its nuclear programs and combat terrorists within its borders and chose instead to pursue a dubious alliance with the MEK, a group of Iranian radic- ials the U.S. was supporting in the hope of effecting regime change there. As Philip Giraldi, a former C.I.A. counterterrorism specialist told Unger: “It is Iraq redux.” While Bush is busy shaking his sabe at both Iran and Syria, he should heed the outcome of the last nation that attempted to fight a war on umpteen fronts at once: Germany.

The strain on the families of the 1.4 million troops who have car- ried out the president’s wars in and around Iraq and Afghanistan is mind-boggling. The injury-to-death ratio (that is, the number of soldiers injured compared with the number of soldiers killed) is 16 to 1, more than five times the ratio in Korea and Vietnam, and eight times the ratio in the two World Wars. To be sure, the reason for the increase in wounded versus killed is that medical advances have made it possible to save soldiers with injuries that would have been untreatable in past wars. But as Linda Bilmes points out in a research paper for the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, the Pentagon’s inept accounting practices have resulted in hundreds of horribly injured troops’ being hounded for money they don’t owe. She tells of an Army Reserve staff sergeant who lost half a leg, then was denied a mortgage because the Department of Defense claimed he owed it $2,231. The soldier spent a year and a half trying to sort that one out. Bilmes describes how the Pentagon treated another staff sergeant, who had suffered massive brain damage after it mistakenly recorded that he owed $12,000; the Pentagon stopped his pay, and the man’s utilities were turned off.

This month marks the Vanity Fair debut of two of the finest in- vestigative journalists of our age: Donald Barlett and James Steele. With numerous honors in their bookcases (including two Pulitizer Prizes and two National Magazine Awards), they report this issue on a powerful, but little-known, federal supplier that has 9,000 active contracts with the U.S. government and a workforce of 44,000. San Diego–based Science Applications International Corporation is, quite simply, the brain to Halliburton’s brawn. So pervasive is it in the military-political food chain that SAIC personnel were instrumental in advising the administration that Iraq had W.M.D. It then secured contracts for the search for the nonexistent weapons. And when no weapons were found, the company helped staff the commission charged with investigating how U.S. intelligence could have gotten the W.M.D. story so wrong. This stuff even Hollywood can’t make up.

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A Fashionable Evening

On October 19, Chanel, Vanity Fair, and Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami patrons Joey and Thea Goldman hosted a private cocktail reception to toast the Chanel 2007 Cruise Collection. Held at the Chanel boutique at the Bal Harbour Shops, the evening drew V.I.P.s to mingle, preview the cruise collection, and enjoy an exclusive Vanity Fair photo exhibit showcasing images of renowned style-makers wearing Chanel, including Sofia Coppola, Julia Roberts, and Jeanne Moreau, among others. The event benefited the MOCA Shakers arts group.

Annie Leibovitz

Contributing photographer Annie Leibovitz’s pictures have been an integral part of Vanity Fair’s Hollywood Issue since its inauguration in 1995, but this year’s portfolio was the most ambitious. Shot over the course of several weeks at Universal Studios in Los Angeles, and on location in New York and London, Leibovitz, with the help of fashion and style director Michael Roberts (in their first collaboration since he joined VF), cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond, and a team of assistants, directed and photographed a cast of actors, including Helen Mirren, Forest Whitaker, and Abigail Breslin, in a made-for-VF film noir. According to senior photography producer Kathryn MacLeod, who has helped Leibovitz create iconic images for VF for the past 12 years, “Annie thoroughly enjoyed working with the ensemble cast. She was inspired by the sense of community among the actors, and she has great admiration and respect for the work they do.” Leibovitz’s book A Photographer’s Life: 1990–2005 (Random House), a collection of personal pictures and work done on assignment, hit bookstores last fall.

Michael Roberts

When fashion and style director Michael Roberts arrived at Vanity Fair, from The New Yorker, last April, he had already devised the idea for the noir portfolio. Presenting the centerpiece of the Hollywood Issue in a new light was a goal Roberts thought the actors would particularly enjoy. By essentially “completing a two-dimensional film, we gave the stars involved a narrative role to play, which permitted them to do what they do best—act. And working with Annie Leibovitz was like working with a great film director.” Also in this issue, Roberts, who wrote the introduction to Let Me In! (Taschen), Mario Testino’s forthcoming book, sheds light on the glamorous life of the VF photographer. Roberts has a book of his own photographic work, Shot in Sicily, due out this summer. His photographs and illustrations have appeared in numerous publications over the years, including Vanity Fair, Interview, British Vogue, The Sunday Times, and V Magazine.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 136
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Ann Douglas

Ann Douglas first encountered film noir in the revival theaters of 1970s New York. “I had this feeling of ‘My God, where did these films come from?’” she recalls. “At that point not many were on TV—TV was still seen as a family medium.” The classic noir movies were made in the 1940s and 50s, but Douglas, author of Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s, points out that the genre reappeared in the 70s and continues today. It is natural, says Douglas, that noir should peak at times when Americans feel conflicted about who they are and about their country’s role in the world. “Noir is a dialogue on American power,” she says, “and on power run amok.” A professor of American studies at Columbia University, Douglas is currently working on a book called Noir Nation, to be published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. This is her first article for Vanity Fair.

Bruce Handy

Vanity Fair deputy editor Bruce Handy had a chance to fool around with one of his favorite movie genres while editing this year’s Hollywood portfolio, “Killers Kill, Dead Men Die,” a tribute to film noir. Working with first-time V.F. writer Nathaniel Rich and contributing editor Jim Windolf, Handy, who also edited “The Kid and J.F.K.”—an excerpt from Bob Evans’s forthcoming memoir, Kid Notorious—served as the development person for the “screenplay” that accompanies the portfolio. “Appropriate to a feature on Hollywood, the piece was a collaboration, but in contrast to Hollywood, it was a happy collaboration,” says Handy. “Noir is something that’s been commented on and parodied so much; Jim and Nathaniel were able to hit all the signposts, while at the same time bringing so much wit and knowingness to the writing that we ended up with something fresh and fun.”

Nathaniel Rich

For his Vanity Fair debut, Nathaniel Rich, author of San Francisco Noir: The City in Film Noir from 1940 to the Present, collaborated with V.F. contributing editor Jim Windolf to write the introduction and movie “script” for this month’s Hollywood portfolio, which begins on page 401. “Everyone knows that the keys to a good film noir are the three D’s: danger, despair, and dames,” Rich says. “But we wanted to make this noir blacker than midnight, so we went ahead and added the three M’s: misery, malaise, and murder.” The 27-year-old Rich, a senior editor at The Paris Review, has also written for The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and The Nation, among other publications. He lives in New York City.
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Donald L. Barlett
and James B. Steele

Since beginning their illustrious careers at The Philadelphia Inquirer, in 1971, Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele have conducted wide-ranging investigations into such topics as corporate welfare, the oil crisis, and illegal immigration. Along the way they have picked up more than 50 national journalism awards, including two Pulitzer Prizes and two National Magazine Awards. For their first piece for Vanity Fair, Barlett and Steele investigate SAIC, a private company that receives countless unmonitored government contracts—a company deep in the national-security business, whose current and former employees are reluctant to discuss their employer with anyone. Barlett describes the situation as “Eisenhower’s nightmare,” referring to the former president’s warnings about an unchecked military-industrial complex. Steele takes it a step further: “There is no oversight; no one is watching the money, taxpayers’ money. It’s the total abdication of responsibility in Congress.”

Burt Boyar

This month, Burt Boyar’s article “It Was a Swingin’ Time.” about his longtime friendship with Sammy Davis Jr., accompanies exclusive photographs taken by the famed entertainer. The images are excerpted from Boyar’s new book, Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr. (HarperCollins). “In 1985, my dear late wife, Jane, and I were working on Why Me?, which was our second book with Sammy,” Boyar says, “We made 150 hours of tapes for research—just conversation among Sammy, Jane, and myself. In the tapes, we spoke of the contents of the book and the pictures, and Sammy wistfully said, ‘I’d love to do a sort of Photo by… kind of thing.’”

He didn’t get around to it, nor did we, until now.” Boyar, who lives in Los Angeles, is currently working on a movie based on Yes I Can: The Story of Sammy Davis, Jr., his first book with Davis, which was published in 1965.

Krista Smith

For the past 13 years, senior West Coast editor Krista Smith has helped select the actors who appear on the cover and in the pages of the annual Hollywood Issue. But this year Smith also took on the role of casting director for the film-noir-inspired portfolio. “It was a daunting task to cast this entire portfolio, which was almost like making a movie,” says Smith. “This issue is something I think about 365 days a year.” Smith thinks this year’s portfolio was especially challenging and exciting. “I am a huge film noir buff, so I was really in my element on this one.”
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**Evans Wright**

Like his subject, the hell-raising Hollywood agent turned pro-war documentary filmmaker Pat Dollard, Evan Wright has experienced combat in the Iraq war while embedded with U.S. troops. He is the recipient of the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize for Generation Kill, his frontline account of a Marine platoon in Iraq, and the winner of a National Magazine Award. What motivated him to tell Dollard's incredible story, in “Pat Dollard’s War on Hollywood,” is that “we have been through similar battles but have drawn different conclusions about war.” Wright does not share Dollard’s extremely hawkish convictions but believes Dollard’s film in progress about Iraq “will emerge as a great document of both the war and the Bush era.

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**Elissa Schappell**

Contributing editor Elissa Schappell sifts through hundreds of review copies of new books each month to uncover gems to encapsulate in the “Hot Type” column, which appears this month on page 202. Also this month, book buff delivers a volume of her own, titled Money Chai Everything (Doubleday). Schappell—who co-edited this anthology with Jenny Offill—finds it ironic that, in a "cult of confession, talking about money is the last taboo." If she says, “money is the snake in the garden of relationships,” then why did she and Offill tackle the touchy subject?

“Money isn’t everything. Sometimes, it isn’t even the money. But it’s good to make the comfortable people uncomfortable sometimes. That, and the money, of course.” This is Schappell and Offill’s second collaboration; their first anthology, *The Friend Who Got Away*, was released in paperback last May.

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**Michael Feinstein**

Michael Feinstein’s introduction to Kitty Carlisle Hart came in 1978, when they both performed in a Gershwin concert at Carnegie Hall. “I met her at a rehearsal, and she talked about how George Gershwin had taught her the songs that she would be singing,” he recalls. “That got my attention.” The 96-year-old Hart, who shares her showbiz memories with Feinstein in this issue (“Kitty Confidential,” page 272), also performs regularly at his Manhattan nightclub, Feinstein’s at the Regency. “Onstage she radiates a charismatic power, and sings with a deep connection to the heart of a song,” Feinstein says. “People feel it. It’s a rare experience.” Feinstein has tour dates this month in New York and California, and this fall Concord Records will release his 25th album.

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**Emily Poensich**

“This was the Ironman of Hollywood Issues,” says assistant editor Emily Poensich, who has worked on the past five Hollywood portfolios. “This year’s was an extraordinary challenge. The scope was simply unprecedented because we weren’t just asking people to participate. We had to figure out who was the best fit for each character in each scene, and then play chess with their schedules. But how lucky are we? We get to work with incredible people—the best in the business. It’s a great privilege.” Poensich, a British American who grew up in the Middle East, now lives in Los Angeles.
THE NEW FRAGRANCE

DONNAR KARAN
GOLD

THE LIGHT OF A WOMAN
Aches & Claims. By Laura Johanne

Assessing Breast-Cancer Risk

Can a few drops of fluid provide an early warning before breast cancer develops? A new testing device, which it has dubbed the breast pap, says the test should be given as regularly as the cervical pap smear. Reports vary on the test's effectiveness.

Makes Music
Rises to top of charts.
Wins 9 Grammys.

Teaches Music
Becomes music teacher.
Works with autistic kids.

Studies Music
Graduates with degree in music education.

Every journey needs a Journal.
Music

Breast cancer

To early diagnosis.
The Big Shoot

The most ambitious portfolio in the 13-year history of Vanity Fair’s Hollywood Issue, this year’s homage to noir had its own dramatic imperatives

By Annie Leibovitz

When Vanity Fair’s fashion and style director, Michael Roberts, came to me with the idea of doing a series of pictures based on film noir I knew it was right up my alley. I’ve been doing fashion portfolios for Vogue based on stories such as The Wizard of Oz and Alice in Wonderland, and I liked the idea of telling a story in a specific genre. It gave me the opportunity to develop a look and a theme and to provide a sense of continuity to the Hollywood Issue. Michael roughed out a story line, and then we collaborated on refining it. Originally there was a central, recurring character moving the narrative along, but we ended up discarding that idea, although just for fun we used some actors more than once. Penélope Cruz appears twice, and James McAvoy’s Weegee character is in the picture with Bruce Willis dead in the rain and again in the nightclub scene.

We started out by looking at a lot of film noir imagery. Some of the pictures, such as the one in the car with Helen Mirren and Judi Dench, are homages to specific films (in that case the 1947 movie Out of the Past, with Robert Mitchum and Virginia Huston); others have references to stills from as many as three or four movies. The picture in the boxing ring, with Djimon Hounsou and Robert Downey Jr., was based on a drawing that Michael Roberts made. We just kept adding people. But the reference pictures were crucial to how we lit the scenes and were CONTINUED ON PAGE 144.
malgosia bela
V-neck tunic
the wide leg boyfriend trouser

the boyfriends

GAP
khakis with attitude
wentworth miler
fleece crewneck T
cargo khakis

wentworth
carmen kass
V-neck hoodie
the boyfriend trouser
nadja auermann
safari jacket
the wide leg boyfriend trouser
chris o’donnell
military jacket
drawstring pants
daniel dae kim
military shirt
straight fit khakis
missy rayder
cropped cardigan
the wide leg boyfriend trouser
liya kebede
cropped peacoat
the boyfriend trouser
dermot mulroney
striped crewneck T
military shirt
straight fit khakis

dermot

GAP
chris brown
light fleece hoodie
relaxed khakis
kyra sedgwick
smocked top
the tailored boyfriend trouser

the boyfriend trouser

GAP
khakis with attitude
Celebrating Art Basel Miami Beach

Skybar at the Shore Club in Miami Beach was the scene of a V.I.P. party, hosted by Banana Republic, Vanity Fair, and the Museum of Modern Art's Junior Associates, on December 8. Amid the excitement of Art Basel Miami Beach, the event gathered nearly 1,000 guests, including Larry Kirsch, Casey Spooner, and Scott Storch, to get an exclusive preview of Doug Aitken's upcoming exhibit at MoMA and celebrate well into the night.

Special thanks to Banana Republic, Amstel Light, Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte, Level Vodka, G Collection by Godiva, and Tassimo.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 150 also useful for the actor to follow.

The great cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond collaborated with us on the project. He won an Academy Award for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and has also shot a number of neo-noir films, from Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* to Brian De Palma's *The Black Dahlia* (for which he's been nominated for another Academy Award). At first, he wanted me to use more small steady tungsten lights, although by the end he saw the advantage of a fast strobe light source. Nick Rogers, my first assistant, and I use strobes simply and efficiently, but in some cases we wanted to do more, and it was interesting to get Vilmos's ideas about the nuances. Nick and I would roughly light a scene, and then Vilmos would say, What about this or that? He showed us how to light the street in the picture with the body in the rain. There was a big Beb night light—a bank of 12 HMI lights—flooding the background. But the foreground was shot with just the light from the old Graflex that the Weegee figure is holding. We had to change the flashbulb each time we shot the picture.

You can light a scene and be prepared, and then the subjects come in and things have to be altered for them. This happened time and time again. I hadn't realized in the beginning, although I should have, what an enormous effect the actors have on the situation. We had been very careful with the choice of people for the portfolio. They were either timeless or particularly relevant in this moment, and having them create the little movie scenarios let them do what they do, which is to act. It was the best way you could possibly use them, and it took a lot of the angst out of taking the pictures.

On the very first shoot we did, with Anjelica Huston and Diane Lane in the powder room of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, it was obvious it wasn't about each person's being a star. It was about their profession, the craft of acting. It was about a community of actors. That was very moving to me, and I saw it over and over. The work went very fast. These people are the best at what they do, and they brought out the best in one another. It was beautiful to see the relationships between them, how they needed each other. You couldn't pull that kind of work out of them in individual portraits. All the actors were wonderful, and it was a privilege to be there to watch them work. The picture with Pedro Almodóvar and Penélope Cruz in the dressing room—CONTINUED ON PAGE 169

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POWDER ROOM

*From top:* Anjelica Huston gets a touch-up from Pati Dubroff at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, in L.A.; Penélope Cruz and Ben Affleck practice their grieving at Trinity Church Cemetery, in New York City; fashion and style director Michael Roberts and Kirsten Dunst on the back lot at Universal Studios; Robert Downey Jr. gets champ instruction from Sylvester Stallone at Universal.
Continued from Page 168

director and his muse in a reflective moment—was from one of the most joyous shoots we did. They love and admire each other so much.

Making the portfolio was like making a movie. It was a big project, with a lot of participants, but I knew that it would be possible because I would be working with Jane Sarkin, Vanity Fair's features editor, Krista Smith, the magazine's senior West Coast editor, and senior photography producer Kathryn MacLeod. And Michael, of course, who is much more than a fashion director, although he is a genius when it comes to clothes. The styling was impeccable. I almost cried when I saw Abigail Breslin in that little French coat with the flare, at the cemetery. The coat and the beret were transforming. We are so used to seeing Abigail as Little Miss Sunshine, but she's really a deeply talented actor, and those clothes helped to take her to a new place. The only problem I had with Michael is that he wanted to put a hat on everyone. It was a battle. I would shoot the pictures with the hats, and then I'd take them off and shoot them again. In the powder-room scene they all had hats originally.

The scene in the rain was shot on a set we built on the Universal back lot. I had had the sets built reluctantly, and it seems to me that the pictures we took on location are more successful. The shot with Julianne Moore and Robert De Niro in armchairs was taken in the lobby of the Algonquin Hotel. They shut down half the lobby for us for a full day. That was amazing, and it set the tone. The picture with Jack Nicholson was taken where he lives. It's his view from Mulholland Drive, overlooking the Valley. And that fire escape Helen Mirren and Kate Winslet are standing on is at a real hotel in New York City, in the West 40s. The cemetery is Trinity Church Cemetery, on the Upper West Side of New York where the Astors are buried.

I didn't want to shoot in black and white, although we did desaturate the color. I wanted a modern feel, with references to the earlier period through body language and story line. Michael and I argued about this. For instance, in the picture of the body in the street in the rain, Michael wanted a car from the 40s and I wanted the car that we used (a 1964 Chrysler Imperial). The clothes aren't costumes. They are modern clothes. It's like architecture: If you're restoring a house you can't restore it exactly the way it was originally. If you try to, something looks wrong. I liked the contemporary aspects that shook things up. You need to go forward. □
Best-Dressed Men

On October 14, Ralph Lauren, Holt Renfrew, and Vanity Fair celebrated the launch of the new Ralph Lauren men's shop at Holt Renfrew in Toronto with a V.I.P. evening of music and style. Guests, including actors Emily Mortimer and Paul Schneider, broadcaster Cheryl Hickey, and hockey star Doug Gilmour, came out to enjoy cocktails, view the world of Ralph Lauren, and see an exclusive Vanity Fair photo exhibit featuring Hollywood's best-dressed men. The highlight of the evening was a performance by acclaimed singer and songwriter Rufus Wainwright.

Omega Celebrates Bond

Omega, Bailey Banks & Biddle, and Vanity Fair hosted a benefit, inspired by the new James Bond film, Casino Royale, for the Houston Children's Charity. Held on November 2 at the Bailey Banks & Biddle store at the Houston Galleria, the event featured a game of Texas Hold 'Em to win the limited-edition Omega Seamaster James Bond watch, as well as martinis that were shaken, not stirred.

Making Animals Smile

Best Friends Animal Society provides expert care and rehabilitation for our animal friends. Set in the picturesque red rock canyons of southern Utah, their sanctuary for abandoned and abused animals is the largest in the nation. The location is a miracle of nature, and what happens there every day is a miracle of love. To learn more, visit bestfriends.org.

For a Good Cause

Burberry and Vanity Fair joined forces on December 5 to host a holiday celebration benefiting the Lupus Foundation of America Illinois Chapter. Held at the Burberry store in Chicago, the event drew more than 100 special guests, including Burberry V.I.P.'s, Lupus Foundation supporters, and Vanity Fair readers, to shop the night away while enjoying cocktails and the sounds of a live jazz trio.

A Literary Affair

On November 15, Dooney & Bourke and Vanity Fair hosted a special celebration of literature at the Dooney & Bourke boutique in New York City. Elizabeth Merrick, editor of This Is Not Chick Lit, and contributing authors Jennifer Egan, Binnie Kirshenbaum, and Dika Lam were on hand to discuss their new book. After a lively conversation with the authors, guests shopped the Dooney & Bourke collection and enjoyed cocktails while mingling.
NEOCON DREAMS, AMERICAN NIGHTMARES
Cut-and-run neocons; Hitchens’s column no laughing matter; questionable motives; undressing Dakota; Garry Wills on Harold Hayes; and more

I am appalled by the arrogance of the neocons in David Rose’s story “Neo Culpa” [January], who are so certain that we have the right to use our power “for the moral good of the world” and who judge our policies as “noble” and “beneficial” when we have left a country and its people in total destruction. What gives us the right to decide on democracy for the Middle East when we don’t study their history, don’t speak their language, and don’t try to understand their religion? It’s time to reinstate diplomacy as a means of dealing with the Arabs, friend and foe alike, and it’s of little use to blame George Bush. One hardly needs Delphic vision to realize that he has been a puppet president from the start.

LUCY ADAMS
New York, New York

LOOK AT THEM RUN, casting bomblets of blame in all directions while weaving and dodging to avoid any suggestion of their own culpability in one of the monumental foreign-policy stupidities of this or any other generation. Secure in their cozy think tanks, egos firmly intact, warmed by generous talk-show fees, comfortable government pensions, and the lamebrain adoration of neocon fanatics, these people continue to spout unconscionable garbage about the rightness of their vision, which they say was defeated only by defective leadership and the incompetence of our chief decider. How shameless, how contemptible, how lacking even a scintilla of humility or admission of accountability. The whole bunch deserve nothing but disrespect and certainly not the generous and usually respectful attention of the press.

JACK MIKLOS
San Francisco, California

WHAT AN ODD PIECE to be appearing in Vanity Fair—the same magazine which published “Rules of Engagement” by William Langewiesche, in November, one of the best pieces of war reporting I have ever
Very famous amongst very few people

BEDAT & C°

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read. A regular reader can only hope that the intention of “Neo Culpa” all along was to give this group of intellectual midgets and war criminals an opportunity to indite themselves in their own delusional words.

HAROLD TOBMAN
Brooklyn, New York

THE NEOCONSERVATIVES are proof that exposure to advanced academics is no assurance of functional intellectual achievement. In their pathetic attempts to distance themselves from Bush, Cheney, and the rest of the crew, they sound like schoolkids whose dogs ate their homework. Understandably, the extent of the complete, boundless failures of the administration with the Iraq fiasco may not have been foreseen. However, to lack the awareness that even a well-run operation would not bring—to paraphrase the neocons—a Middle East at peace, governed by law, where all peoples are free to find their own destinies, is the result of phenomenal arrogance and delusion. We may be able to blow up the world (or a portion of it)—but no country, including the United States, can serve as a “colonial” power any longer. That the neocons believe otherwise is testimony to their incredible ignorance of the world outside our borders. Their American Enterprise Institute is influential only with those who cannot or do not wish to acknowledge our limitations along with our strengths; strengths that their propaganda has severely weakened. Those of us who really care about, as well as appreciate, the valuable philosophical foundations of the United States must actively oppose the neocons and their ilk that abuse this nation, internally and abroad.

DAVID HORN
Oakland, California

TO SUGGEST, as David Rose does, that the pre-war objective of spreading democracy was right and good, that it fell down only through incompetent execution, is letting the neocons off the hook. Many of the people who were against the war from the start clearly stated that war in Iraq could lead to a horrifying future of a never-ending cycle of terrorism and an America suffering a diminished ability to deal with it. Because the people who were responsible for developing American foreign policy were dismissive of this highly likely outcome, they were and still are truly culpable. Let the “Neo Culpa” begin there.

DAVID TANNER
Oakville, Ontario

DAVID ROSE writes that Richard Perle “co-founded the Project for the New American Century.” This is not true. Mr. Perle was not involved in any fashion in the Project’s founding. Moreover, he never was a member of the Project’s board nor did he sign the Project’s founding statement of principles. The founders of P.N.A.C. were three: William Kristol, Robert Kagan, and myself.

GARY SCHMITT
Director, Program on Advanced Strategic Studies
American Enterprise Institute
Washington, D.C.

CONSPICUOUSLY missing from “Neo Culpa” was William Kristol, the alpha neocon himself. With his warmongering and brash advocacy of ever expanding governmental power, he remains unrepentant, even in the face of the unfathomable losses in human life, money, and respect worldwide that our senseless invasion of Iraq has cost us.

LEON PASCUCCI
Kenosha, Wisconsin

REGARDING THE JAMES WOOLSEY quote comparing trained Iraqis to the Seventh Cavalry, it is frightening to think that the former head of the C.I.A. is not aware that not only did the Seventy Cavalry not go into Apache country without scouts, they did not go into Apache country at all. They went into

POSTSCRIPT

A

ply, the lasting image of Vanity Fair’s “London Swings! Again!” article and portfolio (March 1997) is of a doomed couple: Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit. Lorenzo Agius’s photograph of the soon-to-be-married Oasis singer and sex-bomb actress, sprawled out on a Union Jack bedspread, was instantly iconic in Britain, where it appeared on F.F.’s cover (the photo ran inside the magazine in the U.S.) and promptly became an object of fascination and parody.

Liam and Patsy were finished by 2000, and so was the whole “Cool Britannia” phenomenon that I set out to cover in the autumn of 1996—the rush of new confidence that was exemplified by the smart, arrogant Britpop singles of Oasis, Blur, and Suede; by the glass-and-glow futurism of the architects Norman Foster and Richard Rogers; by the glittering purple silk that lined the suits by Ozwold Boateng; and, most auspiciously, by the imminent ascension to No. 10 Downing Street of Tony Blair, who had a year earlier rebranded the Labour Party as New Labour and Britain itself as a “young country.” I deliberately wrote the article with an exaggerated, breathless chirpiness to capture the hopeful tenor of the time. When I met with Blair at the House of Commons that December, he was five months away from becoming prime minister and 43 years old. I ascribed a “shiny nowness” to him.

Blair is now a dead man walking. He’ll step down this year to make way for a new Labour leader, having worn out his welcome and betrayed Cool Britannia’s hopes by becoming President Bush’s staunch war buddy. But well before the Iraq war, Britain’s hipsters and opinion-makers, inveterate cynics that they are, were questioning if it wasn’t all just a load of bollocks. Blair’s decision to go to war with Bush in 2003 simply ratified what they’d long suspected—that, as Zoe Williams wrote in The Guardian that year, “All the things that we thought were cool—the bars, the artists, the obsession with youth, the thrill of buying pointless tat, the politicians, the music, the drugs ... the whole sorry lot has blown up in a stench, like the swollen roadside carcass of a badger.”

But you know what? While I can’t defend Blair, I’m tired of all the mea culpas and repudiations of the era. In my opinion, Britpop was a gift, a welcome resurgence of English songcraft, and London’s embrace of welcome trends—gastropubs, smart tailoring, modernist industrial design—pre-dated and prefigured ours. More so than the Swinging London Mark I of the Beatles and Stones, the Cool Britannia era was the time when Britain woke up from its beans-on-toast dreariness. When it truly, finally stopped being a postwar country.

—DAVID KAMP

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Lakota and Cheyenne country, and George Custer made extensive use of native scouts. Custer’s problem: if his scouts’ reports didn’t agree with his preconceived notions, he didn’t listen to them. The great Apache fighter was General George Crook, who made extensive use of Apache scouts in his campaigns. He also fought for Native American rights. Red Cloud is famous for saying of Crook. “He never lied to us.” It is telling that, of all the historical parallels Woolsey could have chosen to make his case, he chose to create a fictional one. Especially since the actual mistakes and crimes of the Seventh Cavalry, from Wounded Knee to Little Big Horn, are a pretty good allegory of everything that has gone wrong in Iraq. (General Crook may or may not have been a relative. We’ve never been able to make a genealogical connection. But my grandfather looked exactly like him.)

JEFF CROOK
Memphis, Tennessee

THE HUMOR GAP

THERE IS A CERTAIN IRONY to the fact that, while reading Christopher Hitchens’s “Why Women Aren’t Funny” [January], I kept thinking to myself, Is this a joke?

Hitchens takes a brief scientific reference, some cutting-edge 19th-century gender theory, and is off and running with wild generalizations. Maybe I’m just being stupid (because, according to Hitchens, that is how I have been taught to snare a big, strong, funny man), so I would like to be sure I have this right: I, as a woman, am not funny because my brains are drifting down toward my uterus. And I don’t want to be funny, because laughing at poop jokes would make me too seemingly intelligent to be a desirable mate and I am wholly consumed by the need to reproduce. When I am not desperately wishing for a world full of sugarplums and gumdrops. My goodness. I suppose my fellow “cunning minxes” and I should be grateful we’re even allowed to vote, considering how distracted and silly we must be.

I would posit it is not women or their ability to be funny that is “backward”; it is Hitchens. And while I hate to prove Hitchens’s point, I am certainly not laughing. The next time Hitchens decides to explain the differences between the sexes, I hope he keeps his pen to himself.

DEBORAH WOLFSON
New York, New York

HONESTLY, I feel a little sorry for Christopher Hitchens. He set out to investigate “the reasons for the humor gap” and the poor guy was reduced to repeating the same point for three pages. It’s not his fault that he had no new insight, because neither he nor any other man has ever been privy to the real, hidden reason why aren’t funny. Until now.

We are funny—but only behind you! We women have a secret society—sort of female version of your He-Man Woman-Haters Clubs. Instead of cracking jokes that would flaunt our superior intelligence and better grasp of the subtleties of human nature, we women save our humor for clandestine lunches, spa days, shopping excursions, or Mommy and Me classes.

Here’s what I did think was funny about Hitchens’s article. And by funny I mean when—yes—somebody—accidentally—walks into a plate-glass—window funny. Hitchens assumes that, because women laugh at him at parties, he actually is funny. A woman will laugh at a man not only if she thinks he’s genuinely funny, but also as a way of rewarding him, like a trainer throwing a herring to a seal. It’s an audible, easy-to-understand way of giving encouragement to his fragile little ego. Think of it as the public version of faking an orgasm. But Hitchens needn’t worry. If I ever meet him at a party and he’s as funny as he was trying to be in this article, I’ll laugh my ass off.

ROBIN SCHIFF
President, She-Woman Man-Mockers Society
Writer, Romy and Michele’s High School Reunion
Groundlings sketches, and too many other unfunny things to enumerate
Los Angeles, California

LAST TIME I CHECKED, being funny was not linked to gender, race, or religion. As Kurt Vonnegut observed in A Man Without a Country, “Some are funny, and some people are not.” It took Vonnegut 8 words to express what Hitchens couldn’t grasp in 2,747. If “brevity is the soul of wit,” then Hitchens lacks both.

NELL SCOVELL
Los Angeles, California

AS POSSIBLY the only comedian ever to do a statistical analysis of gender differences in comedy, I wish to refute some statements found in “Why Women Aren’t Funny.” My gender analysis, done earlier in 2006, revealed that approximately one third of amateur comedians are female. A smaller percentage of professional comics are women; although, mathematically, one can’t directly compare the two populations at one point in time, because of the several years it takes to go from beginner to professional. Women do appear more likely to take a class when starting in comedy, whereas men are more likely to just write some jokes and show up on open-mike night. And while almost all women who attend open-mike nights seem to want to be comedians, some percentage of males who show up are just in need of attention, or medication.

As a male-dominated industry, it’s a long, hard fight for women until the numbers start to even out. What will help to
even them out? If people would stop publishing articles claiming that women aren’t funny, it’s clearly not true. Comedy is a business; it runs on money. Your money is your vote. Go out and vote.

SHEA BREIDBART
New York, New York

MAYBE CHRISTOPHER Hitchens is right: maybe he is not. Maybe I agree with him; maybe I do not. But about this I challenge him to a duel, stand-up-comedy-style. Let’s see who makes more people laugh. Hitchens can name the place. Full disclosure: I am a stand-up comedian and the widow of comedian Mitch Hedberg.

LYNN SHAWCROFT
Los Angeles, California

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS REPLIES: I took care to distinguish females from female comics. Some of these chicks can’t even read.

CRACKS IN THE MEMOIR

WHILE IT SEEMS certain that Augusten Burroughs exaggerated or embellished some aspects of his childhood, it is striking that the Turcottes do not dispute his most serious accusations [“Ruthless with Scissors,” by Buzz Bissinger, January]. They express dismay over his descriptions of cussing, kibbble nibbling, and a toddler’s preoccupation with poop, but nowhere do they dispute the fact that their father allowed a mentally unstable grown man to carry on a sexual relationship with Burroughs when he was a minor, and stood idly by while he stopped attending school on a regular basis. Nor do they do a convincing job of exonerating their father, who allowed his own daughter to enter into a relationship with an adult when she was 13 years old.

Judging from the severity of their reactions to the book (continuous vomiting, quitting the police force out of fear of being called names), the children of Dr. Turcotte had pre-existing issues that cannot be blamed on Augusten Burroughs. One can certainly sympathize with their struggles, but one can’t help but wonder if it might not be more productive for them to cast a critical eye on their father and his damaging legacy.

The Turcottes claim that Burroughs loved being at their house. I’m willing to bet that when Robert Downey Jr. was eight years old he thought it was pretty cool that his father encouraged him to smoke pot. And we all know how he feels about that now.

GREG HORN
San Francisco, California

I HAVE READ Running with Scissors several times. I loved the book. And until your article, I had never heard of the Turcottes, or Chris Robison. I find the intense reaction of the Turcottes suspect. I find it suspect that they came forward when they found out Hollywood money had gotten involved. And I find it beyond the pale that they—who are supposedly so mortified and sickened—posed for pictures in a high-profile national magazine.

The book is a memoir, not a legal document. I completely disagree with the memoirists quoted: Burroughs was under no obligation, moral or otherwise, to the Turcottes. If, just for the sake of argument, you accept what Augusten Burroughs has written as true, then you have to understand why he would never have contacted them about the book, why he needed to write it, and why he offers them no apologies now.

LAURA PLYBON
Port Washington, New York

I AM GRATEFUL to Vanity Fair for bringing this story to light. Because I think the Turcotte family has a right to share their perspective on this memoir, which has been read by so many, including myself, and has had such a devastating and painful effect on them as a family.

As a poet and contributing columnist for a local paper and as a writer for many years, I understand thoroughly that writers of memoirs are all too often inspired to exact revenge on family members and those from their collective past.

As a boy who was unwanted by his father and mother, growing into a new home, which must have been painful and humiliating for him, he could have been full of rage. I think it is perfectly plausible that Augusten Burroughs did indeed exaggerate and embellish his experiences, if only to garner more attention, sympathy, and readership for his published memoir.

THERESA KENNEDY
Portland, Oregon

FANNING THE FLAMES

AS THE MOTHER of a 12-year-old girl, I enjoyed the pictorial of little Dakota Fanning (“Cinderella in Sneakers,” by Jim Windolf, January). Then it occurred to me: just six years from now you will ask her to take off her clothes and put her on your cover.

TERRY HERNON MACDONALD
Shelton, Connecticut

THE ESQUIRE REVOLUTION

FRANK DIGIACOMO, in his article “The Esquire Decade” [January], calls the cuddly Esquire cover of war criminal Lieutenant Calley in a nest of children “a masterpiece.” It was practically a war crime itself. DiGiacomo notes that Calley was paid $20,000 to be interviewed. He does not tell how Harold Hayes violated journalistic ethics in a deeper way: Calley’s lawyer had the right to vet the article. Hayes asked to write the piece before he asked John Sack. He said he would credit me with two articles, not just one. If I would do it, I fused to whitewash a war criminal. I like and admired Hayes, but this was a deal and lasting stain on his record.

GARRY WIL
Evanston, Ill.

FRANK DIGIACOMO REPLIES: Gore Vidal is entitled to his opinion about the Calley cover, but there is no question in my mind that it is master-piece. Hayes’s Esquire was all about presenting the unexplored and unexplored angles bot-trap, and George Lois’s cover did exactly that. To deliberately depict Calley as a monster would have been old hat—countless press reports had already done so. But to humanize him was truly provocative—and, whether you interpret the Calley cover as a “cuddly” portrait or as a laud black humor, I think the image actually underscores the horror of the My Lai killing. As for Vidal’s assertion that Hayes violated journalistic ethics, I’m not sure such a pat verdict can be rendered. Hayes reportedly did allow Calley’s lawyer to alter passages in at least the first of three “The Confessions of Lt. Calley” pieces Esquire published in part because the first article was published just weeks before Calley stood trial. But it’s worth noting that each of those stories carried the byline “by Lt. William L. Calley Jr., interviewed by John Sack.” Presented in that way, I think Esquire made it clear that the Calley stories were a form of memoir and thus potentially subject to the self-righteousness and selective storytelling that is endemic to the form. Perhaps the articles were flawed in that respect, but they still revealed a side of the Calley story that Esquire’s competition did not and, more than 35 years later, still makes for gripping reading.

AFTER READING Frank DiGiacomo’s admirable retrospective on the history of Esquire in the 60s, I couldn’t help but notice the brilliantly artistic covers that used to grace the great American magazines but are no longer prevalent on today’s newstands. As the story of Esquire’s December 1963 Sonny Liston cover shoot is retold, the cliché “A picture is worth a thousand words” momentarily regains its profound meaning. These classic covers were true works of visual art that could be framed and displayed as a piece of expressive home or office décor.

Unfortunately, the A.D.D.-friendly magazines of today, as DiGiacomo put it, frequently ruin a picture, which speaks for itself, with bulleted headlines and eye-catching phrases, because the average unintelligent reader apparently needs many words for further enticement.

Ironically, these industry-standard attention grabbers are plastered monthly on the cover of
HIP. EVERY HAPPENING...
THIS SPRING,
BARBIE® IS ALL M-A-C
WITH A SMOOTH REBEL ATTITUDE
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Every journey needs a Journal.
Vanity Fair, a magazine which strives to maintain a higher standard. I ask that you raise the standard of your covers to the level of the articles, and perhaps 35 years from now people will remember the exceptional level of this magazine on the whole.

BRIAN C. COX
Houston, Texas

UNTIL I SAW MYSELF identified as a member of the Esquire editorial staff, circa 1994, in the picture on page 132 of the January issue, I was becoming more and more convinced that I had dreamed that episode of my young life. The glasses and expression on my face suggest that if it was a dream was not a particularly nice one. Actually, the whole experience continued on page...

MORE FROM THE V.F. MAILBAG

W ell, we can’t dive into the Hitchens Affair just like that—the Mailbag needs to ease into these things. So, first, here is one anonymous Apocalypso buff offering, in a handwritten note, “my bravos [sic] to wonderful filmmaker Mel Gibson,” adding, perhaps unnecessarily, “I do not own a computer or have e mail I refuse to be a slave of this new revolution computer age of gadgets.” (Could he or she be writing from the Mayan civilization?) Here is William R. Polk, writing from Vence, France, about David Rose’s “Neo Culpa”: “Even in his latest fantasies on the threat of Communists in government, Senator Joe McCarthy would have not believed that a small group of ideologues could do so much damage to America.”

And we have a letter from Jesse Ventura, the former governor of Minnesota. (Or, rather, we don’t: he denies having sent it.) He was upset by some of Norman Mailer’s responses to the Proust Questionnaire. (Or, rather, he wasn’t: remember, he says he didn’t send the letter.) “You people are a bunch of idiots with your heads so far up your asses you haven’t seen the light of day forever… [You] self-styled weasel-dissidents… You’re fuckin’ idiots,” he writes. (Or, rather, he doesn’t.) In any event, thanks, Jesse—or Jesse.

Yes, there was a reaction or two to Christopher Hitchens’s “Why Women Aren’t Funny.” Many readers responded by citing ostensibly funny women such as Lucille Ball, Suzanne Somers, Kristin Chenoweth, Dorothy Parker, Nora Ephron, Mo Collins, Sandra Bullock, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Tina Fey, Laura Orrico (nominated, along with a few other names, by Laura Orrico), Rita Rudner, and Audrey Meadows. (At the mention of Meadows’s Alice Kramden, the Mailbag totally clambered aboard this women-actually-are-funny theory.) Quite a few readers asserted their own comic gifts—a reckless, lose-lose proposition, no matter how blithely it’s put. (“I am a sexy, hot mama who can serve up a barb or a sight gag that has ‘em rollin’ in the aisles”; “I am a stand-up comic in Chicago, I am funny…. Come to one of my shows, I will prove it to you.”)

Quite a few grappled seriously, which is not to say humorlessly, with the issue. “Women—in the media, anyway—aren’t rewarded for being funny. We are rewarded for… having large breasts, thin legs, and looking good in a thong,” writes Susan Isaacs, from Culver City, California. “Women are hilarious when they’re with other women, but when we’re around men, we tone it down, partly because you guys are so competitive and you send us signals that you don’t like it,” says Jane McClelland, of San Francisco. Sixteen-year-old Lydia Stepanek, of Branford, Connecticut, says, “Men do like funny women… All you have to do is look at my dad: my mom has made him laugh so hard for 17 years that he forgets she wears corduroy pants every single day.” And, writes Maude deBagara, of Bloomington, Indiana, “Women are funny. It’s just that the jokes we tell are on you men. And you poor souls often don’t get it.” Finally, “I’ve long had a crush on [Hitchens] for his sharp and bitter turn. With this latest installment, however, I fear I have held on to this crush long past its expiration date. Perhaps if I cut around the blue, moldy edges, I’ll be able to enjoy him for a while longer”—so writes Heather DeLong, from Shanghai.

And what about the men? “Dear Hitch—How’s this for funny: your writing is boring and unfunny. And you suck.” Hmm, how is that for funny? Not very good, David Joe Bradley, of San Diego—not very good at all. In fact, the Mailbag feels a controversial gender-based theory about comedy coming on…

MARCH 2007
NEVER HAS THE PEAR BEEN SO PERFECTLY CAPTURED.
The GREY GOOSE® Maitre de Chai has captured the elegance and decadence of the Anjou pear, artistically blending its natural essence with GREY GOOSE® Vodka.

THE GREY GOOSE® PEARTINI

Combine GREY GOOSE® La Poire Flavored Vodka, DISARONNO® Originale Liqueur, simple syrup and lemon juice in a cocktail shaker. Shake, then strain into a chilled martini glass. Present with a fresh pear slice.
See what happens when the right brain meets the left brain at the first New Yorker Conference, a dynamic day and two nights of new ideas, forward thinking, and eye-opening innovation.

New Yorker writers and editors, among them David Remnick, Malcolm Gladwell, Connie Bruck, James Surowiecki, Ken Auletta, and Michael Specter, will introduce you to the minds that will make a difference in the coming years.

Through exclusive interviews, vivid presentations, and in-depth discussions, you will learn what the future holds. It's the ultimate insider's look at the works in progress that will shape our world, from boardrooms to courtrooms, from biology labs to design studios.

Tickets are $1,200 and will include all programs, meals, receptions, and entertainment. Seating is extremely limited. To order, please call 212.286.5753. Please visit conference.newyorker.com to receive e-mail updates and for more information.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 180 was immense fun, and in much the way Frank DiGacomo depicts it.

One anecdote has stuck with me. In 1968, after Harvard had tied Yale 29–29, in Cambridge, I repaired to the Owl Club with my brother (who was a member) and my father, who was a contributing editor at the magazine when I was an editor (thus accounting for the need to use the roman numerals after my name). Senator Edward Kennedy (also an Owl Club member) showed up with an entourage of handlers and Norman Mailer. I walked across the room and asked Mailer about the “I’ll trade you two ‘shits’ for a ‘fuck’” story. Had Harold Hayes really made that offer in an attempt to get *An American Dream* past the censors? Mailer started shadowboxing around the Owl, demanding to know how I knew the story, asking if I was a member of the C.I.A. and whether his phones were tapped, and generally making the kind of fool of himself we have come to know and dismiss. After a few minutes of watching him circle the room muttering to himself, Kennedy’s handlers started gently moving him away from the bar and toward the door. We left soon after. DiGacomo’s article confirmed the story even if Mailer wouldn’t.

GEORGE FRAZIER IV
New Orleans, Louisiana

LUCE TALK

I AM AMAZED at the letters of blind support written for Leila Hadley Luce [Letters, January]. They ask why Vicky Ward did not merely say something nice about Luce in “The Luce Family War” [November]. I am one of the few individuals to have seen the content of one of the letters that Ward mentions in her reply to the Luce supporters, and I am convinced that the fann mail published in support of Luce is just that.

Linda H. Davis refers to the article as thinly researched. I remember when my friend John Palcowski was contacted by Ward to be interviewed for the article in question. It was out of the blue and honestly disconcerting. The fact that he had not seen it coming indicates to me that Ward dug significantly.

We know that Luce can find plenty of people to support her reputation, which is what those letters proved. What blows my mind is the blind support absent any involvement in or understanding of what Ward’s article covered.

TOM JOHANSMeyer
New York, New York

SALLEY COLLINS, of the Committee on House Administration, was quoted as stating there are no proposed changes, currently, to the House page program. It’s really simple Quit hiring minors as congressional pages! This is the second time, since the early 1980s, that there has been a congressional-page scandal. In response to the first scandal, the minimum age was raised to 16 and a dormitory was built. A lot of good that did. Raise the age bracket to 18 to 22 and require that pages be undergraduate college students.

As a member of the gay community, I don’t have any sympathy for Mark Foley. Having been a messenger-doorkeeper in the U.S. Senate in 1969 and 1971 and a doorman in 1972 and 1974, I know 16- and 17-year-olds are too young to be pages.

STEVEN L. KENDALL
Seattle, Washington

Mark Foley [“Don’t Ask . . . Don’t E-mail, January]. No sensible person appreciates the hypocrisy that Mark Foley foisted upon this country. And most readers of this magazine probably don’t care one whit that Foley is gay, what they care about is his illegal pursuit of a 16-year-old page. Unfortunately, though, Foley becomes a victim, too, at the hands of you two writers. When describing Foley’s reaction to being sexually exploited as a youth by a trusted church priest, the authors write, “Unlike a peer of his who ran away from another priest’s overtures, young Foley apparently did not resist.” I am not a psychologist, nor have ever been a victim of violence, but even I can see that portraying Foley as an accomplice in his own childhood abuse flies in the face of what is right. How many times have we heard of the difficulties in prosecuting rapists and sexual predators? Many individuals in this society subconsciously, or consciously, believe that a victim meant “yes” when he/she said “no” or in some way “enjoyed” the assault. So it goes with Foley, according to Sheehy and Bachrach. “He must have enjoyed being sexually abused as a kid or he would have run away, too,” is the implication. How misguided. Foley should be held accountable for the reprehensible acts he perpetrated as an adult. What he shouldn’t have to account for is the humiliation and suffering he underwent at the hands of a trusted family friend and member of the clergy when he was a child.

STEPHANIE DEAN
Westminster, Maryland

THE MAN IN THE CLOSET

GAIL SHEEHY, JUDY BACHRACH, and the editors at *Vanity Fair* must have been on a mental hiatus when preparing the article on Men.
Mission Control 2.0

Communicate on your compatible cell phone using advanced hands-free Bluetooth wireless technology. The next Nissan Maxima: Part of the next generation of Nissan thinking. All systems go. For more, visit NissanUSA.com.

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ROOM WITH A VIEW
New York's sexy new Bowery Hotel, opening this month, has eight terraces which offer sensational views of the city in every direction. For more, turn to page 213.
An advertisement shot by Snowdon for Acrilan, 1957.

Portraits of Princess Diana, Eric Clapton, Salvador Dali, Noël Coward, and others, taken by Lord Snowdon, are on display at Godel & Co. Fine Art, in New York City, through April 14.

The spectacular exhibition "Henri Cartier-Bresson's Scrapbook: Photographs 1932–46," now showing at New York's I.C.P. through April, features 331 original images from early in the photographer's career. (icp.org)

The Discovery Channel debuts Planet Earth, an 11-episode series narrated by Sigourney Weaver—an unforgettable exploration of the planet's highest mountains, deepest waters, and last true wilderness areas. (8 P.M. E.S.T.)

Blue State Coffee

Drink Liberally

Blue State Coffee, left, the new, socially responsible java company, not only offers organic, fairly traded beans roasted to perfection but also donates half of its profits to causes aligned with progressive values. (bluestatecoffee.com)

Left, Charlotte Casiraghi at the Rose Ball, March 25, 2006, Monaco; above, Monte Carlo, Monaco.

The Rose Ball, held in Monte Carlo and attended by the royal family of Monaco, benefits the Princess Grace Foundation and takes place in the Salle des États at the Sporting d'Été complex, amid a display of more than 25,000 roses.

London's Victoria and Albert Museum debuts "Surreal Things," an examination of Surrealism and its influence on design and pop culture. Paintings by Magritte, Ernst, and Dali, famous pieces such as Dali's Mae West Lips Sofa and Lobster Telephone, and more will be on display through July 22.
Himalia Pearls collection
Cartier classic jewelry

Cartier

1-800-cartier - www.cartier.com
What is the key to an artist's creative success? Joan Acocella's rich and brilliantly wrought trove of essays, Twenty-Eight Artists and Two Saints (Pantheon), proves it's "patience, courage, and the ability to survive disappointment."

Hold on to your helmet: In Leni (Knopf), Steven Bach unspools the dark truth about Nazi-friendly filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, proving her to be anything but apolitical. Conservative, patriotic soldier Joshua Key's allegiance to the U.S. government was decimated by the atrocities he witnessed in Iraq, and with the help of Lawrence Hill he tells The Deserters' Tale (Grove). In her harrowing memoir, Infidel (Free Press), Ayaan Hirsi Ali once again tempts the fury of fundamentalists. Senator Chuck Schumer comes out swinging for the middle class in Positively American (Rodale), Bambi vs. Godzilla (Pantheon) sees David Mamet spitting, growling, and butting his eyes at the business of making movies. Kevin Sessums's memoir is a portrait of the writer as a Mississippi Sissy (St. Martin's). Makeup maven Bobbi Brown (now 50 herself) shares midlife sleights of hand to achieve Living Beauty (Springboard).

"L'amour! L'amour! L'amour!" Daniel Jones, editor of the eponymous New York Times column, presents its loveliest and thorniest tales of "desire, deceit, and devotion" in Modern Love (Three Rivers). In Sally Wofford Girand and Andrea Chapin's anthology, The Honeymoon's Over (Warner), writers such as Jane Smiley and Terry McMillan dish about why they split or stayed. From Dietrich to Stei-

Heyday! Heyday! Kurt Andersen's new novel, Heyday, is 620 pages of excavation over the birth of modern in a young America. Like his first book, Turn of the Century, Heyday is fueled by manic energy, fanatical research, and a wicked sense of humor. The setting is ago-

New York, and the book is encyclopedic in its embrace of the city. The subject is simulta-

eous—"the havoc that technology, man, and a giddy sense of possibility can wreak, but rather than take aim at the New York of the not-too-distant future, as in Turn of the Century, Andersen (who co-edited Spy w. V.F.'s editor) sets Heyday in 1848, when the inventions of the telegraph, steam engine railroad, and daguerreotype all conspire to warp time. Andersen's enthralling start begins with the February revolution in Palm and ends with the gold rush in California and loosely follows the journey of Englishman Ben Knowles from Europe to New York, where he meets Timothy Skaggs, journalist, satirist, daguerreotypist, and a man (now Pantheon), Duff Lucking (a veteran of the Mexican War), and Duff's sister Polly (a tramp and prostitute). Ben and Polly fall in love, and the foursome eventually head west, but what really drives the book is a genuine enthusiasm for progress. Andersen's first novel was a satire of our crazy times, and though Timothy Skaggs, an Andersen-like character, muses on the ironies of his own mad era, Heyday is remarkable for its lack of cynicism. It's a joyful, wild gallipot through a joyful, wild time to be an American.

-Anne Fulewider
Pick a nice spot for your library. The Sony Reader holds almost all electronic books and with a removable memory card, it’s as easy to carry as a slim paperback. You can be reading anywhere you want. Now you don’t have to pick a beachside location for your book shift. Are you a Reader? Read more at www.reader.com.

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Holy Pop Art
SISTER CORITA’S VIVID RENAISSANCE

This year marks the 21st anniversary of the death of Frances Elisabeth Kent, more widely known as Sister Corita, the Andy Warhol of Hollywood. Sister Corita was a nun, a member of the West Coast’s Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, under whose progressive roof Corita developed and taught her art, a cutting-edge populist imagery in the vein of her more famous, mainstream Pop-art peers. Sister Corita used familiar 1960s artistic methods to spread the priorities of her spiritual life, namely religion and goodness, in a star-

A ROYAL COLLABORATION

The new candle line Sarah, Duchess of York, Tea Collection, which launches next month, is a joint venture by Sarah Ferguson and home-fragrance king Harry Slatkin. “Among life’s pleasures for me is sitting down to a steaming and fragrant cup of tea,” says the duchess. “The soothing quality of tea inspired my collection.” Available in five fragrances—Bergamot Tea, Rose, Ginger Tea, White Tea Ginger, Green Tea and Mint Leaves, and Mandarin Green Tea—the candles will be available at Bath & Body Works. “This was about creating something that embodies the duchess,” says Slatkin. And he would know. Candles are his special tea.

—JESSICA FLINT

Sweet Dreams

The story goes that in 1996, after actress Shirley Jones sampled one of the handmade chocolates in the jewel-box-size candy store Edelweiss Chocolates of Beverly Hills, Canon Drive, she went home and told her husband, producer Marty Ingels, that he had fallen in love. Ingels went to try the candy for himself, and after the cashier totaled his purchase, he asked, “Now, how much for the whole store?” Ingels and Jones went on to buy a chocolate business. Everything about Edelweiss, which opened its doors in 1942, is heavenly. Its legendary customers have included Lucille Ball—whose famous I Love Lucy episode where she and Ethel run a chocolate factory was inspired by the confectionery machine that still operates in one of the store—Nancy Reagan, Lauren Bacall, Katharine Hepburn (who wrote ran dark-chocolate turtles in her book, Me), Saudi princes (who come in with eight entourage), Madonna, Steven Spielberg, and Leonardo DiCaprio. One of the best parts about Edelweiss is that, if you’re a regular customer, you need only call and tell them how they can help on your way: they keep a record of all your favorite treats.

—PUNCH
THE GENTLEMEN’S FUND

is an initiative that raises support and awareness for five principles essential to men—Opportunity, Health, Education, Environment, and Justice. Established in 2007 to commemorate GQ’s 50th anniversary, The Gentlemen’s Fund furthers a modern man’s desire to be an agent of change by benefiting charities that champion these causes.

Donate $100 or more to one of the charities affiliated with The Gentlemen’s Fund, and your name will be featured in GQ’s Men of the Year issue.

Learn more at thegentlemensfund.com.
Fred Astaire is one of her idols.

A teddy bear wearing a paper hat that says LIZ SMITH. She is afraid to throw any of this stuff away “for fear of irritating the gods.”

She won this 1984–85 Emmy for Outstanding News Special for her Live at Five report “VE Day: 40 Years After,” broadcast on board the Intrepid.

This Maltese Falcon was given to Liz by University of Texas classmate and Oscar-winning director (Kramer vs. Kramer) Robert Benton. She says she should have married him.

Tany Curtis sent this photo of himself to Liz with a note: “Keep this in your purse. They once had an encounter at Le Cirque, where, according to Liz, he yelled, ‘Fuck yea!’ He later apologized, and they became friends again.

Assistants Mary Jo McDanaugh and Denis Ferrara place mail and items in her in-boxes.

A birthday book, and a New Yorker yearly calendar with her name embossed in gold.

Liz Smith files her weekday syndicated column from this desk at her New York office on East 38th Street, where she’s been since 1976.


Left, Liz with artist Peter Rogers and Ann Richards, right, Liz’s late brother James.

She hates talking on the phone—and doesn’t carry a cell phone.

Her late brother Bobby.

The 2,548 Best Things Anybody Ever Said, compiled by Robert Byrne.

A teddy bear wearing a paper hat that says LIZ SMITH. She is afraid to throw any of this stuff away “for fear of irritating the gods.”

This Maltese Falcon was given to Liz by University of Texas classmate and Oscar-winning director (Kramer vs. Kramer) Robert Benton. She says she should have married him.

Tany Curtis sent this photo of himself to Liz with a note: “Keep this in your purse. They once had an encounter at Le Cirque, where, according to Liz, he yelled, ‘Fuck yea!’ He later apologized, and they became friends again.

Assistant Mary Jo McDanaugh and Denis Ferrara place mail and items in her in-boxes.

A birthday book, and a New Yorker yearly calendar with her name embossed in gold.

Liz with Nicole Kidman at the 2005 Vanity Fair Oscar party.


Left, Liz with artist Peter Rogers and Ann Richards, right, Liz’s late brother James.
Winston's

7746 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
WEST HOLLYWOOD

WHO YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET IN: The owners: actor Andy Fiscella; film producer Beau Flynn; GQ's Chris Huvane; Tsubi's Dan Single, George Gorrow, and Greg Chair; and film producer Matt Alvarez.


D.J.: Mr. Best spins an eclectic music mix.

SIGNATURE COCKTAIL: The Glenlivet on ice for $10. V.I.P. SEATING: No. DOORMAN: Seven nights a week. But the guys say that anyone is welcome.

My Stuff

Georgina Chapman

Marchesa, the two-year-old fashion line from designer and actress Georgina Chapman, is this year's award-season red-carpet sensation. Chapman will next be seen in the Weinstein Company's The Nanny Diaries in April. Herewith, a few of her favorite things...

CLOTHES


FORM AND FUNCTION

A style suggestion for a pharmacy from Shop America; right, the cover of the book.

Fashion Forward

Shop America, out next month from Taschen, captures the optimism, opulence, and commercialism of midcentury America by showcasing a compendium of storefront designs from 1938 to 1950. The illustrations are "reminders of a time when stores were sacred shrines for the congregation of American shoppers." The images reflect a shopping experience unparalleled by today's mega-malls and eBay bids.
Ermenegildo Zegna
What strikes you first about the Bowery Hotel isn’t what it looks like, but what it’s called. Eric Goode and Sean MacPherson, the entrepreneurs behind New York City’s Maritime Hotel and the Park restaurant, didn’t give their new boutique hotel some grandiose name to over up the fact that it sits on a street that plenty of people still think of as skid row. Even as gentrification has marched across Manhattan, the Bowery, which runs from Chatham Square, at the southern edge of Chinatown, up to Cooper Square, in the East Village, has retained its air of runginess. That made it perfect for CBGB’s, the cradle of punk rock that famously closed last October, but it also scared off the developers who were dropping new glass condominiums all over downtown.

The Bowery was never an ordinary street. It has a past. Famous for so long as the last stop for derelicts, it lent its name to a hit song by Charles Hoyt and Percy Gaunt from 891. “The Bowery” ended with the lament “I’ll never go there anymore”—a testimonial to the street’s decline that is about as far as you can get from Irving Berlin’s swoons over Fifth Avenue. The celebrated WPA Guide to New York City, produced during the Great Depression, described the Bowery as a place where “flophouses offer a bug-infested bed in an unventilated pigeonhole for twenty-five cents a night.”

The street is wide, but it has none of the grace of a boulevard, and it skirts all kinds of neighborhoods—SoHo, Little Italy, Nolita, the Lower East Side—without seeming connected to any of them. It’s more a funnel than a place. While the surrounding streets have become studded with fashionable shops, bars, and restaurants, not to mention those condos, the Bowery has remained mostly a mix of old restaurant-supply houses and miscellaneous storefront businesses. There is still a Salvation Army shelter at the corner of East 3rd Street.

The first sign of change on the Bowery came in 2003, when the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the city’s most determinedly avant-
FANFAIR

garde art institution, announced that it was hiring the Tokyo-based architects Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, of the firm Sanaa, to design a home for its collection, at the corner of Prince Street. Sejima and Nishizawa described the Bowery as “tough ... less a boundary than a neutral ‘demilitarized’ zone between neighborhoods.” Their building, a tower of galvanized zinc-plated steel, is scheduled to be finished later this year.

Reasoning that the New Museum’s arrival meant their property might be worth developing, the owners of a garage at the corner of East 3rd Street, across from the shelter, hastily erected a 16-story tower of little architectural distinction. They never managed to complete it, partly because of a zoning dispute, and Goode and MacPherson bought it in 2004.

“The building was literally built out of Styrofoam, with hideous aluminum windows and cheap air-conditioning units,” Goode says. “But we thought it had good bone structure.”

Turning the “Tower of Bowery,” as the real-estate blog Curbed had come to call the unfinished building, into a luxury hotel was an even bigger challenge than the one Goode and MacPherson had faced in their first hotel project, when they transformed the old headquarters of the National Maritime Union into the Maritime Hotel. One of Manhattan’s most endearing, if eccentric, buildings, the Maritime has a sloping, white façade that’s covered with portholes. You can’t fight it—the building has too strong a personality—and Goode and MacPherson were smart enough just to go with the flow. In the spirit of architect Albert Ledner, who designed the building in 1966, they turned it into a crisp temple to 1950s and 60s design.

But the Bowery tower had no personality at all. Goode and MacPherson (who are also partners with the editor of this magazine in the Waverly Inn) had to create one. They stripped the structure of its original skin and recoated it with a veneer of red brick, added industrial-style windows to resemble those of the old factories in the neighborhood, and put large steel-and-glass canopies around the base. The shape of the building, a slender tower with several setbacks, remained the same, but everything else about it was new.

The Bowery

Or new to the Bowery, at least. “For some reason this neighborhood—the Lower East Side—is getting the cheapest and worst architecture,” Goode said to me as we walked through the nearly completed building early this winter. He was trying to explain why he and MacPherson decided to forgo the sleek, paper-thin modernism of almost every other new building downtown in favor of what Goode describes as “New York factory blended with slightly Gothic.”

There are no other tall buildings in the immediate vicinity, so almost every one of the 135 rooms has an open view, and several have huge terraces. Still, if there is a guiding aesthetic to the Bowery Hotel, it isn’t skyline views but urban salvage—old marble sinks and white tile baths, faded oriental rugs, dark wood floors, stained-glass transoms over the doors. The wide lobby has dark wood paneling, vaguely Art Deco in style, taken from an old building in Philadelphia, and the common areas are filled with Spanish-style iron lamps.

Gemma, the Italian restaurant at the front of the hotel—designed by Taavo Somer, co-owner of the nearby comfort-food hangout Freemans—will have a wall of green glazed tile salvaged from an old Con Edison building. “We kept finding things that took us in a far more old-world direction than we had expected,” Goode says. “It is definitely not the Maritime.”

Nor is it Philippe Starck. But more than two decades have passed since Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager hired Andrée Putman and later Starck to invent the hip boutique hotel, and for most of that time Minimalism and retro-modernism have been its modes. At the Bowery, Goode and MacPherson are moving not only into new geographical turf but also into new design territory. While the guest rooms are comfortable and even a bit mellow, it’s too soon to tell if the hotel’s clientele is going to feel that Goode and MacPherson have invented a refreshing new genre or simply figured out a way to sex up the Restoration Hardware look. Goode says he was simply following his own free-ranging taste and trying to make the big building fit into the neighborhood. But as the glass towers continue their march across the Lower East Side, the funky mix of the Bowery Hotel may be the design that stands out most of all.

—PAUL GOLDBERGER

214

MARCH 2007
Hello delicious.

level vodka
beyond smooth, from Absolut
Consider this: none of these movie songs—“Superfly,” “Love Me Tender,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” “A Hard Day’s Night,” “Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door,” and “Staying Alive”—were nominated for Oscars. With that in mind, and with or without “official” recognition, here is some notable music from this year’s film fare.

Until the Dreamgirls DVD release, the next best thing for an at-home re-creation of the hit musical is the soundtrack CD, with the Jennifer Hudson barn burners as well as the original songs sung by Beyoncé and Eddie Murphy. At the end of Bobby, Aretha Franklin and Mary J. Blige join their formidable voices on “Never Gonna Break My Faith,” and the soundtrack reflects the 60s with songs from Simon & Garfunkel, Hugh Masekela, and vintage Motown. Bow Wow Wow’s “I Want Candy” is a bit obvious, but the rest of the music—Aphex Twin, New Order, the Cure, and others—in Sofia Coppola’s beautiful and campy Marie Antoinette is clever and atmospheric. American Hardcore includes all the standard-bearers from the East Coast–West Coast scenes, but the film and soundtrack CD are especially invaluable for the breathless segments with the legendary Bad Brains. High School Musical it’s not; songs from ex-ReplaceMents leader Paul Westerberg elevate the kids’ film Open Season, and Jack Johnson brings pals Ben Harper and G. Love to the Curious George soundtrack. Jonathan Demme’s concert film Heart of Gold is a must for Neil Young fans. “The Neighbor,” from the documentary on the Dixie Chicks, Shut Up & Sing, is another Rick Rubin–produced gem. The Hal Willner–produced Rogue’s Gallery: Pirate Ballads, Sea Songs, & Chanteys, with songs from Nick Cave, Teddy Thompson, and others, is an accompaniment to the Pirates of the Caribbean sequel. The Peter O’Toole tour de force Venus is enriched by Corinne Bailey Rae’s melodic songs. R. L. Burnside, the Black Keys, and Samuel L. Jackson all have songs in Black Snake Moan. Highlights in the adorable Happy Feet are Prince’s “The Song of the Heart” and Fat Joe’s remix of “The Message.” Youssou N’Dour, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Tupac Shakur, and Nas are all heard in Blood Diamond, and Living Like a Refugee is the reggae/hip-hop/West African-influenced soundtrack to the award-winning documentary Sierra Leone’s Refugee All Stars. Of note, too, are songs from James Taylor and Sheryl Crow in Cars, Seal in The Pursuit of Happyness, Melissa Etheridge in An Inconvenient Truth, music from Ryuichi Sakamoto in Babel, and scores from will.i.am (Freedom Writers), Philip Glass (Notes on a Scarland, The Illusionist), and Alberto Iglesias (Volver). Under the experienced direction of Film Music president Kari Nelson, Universal Pictures delivers Jon Brion’s score for The Break-Up, Terence Blanchard’s for Inside Man, and, in Miami Vice, both a great Felix da Housecat remix of Nina Simone’s “Sinnerman” and Moby and Patti LaBelle on the haunting “One of These Mornings.” Also: Marcel Zavros and Bruce Fowler’s score for The Good Shepherd enhances the movie’s tension and elegance, while a version of “Night and Day” in the film sounds so much like Frank Sinatra it fooled me.

When you’ve lived and loved like Frank has, then you know what life’s about.

HOT TRACKS

Lisa Robinson

They all laughed last year when I suggested that Three 6 Mafia’s catchy “It’s Hard Out Here for a Pimp,” from Hustle & Flow, should get the Oscar for best song. Three 6 Mafia laughed laudest when they won. This year’s most moving movie song? Boston-based punk band Dropkick Murphys’ “I’m Shipping Up to Boston,” from the Martin Scorsese masterpiece The Departed. The song has an intensity that embodies the guts and energy of the movie and is another in a long list of music that the director—a renowned music fan—has brilliantly utilized in his work. He’s made impeccable choices: the Ronettes in Mean Streets, Bernard Herrmann’s Taxi Driver score, the Cavalleria Rusticana Intermezzo in Raging Bull, the Rolling Stones in GoodFellas, Mickey and Sylvia’s “Love Is Strange” in Casino, just to name a few. The Dropkick Murphys number, originally on the band’s 2005 CD, The Warrior’s Code, was inspired by an uninspired Woody Guthrie lyric and has a hard-core bagpipe stomp that puts other bands who consider themselves punk rock to shame. It’s included on the Departed soundtrack CD—along with songs from the Stones, the Beach Boys, the Band, Van Morrison, and LaVern Baker. Kudos to Scorsese.

DEAR DEPARTED

Martin Scorsese is the big winner, with two Oscars and a Best Original Score nomination for The Departed. The first Oscar for Best Original Score went to Terence Blanchard for Inside Man, his second nomination for the film. It was a tough choice between his score for Inside Man and the score for An Inconvenient Truth, which was nominated for an Oscar. The second win was a first for John Novello, who was also nominated for Inside Man. The third win was for John Novello, who was also nominated for Inside Man. The third win was for John Novello, who was also nominated for Inside Man. The third win was for John Novello, who was also nominated for Inside Man.
Dior

j'adore

lize Theron. J'adore
Early Modern  The Hishou model airplane, from Yoshido, in Japan, looks like a Pentagon drone but is, in fact, a design that dates from the first years of aeronautics. The prototype of this A-shaped balsa-wood plane first flew in 1911, when it made a test flight over the Sumido River, in Tokyo. It's available at x-tremegeek.com.

One for the Roadster  The American Roadster, in profile, looks like a classic racer from the 1930s. Examine it more closely, however, and you discover that there are only three wheels. The tri-wheel design allowed the Roadster's creator, John S. Greene, to get the vehicle classified as a motorcycle, which, in turn, allowed him to sidestep the billions of dollars in testing required for the research and development of new automobiles. Result: the first production hydrogen vehicle in the world. Because of Greene's fancy footwork, Roadster is available this month (eco-fueler.com) for less than $20,000. The four-cylinder engine is designed to run on compressed natural gas as well. You can go 450 miles on one tank.

Time Out  Suunto invented the modern compass. Today the company makes a watch it calls a "wristop computer," the X9i, equipped with a compass, chronograph, altimeter, barometer, and, most important, G.P.S., which can interface with Google Earth. This allows adventurers to view their routes anywhere on the planet with satellite imagery. The X9i tells your computer where you have been, which enables you to zoom in from outer space to relive everything you saw on the ground.

Lapo of Luxury  An heir to the Fiat fortune—and to mony Corocenci suits once owned by his grandfather Gianni Agnelli—Lapo Elkann has started his own fashion brand. Italo Independent (I-I for short) debuts with carbon-framed sunglasses whose design, Lapa says, is "soft but aggressive." Euro-fabulous goggle look guaranteed. Most sales will be on the Web at italoindependent.com, where you can customize your I-I look with monograms and four different colors for the lenses and frames.

Big Marc Up  Marc Newson trained as a jeweler and sculptor, "to raise silver teapots à la Georg Jensen," he says. In 2006 his riveted aluminum Lockheed Lounge chair—created in 1986—sold for $968,000 at Sotheby's in New York, the highest price ever paid for a work by a living designer. The distinctions between art and design—were there ever distinctions?—are becoming increasingly blurred in the eyes of the auction houses, galleries, and art groupies who drive the market. What 10 years ago may have been merely an uncomfortable chair is now elevated on a pedestal as Art. This month, the Gagosian Gallery in Manhattan gives Newson his first solo exhibition in the U.S. The designer is pushing the envelope in terms of complexity and luxuriousness of materials. There are sculptural morile chairs, a surfboard mode of nickel, and a web-like shell cut from a single block of Carrara marble. The forms are graphically simple, but, at times, defy technical explanation. Newson's theme is seamlessness, one he has preached and practiced in all of his work, from flashlights to airplane interiors—much as Raymond Loewy compulsively streamlined everything from locomotives to Lucky Strike boxes in the course of inventing the field of industrial design, in the 1920s. If Loewy were alive and working today, would Gagosian give him a show? That's the $968,000 question.
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Katherine Jenkins, the young opera star, is Montblanc’s ambassador for arts & culture projects.
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an Francisco grande dame Denise Hale remembers Trevor Traina at age 14, coming up to her at a party of his mother's and saying, "Mrs. Hale, those are the most beautiful ruby earrings I've seen in all my life." As Hale says, "You already knew he was someone special." Trevor, a scion of one of San Francisco's highest-profile clans—his mother is the society powerhouse Dede Wilsey; his stepmother is the hugely successful romance novelist Danielle Steel; his father, John Traina, is the city's most popular extra man—has lived up to expectations. By his late 20s, he had earned degrees from Princeton, Oxford, and Berkeley, started his first company, CompareNet, and sold it to Microsoft for a reported $100 million. In 2005, he was appointed chairman of another Internet company, StepUp, that Intuit acquired 18 months later for approximately $60 million. He is chairman of SchemaLogic and a director of Veridem, both software companies, as well as a major investor in a Chinese Internet venture called MyEtone. He serves on several philanthropic boards, ranging from Venetian Heritage to Vision of Hope, which supports eight inner-city California schools. He has also amassed a collection of nearly 200 photographs and photo-based artworks by Walker Evans, Garry Winogrand, Diane Arbus, Larry Clark, Andreas Gursky, Mike Kelley, and John Baldessari, among others. "Warhol, Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons, and Richard Prince are on my shopping list," he says.

Trevor met his wife, frozen-food heiress Alexis Swanson, 10 years ago. They became "great pals," he says, but didn't start dating until 2003, when she was "convalescing" after the collapse of her first marriage. A product of the Ethel Walker School and Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Alexis grew up mostly in Naples, Florida—"a Valhalla of eccentric characters," as she recalls it. Her father, Clarke Swanson, made a fortune in cable television before moving the family to Napa Valley and founding Swanson Vineyards, a winery.

That Alexis now runs with him. Indeed, its flagship wine, a Cabernet blend, is called "Alexis." ("I'm in the unenviable position of being a husband who frequently hears, 'Oh, I had Alexis last night,'" quips Trevor.) The Swanson winery also sells Alexis chocolates, made in partnership with Vosges Haut-Chocolat of Chicago, and $32-anounce dairy caviar. A gung-ho marketer, she delights in spinning company slogans such as "quality, relevance, and irreverence" and "celebrating decadence with a wink." Trevor proposed to Alexis last May at Bergdorf Goodman, in New York, in an elaborate setting of "golden branches, golden peacocks, and golden candles" that the store's famous window designer, Linda Fargo, had created for him and installed after-hours. Waiting for them on a Venetian-grotto table that had once belonged to movie director Franco Zeffirelli were Alexis wine, Alexis bonbons, and Swanson caviar. "I wanted to propose in a meaningful way," Trevor explains, "but also to let Alexis know that I got her—she's a woman in love with charm, whimsy, and fantasy. As luck would have it, my stepmother is probably Bergdorf's top customer." Adds Alexis, "I was so dumbfounded—and touched—I could hardly speak. It was such a wildly romantic gesture."

The bride's parents hosted the August wedding at the Napa Valley vineyard Trevor owns with his younger brother, Todd, just down the road from the Swanson spread and not far from the vineyards individually owned by the groom's mother and father. A mediation consultant was brought in to help decide whose wine to serve at the reception that followed an Episcopalian ceremony officiated by Bishop William Swing. After a honeymoon at the Ritz in Paris, the Bauer Il Palazzo in Venice, a Loire Valley château, and a Lake Garda villa, Trevor and Alexis returned home to Pacific Heights. A baby boy is expected around Memorial Day.

—BOB COLACELLO
Eventually it all boils down to:
Do I want a car, or do I want a Porsche?

The decision couldn't be more clear-cut. Legendary Porsche handling. A potent, new, 500-hp engine that uses less fuel. And all tightly wrapped in a newly refined, more muscular stance.
Now do you want a Cayenne, or did you just want a car? Porsche Cayenne Turbo. There is no substitute.

The new Cayenne. Available in March.
Step inside the Brentwood Country Mart, built in 1948 and you’re instantly transported to a time when a post office, barbershop, cobbler, and pub made for a town. The original long red barn, replete with white trim and arched walkways, is a charming architectural contrast to the tony Brentwood enclave. Stroll down narrow passageways connecting high-end, independently owned boutiques such as Turpan (everything from cashmere throws to eco-friendly cleaning supplies), Apartment Number 9 (with men’s labels such as Trovata and Seiz Sur Vingt), Calypso, and the Monogram Market, and leading to two cobblestoned courtyards filled with a handful of picnic tables and benches surrounding a fire pit, given to the original owners by the community as a one-year-anniversary present. On any given weekend, you’ll find locals and families of all ages eating chicken and fries from Reddi Chick (the best rotisserie recipe in town) and burgers and salads from Barney’s. The Country Mart is still one of the best-kept secrets in L.A. —PUNCH HUTTON
Who knew all those double lattes would end up being so relaxing?

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BEAUTY HEIR

F or those who were deprived of a grandmother's vanity, stocked with gold-encased lipsticks and proper metal compacts that snap with an old-fashioned, satisfying clunk, comes Estée Lauder's limited-edition Heritage Collection. A tribute to Madame Estée herself, the concept was pieced together from granddaughter Aerin Lauder's memories of the beauty icon. "Estée always kept her makeup on a vanity. There's something so wonderful about that—it's the whole inspiration for the collection, designed in the colors that she lived in. Whether it was her clothes, her home, her china, or her jewelry, there was always navy, gold, and white, a core part of the original brand that was founded in 1946." Estée's navy Givenchy coats; enameled gold and navy David Webb jewelry, and 60s and 70s product designs from the company archives act as muses for the spirit of the line: a mix of deliciously packaged sets of vintage-derived, dresser-worthy compacts and accessories, reissued nautical fabrics Estée draped inside her houses on Cap-Ferrat and Long Island. If the look was good enough for Estée, well, it's good enough for us.

—ALEXA BRAZILIAN

Q&A WITH BARBIE

- You're an ageless beauty, but how old are you?
- I am forever a teenager!
- Most people think of you as a style icon. How does that make you feel?
- Being stylish is a fabulous reputation to have, so thank you, but more than anything, I try to be a role model to all girls—encouraging them to dream big and be anything they want to be.
- What was it like to work so closely with Bob Mackie for so many years?
- He is a wonderful friend and very talented designer. Every girl likes to dress over the top every now and then, and Mr. Mackie is a visionary for this—he has graced me with many memorable looks!
- Barbie and MAC cosmetics seem like a match made in heaven—how did this come about?
- We approached each other. MAC told me that, as one of the world’s most recognizable faces, my signature look and color, pink, was their inspiration. Also, we both have a rich heritage in the fashion and beauty industries, we’re both recognized as global style setters, and we’re multicultural, believing that beauty can be represented by a diversity of looks.
- What does it mean to you to have MAC come out with a collection of cosmetics with your name on it?
- I am a huge fan of MAC, so I’m just tickled pink to have my own collection. The collection is absolutely beautiful—from the pink-inspired color palette to the fun packaging.
- Just how big is your closet?
- I have a great big closet—10 inches by 8 inches—to hold all my amazing ensembles and accessories. But, like any good fashionista, I also rotate my wardrobe every spring and fall so I can accommodate new styles and pieces. Plus, over the past five decades, I’ve collected more than one billion pairs of shoes—from platform wedges to cowboy boots, stiletto heels to stylish flats!

Both the Barbie color collection for MAC and Mattel’s MAC Barbie ($35) are in stores now.
**PISCES FEB. 19 - MARCH 20**

Menial tasks can be such a drag. For one thing, all that work eats into your downtime, and you seem to need plenty of that. With so much craziness in your 12th house, you're not sure whether to sing from the rooftop or jump off in despair. Although life can feel like sheer drudgery at times, the three demons that pursue you to the ends of the Earth—discipline, consistency, and regularity—are there now to save you from three other characters you tend to consort with: grief, confusion, and guilt.

**TAURUS APRIL 20 - MAY 20**

It's one thing to get clobbered during the day. Given the disparity between personal morality and professional politics (which is always there but seems worse whenever lunations occur on midheaven planets), what else can you expect? It sure would be nice, though, to be able to walk through the door at sunset without having to face even heavier responsibilities. No matter how exhausted you are, you have to perform. The good news: Someone in the distance will be there to support you through thick and thin.

**CANCER JUNE 22 - JULY 22**

Mars in your 7th house challenges you to adopt a fearless but diplomatic approach to confrontations. It may take a little while to fully understand the idea, but with outer planets in your 7th and 8th houses, you have a lot to gain from cooperating with others who are at least as powerful as you are. We're not just talking about financial benefits, either. Without intruding upon your private affairs, let's just say that any wounds to your self-esteem and confidence can and will be healed. It takes two, though.

**LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 23**

The ancient Greeks had at least three words for love, and considering your odd emotional state, it would be wise to look them up and see which one best describes the way you've been feeling. Not that it would do much good to analyze what's in your heart. Fifth-house transits of outer planets and asteroids make it impossible to be rational. Fortunately there are people around to distract you from your goofy reverie.
Clarins Research as revealed the link between accelerated skin aging and exposure to artificial electromagnetic waves.

We are surrounded by artificial electromagnetic waves generated by a host of modern day devices used for the transmission of sound images. And since they are able to penetrate walls and reach underground, key certainly have no trouble getting into our skin.

For the very first time, Clarins Research has revealed the link between accelerated skin aging and exposure to artificial electromagnetic waves. A few hours of daily exposure is enough to provoke a notable change in the skin's natural barrier, which is often the reason behind skin irritations, dull-looking complexion and early signs of aging.

To help fight this new form of pollution and all other known pollutants, Clarins introduces Expertise 3P™.

**Expertise 3P™ poly pollution protection**

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  Expertise 3P™ Screen Mist leaves behind an invisible veil on the skin's surface to help protect, for the first time, against the aging effects of electromagnetic waves. Refreshing and sheer, you won't feel anything on your skin, yet just a few sprays are enough to cover the entire face and protect it like never before.

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  Rich in super-adaptive plant extracts, Expertise 3P™ respects the balance of even the most sensitive skin and can be used every day, as often as desired. With Clarins exclusive Magnetic Defense Complex (Rhodiola Rosea, Thermus Thermophilus) and our Anti-Pollution Complex (White Tea extract, Succory Dock Cress, a Glycofilm screen), its formula is perfectly compatible with all other skin care and make-up products. Spray onto the face, neck and décolleté over your regular skin care and make-up. Recommended for use by the entire family.

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  Expertise 3P™ is the new protective step to enhance your daily skin care routine. It is the fastest, easiest way to achieve this new level of protection to help the skin look younger, longer. Helps reinforce skin's natural barrier, protects against biological stress and increases cellular energy.

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*Clarins discovery. The subject of a scientific research paper. In-vitro tests. Dermatologist and ophthalmologist tested.*
An Unforgettable Face

Half a century after Elia Kazan made *A Face in the Crowd*, the performances—by Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal, and Anthony Franciosa—are still pungent, the dark tale of media manipulation still resonates, and even fans can’t quite define its power.

M ade during the middle slumbers of the Eisenhower era, Elia Kazan’s *A Face in the Crowd* marks its 50th birthday in 2007 and retains its status as one of the most provocative, unplaceable vagrants—or is it mongrels?—of American moviemaking. It’s a perennial in-between. It didn’t behave then, and it doesn’t quite belong now. It has neither indelibly darkened into a lithographic fable, like Charles Laughton’s masterwork, *The Night of the Hunter*, nor faded into parchment. As Richard Schickel observes in his gung-ho biography of Kazan, published in 2005, “The film has never achieved wide popularity, but it has never disappeared, either. It keeps nagging away at us. At some of us, at least.” *A Face in the Crowd* was and is a satire for the enlightened minority (“some of us, at least”) about the threat posed to democracy when TV personalities achieve magnetic sway over the masses and wield their popularity like a whip. If Fascism comes to America, this film suggests, it’ll be wearing the friendly, donkey grin of a good ol’ boy. Written by Budd Schulberg (who also did the screenplay for Kazan’s *On the Waterfront*), *A Face in the Crowd* is a dark-hued tall tale about a rough-diamond charismatic—Andy Griffith’s singer-joker Lonesome Rhodes—who catapults into national celebrity, only to become the puppet of a populist scheme orchestrated by corporate overlords, who exploit his likability as a lever of social control. Rhodes is no innocent buffoon; he’s as cynical as his paymasters. He preys upon the yearnings and insecurities of regular folks and plays them for suckers. until he commits career suicide by open mike, the victim of a “Macaca” moment. *A Face in the Crowd* might have become an acrid, worry-want exercise in elitist condescension if it hadn’t been for the seams-busting acting of Griffith, who unleashes a moody, gutsy force unsuitable for the future sheriff of Mayberry; Patricia Neal, as the film’s abused, bruised conscience; Anthony Franciosa, who has the appetite of a gigolo turned jackal; and, gleaming in her screen debut, Lee Remick.

*A Face in the Crowd* could have drawn its creative inspiration only from below the Mason-Dixon line, in the country’s moist loins. Postwar American drama roughly split along a North-South divide. The North
I have a teenager.
I don’t need a broker who doesn’t listen to me.
was Arthur Miller country, the Puritan New England of
repression (The Crucible) and the urban stronghold
of Ibsenite social conscience (All My Sons, A View from
the Bridge). Major stress is
laid on the Dignity of Man,
with Death of a Salesman’s
famous injunction, “Attention
must be paid,” hoisted
as the banner statement of
the period. What hope is
there for the little guy when
society is so hierarchical,
top-heavy, uncarving, and
unsparing? If the North was
the crown of America’s
super-perego, crushing the spirit
of the little guy with its de-
dmands and duties, the South
was the oozly underbelly of
id, its poet laureate of psy-
chopathia sexualis being
Tennessee Williams. (“Even
those who dislike Ten-
essie Williams must give him
credit for castrating a hero
here, eating one there.” Gore
Vidal mused in his famous

KAZAN-SCHULBERG’S depiction of the packaging
and marketing of fake authenticity now looks prophetic.

survey of the 50s theater scene, “Love, Love,
Love.”) Where Miller’s plays showed flinty
integrity, a strong work ethic, and a vertical
horizon. Williams’s imagination curled in on
itself, laid up with dreamy memories and a
supply of medicinals, its sly cunning lurking
beneath the mangled fragrance of sachet,
perfume, hothouse flowers, and fleshly de-
cay. With A Face in the Crowd, Kazan bridges
North and South, scales them, the movie
starting out as a character study in southern
depravity and ending up as a northern mes-
sage movie complete with sociological com-
mentary by Walter Matthau’s Mel Miller,
whose last name can’t be a fluke. Outfitted
with a pipe, intellectual spectacles, and an
owlish-liberal demeanor, Matthau’s man of
reason is virtually a stand-in for Arthur
Miller, acerbically editorializing from the side-
lines as Rhodes goes ape. If A Face in the
Crowd has a split personality, the persona-
that’s split is Kazan’s. Unlike, say, John
Cassavetes, whose directorial approach was
strictly observational-behavioral, Kazan en-
couraged brute ferocity in his actors—getting
Griffith soused to bellow his big, raging
monologue—but used his movies to espouse
desires, illustrate themes, and pound home
the-holy-mackerel truth.

Slaps are usually choreographed so the
actor receiving the slap will pull back as if
actually hit, with sound added later, but
Kazan told Patricia to really haul off and
hit the actor. Patricia gave it everything
she had. Franciosa, stunned by the force
of the slap, began to cry. Patricia recalled, “He
was utterly fantastic. But when the camera
stopped, he kept on crying and cried all
through lunch. I felt terrible. I wanted to tell
him what a great job he’d done, but he
wouldn’t come near me. I’m sure he thought
I was a number one bitch.” Unfortunately,
the scene was not used in the film.
—From Patricia Neal, An Unequiet Life,
by Stephen Michael Shearer
(University Press of Kentucky, 2006).

ur introduction to the film’s antihero
comes when “roving reporter” Marcia Jefferies (Neal) pokes her hated
head into the pigeon of the county jail to
scrounge up amateur talent for her radio
program, A Face in the Crowd, which high-
lights the music and gab of everyday folk.
Caterpilled against the wall trying to get
some shut-eye is Griffith’s Lonesome Rhodes
(real name, Larry), a drifter spending the
night after a drunk arrest. Remember drift-
girls start getting blushing ideas. Think of
Paul Newman in The Long, Hot Summer,
his cocky insolence the perfect antidote for
the low sperm count that has denied Orson
Welles’s pug-nosed patriarch his rightful
crop of heirs; or as Chance Wayne in
Sweet Bird of Youth, reducing that town’s petty
despot to Rumpelstiltskin stamps of im-
potent fury. Think of William Holden
hopping off the train in Picnic, his shirtless
torso driving Rosalind Russell into a sexual
dither and arousing the narcotic, met-
nomic beat of Kim Novak’s hips. Think of
Marlon Brando in The Fugitive Kind, a
poetic hunk who wows Anna Magnani with the
melancholy wisdom that “we’re all of
us sentenced to solitary confinement inside
our own lonely skins for as long as we live
on this earth.”

Andy Griffith, fresh from making comedi-
dy records such as “What It Was, Was Foot-
ball” and erasing a beat-up guitar that he
calls “momma,” can’t compete with
Newman, Holden, and Brando in the hairless-
chest, backwoods-Apollo category—who
can? But he owns a thick mop of curls that
screams virility, contrasted against the
bald gens infesting the executive suites (the
rubs one geezer’s scalp and compliments his

MARCH 2007

WOLCOTT

FACE TIME
Elia Kazan flanked by actors Patricia Neal and Anthony Franciosa
during the filming of
A Face in the Crowd.
Lee Remick's Betty Lou burned a hole in the film stock as a "sex-bomb miniature living in a small-town nowheres."

frisky ("Why don't you take Vitajex like Lonesome Rhodes does?" moans a pulp-novel blonde in a nightgown). Everywhere this rascal goes, he incites sexual hysteria, a sea of crazed women and squealing schoolgirls clawing the air to tear at his clothes. The explosive emergence of Elvis Presley probably inspired the pubescent dambusthat erupts after Rhodes achieves TV fame. and it's pertinent that the same year that A Face in the Crowd was released Presley starred in Jailhouse Rock, where, like Rhodes, his character goes from inmate to idol. (And it was a year earlier, in 1956, when Elvis, in his first flush of glory, was filmed walking around Times Square—see the documentary Elvis '56.) Sexual hysteria, another 50s artifact (which would crest in the early 60s with the collective orgasm that was Beatlemania), was the flip side of sexual inhibition—pop open the lid, and all that pent-up energy sends wet panties flying. Now that we live in a porn society that's lost nearly all inhibition, such scenes have an anthropological interest. It's like watching tribal footage of our ancestors' Dionysian rites.

They could all use a good cold shower," Pauline Kael observed of Kazan's cast in her capsule review of A Face in the Crowd, finding the frenzy even then a bit much. Erotic heat is always accompanied by heavy humidity in the fictional realm that critic Dwight Macdonald labeled Kazakhstan. Set before air-conditioning became the norm in homes and businesses, Kazan's melodramas are drenched in perspiration—foreheads glistening, shirts stained, sheets damp with fetid desire, electric fans swiveling their heads and shifting stale air around in cramped rooms. Where Kazan's women are coated with a thin veneer of sweat, enabling them to maintain a semblance of dignity (before they let themselves go native wild), the men are sopping, whipping up a good lather from all the dirty, itchy thoughts prowling around in their primordial brains. Part of what makes Patricia Neal so sexy in certain roles is that she tidily tends to business even as her appraising glances measure every inch of the man under inspection. Here, playing a Sarah Lawrence graduate with certain refined notions that are going to be put through the wringer, she never gives Griffith's Rhodes as avidly frank a going-over as she does Gary Cooper and his phallic drill in The Fountainhead or Paul Newman in Hud (her sexiest performance, with her crookedest grin), but she lets you see the layers of her ladylike reserve slide away when he calls on her in an hour of need, and she tends to his need as only a mature woman can in the sanctity of her hotel room.

But a man-boy such as Rhodes has only passing interest in mature women, with their complicated needs and undergarments. A perky pair of devoted eyes gazing up and idolizing him—that's what he's hankering for. Like Elvis, who bestowed his first glance upon his future princess, Priscilla, when she was a mere 14, or Jerry Lee Lewis, who married his second cousin when she was 13, this cradle robber scoops up a dewy handful of southern delight to be his sister-daughter-lover-missus. The movie's iconic emblem and tasty morsel of wholesome American quirkiness is Lee Remick, Betty Lou Fleckum, a drab majorette with a trim, bar-midriff, white boots that accent her athletic thighs (not until Myra Breckinridge would white boots be used so prancingly), and cheekbones that catch the sun. Every pose she strikes seems perfect for a yearbook photo. A morose sparkly and spangle version of Carroll Baker's thumb-sucking nymphet in Baby Doll (directed by Kazan from a devilish screenplay by Tennessee Williams) flips the corresponding young men's eyes open wide. But this one who wants to be just as much for her as his is Betty Lou in a film about youth. I don't think we've had one in Hollywood since then. It's sad, then, that her screen life, which bloomed so vividly here, has dried up since Kazan's was already underway.
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Rhodes’s slatternly ex-wife, the one he married before Betty Lou, rues, “I knew he’d open his big yap once too often.” In the film’s wittiest visual touch, Rhodes’s rapid plunge in popularity is signaled by the panel lights in the elevator as it descends from floor to floor (“The Lonesome Rhodes Express, going down!” roars the elevator operator)—by the time it reaches the lobby, Rhodes’s career has hit flat bottom. Stunned, stupefied, disoriented, he retreats to his Manhattan penthouse lair, where his punny name takes on ironic significance: he learns it’s Lonesome at the top. In 50s films, nothing symbolizes how lonely it is at the top better than a penthouse suite from which love has flown. A time capsule from the pioneer days of television, when the cameras and sets looked Soviet-bulky and the production values were strictly Salvation Army, A Face in the Crowd gits with a documentary charm, presenting cameo appearances by then familiar granite heads such as Walter Winchell, John Cameron Swayze, and Mike Wallace (who has outlived everybody), postcard snaps of Norman Rockwell small-town American, and anxious political palaver whose sinister tone seems drawn from the demagogic specter of Red-baiting senator Joe McCarthy, who died the year A Face in the Crowd was released but whose influence lingers today, an enduring toxin in the bloodstream. A Face in the Crowd peered into a glass darkly at the prospect of a mob mentality that might rise from the mud and follow the tune of a malignant Pied Piper. While contemporary reviewers scoffed at the prospect of a hayseed fireball like Lonesome Rhodes becoming a national sensation, Kazan–Schulberg’s depiction of the packaging and marketing of fake authenticity now looks prophetic, if a trifle overcooked. In 1990, Kazan told biographer Schickel that the film anticipated the rise of Ronald Reagan, and Schickel adds, “It also anticipates George W. Bush’s manipulation of the crowd.” These days we pride ourselves on being more sophisticated in perceiving image manufacturing and media manipulation, but I would argue that it’s the usual voters who have savvied up over the last half-century and the Beltway pundits who have become the rubes, regressively dumber with each political cycle. They’re suckers for a “man of the people” more than the people themselves are! It’s the Beltway cognoscenti who fetishized Bush’s likability, harping on how much more fun he’d be to have a drink with than the cardboard Gore (never mind that Gore won the popular vote), lionize John McCain as a no-guff maverick (never mind his rambling reversals and shameless backflips to court favor with the Republican far right), and keep fobbing off Newt Gingrich—that Uriah Heepish fraud—as a bubbling fountain of futuristic intellect instead of the flagrantly opportunistic manure spreader he has shown himself to be over the last two decades. It was the majority of the American people who kept “Monicagate” in sensible perspective while archdeacon of capital wisdom such as David Broder worked themselves up to a fine moral lather, and it was the majority of the American people who faced reality and turned against the war in Iraq while the archdeacons flittered and fence-straddled. The militant gullibility and brassy confidence of today’s elite opinion-makers produce more harm and folly than anything conjured in A Face in the Crowd. Because they possess influence. They’re professional dupes.
The Trouble with Judith

For years, Judith Regan’s tabloid sensibility (a deal with O. J. Simpson, for example) and outrageous behavior made her a star in the Murdoch empire.

So why was she fired? The author, once a friend, has some pretty good ideas.

Somehow Judith Regan—the most famous book publisher of her generation, and the would-be Nancy Drew ready to finally close the O. J. Simpson case—has always gotten away with her obscene, grotesque, often funny, Jewish-obsessed, but just politically incorrect but reprehensible, probably slanderous, not necessarily truthful monologues (definitely monologues—she doesn’t really engage in conventional conversation). Neither corporate America nor upwardly mobile society objected, or, even, seemed to blanch. Her diatribes were part of her charm—or at least part of the forcefulness of her nature (if you didn’t find her charming, you certainly found her forceful). I do know that one of her former lovers, no shrinking violet himself, says he finally broke up with her because he couldn’t stand her Niagara of obscenities anymore, but the stuff about Jews, for instance—one of her perennial themes is that Jewish men run the media world and they need special handling—never bothered him (he’s Jewish).

The Jewish thing just got crowded into all the other taboos Judith was verbally violating. And, anyway, Jews really aren’t the issue for her; authority is the issue. Judith hates authority (and, conversely, loves power). She’s got an 800-pound chip on her shoulder. And the chip is part of how she’s made money—she’s tapped into a vein of American resentment and victimhood, plus she’s been able to bully her way into the market—and making money gives a pass to even the worst manners.

Also, her world, on top of being so profitable, is clearly such a harrowing, bleak, sordid place—Hobbesian with a twist of sexual perversity and degradation—that I don’t think anybody wanted to look too closely at it or risk getting drawn into it.

Judith (she used to be Judy but got grander later) and I went to college together. We were great friends for 25 years before—as with so many other people in her life—having a falling-out. The proximate cause was my wife’s law firm’s involvement at one stage in Judith’s harassing, bleak, and sordid divorce from money manager Robert Kleinschmidt—among the most contentious in New York State history. Likewise, Judith may have been one of the most contentious clients in legal annals. Lawyers are her enemies. It was a lawyer at Harper-Collins, the division of News Corp. that employed Judith, who provoked her final, allegedly anti-Semitic sally.

Judith’s college boyfriend was my best friend. After college, she moved in with my friend and his very wealthy parents in their fabulous Manhattan apartment, overlooking Central Park. My friend’s father—Jewish and a lawyer—didn’t like Judith very much, and she didn’t like him. There were a lot of class issues and nuances here, which came out in running commentary—profane, angry, scurrilous—about the rich, the Jews, and lawyers, delivered to me from pay phones around the city. I confess I found it entertaining.

On several occasions, we almost got involved. Aside from her being with my best

DEAD ON ARRIVAL
Judith Regan, in Regan’s never a Fox interview with O. J. Simpson, which had been scheduled for November

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friend. I sensed, even then, that it was not a good idea to be on the descriptive end of her running commentary (from Judith, I know things about the intimate behavior of other men—when they cried, how they begged, where they like to insert sharp objects—that may have altered my fundamental view of humanity). Years later, she told The Washington Post that I was gay, that I had a thing for her college boyfriend. I got off easy.

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At any rate, what's different about Judith's behavior now is that less than a year ago, after 12 years at News Corp., in a state of pique and hubris notable even for her, she relocated her publishing company, Regan-Books, to Los Angeles from New York, a move The New York Times found significant enough for a front-page story.

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She had, the Times implied, supernaturally powerful in the book business. This is partly because she screamed so vulgarly and violently—demanding and achieving so much attention. But, as well, because she had a different idea about what a book was—a less sentimental idea. Her books were concoctions she controlled. They were often her idea, written by her ghostwriters (once she had the very unlikely idea that I should ghostwrite Howard Stern's book). "You'll sit next to Howard by his pool or Long Island and write while he talks."

The fact is, which is when I begged off), propelled by her publicity acumen. She dominated tone, sensibility, drama, taste—the whole production. She was the Phil Specter of publishing.

What's more, she herself was—or thought of herself as—a media polymorph. She'd wanted to be a television personality before she got sidetracked into books—she was hungry for television. She'd once worked for Geraldo. Ideally, she'd be Barbara Walters. True. She'd have a show on the Fox News Channel. In one of its least watched time slots, and while on-air she was charmless. That had not dissuaded her from thinking of television as her inevitable future. (In the mid-90s, Judith, with the British newspaperman and television presenter Andrew Neil, was handpicked by Rupert Murdoch to be the co-anchor of later-aborted Fox-network competitor to 60 Minutes.) She's not only create content but per-
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he book itself is vastly pre-cynical and bizarre in the reports.

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There is, too, a kindred-spirit thing. Murdoch remains a tabloid guy. There may not be too many people who have his certain feel for the meretricious nitty-gritty of mankind, but Judith is one of them. Perhaps for some of the same reasons he accepts the multi-million-dollar losses of the New York Post, he indulged Judith. They both have a kind of soul. Murdoch, according to a former executive at News Corp. in the early Judith years, used to laugh at her, but, at the same time, deeply enjoy her provocative, populist, tabloid instinct, which so tweaked the noses of the bookpublishing crowd. (Murdoch’s former wife Anna is said to have disliked Judith because she regarded her as a bad influence on her husband, indulging his down-market tastes.)

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In the quest for yuppie respectability, News Corp. is selling out. Judith Regan isn't.

Among the major bullet points on the résumé of Jane Friedman, HarperCollins's C.E.O.—who finally fired Judith before Christmas and who, for the 10 years she's run HarperCollins, has, by most accounts, been waiting to fire Judith—is that, in addition to taking the book publisher from an also-ran to a leader in the business, she's existed with Judith for so long. Jane makes lemonade from lemons. Indeed, Jane has long suggested to Murdoch that to the extent that Judith was valuable to News Corp. it was because...
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The dinner party photos that appear during dessert.

The exact shade of his baby blues, minus the red-eye.

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Judith certainly needed O.J.—and knew his value. (She’d published one of the most successful O.J.-related books, by assistant prosecutor Christopher Darden.) She needed Rupert too—and an O.J. confession was plausibly a way back into Rupert’s tabloid heart. What’s more, she needed, after six months in Los Angeles, to truly demonstrate the synergy, multi-media thing. And, then, she was 53.

Again, Judith would make the valid point that if she were a man 53 would hardly be any sort of an issue. But it is hard to turn yourself into a TV star at 53 (actually, even for a man it would be hard). And if one of your trademarks is the joie de guerre of sex talk, the context perhaps changes, cruelly changes, you might say, for a woman at 53. Indeed, acknowledging this, or trying to turn the tables on this, Judith last summer did a radio show—she’s recently launched a satellite-radio program for herself—on the end of sex.

She wasn’t wrong to think that getting an O.J. confession would offer her a mighty star turn—and certain renewal. No matter that she had to finesse O.J. into confessing. And finesse News Corp. into thinking that she had a confession—Murdoch insists she told him O.J. would confess—or, at least, that the drama of it all would be so big that it would overshadow the devil in the details (i.e., that there might not be an actual confession).

And not just a book, but the television interview. This was the Barbara Walters moment. Judith began looking for the most prominent exposure—and best deal—for the interview. Apparently, her model here was the hugely successful, 27-million-viewer Martin Bashir interview with Michael Jackson, which ABC aired and in which Jackson confessed to sleeping with young boys. And ABC was seriously interested in the O.J. project.

During the course of the two-month negotiation, Barbara Walters considered doing the interview (she has since minimized her interest). This became part of Judith’s ultimate justification. The Barbara Walters standard: “Barbara Walters interviews murderers, dictators, and criminals,” Judith said, defending the O.J. project. And Barbara Walters might have gotten away with doing it. Her imprimatur might have made it less craven and feral. But News Corp. people say that what happened at ABC is that Judith began to insist that she was the necessary interviewer—that only she could do it! The discussions with ABC ended.

The Fox network took on the project with consider the psychopathology of how it ever came into being. What’s more, it’s amply evident that even the confession which exists, in the book as a “hypothetical” is a pulp artifact—the book’s aw-shucks Holden Caulfield/Huck Finn voice changes in the murder scene to Mickey Spillane—as concocted as everything else, in the end much more the work of a desperate bookseller than of even a money-hungry murderer.

Murdoch was at his ranch, in Australia, when the announcement of the book and the interview was made, on November 14. Gary Ginsberg, a senior News Corp. corporate strategist and one of Murdoch’s key lieutenants, was on his way back from Australia. By the time Ginsberg landed, his BlackBerry was going crazy, and, in some sense, the tabloid landscape had changed in America.

O.J., who had begun the current tabloid epoch, was in a sense ending it, causing a sudden, mass reversion to a shocked and appalled bourgeois sensibility. Judith’s market value took a direct hit.

While this was evident to Ginsberg, it was not yet evident to Judith. She continued to work the publicity levers—negative publicity, after all, can be more positive than positive publicity—once again creating an O.J. circus. What could be bad about that?

The money, however, was the smoking gun: by agreeing to an indirect-payment scheme to a purported third party, News Corp., a Fortune 100 company, through ReganBooks and Harper-Collins, appeared to have conspired with O.J. Simpson, the most notorious living American, in an effort to bypass or, even, defraud his creditors.

O.J.’s victims’ families—the Browns and the Goldmans, astute media practitioners—went into action. They wanted not only the dough but moral attention (or just attention). Affiliates began to react—expressing distaste and reluctance to air the two-hour interview.

What’s more, Fox News, in an almost insurmountable internal political complication for Judith, turned its vaunted media venom on the project. The possible reasons for this slap were varied: reported tensions between Fox News chief Roger Ailes and Chernin, who’d approved the Fox-network interview; an effort to distance Fox News, with its version of heartland moralism, from the Fox network’s (always a tetchy branding issue), with its outre-ness; and Ailes’s antipathy to Regan—he’d moved her talk show off the air.

Then, in an impulsive act to justify the
She's a fan.
Mark Jackson spent the weekend in secret meetings in Indianapolis with representatives of the Brown and Goldman families trying to come up with a deal that would disgorge all of the book and television earnings to the families.

But by Monday morning, with more affiliates in retreat, and without a joint agreement with the families (the next morning Denise Brown went on the Today show to accuse News Corp. of trying to buy the families' silence), it became clear to everyone—including Judith, who shot an e-mail to all concerned saying she no longer wanted to publish the book—that the project was dead.

It was only later in the day that Judith came to understand that the company was killing not just the book but the television interview. She would not become the heroine of one of the greatest melodramas of the age.

Part of Judith's appeal, if you will, is knowing that, at this point, she won't try to save her job. No false contrition. No effort to reach out. Heal. She will, reliably, set fire to the house.

The people at News Corp. just sat back and watched.

She used her Sirius radio show to attack the company. She raged to anyone who would listen. She was an open wound, a jihadist, and, finally, an entirely isolated figure in the company.

Two days before she was fired, Publishers Weekly did a story about an upcoming novel Regan Books was publishing about Mickey Mantle. The book (since canceled by News Corp.) apparently has Mantle in various imagined sexual situations. But according to a News Corp. source, Judith hadn't even read the book—the exact detail which finally made Rupert blow his stack and decide he was finished with her.

And then there occurred, as they have over a dozen years so often occurred, the raging, loaded, fraught, contemptuous, abusive conversation—this one, allegedly anti-Semitic, with Mark Jackson, the HarperCollins lawyer.

It's a dicey stage, the actual firing, or its cause, or explaining it is dicey, because it's what the defamation and breach-of-contract lawsuit promised by Judith's lawyer, legendary litigator Bert Fields, will hinge on. (Fields is the Hollywood lawyer who was questioned in the Anthony Pellicano wiretapping investigation; Judith is a longtime friend of both Fields's and Pellicano's.)

Had the decision to fire her already been made and was the allegation of anti-Semitism a convenience, a trumped-up thing, as Judith has suggested?

It may be the longest firing in corporate history. The life-is-too-short desire to do something about Judith, to be done with her, to expunge her, had existed, after all, at HarperCollins and News Corp. for nearly all of her tenure, just waiting for the wherewithal. Or waiting for someone to seize the day more forcefully than Judith was always seizing it.

The purported anti-Semitic moment that became the cause of her termination—the language of which will be debated in depositions possibly for years to come—was a ritualistic one. They must have been waiting for it, could have counted on it like the sun rising, Judith's going bananas.

When she did. Jane Friedman went to Murdoch—one can only imagine with what satisfaction—and, finally, he ended it.

Still, Judith may be right in her technical defense—her bizarre equation of what was being done to her with the Holocaust, and, hence, that the Jews at HarperCollins should therefore be sympathetic to her, might not, on its face, be anti-Semitic (although it's certainly something off-kilter). The people at HarperCollins may just have gotten too enthusiastic, heard the word "Jew," and pulled the trigger, because Judith's verbal path here is so well worn.

After all, were they really firing her for her inappropriateness? Or had the triumphalism of her inappropriateness finally, after years of effort, been beaten back by the power of conventionalism? Were they firing her for being who she was?

Anyway, the strange, singular, disturbing, mad, and in so many ways inexplicable career of Judith Regan at News Corp. had come to an end.

And, possibly, with a little critical interpretation, we are less for it—the world will be a pleasanter and safer without Judith but perhaps not as interesting.

Judith has been telling people that something has changed at News Corp. It's not the same company anymore. Murdoch himself has changed. His third wife, Wendi Deng Murdoch, is part of the problem. It's her craven for respectability that has made Murdoch weak, according to Judith. She might even be... liberal. Peter Chernin is... a Democrat. Gary Ginsberg worked for Clinton. Murdoch is foraging his tabloid heart in the quest for mainstream, yuppie respectability. The greatest, most audacious media company of the age had become like any other—pitifully concerned about what people think. News Corp. is selling out. Judith Regan isn't.

There might be something to this. Murdoch, over the last few years, has certainly morphed from a dark, ruthless, diabolical figure into a more complex, thoughtful, and, as he aged, vulnerable media sage.

Judith, the tabloid monster, is, in some sense, the skin he's shed.

So Judith is left representing the psychopathology of the media—its shameless self-promoters, so without a moral center, so motivated by their own grandiosity and need for attention, that they have bankrupted the culture—not Rupert.

That she might be something else, the yin showman to the yang bureaucrats, the classic, if socially unacceptable, tabloid muckraker to the tepid suits—a media museum piece who should be preserved—was difficult to argue. She actually made the bureaucrats look pretty good.

As she had left New York for Los Angeles, her friends were saying she was leaving Los Angeles for London, the tabloid capital of the world, to make it on her own.
So Clicquot...
The Queen and I

In the never published introduction to a book about Elizabeth Taylor's jewels—which caused a brief rift between the star and him—the author recalls scenes from their 30-year friendship, beginning on a movie set in Italy.

Recently, while going through an old file cabinet, I came across the introduction to a coffee-table book about Elizabeth Taylor's jewels that was published in 2002. Elizabeth and my friend Michael Korda, the editor in chief at Simon & Schuster, had both requested that I write the introduction. I had a wonderful time writing it, and Michael liked it, but Elizabeth demanded changes. Michael wrote me a letter listing the changes, and I got mad. The piece was never published. About a year later, when Elizabeth and I were speaking again, she told me that she had actually never read the introduction. It was her publicist who had read it and requested the changes. Below are the introduction I wrote, Michael's letter to me, and my notes back to him on his letter.

If you ever hear anybody refer to Elizabeth Taylor as Liz Taylor, you can be pretty sure the person doesn't know her. She's not Liz. She's Elizabeth. So remember that, if you should ever be lucky enough to get to know her, as I have been lucky enough to know her. Thirty years ago, when she was turning 40, I had the good fortune to spend the better part of a year with her, making a film in Europe. She was married to the late film star Richard Burton, and it's safe to say that they were the most glamorous couple in the world at that time. I saw her every day. I witnessed all the varieties of her moods. We lived on different floors of the same hotel, the Miramonti, in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy. Elizabeth has an uncanny ability to create total chaos around her while remaining serene herself.

The experience of spending so much time with the Burtons, as Richard and Elizabeth were referred to, was one of the most fascinating I have ever had. Being with them was like being in a state of almost surreal celebrity. Elizabeth was at the peak of her great beauty, and she and Richard drew vast crowds whenever they appeared in public. They understood the obligations of fame. They waved like royals to the crowds. "What's it feel like to be cheered?" I once asked Elizabeth after witnessing one of their public ovations. We were talking about fame, a subject that has always captivated me, and my proximity to the Burtons made me able to explore the subject later, when I stopped pro-
Elizabeth loved campy men and had a camp sense of humor

the director, and I spent New Year's Eve with the Burtons at the Grand Hotel in Rome. We met alone with them in their enormous suite for champagne and caviar, while their other guests waited below. As we entered the sitting room, Richard was on the floor in a green velvet dinner jacket picking up a Kleenex dog shit left by their unhousebroken Shih Tzu, on which Elizabeth doted. Her dogs were never house-trained. When Elizabeth finally entered, she was dressed and bejeweled as if she were going to a ball at Buckingham Palace. It was our first meeting. Her beauty was even more breathtaking in person than on the screen. It was not uncouth for people to gasp a little when they first saw her, and I did just that. I didn't want to stop staring at her. She requested Edith Head, the great costume designer at Paramount, to do her costumes, but she said she also wanted to wear a long white cape with a white-fox hood that Valentino had made for her for the opening of the opera in Milan.

The couple talked about Tito, the dictator of Yugoslavia, who had become their friend during the shooting of a film there. The Elizabeth's secretary-majordomo, Raymond Vignale, came in pointing to his Cartier watch to remind her that their guests were waiting downstairs. Raymond was a great character and wit, who stage-managed the Burtons' nomadic hotel existence, took charge of the packing of their 30 trunks, carried the jewels, and hid the pills. He could speak five or six languages and camp in all of them.

Elizabeth loved campy men and had a camp sense of humor herself. Raymond wore a white mink coat with jeweled buttons that Elizabeth had given him for Christmas.

Like a king and queen, the Burtons descended the marble stairway from their suite to the lobby, where they greeted their guests. They were about 20 for dinner, all dressed to the nines: Elizabeth's hairdresser, Alexander of Paris; her other hairdresser, Gianni Novelli, for whom Alexander of Paris was in Paris; her makeup artist; her dress; her secretary; her photographer; her chauffeur—on and on. The Burtons had the largest entourage ever seen, and the people who worked for them worshipped them. I had somehow expected that their guests would be princes and princesses.

F

rom the beginning, there were problems on the picture. We kept getting more and more behind schedule. Richard Burton sent a note from his room to mine saying that Elizabeth was "chronically" late, and she was. Robert Evans, then the head of Paramount, kept calling from Hollywood, complaining bitterly about the overages. "Read her the riot act!" he yelled at me. The next day, however, when she walked onto the set three hours late, with a hundred extras waiting in evening clothes and Henry Fonda fuming off to one side, was I going to read her the riot act? No such thing. This movie star would have made minced meat of me if I had ever tried to tell her off. Even as a child star at MGM she had held her own with Louis B. Mayer. I just told her how beautiful she looked in her Edith

SOUR NOTES

Michael Korda's request for author's changes was returned with the author's comments.
Head red velvet evening gown and her Alexander of Paris hairdo, and we kissed on each cheek. After that, she went right on being chronically late.

Catastrophic things happened on the Italian location. A doctor had to be flown in from Rome on two occasions, but I won't get into that. At one point, Richard imagined an affair between Elizabeth and Helmut Berger that didn't exist. There was a terrible scene, excruciating for all of us, with screaming and tears, during a lunch break at a chalet on the top of a mountain. Their lives were so public that even when they fought in private Larry Peerce and I were often called into their suite to be witnesses. We never knew what to say, we were so embarrassed, but they weren't embarrassed at all.

We were told that she was using to receiving gifts at the start of a film from the director and producer, and I was shown a diamond bracelet that one producer had given her. Larry and I were both going through divorces at the time, so money was a thing we worried about. We gave her a pair of Art Deco lamps that had once belonged to Colette, and she was courteous in her thanks, but not ecstatic. On the contrary, she was clearly disappointed, so we knew that we had to buy her a piece of jewelry. We figured that $2,500 to $3,000 between us—which didn't sound as cheap back then as it does now—would get something with diamonds, and I asked one of the drivers from the film company to take me into Venice to Nardi, the famous jeweler on St. Mark's Square. I settled for a coral ring set in gold, with diamonds around the coral. It was pretty, I thought, and she liked it. She wore it for days, and kept looking at it on her finger. Then she lost it. Raymond Vignale said she had left it in a taxi in Rome, but I couldn't imagine Elizabeth Taylor ever taking a taxi.

I never asked her, but I always felt that the two men she loved most in her life were Mike Todd, the master showman, who was the father of her daughter Liza, and Richard Burton, with whom she adopted a child named Maria. She had married Richard twice, and was absolutely mad about him, but they fell out of love on our picture. She had a capacity for great friendships with men. Montgomery Clift, with whom she made her most romantic movie, *A Place in the Sun*, became her best friend, and he later lost his beautiful looks in an automobile accident after leaving a party at Elizabeth's, during her marriage to Michael Wilding, the father of her two sons. Elizabeth had a lot of guys who were her friends. Not lovers, just friends. They included Laurence Harvey, Rock Hudson, Roddy McDowell, and quite a few other who died too soon. I was with her at the time Rock Hudson died. She mourned. She did the first great charity show for AIDS and AIDS was still a forbidden topic of conversation in polite circles. Everyone of any consequence in the film industry went to that party, was Elizabeth's date that night, and I was writing a story about her for *Vanity Fair*. "I don't know how you got all these studio heads to come here tonight," I said to her. She replied, "If you have fame, that is the way to use it." Let's face it, the lady has class.

During the O. J. Simpson trial, I used to go to her house in Bel A almost every Sunday for lunch, loved talking to her. She was very loyal to the waifs who were regulars at the house. I remember especially Bernard Lafferty, the famous butler of the billionaires. Doris Duke, who became Duke heir and her executor. People were suspicious of him. Some thought he had killed Duke, but Elizabeth would have none of it. She remained stalwart in her friendship. She even arranged a memorial service for Lafferty when he died rather unexpectedly. I don't see her much anymore. She lives in Los Angeles. I live in New York. Mostly, I hear about her. We have a couple of close friends in common who keep me up-to-date.

Life has dealt her a sufficient number of hard knocks to even out the glory years of fame, fortune, and accomplishment. To my mind, she's had more than her share of hard knocks. But she copes

Elizabeth and Richard Burton fell out of love on our picture.
"THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND BOUNTY OF HAWAII ARE MY DAILY INSPIRATION"

Roy Yamaguchi
CHEF + FOUNDER

Roy's
hawaiian fusion cuisine

MACADAMIA NUT MAHI MAHI
The Kid and J.F.K.

Heard the one about the debutante, the bishop, and the congressman? The author recounts a youthful foray into New York high society and an unexpected meeting with a future president

By Robert Evans

On the sly, I was seeing a girl who was the current “Debutante of the Year.” Naturally, her parents knew nothing about us. If they had, she’d have been on a one-way trip to a nunnery. Why was she seeing me? Rebellion was the excuse she gave to her snooted, pigtailed piglet friends. She knew—and I knew she knew—she was lying. She dug the dirt…the dirt of going to Harlem. Being the only white chick in the joint watching shows she shouldn’t be watching. Going to the track with me and my pal Dickie Van Patten, rather than finishing finishing school. Sneaking up three flights of stairs on the Lower East Side to hear Mabel Mercer warble them naughty lyrics.

The more she whispered her rebellious acts to her pigtailed piglets, the more they too wanted to rebel. She got off on it. Me? I got off on her getting off! Her parents, icons of New York society, would have gotten off, too…with a gun!

In the late 40s it was considered chic to spend summer weekends in the Big Apple. Call it inverse snobbism, call it what you want. “With the riffraff at the beaches, we can have the city all to ourselves,” long-drawled them snobs. Those were the days. when heritage, not wealth, was the key to society. Wealth alone would buy you entrance only to what was called “café society.” But thoroughbred heritage was no automatic pass when it came to big bucks. Many families whose heritage dated back to Plymouth Rock were driving Plymoughs. “How marvelous New York is in

It was a sweltering Saturday in the summer of ’49. Most civilians were at the many beaches that surround the Big Apple. Me, I was no civilian. I was an actor on the radio, co-starring every Saturday morning on CBS’s top show. Let’s Pretend.

Excerpt from Kid Notorious, a forthcoming memoir by Robert Evans. © 2007 by the author.

side from being an actor (The Sun Also Rises, Man of a Thousand Faces), a studio head (Paramount Pictures, from 1966 to 1975), a producer (Chinatown, Marathon Man), and a legendary Hollywood ladies’ man, Robert Evans is the author of the best-selling 1994 memoir The Kid Stays in the Picture. As read by Evans in his signature purr, it became an even more successful audiobook, an industry must-listen that enlivened many a commute between Bel Air and Burbank. He is currently working on a second memoir, Kid Notorious. By way of an exclusive preview, audio files of Evans reading selections from the new book are available for downloading on vanityfair.com. We also present the following excerpt, the story of a surprising encounter Evans had back when he was a 19-year-old actor on the make in Manhattan.
an hour earlier. I was signing autographs backstage at Let's Pretend... Now I'm standin' alone feelin' like a leper!

Finally, an Oyster Bay snob gave me the time of day. With his Long Island drawl on high: "I've been told you're an actor."

"That's right."
"I've never met one before."
Was he putting me on?
"Really," he insisted.
"Well, you have now."
"Are you from England?"
"No... not quite."
"Your diction! It's extraordinary! What a luxury to hear the King's English spoken in this city of refugees."

Moving a step closer, I eyed him and half whispered, "You're right. I speak the King's English... King of the Streets, motherfucker."
Leaving him with his mouth open, eyes poppin', and face on red alert, I quickly U-turned it to the John for a long- overdue piss.

Mr. Oyster Bay? In one big hurry he scooted from the luncheon.

Big mistake, pal...

A couple of minutes later, the luncheon's guest of honor arrived. What a shocker! He was No. 1 on America's Most Wanted List—to shuck up with, that is. His name: Congressman Jack Kennedy, from Massachusetts. He was top honcho on every lady's "heat list." The more he broad-smiled, the wetter them panties got. He knew it, and they knew he knew it!

Me, I was by far the youngest guy there. Miss Society quickly introduced us, but the congressman had little interest in talking with an aging teenager. Don't blame him.

Meanwhile, the eyes of every "deb-turmp" were on putter-putter, veering for his attention. The congressman didn't have to ask for any of their phone numbers. They were all given to him before he arrived. Not at his request, but rather by each and every one of them wet panties, all of whom had given him an extended weekend at a summer resort for a shot at being seven digits away from the congressman's call.

Of the 25 or so invited guests, 17 were deb-turmps. The rest, including myself, were invited as shills, so it wouldn't look embarrassing for the deb-turmps or the congressman. Damn it! My first phone call from Miss Society's booth... and I'm a "plant"!

The look struck three. Debbies were being served. The good ol' days were a stand and grab at Miss Society for the fun lunch.

"They're smiling, I think," I said to an early exit: "It's not easy keeping these hungry bitches from much less in Congress. If I weren't running for reelection, I'd have residence right here on East 73rd Street. But I have to be on the road before the sun goes down, and I promised His Excellency, Bishop Donahue, I'd spend a bit of time with him before I left for Boston." The congressmen had them words down cold. He knew what to say, when to say and how to say it.

Wishing everyone good-bye as he was leaving, he took me by the arm and said: "When you see His Excellency, would you give him my regard."

A dead-ass silence hit the patio. Miss Society closed her eyes, thinking. This ain't Harlem. I knew I shouldn't have invited him! The congressman, he gave me a triple take.

"You know His Excellency?"

"Very well." He didn't believe me. His face showed it.

Congressman Kennedy was No. 1 on America's Most Wanted List—to shuck up with, that is.

As he drove us across the park to West 96th Street, the congressman threw me a look. "Why did you say that you knew Bishop Donahue?"

"I'm an actor. I like getting reactions."

"I was right! You don't know him."

"You are wrong, Congressman! I do know him. I know him well... It's a story you don't wanna hear."

The congressman's street smarts matched his Harvard diploma. He didn't ask another question.

I had been introduced to His Excellency by my close friend, Dino Cerutti, who I had met through a dime-a-dance girl. I was 18 then. He was 25—a handsome, dashing ex-Army Air Force pilot who was studying at Harvard Law School. While I prob the streets of Broadway... he probed them "halls of Ivy." Strange casting for a friendship, huh? Not really. We both shared one thing big-time... pussy on the brain!

The kid from Broadway gave his elder from Harvard a new life. Not one that helps pass the bar exam, but one that opens your eyes and makes you rethink what is more to life than law—the lawless!

Nicknaming me "Ripley's Believe It or Not Kid," Dino's prestigious family looked upon his new "shaveless" friend with, let's say, a bit more than a bit of skepticism. Poor Dino... from the moment of friendship began, he became an almost daily visitor to the church confession booth. Blame me if you want, but I sure rocked his Ivy League world. Dino tried to rock mine, and rock it he did. He invited me to Bishop Stephen Donahue's domicile. His Excellency was a close friend of the Cerutti family, who, naturally, were large contributors to the church.

"This ain't no domicile. It's a fuckin' palace on West 96th Street!" I told Dino. I thought I was at the Vatican, visiting the...
BEST ACTRESS

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

BEST DRESSED ACTRESS

SOME PERFECTION IS DEBATABLE.

SOME IS NOT.
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Pope! Though he wasn’t the Pope, His Excellency was considered the second-highest-ranking Catholic in America, under Cardinal Spellman. What followed was, without equivocation, the most bizarre experience of my bizarre young life.

For propriety’s sake, I won’t delve into the details of what happened. Except to say that what started out as a “religious experience” ended up a cause célèbre within my family. Stopping my father from having His Excellency arrested and put behind bars posthaste was no easy task.

**THE LEGEND**

Over grilled hot dogs splashed with mustard McGuinness style, and chilled draft beer, the young congressman passed a bit of wisdom my way that all but changed the course of my life. Trying to recall verbatim words and thoughts expressed more than half a century ago would be remiss not only to the reader but to the writer and to the wisdom itself. What I specifically do remember is that I filled three paper napkins writing down, word for word, a brain exercise that the junior congressman explained to me in minute detail. And then, as we were walking through the revolving doors toward the street, saying our good-byes, he told me something to the effect that “word power is far stronger than muscle power. Stick with it. It could change your life.” It did!

I’d like to say the congressman and the wannabe became good pals.

We didn’t. More than a decade passed before our eyes met again. What a decade! He went from congressman to president. Me? I went from screen virgin to the next Valentino. Not quite as meteoric, though I also died at 31 ... and my career did as well. Couldn’t help it. I wasn’t that good.

It was now the spring of ’62. Alan Jay Lerner invited me to a post-theater supper on upper Fifth Avenue honoring the Camelot couple. A Harvard classmate of Kennedy’s, Alan knew my passion for wanting to go eye-to-eye with the then president once again. Arranging an invitation was no easy task. The soirée was hosted by Flo Smith, an intimate—and I mean intimate—friend of the president’s. It was supposed to be restricted to ex-Harvard classmates only.

Them Secret Service guys, they knew their service well. They warned the await-

"You like trouble, don’t you?" the congressman asked me. "Yeah! I do." "So do I."

Back in the young congressman’s car, he, quick on the pickup, knew that the kid sitting next to him was one hot ticket.

“You know, Bob, I think it best I visit His Excellency alone. Don’t you?”

“If I were you. Congressman, I would.”

Pulling out of the 96th Street Transverse onto Central Park West, he stopped his car at the corner. I think he felt somewhat guilty. “You know, the visit won’t take more than an hour. How about a hot dog afterwards at McGuinness’s?”

“Sounds great to me.”

Putting in his clutch, he waved. “See you at five.”

At 5:15, the congressman and the actor were driving down Broadway on our way to McGuinness’s, on the corner of 47th Street.

I couldn’t help it, had to say it: “Congressman, did you give His Excellency my regards?”

“You like trouble, don’t you?”

“Yeah! I do.”

“So do I.”

For the next hour it was first names all the way. guest that the president and the First Lady would be arriving at exactly 11:40 P.M. Big Ben couldn’t have been more accurate!

Earlier that evening, the two of them had enjoyed a rare night out, taking in New York’s top comedy revue—a London import. Beyond the Fringe. Then, at exactly 11:40, the most glamorous couple in the world made their entrance. Everyone stood. The president and his “lady fair” shook hands with all. Our eyes met. Our hands shook. Would he remember me? The last time we eyes each other, I had yet to shave. At best, a trivial incident on his historic climb to the top step of the world’s ladder.

But that’s why he was standing on it: he remembered well! “Did you take my advice?”

“I did, Mr. President.”

Smiling Jack got in the final lick. “You must have. I’ve followed your career closely. Congratulations.”

And before I could utter another syllable, the president was off shaking the hand of another he knew far better.

\[
\text{TO HEAR ROBERT EVANS READ FROM HIS NEW MEMOIR IN PROGRESS, GO TO VF.COM.}
\]
My Lunch with Harvey

The author’s stint as a top sex-crimes prosecutor helped inspire Law & Order: SVU and launched her writing career. But a movie deal was still just a dream.

Then she got the call from Harvey Weinstein’s office

By Linda Fairstein

As much as I wanted to tell my good friends about how close I was to clinching a movie deal with Harvey Weinstein, I decided not to say anything at all. It’s not as though we had hammered out terms or drawn up a contract, but I was truly optimistic that by the time our lunch was over we’d seal things with a handshake.

Writers are an odd bunch. I knew that some of my pals would be happy for me, but that others have a bit of an attitude about the book-to-movie plan. I’ve written nine crime novels. I’ve made the New York Times best-seller list and been translated into more than a dozen languages. I’ve dreamed about the movie deal. I’ve cast the central characters scores of times. I’ve even spent the proceeds.

For 30 years, I worked in the Office of the New York County District Attorney. I ran the Sex Crimes Prosecution Unit for 25 years, investigating and trying many of the worst rapists and murderers in the city—and some of the most high-profile cases in Manhattan. Screenwriters and producers courted me regularly, having actors shadow me at trial to snag an air of authenticity for movies such as The Accused and Presumed Innocent. When Dick Wolf created Law & Order, SVU, he ripped my professional life from the headlines, along with the cases. I’ve been waiting for my own movie deal since I tapped my first fictional strokes on the keyboard.

I’d met Harvey on several social occasions during my years in public service. He was always gracious but never engaged me on the subject of my novels. Then, about four years ago, at a cocktail party on Martha’s Vineyard, he made his first overture.

We were on a perfectly manicured lawn that bordered Vineyard Sound, and the mix of showbiz personalities with social and literary luminaries made it a storybook setting to talk movies. Walter Cronkite, Mike Wallace, Louise and Henry Grunwald, Ann and Vernon Jordan, Liz Smith, Art Buchwald, and Cynthia McFadden were all in attendance.

My husband, Justin, and I were chatting with Louise when Harvey stopped to greet us. He told me that he had read my latest book and loved it. Hearing that, I flipped my arm and roughly I was almost the steak would split in half.

“You think you could do more of a thriller? There needs to be more action if we were to do the story as a movie.”

“Not a problem,” I answered.

“Why don’t you give me a call sometime?” Harvey said. “Come down to my office and let’s see if we can figure out a project we could do together.”

I can hardly remember the rest of that summer. Harvey Weinstein had given me something to dream about.

Back in the city, I got to work on my next manuscript. Justin occasionally nudged me to call Harvey and set up a meeting, but he knew it wasn’t my style to pursue someone quite that way. I practiced a pitch over and over, but hoped instead that Harvey would reach out to me when all the publicity for my next novel—much more visual work than the one he had read—ramped up that winter.

But Harvey never called.

In January 2006, the eighth book in my series about a sex-crimes prosecutor was published. Death Dance debuted on the New York Times best-seller list at No. 4—my personal best—and for one week, only two spots on the list separated me from The Da Vinci Code. The buzz was good, and the novel had much more notice than any of the earlier ones.

It was still pretty stunning when I opened my e-mails in a hotel room in Los Angeles during the tour and read one that began, “My name is Susan Glickman, and I’m with Harvey Weinstein.”

It had been three years since Harvey and I had talked, but I felt that the books had gotten stronger and that this one would translate to the big screen really well. It seemed as though his instincts had been right, and he had chosen the perfect moment to connect with me. My hands were shaking as I scrolled down to read the message.

Susan’s e-mail went on, “We were recently at a charity auction to support the New York Police Foundation. You donated first editions of your novels and a literary lunch at Michael’s for the winner. Harvey was the highest bidder.”

I opened the mini-bar and poured myself a celebratory drink before I called Justin. I’d been right to wait. It made sense to me that with a better book I had a better chance to get the deal done.

Before I even answered Susan’s e-mail, I began thinking about whether I’d renovate the Vineyard kitchen before or after...
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I can hardly remember the rest of that summer. Harvey Weinstein had given me something to dream about.

"My Harvey is 81 years old," her response began. He had been the tuxedo king of America, the owner of a family business that had manufactured most of the tuxedos in this country. Until his retirement, seven years ago.

Harvey wasn't nearly as disappointed as I was. He was hoping, having lost so much weight after his surgery, that Harvey might show up at lunch with a new tuxedo for him. Forty-one long with a 38 waist.

The Harvey Weinstein with whom I had the pleasure of dining—at a great table at Michael's—had a reason to be supporting the important charity to which I had donated the lunch, and to have followed my prosecutorial career. In 1993, while C.E.O. of the tuxedo-manufacturing company, Harvey was kidnapped by an employee and three accomplices, who demanded a $3 million ransom. For twelve and a half days, he was held by his captors in a dirt hole in the ground, underneath the upper Manhattan's Henry Hudson Parkway, into which food and water were occasionally dropped. He kept sane throughout this nightmare by telling himself stories about his family and his experiences, and reciting poetry. The N.Y.P.D. did a brilliant job in getting Harvey out safely, and in catching the villains who had kidnapped him. The case was headline news in the weeks following his rescue.

I still don't have a movie deal, but I spent an afternoon with a genuine hero.
Kitty Confidential

Despite her renown as a To Tell the Truth celebrity panelist, Kitty Carlisle Hart doesn’t spill all her best stories in her sellout nightclub act. The author got the 96-year-old Hart to share choice outtakes from seven decades at the epicenter of musical-theater history.

By Michael Feinstein

Every morning, Kitty Carlisle Hart gazes at herself in her dressing-room mirror and says, “I forgive you for whatever you did yesterday.” She is 96, and this is part of her system for survival. “You have to forgive yourself,” she says. “Because if you carry around that burden through the years it gets too heavy.” When I asked how she arrived at this philosophy, she says, “It all goes back to my mother.”

Kitty is a force of nature, who has become a cultural icon through self-discipline, optimism, intelligence, and a steel-willed application of her mother’s principles. Above all else, she is a tenacious survivor, who enjoys sold-out business each time she performs at my Manhattan nightclub, Feinstein’s at the Regency, and at other venues around the country. From 1976 to 1996, she was chairman of the New York State Council on the Arts; from 1957 to 1968, she was a television favorite on To Tell the Truth; before that, she made movies with Duke Ellington, Bing Crosby, and the Marx Brothers. Starting in the 1940s, Kitty was also a nightclub singer.

When I approached her two years ago and asked if she would consider returning to the club scene, neither of us had any idea of the level of adulation she would achieve. Yet she takes it all in stride. “My career blossomed when I was 95,” she says, laughing. “and I
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love gigs. I need more gigs.”

Her act is simple yet affecting, and she looks stunning doing it. When I compliment her on a Bill Blass dress, she says, “When I lived in Paris as a teenager my mother and I had a friend named Elsa Schiaparelli, who advised me on what to wear.” The imposing jewelry? “It was a gift from my mother. Where in the world?” she muses, “did Mother get the money to afford such stones?” When Kitty steps onstage, she flashes a beaming technicolor smile and instantly takes command of the room. Under the lights her smooth face appears 30 years younger, and her cultured speech belies her lifelong stage fright. With David Lewis, her accompanist and confidant, at the piano, she sings and tells personal anecdotes about her friends, who happen to span the history of the American musical theater—George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers, Lerner and Loewe, Jerome Kern, George S. Kaufman, and her adored late husband, the playwright and director Moss Hart.

Some of Kitty’s best stories aren’t in her act. After all, it’s hard to encapsulate nearly a century of living into an hour of anecdotes. “I knew everyone from Mother Teresa to that lady who said, ‘Come up and see me sometime,’” she says. Her private reminiscences of Cole and Linda Porter, for instance, are compelling and bittersweet. “We were very close, Cole and I, great friends. Linda came to see me when my son was born, and she gave me a gold rattle with her name on one end and Christopher’s name on the other.” When I ask if the Porters wanted to have children, she responds emphatically, “Absolutely not. Their relationship was never physical, and she was much older than Cole. Many years later, he invited me to dinner when he was living at the Waldorf Towers. We were alone, and he had already lost his leg by then. The butler carried him in and put him at the table, and then I came in. He started telling me about when he was a boy and went to this fancy school, because they had money, you know. The headmaster came to his room, scooped him up, and put him into his bed. That’s what started the whole thing. He said, started him as a homosexual. At the end, when he was in the hospital, I went to see him, and he had his valet put all kinds of hors d’oeuvres on the radiator. I loved Cole. It was a tremendous loss.”

Kitty’s introduction to her paramour George Gershwin occurred on November 9, 1933, when she was presented on crooner Rudy Vallee’s radio show as New York’s “first new name of the year.” Gershwin was also a guest, and she practiced “The Man I Love” accompanied by the composer. “He was a wonderful person. I was enchanted by George and I loved being with him. He put the moves on me quickly, and I was delighted. I couldn’t have been happier. We would go to El Morocco and dance, all dressed up, and I used to go with George to Harlem. He was persona grata, and we were treated as honored guests. George asked me to marry him, but he didn’t really love me. I think he asked me because he thought it would be suitable. I asked him why he didn’t marry his longtime flame, Kay Swift, and he said, ‘I’d never marry her, because she isn’t Jewish.’ He died at 38. If he had lived, maybe we
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Kitty's marriage to theater's most desirable bachelor, Morrie R. Hart, occurred in 1946, 11 years after they had met on the set of the Marx Brothers' movie *A Night at the Opera*. They had two children: Christopher, who is a theater director, and Cathy, who is a doctor. Moss died in 1961, after—among other things—writing eight plays with George S. Kaufman, collaborating on Broadway musicals with Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, and Kurt Weill, directing the landmark musicals *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*, and writing the memoir *Act One*. “He was such fun to live with,” Kitty says. “With Moss I felt like I was in a continuous drawing-room comedy. We lived in each other's pockets, and he never wanted me out of his sight.” I ask her how often she thinks of him. “Only a thousand times a day.”

Even though Kitty has never remarried, and has refused some “very desirable proposals,” she still dates. “I was dating three people, and the youngest one, in his 70s, died. Then there’s Mr. Neuberger, and there’s my German beau, Dieter.”

These days, Kitty is focused on her performing career and on staying healthy. Her spacious East Side apartment is filled with memorabilia. There are paintings by Irving Berlin, Noël Coward, George Gershwin, and Harpo Marx, perfume bottles from Jackie Kennedy, and so many honorary doctorates, awards, and citations that she has to stack them under the bed. The guest book from her and Moss’s country house in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, suggests what their life was like, with characteristic notes from guests including Dorothy Parker, Edna Ferber, and Alexander Woollcott.

As we have tea and biscuits in her living room, she makes it clear that she is not interested in living in the past. “You have to be in the present to survive. It's about paying attention and doing what you have to do. I have more and more engagements, and the show takes a lot of work. Every piece of music has a story, and I like to tell that story. I won't sacrifice the lyric for the sound—that's not a wise move. I practice singing every day for a half-hour, even if I'm traveling. I can remember new songs, but names? Forget it.”

She is delighted by the attention she receives, but she can't really offer any secrets for longevity. “I'm very grateful because I'm well and I have a lot of energy and I don't look my age. Exercise is important. I do my exercises on the floor. I put my legs over my head and can touch the ground behind me. Don't try it! If I could explain how I've managed to maintain such a youthful appearance, I'd be the richest woman in the world. Perhaps it's worry that creates wrinkles. I put aside all the bad things. I don't think about them.” She pauses for a moment. “Everybody is so nice to me,” she says, and grins broadly. “They stop me on the street all the time and say, ‘You're Kitty Carlisle! I'm so lucky!'”

And so are we. □

**AMONG HER SOUVENIRS**

*From top:* posters for *My Fair Lady* and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and a painting by Harpo Marx; a painting by George Gershwin; portraits of Kitty and friends in her library.

**“GEORGE GERSHWIN ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM, but he didn’t really love me.”**
Fat.

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Pirates of the Multiplex

Under U.S. pressure, Swedish authorities are going after the popular Pirate Bay Web site for illegal distribution of video files. But if Hollywood wants to stop online pirates—who cost the industry some $7 billion in 2005—it needs to join them, not beat them

By Steven Daly

“Steve TV”

was a reluctant convert, to say the least. When I got the call from my old friend Richard back in late 2005, he sounded far too enthusiastic about the latest Internet gimmick that was going to “change my life.” Richard, you see, is prone to great enthusiasms, and I was not particularly disposed to listen to his ravings about some Web site called UKNova, which supposedly let him download all kinds of amazing British TV shows completely free of charge.

I relented and signed up for UKNova membership. The site functions as a “torrent tracker,” a skeletal database that allows users to locate and share digital files with other users. Unlike some previous peer-to-peer content-sharing programs, the files are not located on a Web site or taken from any single source; they’re shared among members in the form of tiny digital fragments that are eventually reconstituted, like a completed jigsaw puzzle, as a single file on your desktop. The operation—which incidentally makes it difficult to sue members of a site like UKNova—is enabled by an ingenious little software application called BitTorrent, a paradigmatic advance in file sharing that has engendered many variants since its 2002 advent.

As I am to admit it, UKNova did change my life—at least as far as my viewing habits are concerned. After downloading free BitTorrent software, I could use UKNova to procure—slowly at first—television shows that would have hitherto obliged me to beg British friends and relatives to record them for me on VHS (remember tapes?) and send via airmail. The unalloyed thrill of watching all this downloaded Brit-TV stuff easily outweighed the nagging shame of staring at a computer screen for hours on end.

Mock if you will, but I assure you that this was nothing but top-drawer telly: a typical evening’s viewing schedule might include an episode of Peter Ackroyd’s magisterial history of London, the upsetting
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I began storing all my UK Nova downloads on blank DVDs—first on spindles of 10, then 25, then 50. I soon had enough material to program my own TV channel—Steve TV—for weeks on end; my Time Warner Cable box was switched on only for live soccer games and weekly HBO favorities. This UK Nova habit went well beyond the recreational-use stage: according to site statistics, I have downloaded a frankly embarrassing 800 gigabytes’ worth of files—well over 1,500 hours of programming. And since UK Nova expects members to maintain a decent balance between material uploaded and downloaded, my computer stayed connected to the Internet for, more or less, 18 months straight in order to allow other users access to my file fragments. The cost of two burned-out hard drives seemed like a small price to pay.

Then this BitTorrent junkie discovered that Philips made a DVD player (Model DVP642) that would play, straight from the disc, UK Nova files that previously required hours of reprocessing to watch on a standard player. Which is when I started making over-enthusiastic phone calls to my friends.

Surprisingly, not everyone was receptive to my BitTorrent evangelism—in fact, some went as far as to suggest I had turned into some kind of cyber-criminal. Sure, I knew that the Motion Picture Association of America claimed worldwide losses of $18.2 billion to movie piracy in 2005, $7.1 billion of which was ascribed to Internet file sharing. And I knew that even though the U.S. government had shut down prominent Internet operations for violating copyright laws—eDonkey, Grokster, Kazaa—there are now many BitTorrent mega-sites that continue to thrive; in particular, the Pirate Bay (ThePirateBay.org), based in Sweden, stands as probably the prime destination for anyone looking to download, unrestricted, the very latest in Hollywood movies, video games, TV shows, music, software, and pornography.

But I was not some snickering teenager looking to get cool shit for free. I was a taste-ful, middle-aged gent with a victimless hob-

by. The sprawling, lawless frontiers of the file-sharing universe looked too much like the Wild West to me—I was happy to stick to the Victorian tea party that is UK Nova. In file-sharing terms, UK Nova (originally created for soap-opera-craving British expats) is a genteel anomaly, a highly regulated community whose many rules include a strict ban on any material commercially available on DVD. Nonetheless, with its limited membership list and impressive inventory, the site shines through the surrounding chaos as an exemplary—albeit rudimentary—model of digital media distribution.

As my exquisite digital-video library threatened to overrun my apartment, even my original BitTorrent pusher Richard was starting to talk about the dark side of the current climate, my friend Richard’s apocalyptic vision of the show-business future started to seem more plausible than I could have ever imagined.

The industry has assigned the task of repelling the pirate hordes to the Motion Picture Association of America, a body best characterized by a 2006 public-service announcement that shows action-movie oldsters Jackie Chan and Arnold Schwarzenegger riding twin motorcycles in front of green-screened freeway mayhem. “Let’s terminate piracy!” bellows Schwarzenegger. Your more sentient Hollywood graybeards will have flashed back to 1982, when then M.P.A.A. president Jack Valenti fired off a warning to Sony about its newfangled Betamax video recorder. This sinister device, said Valenti, would do to the American film industry what “the Boston Strangler did to a woman alone.”

The modern M.P.A.A., as it prove itself capable of a more nuanced approach to the file-sharing threat, recently collaborated with the Boy Scouts of America, who are now offering a merit badge for anti-piracy activities. Another P.S.A. argues that people who buy pirated films are hurting Hollywood’s ordinary folks, the humble artisans who toil backstage building pedestals for the stars. The M.P.A.A.’s case might have carried more weight had it not featured the heartfelt testimony of Ben Affleck, a man who was paid $12.5 million to star in Gigli.

I when I awoke from my UK Nova-induced idyll and looked at the bigger picture, it seemed like Sharpie stock must be on the rise. Legitimate-DVD sales have been slowing down for some time now. The movie studios as a whole are in trouble, and piracy is—along with rising costs—one of the main factors being cited. DVD revenue is a critical component of Hollywood’s bottom line, and with theatrical-box-office receipts believed to be in long-term decline, DVD sales look set to become an increasingly important revenue stream.

As long ago as November 2005, Warn Bros. abruptly laid off 260 employees (more than 5 percent of its staff) on a single day; this after a very healthy fiscal year. Soon after, Disney announced plans to cut more than twice that many jobs (which it did in summer 2006), and to drastically reduce the number of films on its annual production slate.

The dominoes continued to tumble through late 2006 as we read countless business-section stories about Hollywood financial woes, along with heart-wrenching tales of movie-star salaries being cruelly slashed by millions of dollars. When multiplex titan George Lucas came out with the startling announcement that his company had decided that making feature films was now “too expensive and too risky” in the
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width, gentle little Sweden—which refers to itself as Europe's "duck pond"—has become a file-sharing fortress in which more than 10 percent of its nine million citizens trade digital material, much of it provided by the country's Pirate Bay site.

Early on the morning of May 31, 2006, Swedish police launched the kind of clean-up operation the M.P.A.A. had long been craving. Law-enforcement officials raided eight locations related to Pirate Bay, with more than 50 police officers involved in arresting the site's operators and seizing their computer equipment. As one Swedish Internet entrepreneur puts it: "When was the last time the Swedish police had 50 people doing anything?"

When Pirate Bay co-founder Gottfrid Svartholm first heard that there was police activity at the site's main location, he jumped in a cab and headed straight there, only to be pulled over by a police car with lights flashing and sirens blaring. Svartholm's business partner, Fredrik Neij, had also been alerted to the raid in progress, and was able to back up most of Pirate Bay's files before showing up and doing a bit of "who-are-you-ing" with the invading lawmen.

If Svartholm and Neij's experience sounds like something out of a generic mid-90s cyber-thriller, neither of them is exactly leading-man material. Neij, a 28-year-old of cheap desks are strewn with standard dude detritus: empty beer bottles, scattered paperwork, take-out-food cartons, and so on. In the middle of the floor stands a red-and-black Honda Super Sprint motorcycle belonging to Neij. It was moved inside after some of the kids in his neighborhood tried unsuccessfully to break the heavy-duty chain around the front wheel; instead, they burned a patch of paint with a lighter. "I don't mind copying," Neij notes, "but I don't like taking.”

Neij certainly didn't like it when the Swedish police entered this facility and confiscated 186 pieces of computer equipment, most of which were servers, from him and his partner—particularly since only about 20 of those machines were connected to Pirate Bay. The other equipment belonged to PRQ, the legitimate Internet-service provider from which Neij and Svartholm make their living. In a back room there are now a few replacement servers stacked up in small, uneven piles.

The Swedish courts decided that the police could keep the PRQ servers, and those belonging to company clients, for forensic examination until May 2007. When PRQ sued for the return of the non-Pirate Bay equipment, the prosecutor responded in hysteric Valenti mode, comparing Pirate Bay to the I.R.A.—the judge ruled that the police could keep any computer equipment netted by the raids until the trial date.

Despite the hardware hardships inflicted by the raids, Pirate Bay managed to find temporary home in the Netherlands with 24 hours, and, thanks to borrowed equipment, the site was fully functional within three days. Fredrik Neij takes great pride in the way this rapid regeneration won the authorities. "The prosecutors didn't know we were back up," he says. "A journalist asked him what he thought. He had to explain that the site was back up. The anti-piracy chief said, 'They won't be back up.' When he was corrected, he said, 'Well, it still works a bit bad.'" The Swedish government had been outwitted by the fastest guns in Deadwood. (Incidentally, the HBO series of that name continues to be available for free download through Pirate Bay—along with such recent movie as Borat, Blood Diamond, Apocalypto, an Night at the Museum.)

Pirate Bay has now taken careful steps to ensure that any future raids will inflict minimal disruption to the service. "We have divided the servers up geographically—they are hidden," explains Svartholm. "If they come after us again, they will only find our front end. A single metal box with a short message stuck on the front: 'You forgot to take my label writer.'"

In reality Svartholm does not expect another raid: "At this point it would be political suicide," he says. Shortly after the raid more than 1,000 citizens attended Pirate Bay rallies in central Stockholm and Sweden's second-largest city, Gothenburg, events which were captured by the quickie documentary Steal This Film. The recently formed Pirate Party doubled its membership, and even mainstream politicians—mindful of Sweden's million or so file-sharing voters—weighed in on the Pirates' behalf.

As Neij pilots his red, rusted Chevy Van 20 toward another scene of the May raids, he explains that he himself is too busy to maintain a serious file-sharing habit. In keeping with the classic computer-geek stereotype, he admits to "pretty much downloading every episode of every sci-fi series that's out there." The late-night animated show Robot Chicken is the entertainment of choice for Svartholm, the Pirate Bay partner who posts diligently.

If the file-sharing universe is the Wild West, Sweden is Deadwood—where the rule of law leaves barely a footprint.

who is the more gregarious of the pair, is a scruffy, impish type who regards his outlaw status with wry detachment; Svartholm is a sardonically 20-year-old with wispy hair and near-translucent skin that positively scream out "Dungeons and Dragons Master."

Although this pair of Internet scofflaws (or criminal masterminds, if you prefer) now live with the threat of prison sentences looming over their heads, neither seems particularly jittery as they conduct a brief tour of their modest empire on a sunny afternoon in Stockholm. The police raids focused particularly on the basement premises Pirate Bay occupies in the back of an office building in Solna, an unremarkable suburb of the city.

Pirate Bay HQ is a shabby, low-ceilinged concrete bunker that bears little resemblance to anyone's idea of a high-tech Death Star that is threatening to annihilate Hollywood. A handful of
pearl power

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bitchy replies whenever the site receives threatening letters from corporate lawyers.

The other locus of the Pirate Bay raids was a giant data-storage facility that is also used by many of Sweden's major banks. It so happened that the company responsible for operating the surveillance cameras at this location relied on Svartholm and Neij's PRQ company for its Internet connection—which may be why grainy footage of the raid appeared on the Internet soon after it happened.

The publicity generated by the Pirate Bay raids gave a huge boost to the site's traffic, which already stood at more than one million visitors per day, and forced the company to hire five new workers to cope with merchant-unofficial distribution of music files. Expanding bandwidth enabled the transmission of video files. Fleischer neatly summarizes the ethos of his site: "We don't want to reform copyright law—we just don't want the state to enforce it."

Fleischer likes to frame the copyright issue in historical and theoretical terms, expounding on ideas about "how value is produced in the cultural sector." He sees the notion of music copyright in particular as a transitory construct. "This has been the business model for some bit of the 20th century," he says. "Music has always worked in different economic ways, and copyright has only applied to a few genres historically."

The New Frontier

As dryly academic—and, frankly, downright Swedish—as this analysis might sound, it was effectively endorsed several years ago by one of the most consistently innovative figures of the rock era. Speaking to The New York Times in 2002 about the future of the music industry, David Bowie said, "Music itself is going to become like running water or electricity."

Another of Pirate Bureau's founders, Marcus Kaarto, believes that the U.S. entertainment industry itself is, ironically enough, responsible for the rise of the BitTorrent protocol that is now sending the Hollywood community into such a tailspin. "The record industry destroyed Kazaa," says Kaarto, referring to the once popular file-sharing service. "They hired companies to fill it with bogue content and viruses—and that drove users to BitTorrent." And the new software happened to be far more efficacious for transmitting video files. What had begun as a music-business problem was now, thanks to sites like Pirate Bay, starting to send gusts of panic across the television and movie industries.

As dryly academic—and, frankly, downright Swedish—as this analysis might sound, it was effectively endorsed several years ago by one of the most consistently innovative figures of the rock era. Speaking to The New York Times in 2002 about the future of the music industry, David Bowie said, "Music itself is going to become like running water or electricity."

A Hollywood Production

Not only had the Swedish police been heavily-handed in their seizure of Pirate Bay's property, they had, on the evidence of a private investigator's report questioned a female acquaintance of Neij and searched her apartment. Also hauled in for questioning was Pirate Bay's legal counsel, Mikael Viborg; for some reason police saw fit to take a DNA swab from the inside of his mouth, as they'd also done with Neij and Svartholm. Initial public outrage over the police's actions only increased when widespread suspicion about the raids' origin was confirmed. It turned out that the whole operation was indeed a Hollywood production.

In late 2005, Sweden's Motion Picture Association was imploring the country's justice department to prosecute Pirate Bay for large-scale copyright infringement, but chief prosecutor Hakan Roswall decided that the site's owners were doing nothing actionable concerning American films' copyrights. Shortly after the raids the Swedish media discovered what had inspired Roswall's change of heart.

In June 2006, the Swedish media exposed a leaked March 17 letter from John Malcolm, head of anti-piracy for the U.S.-based M.P.A.A., to Dan Eliasson, state secretary to Sweden's minister for justice. Malcolm's missive referred to an earlier meeting between the pair and urged the Scandinavian official "to take much-needed action against the Pirate Bay." Eliasson's cordial reply was dated April 10.

Malcolm and Eliasson had been brought
Available where you buy groceries.
On May 31, 2006, Swedish police launched the kind of cleanup operation the M.P.A.A. had long been craving.

As it turned out, Monique Wadsted and her local M.P.A. colleagues were little more than supporting players in a global economic power play that, according to many sources, has seen the U.S. government directly interfering in the domestic affairs of another sovereign nation. According to Swedish news reports, just before Easter 2006, a delegation from Sweden’s police force and its Justice Ministry visited Washington, D.C., where high-ranking U.S. officials reportedly threatened to put Sweden on a World Trade Organization “priority watch list” if it did not immediately clamp down on the nettlesome Pirate Bay. After initially denying that the raids were a result of these U.S. threats, State Secretary Eliasson relented; he admitted, on-camera, that the consequences of non-cooperation had been “explained” to him and his colleagues in D.C. The M.P.A.A.’s John Malcolm denies advance knowledge of this meeting.

In terms of international-copyright malfeasance, Sweden found itself among some heavyweights. The U.S. had, for instance, become extremely frustrated that it hadn’t insisted on China’s compliance with digital-piracy laws before China joined the WTO. And the very same issue has been one of the major obstacles to the admission of Russia, a nation where former military bases have been converted to factories that churn out millions of bootleg CDs and DVDs.

On July 5 of last year, with the Swedish government still reeling from the Pirate Bay scandal, and ministers being subjected to investigation, there was momentary relief in the form of a national-newspaper article. The story alleged that Neij and Svartholm had all along been making a healthy financial score off Pirate Bay, in the form of advertising revenue. Posing as a potential advertiser, a journalist had approached the company that sells banner ads on Pirate Bay, and estimated that these must be generating, in Swedish advertising alone, as much as $80,000 per month, and claimed that these funds were being channeled into a front company in Switzerland.

“I wish I earned that!” counters Neij. “Do I look like I have, like, $2 million?”

Neij insists that whatever advertising revenue is generated is severely limited by the fact that the site operates in a legal “gray zone,” and Svartholm points out that they lost $660,000 worth of equipment in the raids. “It’s not free to operate a Web site on this scale,” he adds. In early 2007, one of the companies advertising on Pirate Bay operated altogether,” she says. “The judge could end up sending both of these guys to prison for five years.”

Remote Control

After my fact-finding safari in Sweden, I returned to Paris where I was temporarily domiciled, and where my personal piracy habit was expanding quite impressively. During a settling-in period in France, my wife happened to mention how much she regretted missing the third season of Project Runway (which was supposedly even better than the first two). Proving that chivalry is not dead, I strayed from the genteel UK Nova tea party and downloaded, through the torrent tracker mininova.org, all the new episodes of Bravo’s flagship reality series. It didn’t stop there: I went on to indulge myself with the pilot episodes (unscreened at that point) of Studio 60 and Knights of Prosperity, among other U.S. network treats.

But I still drew the line at downloading movies. This was mainly because, in light of my irrational dislike of French TV variety shows, I had already prepared for our relocation by augmenting “Steve TV” with several months’ worth of illegitimately copied movies—meaning that I’d rented dozens of DVDs from Netflix and duplicated them using a fun (and completely illegal) little computer application called Mac the Ripper. There may be those who need their Criterion Collection DVDs in the lavish original packaging, but it turned out I wasn’t one of them—apparently I’ve
As the retailer responsible for shifting around 40 percent of the $17 billion worth of DVDs sold in 2006, Wal-Mart wields uniquely powerful influence over the way in which Hollywood studios choose to distribute their product. Until Paramount announced a deal with iTunes this past Janu-
ary, no studio other than Disney was willing to risk offending Wal-Mart, a company that they fear more than Pirate Bay itself. So even though DVD sales are slowing and online piracy is booming, Wal-Mart can restrict the studios’ downloading plans and hold them to a pact of mutually assured self-destruction.

This past fall, Wal-Mart took its first baby steps into the movie-downloading arena, offering a rudimentary service to its online customers—not even the most paranoid Wal-Mart executive would be threatened by the other major legal-download service currently in operation, Amazon.com’s Unbox. In its current iteration Unbox boasts a reasonably large inventory of films, but with many unappealing restrictions: the movies it provides can be viewed only on Windows devices (i.e., video iPods not invited!); hit-movie downloads are priced slightly lower ($14.99–$19.99) than physical DVDs, but they cannot be burned onto blank DVDs and they self-delete in 24 hours.

In 2004, longtime M.P.A.A. president Jack Valenti was succeeded by Dan Glickman, the secretary of agriculture in the Clinton administration. While Glick-
man’s public pronouncements on piracy can bend toward Valenti-like belligerence, in per-
son he is alarmingly reasonable when dis-
cussing Hollywood’s piracy problem. Glick-
man believes that the movie industry will soon give the public “a reasonably priced, hassle-free alternative” to illegal down-
loading. “Most people, if it’s easily available, will not steal it,” he insists.

This assertion is not necessarily sup-
pported by the available data. For instance, although Apple’s iTunes service became known as the savior of the record business by generating millions of dollars a year through its legal, hassle-free downloads, the market share is less than healthy. A recent industry study estimated that iTunes accounted for a mere 2.5 percent of music files downloaded from the Internet. Glickman is undaunted by this grim statistic. “I see the glass half full, not half empty,” he states. Though he’ll admit that there is “a lot of trial and error going on” during this “digital transition,” he insists that Hollywood will soon get its act together.

Glickman supports this positive fore-
cast with two examples, neither of which really stands up to serious scrutiny: Yes, the studios have made BitTorrent found-
der Bram Cohen guarantee that his site (bittorrent.com) will no longer host any il-
legal content. So one pirate surrendered—the fleet is still growing by the day thanks to Cohen’s original software. Glickman’s other ray of hope is Guba, a marginal site that offers visitors a smorgasbord of YouTube-like amusements, plus commercial fare that again comes with severe technical restrictions. January 2007 saw the launch of Qflix, a movie-download system endorsed by all the major studios. Qflix sounded like a promising development and a marked improvement on existing services, but once again there was a catch: most customers would need to purchase a new DVD burner in order to use it.

While the movie business continues to prove itself less than effective in combating the threat of digital piracy, the electronics industry has done very well by joining the pirates’ fleet. When electronics giants like Philips, Daewoo, and Samsung are flooding the market with DVD players specifically designed to play raw MPEG and AVI computer files, they are clearly enabling the viewing of illegally downloaded content on domestic television sets. This trend approached critical mass in late 2006 when TiVo unveiled its latest software update, which could play downloaded video files; when Steve Jobs introduced AppleTV in January, all the chatter about the computerization of television seemed to coalesce into an irresistible force.

Meanwhile, Hollywood continues to de-

“Sweden is not the enemy,” says Jonas Birgersson. “Sweden is the prototype of society to come.”
“What do you need these multi-billion-dollar companies with all their skyscrapers for? We shouldn’t sacrifice a lot of these gains to prolong that system for another few years.”

At the risk of sounding sentimental—or even, God forbid, anti-progress—there surely has to be a moment for speculation on what could be lost if the current scenario plays out to its logical conclusion. Internet pioneer Jaron Lanier, the man who gave us the term “virtual reality,” is one of the few credentialed individuals to have spoken out against the coming age of “digital Maoism.” If Hollywood’s ancient regime is indeed swept away by unstoppable technological changes, the old patronage system may one day be regarded with nostalgic benevolence in light of the rising mob culture and YouTube novelty-storm that is replacing it.

“There are new business rules, and some art forms won’t be able to be supported anymore,” Birgersson responds. “I mean, in ancient Rome they used to stage full-scale naval battles in the Colosseum. We don’t do that anymore.” Sweden’s “Broadband Jesus” appears to be suggesting that the sun is setting on the era in which Ben Affleck got paid $15 million for Paycheck.

Birgersson still believes that Hollywood can avoid its own worst-case scenario. but only if it rapidly renounces business practices it has held as eternal verities since Louis B. Mayer was selling scrap metal. This would more or less involve concurring with Anne Sweeney of ABC-Disney that piracy is, in fact, a business model, then finding ways to adapt pirate-model technologies to deliver movie downloads at prices well below the current level.

Should the movie industry decide that any appeasement of file sharers would be tantamount to surrender, and keep trying to put the digital genie back in the bottle, Birgersson believes, it would be virtually guaranteeing its own obsolescence. In a recent briefing to Swedish media executives, he said, “You say you’re going to war. Pray that these people don’t believe you.” Drawing on his military-intelligence background, Birgersson says the entertainment industry’s hostile declarations on piracy are entirely counterproductive. “The harder you push people to go in one direction, the harder they’ll push in the opposite direction.” he says. “And right now the pirates are having the time of their life.”

One person who is relishing the idea of asymmetrical warfare with M.P.A. A. is Pirate Bureau chief Rasmus Fleischer. “Mark Getty [the photo archive mogul] said that intellectual property is ‘the oil of the 21st century’—and it apparently means war,” states Fleischer. “Copyright is so incompatible with so many cultural and technological developments. This is going to be a growing problem in years ahead.”

M.P.A. A. chairman Dan Glickman m. has erroneously hailed the raids on Pirate Bay as “a reminder to pirates all over the world that there are no safe harbors for Internet copyright thieves.” because the ultimate ruling in the case against Svartholm and Neij will have virtually no effect on Hollywood’s losing war against file sharers.

Regardless of whether the Pirate Bay case is finally judged by the Swedish courts—and sources close to the prosecutor are confident that charges will be brought in May—it is likely that both Pirate Bay and BitTorrent will be replaced as leading facilitators of Internet piracy. And as has happened repeatedly in the past, file sharers will gravitate toward delivery methods that are more powerful and more problematic for law enforcement. Sweden’s pirate contingent is already developing a new file-sharing program that will grant a sturdy shield of “anonymization” to its users—whether they be movie downloaders or persons of the darkest criminal intent.

So, the question remains: Will Hollywood adapt and survive, or will it continue to escalate its apparently futile battle against the collective intelligence of a million resourceful and highly motivated computer geeks worldwide? (The kind of people who recently unlocked the supposedly resilient copy protection on Hollywood’s new HD DVD format.) Once again, the situation was adroitly summed up in the words of Anne Sweeney, no matter how unpalatable they may have been to the lunchtime crowd at the Ivy. In her 2006 mipcom speech, Sweeney plaintively stated, “We want to go wherever our viewers are. Viewers have control and show no sign of giving it back.”

I wonder what’s on Steve TV tonight? =

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Hollywood depicts its battle against Internet piracy as an almost biblical struggle between good and evil.
AND THE OSCARS GO TO...
Producer Walter Mirisch, photographed in his office at Universal Studios.

STARDUST MEMOIRIST

When you walk into Walter Mirisch’s office at Universal, the phone rings incessantly as he describes the new project he’s producing for Disney.

But what stops the conversation cold is something that catches your eye on his credenza: three best-picture Oscar statues, for The Apartment, West Side Story, and In the Heat of the Night, along with an Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award and a Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award. It’s sort of the grand slam of motion-picture accolades. And it’s nothing if not jaw-dropping.

“We were just trying to make good movies,” says the 82-year-old four-time president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences with a self-deprecating shrug. It’s as if he too is just a little amazed at having made some of the most admired movies of the past half-century. “We never expected that they would still resonate with audiences all these years later,” he says, and then catches himself, adding, “Well, maybe Billy Wilder did.”

And with this, he begins to regale a visitor with tales about making Some Like It Hot, The Magnificent Seven, The Pink Panther, The Great Escape, and Fiddler on the Roof, collaborating with directors like Wilder, John Huston, and Blake Edwards, and casting Shirley MacLaine, Sidney Poitier, Jack Lemmon, Peter Sellers, Tony Curtis, Steve McQueen, and Marilyn Monroe in some of their most memorable roles. All told, it’s a pretty good trailer for the memoir he’s finished that will be published by the University of Wisconsin Press later this year.

If Walter Mirisch isn’t a household name these days, it’s because he was more interested in making movies than taking credit for them. He let the movies take the spotlight. - BRUCE FEIREIN
From the Wonderful Folks Who Brought You Iraq

The same neocon ideologues behind the Iraq war have been using the same tactics—alliances with shady exiles, dubious intelligence on W.M.D.—to push for the bombing of Iran. As President Bush ups the pressure on Tehran, is he planning to double his Middle East bet?

By Craig Unger

In the weeks leading up to George W. Bush's January 10 speech on the war in Iraq, there was a brief but heady moment when it seemed that the president might finally accept the failure of his Middle East policy and try something new. Rising anti-war sentiment had swept congressional Republicans out of power. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had been tossed overboard. And the Iraq Study Group (I.S.G.), chaired by former secretary of state James Baker and former congressman Lee Hamilton, had put together a bipartisan report that offered a face-saving strategy to exit Iraq. Who better than Baker, the Bush family's longtime friend and consigliere, to talk some sense into the president?

By the time the president finished his speech from the White House library, however, all those hopes had vanished. It wasn't just that Bush was doubling down on an extravagantly costly bet by sending 21,500 more American troops to Iraq; there were also indications that he was upping the ante by an order of magnitude. The most conspicuous clue was a four-letter word that Bush uttered six times in the course of his speech: Iran.

In a clear reference to the Islamic Republic and its sometime ally Syria, Bush vowed to "seek out and destroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies." At about the same time his speech was taking place, U.S. troops stormed an Iranian liaison office in Erbil, a Kurdish-controlled city in northeastern Iraq, and arrested and detained five Iranians working there. Already, hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent on the war in Iraq. Tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of people have been killed. Countless more are wounded or living as refugees. Launched with the intention of shoring up Israeli security and replacing rogue re-

HEAD CASES OF STATE
His nuclear ambitions make Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (near right) a threat. But attacking Iran—formerly a former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's biggest blunder of all.
Joaquin Cortés, flamenco dancer.
He travels with X’lite, the lightest, strongest Samsonite ever.

Madison Ave, New York  Union Square, San Francisco  Copley Place, Boston
Neiman Marcus - select retail locations  Holt Renfrew - select retail locations
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gimes in the Middle East with friendly, pro-Western allies, the war in Iraq has instead turned that country into a terrorist training ground. By eliminating Saddam Hussein, the U.S.-led coalition has sparked a Sunni-Shiite civil war, which threatens to spread throughout the entire Middle East. And, far from creating a secular democracy, the military have lent credence to widespread reports that the U.S. is secretly preparing for a massive air attack against Iran. (No one is suggesting a ground invasion.) First came the deployment order of U.S. Navy ships to the Persian Gulf. Then came high-level personnel shifts signaling a new focus on naval and air operations rather than the ground combat that predominates in Iraq. In his January 10 speech, Bush announced that he was sending Patriot missiles to the Middle East to defend U.S. allies—presumably from Iran. And he pointedly asserted that Iran was “providing material support for attacks on American troops,” a charge that could easily evolve into a casus belli.

“Everything the advocates of war said would happen hasn’t happened,” says the president of Americans for Tax Reform, Grover Norquist, an influential conservative who backed the Iraq invasion. “And all the things the critics said would happen have happened. They’re using the same dance steps—demonize the bad guys, the pretext of diplomacy, keep out of negotiations, use proxies. It is Iraq redux.”

The neoconservatives have had Iran in their sights for more than a decade. On July 8, 1996, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel’s newly elected prime minister and the leader of its right-wing Likud Party, paid a visit to the neoconservative luminary Richard Perle in Washington, D.C. The subject of their meeting was a policy paper that Perle and other analysts had written for an Israeli-American think tank, the Institute for Advanced Strategic Political Studies. Titled “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm,” the paper contained the kernel of a breathtakingly radical vision for a new Middle East. By waging wars against Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, the paper asserted, Israel and the U.S. could stabilize the region. Later, the neoconservatives argued that this policy could democratize the Middle East.

“It was the beginning of thought,” says Meyran Wurmsr, an Israeli-American policy expert, who co-signed the paper with her husband. David Wurmsr, now a top Middle East adviser to Dick Cheney. Other signers included Perle and Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense for policy during George W. Bush’s first term. “It was the seeds of a new vision.”

Netanyahu certainly seemed to think so. Two days after meeting with Perle, the prime minister addressed a joint session of Congress with a speech that borrowed from “A Clean Break.” He called for the “democratization” of terrorist states in the Middle East and warned that peaceful means might not be sufficient. War might be unavoidable.

Netanyahu also made one significant addition to “A Clean Break.” The paper’s authors were concerned primarily with Syria and Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, but Netanyahu saw a greater threat elsewhere. “The most dangerous of these regimes is Iran,” he said.

Ten years later, “A Clean Break” looks like nothing less than a playbook for U.S. foreign policy during the Bush-Cheney era. Many of the initiatives outlined in the paper have been implemented—removing Saddam from power, setting aside the “land for peace” formula to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, attacking Hezbollah in Lebanon—all with disastrous results.

Nevertheless, neoconservatives still advocate continuing on the path Netanyahu staked out in his speech and taking the fight to Iran. As they see it, the Iranian debacle is not the product of their failed policies. Rather, it is the result of America’s failure to think big. “It’s a mess, isn’t it?” says Meyran Wurmsr, who now serves as director of the Center for Middle East Policy at the Hudson Institute. “My argument has always been that this war is senseless if you don’t give it a regional context.”

She isn’t alone. One neocon after another has made the same plea: Iraq was the beginning, not the end. Writing in The Weekly Standard last spring, Reuel Marc Gerecht, a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, made the neocon case for bombing Iran’s nuclear sites. Brushing aside criticism that a pre-emptive attack would cause anti-Americanism within Iran, Gerecht asserted that it “would actually accelerate internal debate” in a way that would be “painful for the ruling clergy.” As for imperilling the U.S. mission in Iraq, Gerecht argued that Iran “can’t really hurt us there.” Ultimately, he concluded, “we may have to fight a war—perhaps sooner rather than later—to stop such evil men from obtaining the worst weapons we know.”

More recently, Netanyahu himself, who may yet return to power in Israel, went as far as to frame the issue in terms of the Holocaust. “Iran is Germany, and it’s 1938,” he said during a CNN interview in November. “Except that this Nazi regime that is in Iran … wants to dominate the world, annihilate the Jews, but also annihilate America.”

Like the campaign to overthrow Saddam, the crusade for regime change in Iran got under way in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. One of the first shots came in The Wall Street Journal in November 2001, when Eliot Cohen, a member of the neoconservative Project for the New

"THEY'VE USING THE SAME DANCE STEPS—DEMONIZE THE BAD GUYS. THE PRETEXT OF DIPLOMACY…. IT IS IRAQ REDUX." SAYS PHILIP GIRALDI.

war has empowered Shiite fundamentalists aligned with Iran. The most powerful of these, Muqtada al-Sadr, commands both an anti-American sectarian militia and the largest voting bloc in the Iraqi parliament.

“Everything the advocates of war said would happen hasn’t happened,” says Philip Giraldi, a former CIA counterterrorism specialist. “They’re using the same dance steps—demonize the bad guys, the pretext of diplomacy, keep out of negotiations, use proxies. It is Iraq redux.”

"It is absolutely parallel," says Philip Giraldi, a former CIA counterterrorism specialist. "They’re using the same dance steps—demonize the bad guys, the pretext of diplomacy, keep out of negotiations, use proxies. It is Iraq redux."
American Century (PNAC), declared, “The overthrow of the first theocratic revolutionary Muslim state [Iran] and its replacement by a moderate or secular government ... would be no less important a victory in this war than the annihilation of bin Laden.”

Then, as now, the U.S. had no official diplomatic communications with Iran, but a series of back-channel meetings from 2001 to 2003 put unofficial policy initiatives into action. The man who initiated these meetings was Michael Ledeen, an Iranian specialist, neoconservative firebrand, and Freedom Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. During the Iran-contra investigations of the late 80s, Ledeen won notoriety for having introduced President Ronald Reagan’s chief intriguer, Oliver North, to Manucher Ghorbanifar, an Iranian arms dealer and con man.

Ghorbanifar helped set up the first meetings, in Rome in December 2001. Among those attending were Harold Rhode, a protégé of Ledeen’s, and Larry Franklin, of the Office of Special Plans, the Pentagon bureau that manipulated pre-war intelligence on Iraq. (Franklin has since pleaded guilty to passing secrets to Israel and has been sentenced to 12 years in prison.) Ghorbanifar reportedly arranged an additional meeting in Rome in June 2002. This one was attended by a high-level U.S. official and dissidents from Egypt and Iraq. Then, in June 2003, just three months after the invasion of Iraq, Franklin and Rhode met secretly with Ghorbanifar in Paris at yet another gathering that was not approved by the Pentagon.

According to Ledeen, Ghorbanifar and his sources produced valuable information at the 2001 meetings about Iranian plans for attacking U.S. forces in Afghanistan. But it is also likely that there was some discussion of de-stabilizing Iran. As the Washington Monthly reported, the meetings raised the possibility “that a rogue faction at the Pentagon was trying to work outside normal U.S. foreign policy channels to advance a ‘regime-change’ agenda.”

Also in attendance at the first meetings, according to administration sources who spoke to Warren P. Strobel, of Knight-Ridder Newspapers, were representatives of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq, or MEK, an urban guerrilla group that practiced a brand of revolutionary Marxism heavily influenced by Mao Zedong and Che Guevara.

Having expertly exploited phony intelligence promoted by the Iraqi National Congress (I.N.C.), a dubious exile group run by the convicted embezzler Ahmad Chalabi, the neocons were now pursuing an alliance with an even shadier collection of exiles. According to a 2003 report by the State Department, “During the 1970s, the MEK killed US military personnel and US civilians working on defense projects in Tehran... The MEK detonated bombs in the head office of the Islamic Republican Party and the Premier’s office, killing some 70 high-ranking Iranian officials.... In 1991, it assisted the Government of Iraq in suppressing the Shia and Kurdish uprisings in southern Iraq and the Kurdish uprising in the north.” In other words, the MEK was a terrorist group—one that took its orders from Saddam Hussein.

To hear some neocons tell it, though, the MEK militants weren’t terrorists—they were America’s best hope in Iran. In January 2004, Richard Perle was the guest speaker at a fundraiser sponsored by the MEK, although he later claimed to have been unaware of the connection. And in a speech before the National Press Club in late 2005, Raymond Tanter, of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, recommended that the Bush administration use the MEK and its political arm, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (N.C.R.I.), as an insurgent militia against Iran.

“The National Council of Resistance of Iran and the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq are not only the best source for intelligence on Iran’s potential violations of the nonproliferation regime. The NCRI and MEK are also...”
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a possible ally of the West in bringing about regime change in Tehran," he said.

Tanter went as far as to suggest that the U.S. consider using tactical nuclear weapons against Iran. “One military option is the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, which may have the capability to destroy hardened deeply buried targets. That is, bunker-busting bombs could destroy tunnels and other underground facilities.” He

granted that the Non-Proliferation Treaty bans the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states, such as Iran, but add-
ed that “the United States has sold Israel bunker-busting bombs, which keeps the military option on the table.” In other words, the U.S. can’t nuke Iran, but Is-
rael, which never signed the treaty and maintains an unacknowledged nuclear arsenal, can.

S
hortly after the invasion of Iraq, when the U.S. mission there seemed accom-
plished or at least accomplishable, Iran came to fear that it would be next in
the crosshairs. To stave off that possibil-
ity, Iran’s leadership, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, began
to assemble a negotiating package. Suddenly, everything was on the table—Iran’s nuclear program, policy toward Israel, support of Hamas and Hezbollah, and control over al-
Qaeda operatives captured since the U.S.
went to war in Afghanistan.

This comprehensive proposal, which diplomats took to calling “the grand bar-
gain,” was sent to Washington on May 2, 2003, just before a meeting in Geneva
between Iran’s U.N. ambassador, Javad Zarif, and neocon Zalmay Khalilzad, then
a senior director at the National Security Council. (Khalilzad went on to become the U.S. ambassador to Iraq and was recently nominated to be America’s envoy to the U.N.) According to a report by Gareth Pot-
er in The American Prospect, Iran offered to take “decisive action against any terror-
ists (above all, al-Qaeda) in Iranian terri-
try.” In exchange, Iran wanted the U.S.
to pursue “anti-Iranian terrorists”—i.e., the
MEK. Specifically, Iran offered to share the names of senior al-Qaeda operatives in its custody in return for the names of MEK cadres captured by the U.S. in Iraq.

Well aware that the U.S. was concerned about its nuclear program, Iran proclaimed its right to “full access to peaceful nuclear
technology,” but offered to submit to much stricter inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (I.A.E.A.). On the subject of Israel, Iran offered to join with moderate Arab regimes such as Egypt and Jordan in accepting the 2002 Arab League Beirut declaration calling for peace with Is-
rael in return for Israel’s withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders. The negotiating package also included propos-
als to normalize Hez-
bollah into a mere “political organization within Lebanon,” to
bring about a “stop of any material support to Palestinian opposition

groups (Hamas, Jihad, etc.) from Iranian territory,” and to apply “pressure on these organizations to stop violent actions against civilians within borders of 1967.”

To be sure, Iran’s proposal was only a first step. There were countless unanswered
questions, and many reasons not to trust the Islamic Republic. Given the initiative’s
historic scope, however, it was somewhat surprising when the Bush administration simply declined to respond. There was not even an interagency meeting to discuss it.

“The State Department knew it had no chance at the interagency level of arguing the case for it successfully,” former N.S.C.
staffer Flynn Leverett told The American Prospect. “They weren’t going to waste [Colin] Powell’s rapidly diminishing capital on something that unlikely.”

Iran had sent the proposal through an intermediary, Tim Guldmann, the Swiss
ambassador to the U.S. A few days later, Leverett said, the White House had the State Department send Guldmann a mes-
sage reprimanding him for exceeding his diplomatic mandate. “We’re not interested in any grand bargain,” said Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and Internation-
al Security John Bolton, who went on to become interim ambassador to the U.N. until his resignation last December.

If the MEK has been cast as the Ira-
nian counterpart to the I.N.C., there are more than enough Iranian and Syrian Ahmad Chalabis to go around. Reza Pahlavi, the son of the late Shah, has been shipped around Washington as a prospective leader of Iran. And Farid Ghadry, a Syrian exile in Virginia who founded the Reform Party of Syria, is the neocon favorite to rule Syria. Ghadry has an unusual résumé for a Syrian—he’s a member of the American Israel Public A-
fairs Committee, the right-wing pro-Israel lobbying group—and he has endured so many comparisons to the disgraced leader of the I.N.C. that he once sent out a mass e-mail headlined, “I am not Ahmad Chalabi.”

Nevertheless, according to a report in The American Prospect, Meyrav Wurmser last year introduced Ghadry to key admin-
istration figures, including the vice presi-
dent’s daughter Elizabeth Cheney, who as principal deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs and coordi-
nator for broader Middle East and North Africa initiatives—plays a key role in the Bush administration’s policy in the region.

According to The Financial Times, Eliza-
abeth Cheney, who has been on maternity leave since May, had supervised the State Department’s Iran-Syria Operations Group, created last spring to plot a strategy to de-
mocratize those two “rogue” states. One of her responsibilities was to oversee a pro-
jected $85 million program to produce anti-Iran propaganda and support dissi-

dents.

By the end of 2002, MEK operative had provided the administration with intel-
ligence asserting that Iran had built a secret uranium-enrichment site. As reported in the San Francisco Chronicle, David Albright, a former I.A.E.A. weapons inspector in Iraq, said that the data provided by the MEK was better than that provided by the I.N.C. But he added that it was possible Iran was enriching the uranium for energy purposes and cautioned that Saddam’s former mercen-
aries could not be relied upon to provide objective intelligence about Iran’s W.M.D.

“We should be very suspicious about what our leaders or the exile groups say about Iran’s nuclear capacity,” Albright said.

“There’s a drumbeat of allegations, but there’s not a whole lot of solid information. It may be that Iran has not made the deci-
sion to build nuclear weapons.”

The MEK wasn’t the administration’s only dubious source of nuclear intelligence. In July 2005, House intelligence commit-
te chairman Peter Hoekstra (Republican, Michıgan) and committee member Curt Weldon (Republican, Pennsylvania) met se-
cretly in Paris with an Iranian exile known as “Ali.” Weldon had just published a book called Countdown to Terror, alleging that the C.I.A. was ignoring intelligence about

Iranian-sponsored terror plots against the U.S., and Ali had been one of his main sources.

But according to the C.I.A.’s former Paris station chief Bill Murray, Ali, whose real name is Fereidoun Mahdavi, fab-
ricated much of the information. “Mahdavi
BURBERRY
BRIT
THE FRAGRANCES FOR WOMEN AND MEN
LIFT HERE
TO EXPERIENCE
BRIT FOR WOMEN

BURBERRY
BRIT
THE FRAGRANCES FOR WOMEN AND MEN

NEIMAN MARCUS  NORDSTROM  SAKS FIFTH AVENUE
M e more than a year later, in August 2006, Peter Hoekstra released a
House-intelligence-committee report titled “Recognizing Iran as a Strategic Threat: An Intelligence Challenge for the United States.” Written by Frederick Fleitz, former special assistant to John Bolton, the report asserted that the C.I.A. lacked “the ability to acquire essential information necessary to make judgments” on Tehran’s nuclear program.

The House report received widespread national publicity, but critics were quick to point out its errors. Gary Sick, senior research scholar at the Middle East Institute of Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs and an Iran specialist with the N.S.C. under Presidents Ford, Reagan, and Carter, says the report overstates both the number and range of Iran’s missiles and neglects to mention that the I.A.E.A. found no evidence of weapons production or activity. “Some people will recall that the IAEA inspectors, in their caution, were closer to the truth about Iranian WMD than, say, the Vice President’s office,” Sick remarked.

“This is like pre-war Iraq all over again,” David Albright said in The Washington Post. “You have an Iranian nuclear threat that is spun up, using bad information that’s cherry-picked and a report that trashes the inspectors.”

Curt Weldon’s 20-year career in Congress came to an end on November 7, 2006, when he lost his seat to Democrat Joe Sestak, a navy vice admiral who’d served in Iraq. Two weeks later, Seymour Hersh reported in The New Yorker that a classified assessment by the C.I.A. had found no conclusive evidence as yet that Iran had a secret nuclear-weapons program.

T o Israel, however, it didn’t matter whether a secret weapons program existed. For a state as antagonistic as Iran even to know how to make nuclear weapons was unacceptable. Long before the Iraq invasion, Israeli officials had told the Bush administration that Iran was a far greater threat than Iraq. “If you look at President Bush’s ‘axis of evil’ list, all of us said North Korea and Iran are more urgent,” says former Mossad director of intelligence Uzi Arad, who served as Netanyahu’s foreign-policy adviser. “Iraq was already semi-controlled because there were sanctions. It was outlawed. Sometimes the answer [from the neocons] was ‘Let’s do first things first. Once we do Iraq, we’ll have a military presence in Iran, which would enable us to handle the Iranians from closer quarters, would give us more leverage.’”

Instead, the Americans got bogged down in the Iraqi quagmire, and Iran elected a frightening new president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in 2005. His anti-Israel tirades and aggressive pursuit of nuclear technology led Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to say that Iran threatened not just Israel but the entire world. Outside the administration, neocon ideologues responded with bolder calls for military action against Iran. In The Weekly Standard, Gerecht threw down the gauntlet: “If the ruling clerical elite wants a head-on collision with a determined superpower, then that’s their choice.” (In January, Iran’s parliament responded to new U.N. economic sanctions with a rebuke of Ahmadinejad that raised doubts about his political future.)

But just as the neocons put Iran on the front burner, opposition to the Iraq war began to mount within the U.S. As the 2006 midterm elections approached, one Republican after another began to back away from Bush’s war. That March, former secretary of state James Baker and Lee Hamilton, the former chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, joined forces to found the Iraq Study Group and search for an exit strategy.

Baker’s realpolitik is anathema to neocons, but it is worth remembering that Bush, despite pursuing a neoconservative agenda in Iraq, is not a dyed-in-the-wool member of their group. “The president is a true believer in the policies the administration has been engaged in,” says one former N.S.C. staffer. “When it is applied to the policies regarding the Palestinians.
Bush showed his willingness to depart from the neocon line a year ago, when he received an unusual proposition from Israeli officials together with the Palestinian president, Mahmoud "Abu Mazen" Abbas, and a top administration neoconservative, Deputy National-Security Adviser Elliott Abrams. According to a Middle East expert, the Israelis and Abbas had determined that Hamas was positioned to fare strongly in the upcoming Palestinian elections, so they came to the administration with a plan to postpone them. "The Israelis and the Palestinians together had worked out a way to do it," says the expert. "The Israelis were going to say that Hamas candidates could not run in Jerusalem, which was under Israeli jurisdiction, because they did not recognize Israel's right to exist. And Abu Mazen was going to say if they can't run in Jerusalem, then we can't have an election now, [be-
cause] it wouldn't be fair to Hamas. It was all worked out."

There was just one problem: Bush, whose enthusiasm for spreading democracy had led him to actively lobby for the elections, didn't want to go along. "The president said no," the expert says. "He said elections will be good for Hamas. They would have to be responsible. They expected Hamas to do well, but not get a majority. Now they've become the government and it's a big mess." If anything, Bush had shown himself to be less pragmatic than his neocon advisers.

Reach via e-mail, a spokesperson for the National Security Council responded. "When the elections were rescheduled for January 2006, after earlier being postponed by the [Palestinian Authority], the United States took the position that they should be held and not postponed yet again.... We were advised during the campaign by some of our Palestinian interlocutors that Hamas would win. We do not believe in cancelling elections because we may not like the outcome."

Martin Indyk, the director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, at the Brookings Institution, and former U.S. ambassador to Israel, says Bush's decision reflects a mistaken belief that "elections are the most important way to promote democracy." Indyk explains. "It would have been better to build up the rule of law, establish independent judiciaries, promote freedom of religion and the press, and insist on the principle of a monopoly of force in the hands of the elected government. Ignoring that last principle in favor of elections was Bush's biggest mistake. As a result, in Palestine, Iraq, and Lebanon, parties with militias have moved into the government. Hamas, Muqtada al-Sadr, and Hezbollah have taken advantage of elections to promote their policies, which are antithetical to democracy."

Baker's entry onto the scene didn't just raise new questions about Bush's openness to pragmatic solutions; it also introduced an Oedipal element into the drama. Baker and Bush's father, after all, were best friends. Tennis partners. More than 40 years earlier, when George W. was a 16-year-old student at Andover, Baker had given him a summer job as a messenger at Baker Botts, his Houston law firm. Now, along with Brent Scowcroft, the elder Bush's former national-security adviser, Baker was leading a coterie of multilateralists and realists who found themselves aghast at the radical direction the younger Bush was taking American foreign policy, and desperate to reverse it.

In July 2006, after Israel's disastrous attack on Hezbollah in Lebanon, Scowcroft offered the administration some foreign-policy advice on the opinion page of The Washington Post, arguing that the crisis in Lebanon provided a "historic opportunity" to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Resolving that conflict, Scowcroft argued, was crucial to stabilizing the region—including Iraq.

According to an article in Salon by Sidney Blumenthal, who was a senior adviser to President Bill Clinton, Scowcroft, with the assent of Baker and the elder Bush, sought and found support for this notion from the rulers of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Even Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Scowcroft's former protégé, seemed receptive, he asked her to help open the president mind to the forthcoming I.S.G. report.

As the November congressional elections approached, there were a number of indications that foreign-policy realists such as Scowcroft were gaining favor. Key neoconservative architects of the war in Iraq—Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, and Richard Perle—were no longer part of the Bush foreign-policy team, at the State Department. All but ineffectual during the run-up to the Iraq war, was showing new signs of life. "My sense is that the Iran portfolio has been shifted to State Department official Karim Sadjadpour, an Iran specialist at the nonprofit International Crisis Group," told me last fall. "Secretary Rice and her deputies are more influential than the vice president and the secretary of defense. It's an about-face in U.S. policy after two decades of not talking to Iran."

Meanwhile, more than a month before its report was due to be released, sources close to the Iraq Study Group had begun talking to the press, and word quickly leaked out that its recommendations would be largely aimed at achieving stability rather than democracy in Iraq. When it came to Iran, a source told me, the I.S.G. might recommend "comprehensive and unconditional talks with the regime" in Tehran—something Bush had already ruled out.

On November 7, the Democrats won both houses of Congress. The next day, Rumsfeld resigned. Bush vowed to "find common ground" with the Democrats. A last, the moderates seemed to have prevailed over the neocons.

On December 6, the Iraq Study Group finally released its report, "The Way Forward—A New Approach." Bipartisan reports tend to be bland affairs, but this one was different. Describing the situation in Iraq as "grim and deteriorating," the I.S.G. report did not shy away from pointing out that the new Iraqi Army, the police force, and even Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki often showed greater loyalty to their ethnic identities than to the ideal of a nonsectarian, democratic Iraq. Ultimately, the report concluded that sending more American soldiers to Iraq would not resolve what were fundamentally political problems. The subtext was clear: America's policies in Iraq had failed. It was time for the administration to cut its losses. A Gallup poll from December 12 showed that, among people who had an opinion on the subject, five out of six supported implementing the report's recommendations.

The only American whose opinion mattered, however, was not impressed. Bush, Salon reported, slammed the I.S.G. study...
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as "a flaming turd." If Rice even delivered Scowcroft's message, it had fallen on deaf ears.

Just eight days later, on December 14, Bush found a study that was more to his liking. Not surprisingly, it came from the American Enterprise Institute, the intellectual stronghold of neoconservatism. The author, Frederick Kagan, a resident scholar at the A.E.I., is the son of Donald Kagan and the brother of Robert Kagan, who signed PNAC's famous 1998 letter to President Bill Clinton urging him to overthrow Saddam Hussein. According to Kagan, the project began in late September or early October at the instigation of his boss, Danielle Pletka, vice president for foreign and defense policy studies at A.E.I. She decided "it would be helpful to do a realistic evaluation of what would be required to secure Baghdad," Kagan told Vanity Fair.

The project culminated in a four-day planning exercise in early December. Kagan said, that just happened to coincide with the release of the Iraq Study Group report. But he rejected the notion that his study had been initiated by the White House as an alternative to the bipartisan assessment. "I'm aware of some of the rumors," Kagan said. "This was not designed to be an anti-I.S.G. report.... Any conspiracy theories beyond that are nonsense.

"There was no contact with the Bush administration. We put this together on our own.... I did not have any contact with the vice president's office prior to... well, I don't want to say that. I have had periodic contact with the vice president's office, but I can't tell you the dates. If you are barking up the story that the V.P. put this together, that is not true." Kagan's report was sharply at odds with the consensus forged by the top brass in Iraq. Iraq commander General George Casey and General John Abizaid, the head of Central Command (CentCom), had argued that sending additional troops to Iraq would be counterproductive. (Later they both reversed course.) Kagan's study, on the contrary, suggested that with a massive surge of new troops America could finally succeed. It cites the military's new counter-insurgency manual, which suggests that a nation can be secured with a force of one soldier for every 40 to 50 inhabitants. That calculus would call for stationing more than 150,000 troops in Baghdad alone (there are currently 17,000 there), far more than is politically feasible today. But Kagan skirts this issue by asserting that "it is neither necessary nor wise to try to clear and hold the entire city all at once." Focusing instead on certain areas of Baghdad, he concludes that the deployment of 20,000 additional troops would be enough to pacify significant sections of the city. Even the title of Kagan's report must have been more appealing to Bush: "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq." Soon, it would be announced that Casey and Abizaid were being replaced with more amenable officers: Lieutenant General David Petraeus and Admiral William J. Fallon, respectively. The escalation was on.

In one sense, the neoconservative hawks—including the authors of "A Clean Break"—have been kept aloft by their failures. The strategic fiasco created by the Iraq war has actually increased the danger posed by Iran to Israel—and with it the likelihood of armed conflict. "[Bush's wars] have put Iran in the worst strategic and operational situation she's been in since 1948," says retired colonel Larry Wilkerson, who was Colin Powell's chief of staff in the State Department. "If you take down Iraq, you eliminate Iran's No. 1 enemy. And, oh, by the way, if you eliminate the Taliban, they might reasonably be assumed to be Iran's No. 2 enemy."

"Nobody thought going into this with these guys would screw it up so bad that Iran would be taken out of the balance of power, that it would implode, and the Iran would become dominant," says Martin Indyk.

As a result, many Israelis believe that diplomacy is doomed and that Iran will have to deal with sooner or later. "Attacking Iraq when it had no W.M.D. may have been the wrong step," says Uzi Arrad, the former Mossad intelligence chief. "But to ignore Iran would compound the disaster. Israel will be left alone, and America's interests will be affected catastrophically."

Even critics of the White House say the Iran's nuclear program poses a grave threat to Israel. "They correctly fear the Iranian nuclear program as an existential threat to Israel," says retired colonel W. Patrick Lang, who served as an officer for the Middle East, South Asia, and terrorism at the Defense Intelligence Agency. "They are not being silly about this. It really is a threat to Israel."

But waging war against Iran could be the most catastrophic choice of all. It is widely believed that Iran would respond to an attack by blocking the Straits of Hormuz, a 20-mile-wide narrows in the eastern part of the Persian Gulf through which about 40 percent of the world's oil exports are transported. Oil analysts say a blockade could push the price of oil to $125 a barrel, sending the world economy into a tailspin. There could

ELIZABETH
CHENEY OVERSAW
A PROJECTED $85 MILLION
PROGRAM TO PRODUCE
ANTI-IRAN PROPAGANDA AND
SUPPORT DISSIDENTS.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE
DAUGHTER
Dick Cheney and his
daughter Elizabeth, who has been involved in destabilizing Iran.

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A nother serious development is the growing role of the U.S. Strategic Command (StratCom), which oversees nuclear weapons, missile defense, and protection against weapons of mass destruction. Bush has directed StratCom to draw up plans for a massive strike against Iran, at a time when CentCom has had its hands full overseeing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. "Shifting to StratCom indicates that they are talking about a really punishing air-force and naval air attack on Iran," says Lang.

Moreover, he continues, Bush can count on the military to carry out such a mission even without congressional authorization. "If they write a plan like that and the president issues an execute order, the forces will execute it. He's got the power to do that as commander-in-chief. We set that up during the Cold War. It may, after the fact, be considered illegal, or an impeachable offense, but if he orders them to do it, they will do it."

Lang also notes that the recent appointment of a naval officer, Admiral William Fallon, to the top post at CentCom may be another indication that Bush intends to bomb Iran. "It makes very little sense that a person with this background should be appointed to be theater commander in a theater in which two essentially 'ground' wars are being fought, unless it is intended to conduct yet another war which will be different in character," he wrote in his blog. "The employment of Admiral Fal- lon suggests that they are thinking about something that is not a ground campaign."

Lang predicts that tensions will escalate once the administration grasps the truth about Prime Minister Maliki. "They want him to be George Washington, to bind together the new country of Iraq," says Lang. "And he's not that. He is a Shia, a factional political leader, whose goal is to solidify the position of Shia Arabs in Iraq. That's his goal. So he won't let them do anything effective against [Muqtada al-Sadr's] Mahdi army."

Recently, a complicated cat-and-mouse game has begun, with Maliki's forces arresting hundreds of Mahdi militiamen, including a key aide to Muqtada al-Sadr. But there are many unanswered questions about the operations, which could amount to little more than a short-term effort to appease the U.S.

Gary Sick is slightly more optimistic that the Bush administration's Iran strategy entails more than brute force. "What has happened is that the United States, in install- ing a Shiite government in Iraq, has really upset the balance of power [in the Middle East]," Sick says. "Along with our Sunni al- lies—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt—the administration is terribly concerned about Iran emerging as the new colossus. Having created this problem, the U.S. is now in ef- fect using it as a means of uniting forces who are sympathetic [to us]."

In order to do that, Sick says, the ad- ministration must reassure America's al- lies that it is serious about protecting them if the conflict spreads throughout the region—drawing in Iran, Sunni Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, which would resist any attempt by the Kurds to create an independent state. "That means providing Patriot missiles, if Iran goes after the Saudi oil ports," he says. "One of the prices we will have to pay is a more active role in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Then there is fighting Hezbollah in Lebanon. The president has signed a covert-action finding that allows the C.I.A. to confront and counter Hez- bollah in Lebanon. So this is a very broad

BY THE END OF FEBRUARY, SAM GARDINER SAYS, THE U.S. WILL HAVE ENOUGH FORCES IN THE GULF TO MOUNT AN ASSAULT ON IRAN.

strategy. It has a clear enemy and an ap- peal to Saudis, to Israelis, and has a poten- tial of putting together a fairly significant coalition."

For all that, Sick acknowledges, this policy carries a significant risk of provoking war with Iran: "Basically, this is a signal to Maliki that we are not going to tolerate Shi- te cooperation with Iran. This could lead to the ultimate break with Maliki. But once you start sending these signals, you end up in a corner and you can't get out of it."

Whatever the administration's mas- ter plan may be, parts of it are al- ready under way. In mid-January, the U.S. sent a second aircraft-carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf. According to Gardiner, by the end of February the Unit- ed States will have enough forces in place to mount an assault on Iran. That, in the words of former national-security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, would be "an act of political folly" so severe that "the era of American preponderance could come to a premature end."

The Bush White House has already built the fire. Whether it will light the match re- mains to be seen.
The Most Happening Fella

Hollywood loves Brett Ratner. At 37 he's directed seven movies (Rush Hour, X-Men: The Last Stand), which collectively have grossed more than a billion dollars, and he's made fans of everyone from Robert Evans to Brian Grazer to Russell Simmons. Now he wants respect.

By Nancy Jo Sales

There's a party at Brett Ratner's house. Not downstairs, in the disco, where producer Allan Carr (Grease) built a gold lamé playpen for 70s Hollywood, and Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan have lately been known to play, but upstairs, in the living room, where Ingrid Bergman once cast her loveliness at a visiting director, Roberto Rossellini, before he stole her away from her husband, Petter Lindström, a brain surgeon.

Wait a minute. There's Dino De Laurentiis. Dino De Laurentiis? Who made La Strada? What's he doing here?

The elegant Italian producer smiles when asked what made him hire Brett Ratner to direct his Hannibal Lecter prequel, Red Dragon (2002). "Nobody wants to win more than Brett Ratner," he says.

Ratner. robust and shaggy, shvitzing slightly in crisp, blue Armani, still seems excited by this proximity to one of his idols. "When they hired me for Red Dragon," he says, "Stacey Snider, the chairman of Universal, says, 'You have to meet Dino De Laurentiis.' I said, 'Oh shit! This guy made Fellini movies! He's been making movies longer than I been alive!' I went to see him, first thing he says is'—heavy accent—"'Who are you? Why do they like you? You tell me now!'"

De Laurentiis gives a shrug. "About a half an hour later, I said he could do it—I like the guy. He's a son of a bitch, but you know, a director must be a son of a bitch, too."

"In my opinion," he says, after Ratner hurries off to greet his other illustrious guests, "in another two, three years, he'll do an important movie."

In Hollywood, Brett Ratner is known for many things: first and foremost, for being one of the most bankable directors in the industry. His feature films—only seven of them, including Rush Hour and Rush Hour 2, the wildly popular buddy action comedies with Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan—have grossed well over a billion dollars. Yes, a billion dollars, which has earned Ratner a $7.5-million-per-picture payday. And he's only 37.

His last movie, X-Men: The Last Stand (2006), the operatic third installment in the
wondered if her dress or the LEATHER DIVAN would be the hit of the party
I lived in his house for two years," from 2002 to 2004, while this house was being renovated. Ratner says, "Every morning his butler brought me the best eggs I ever ate in my life!"

"When I screen a movie," he says, "before I show it to anybody, I show it to one of three people: Warren [Beatty], Bob Evans, or Bob Towne, because they're the smartest guys in the business. They tell me the truth, they're not kissing my ass."

There's Danny Elfman—the prolific composer; he scored Red Dragon—and Penelope Cruz, glistening with Spanish beauty. There's the legendary Quincy Jones—composer, conductor, producer—sitting at Ratner's dining-room table with a fetching young Brazilian woman on his lap.

"That's my baby," Jones says. She goes by Tulsia.

Ratner stands up and starts telling everyone a story—it's his favorite kind: a general story, about his meeting with a famous older man who becomes his "best friend" and then changes his life. Which is the constant theme in his life.

"I start directing music videos," he says, "because I became best friends with Russell Simmons"—the founder and former head of Def Jam Recordings was Ratner's mentor in New York in the early 90s and while he was a student at N.Y.U. film school—and I was, like, the hottest video director at the time. And Quincy's like, 'I want you to direct videos for my company, we gotta work together, come see me in the Hamptons, come to this party.'"

"He wanted me to do videos for him," Ratner says. "He had an eye. I'm like 20 years old. I walk into the party. I think there's going to be a hundred people there, and Quincy's standing there with three people, at the late Steve Ross's house. And he says, 'Everybody, this is Brett Ratner, a talented young director.' He says, 'Brett, this is Penny Marshall, Robert De Niro, and Steven Spielberg.' And I'm like—"

He pauses for the requisite gash, which he gets. He's also known for being "good in a room."

"Right," Ratner continues, with a smile. "And I'm like, 'Nice to meet you guys.' And I go and sit down with Spielberg. He sent me money for my student film"—called Whatever Happened to Mason Reese? it starred the Cabbage-Patch-doll-faced 70s child actor, whom Ratner met walking down the street in New York. He sent letters out to 40 directors asking for funding, and got one letter back. From Spielberg.

"So I sit down, and Spielberg sits right next to me, and he goes, 'So, did you go to film school?' And I go, 'It's funny you should ask!' I go, 'You gave me money for my student film!' He goes, 'No way!' For hours later, we're still talking. Quincy looking at me like—Are you bothering him? Stop bothering him!"

Laughter. It's a classic Ratner tale: the play comes off a player while giving props to the master.

"And now when I finish Rush Hour 3 says Ratner, "Quincy and I are flying to Brazil. We're going to shoot Brazil Carnival in H.D."

"High definition," says Jones.

"It's going to be like the Brazilian version of Buena Vista Social Club," Ratner says. "But bigger," says Jones.

"There's a whole new wave of Brazilian music," says Jeff Berg, chairman of ICM the power agency, who's just come in.

I n Ratner's guest bathroom, there's a David LaChapelle photograph of Naomi Campbell lying naked on a kitchen floor (nipples very prominent), pouring milk all over herself. "Happy Valentine's Day, Brett," says the inscription. "Love, Naomi, February 14, 2003."

"I think people player-hate on Brett because they're jealous," says Mike De Luca, balancing a plate of steak on his lap.

De Luca, former president of production at DreamWorks, gave Ratner his first shot at directing—with the surprise hit Money Talks (1997), another buddy action comedy, starring Chris Tucker and Charlie Sheen—when he was at New Line.

"This kid literally invented his career out of nothing," he says, "Talking his way into N.Y.U. film school"—at 16. Ratner says he was the youngest student ever accepted. "He talked his way into Russell Simmons's life. And it's not just the cinematic success—in his spare time he becomes a photographer for French Vogue."

Last May, Ratner had his own photography show, "Portraits by Brett Ratner," at the Altair Lofts, in New York. Hugh Jackman was at the opening. So were Barry Diller and Oluchi (she's a model).

When you walk into his house, the first
Redheaded Danny Elfman, who’s sitting nearby, says, ‘Brett once took me and this new girlfriend that I had’—Elfman’s now married to Bridget Fonda—”he said. ‘Come on, we’re going to Miami. We’re dropping [director] John Woo off in Boston. We’re going to stay at my mom’s house. Come with us. It was the craziest weekend of my life. With this running here”—meaning my tape recorder—’I’m not going to say too much more, but it was, man, um…”

“He throws a good party,” says De Luca.

Ratner’s taking pictures of Robert Evans and Dino De Laurentiis sitting side by side on his couch. “I have a picture of Dino and Bob Evans sitting on my couch!” he exclaims. The Hollywood legends look up at him indulgently, as if at an excised child.

“He is a little boy, a little tiny boy,” Bob Shaye, the normally tough-talking co-chairman of New Line, told me earlier. Shaye said he met Ratner on a plane from New York to L.A. in 1996. “He said to the guy sitting next to me, ‘I have to sit next to this guy’—persuading the guy to switch seats. ‘He regaled me about his life for five hours. He’s got some real talent.”

Now Ratner sits on the big mahogany coffee table in front of Evans and De Laurentiis and starts telling them a story. It’s another kind of Rat tale: one that involves tremendous serendipity, which seems to put Ratner in the middle of a great, cosmic plan. He tells me I’m not allowed to repeat the story here because it involves a young lady, but let’s just say it’s sufficiently amazing in content, and even more so in its telling, to get Robert Evans and Dino De Laurentiis who’ve heard lots of expert storytellers spinning their stories, saying “No!” (De Laurentiis) and “Wow!” (Evans). Ratner squeezes De Laurentiis’s arm. Evans’s ankle, for emphasis.

“How crazy is that?” he asks, finishing it.

“IN ANOTHER TWO, THREE YEARS, HE’LL DO AN IMPORTANT MOVIE,” SAYS DINO DE LAURENTIIS.

our life is full of serendipity,” says Imagine Entertainment head Brian Grazer.

Naturally, Ratner has a story about himself and Grazer, arguably one of the biggest producers in Hollywood (from A Beautiful Mind to Inside Man).”

“Russell [Simmons] introduced me to him,” Ratner says, standing with Grazer by his giant mantel. “They were doing this movie called Boomerang—an Eddie Murphy comedy from 1992. ‘Every time I came to New York he would call and ask me to come and see the movies he was producing and say, ‘Hey, what do you think?’ Because I was a film student. Then when I graduated from N.Y.U., he said, ‘Come to L.A., I’m going to hire you.’ I thought, Oh, this is my opportunity!”

“So I go to see him,” Ratner says, “and he said, ‘You’re going to be my assistant, I’m going to train you to be the biggest producer in Hollywood—’”

Grazer smiles. “I did.”

“And I’m going to pay you $23,000 a year.’” Ratner says. “And I said, ‘No, no, I’m a director, like your partner, Ron Howard.’ And he says, ‘I’m going to pay you $25,000 a year’—”

“He kept turning me down,” Grazer says. “And I said, ‘No, no, you don’t understand—I’m a director,’” says Ratner. “And he said, ‘O.K., well, good luck in the future, nice seeing you.’ He offered me my first job!”

“Well, there you go,” says Grazer.

And now they’re doing a movie together, and Ratner is the director. It’s an action comedy with Eddie Murphy and Chris Rock called Trump Heist, the story of an inside job at Trump Tower.

“He’s very winning is what he is,” says Grazer after Ratner has zoomed away. “I was trying to get the best understanding of the music culture”—because he says he knew, even back in ’92, that he wanted to do a hip-hop movie like 8 Mile, which he finally made 10 years later—and he was very good at being a
navigational tool into that world. "He's kind of like a wishing stick," says Grazer. "He knows what exactly is present in our culture. He knows what's corny and what's not corny, and that I think is the most important editorial tool.

"And to be around him," he says. "it's a lot of fun. I mean, he can kind of get you to do almost anything. It was very hard for me to get here tonight—but yet, he threw me a bunch of e-mails: 'You've got to come up! No matter how late!'"

"Bob!" Ratner's now calling to Bob Shaye. "This girl is a 10th-degree black belt! She's in Rush Hour 3! She can put her leg straight up in the air! Her leg is a karate weapon!"

Chinese stuntwoman Michelle Lee obediently raises leg to cheek.

"He made me do that a million times in my tight-ass jeans," she says, laughing.

Penelope! Penelope!

Now Ratner's calling for Penelope Cruz to come down the stairs of his house, which is perched on a hill, to the lane outside, where his famous photo booth stands.

"HE BURNED DOWN MY SCREENING ROOM AND I STILL LOVE HIM," SAYS ROBERT EVANS.

Famous because he has made it so. His book Hilhaven Lodge: The Photo Booth Pictures (Powerhouse, 2002) is a delightfully quirky album of the many famous people who have visited his home: Britney Spears, Leonardo DiCaprio, Colin Farrell, Nicolas Cage—who starred in Ratner's 2000 drama, The Family Man—Naomi Watts, Liv Tyler, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs...

"Penelope and Bob Towne in the photo booth," Ratner the director yells.

Bob Towne—white-haired, tall, and lanky—is already cramped inside it. I ask him if he thinks Ratner is a good director.

"Yes, I do," he says after a moment. "I do think he's a good director. Very lively."

He doesn't look like the kind of guy who'd say something he didn't really mean.

"I'll never have it better than this," Towne says as Ratner leads Penelope Cruz into the photo booth and onto his lap.

The machine starts to whir. "This one we'll smile," Ratner says, directing the shoot from just outside the photo booth. "This one we'll be pissed off... This one nose to nose... This one we kiss—"

The writer and leading lady kiss—flash!

"Bob, I love you," says Ratner.

"He's such a character," Cruz says charmingly (pronouncing it "karracter").

Brett Ratner is a bastard.

Not really, but he was born out of wedlock, in 1969, to a 16-year-old Miami girl of Cuban-Jewish descent, Marsha Presman.

His father, Ronny Ratner, then 25, "was the son of a wealthy guy," who sold rat poison, incidentally. "He was just kind of the rich kid," Ratner tells me one day at a café near the Plaza Athénée in Paris. "And he was on drugs because it was the 60s... And he never really stopped." Ratner grew up in Miami Beach with his mother and maternal grandparents. (His father passed away last year.)

"I'll tell you a really great story," Ratner says. "When I was 10 years old, I went on a school trip, and I went to the courthouse and you're supposed to look up a case. And I typed in the name 'Ratner.' And I saw 'Preman v. Ratner—Paternity' I gave the case number to the clerk, and the first thing I read was 'the bastard child Brett and I was like, Aaaahhhhh!" He gives a long, comic gasp.

He did later meet his dad, when he was 16. Worrying that his "bastard status bothered him, his parents got married just before his high-school graduation. "I'm like, 'I didn't want you to marry my mom!''" Ratner says. "And [my dad] says 'But you're not a bastard anymore!'

They weren't unfriendly, but were never close either, which Ratner says is "the reason I love old men. I'm obsessed with older men. I mean, Bob Evans, Roman Polanski—"

Rosemary's Baby director has a role in Rush Hour 3 as an officious French policeman—"Dino De Laurentis, and all these guys that I gravitate to and end up working with..."

When we finish lunch, he meets up with Polanski outside, and they go tramping down the street together.

Ratner's many surrogate fathers present a remarkable array of characters: first there was Al Malnik, a Miami attorney who once represented Mob boss Meyer Lansky and owned the Miami restaurant the Forge.

"He's like my true father figure, my true role model," Ratner told me. "When he sends me a note he signs it 'Dad.'"

Malnik was never involved with Ratner's mother; apparently, he just liked the kid. He was a friend of his paternal grandfather. Ratner would spend weekends at his house. When Michael Jackson hit some financial woes in 2004, Malnik helped him out. "Michael Jackson is my best friend!"," Ratner said. "You didn't know that?" (He said he always believed Jackson was "totally innocent," and, actually, it's hard to imagine Ratner, kid 

malheer, at Neverland, where Jackson also enjoyed the role of surrogate dad.)

Ratner's next adopted father was Russell Simmons, although he insists Simmons is just his "best friend." "Russell isn't my dad..."
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actor Eric Dane from Grey's Anatomy, as she and Ratner are still good friends.

I put the same question to Ratner the cold night we spent together at the tip of the Eiffel Tower, where he was filming Rush Hour 3. The mood was giddy, so I asked him—because he allows you to feel he's open to being asked such things—"Why do the women love you? Do you have a big dick?"

"No," he said frankly. "It's not big. It works well. I know how to use it. You can put that in." And catching his dour air, "I mean!"

"No!" he said, rethinking it. "Say big. It's huge!"

So, Simmons says, "Brett knew where the models' apartments were a tremendous plus. You know, he always...around. He's always around. He stick with you all night. right?" He laughs.

Their revelry took them to all the hlications in New York at the time—downtown to Area, uptown to China Club, "where would see Rick James and Eddie Murphy and all those guys," Ratner says.

"Let's get a big car, let's all go to Cab Tabac! That was all Brett's stuff," says Simmons.

Ratner claims that, throughout all this and to this day, he has never done drugs, drunk alcohol, or smoked a cigarette. Simmons concurs: "Brett has never had a glass of water. He's naturally high as hell. If I took a drug, we'd all be in trouble."

Their companionship began to see the nights into the days. "We'd list...
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**THE GOLDEN BOY**

Excuse me for lying in bed," says Robert Evans, stretched out across a fur comforter in his bathtub. "But I have nowhere to sit since Brett burned my screening room down.

He's joking, sort of; he's known for reclining. And Ratner didn't really burn his screening room down. A faulty television Ratner had given Evans for his wedding to former model Leslie Ann Woodward (from whom he's now divorced) blew up one morning in July of 2003, causing a devastating fire. Lost was not only the screening room itself—which for 30 years had been one of the most exclusive spots in Hollywood—but also much of Evans's personal memorabilia, his many awards, as well as a Hockney, a Picasso, and a Toulouse-Lautrec.

"He burned down my screening room and I still love him," says Evans in his deep, purring voice. "What does that say?"

His English butler, Alan, comes in with a snack of smoked salmon. "Do we miss having Brett around, Alan?" Evans asks.

"Ye-e-es." Alan says carefully. "He was very lively.

"Would you say he was on this bed every night?" Evans asks, as if making a point.

"Yes, he spent a lot of time in this room," says Alan.

"He got a Ph.D. here," Evans says.

Ratner came for the weekend one day in 2002. And then stayed for two years. "He was the man who came to dinner—Monty session to succeed. Not succeed Sammy Glick—style, but as an artist. He wants to be taken seriously.

"And he is a serious artist," he says. "I'm a big believer in his talent. And I think other people would be if he weren't as available as he is. He loves going out all the time. Because of his child-like openness, people don't regard him with the same awe as people who are one-tenth as successful.

"Let us not forget," Evans says, "this is an industry where 95 percent of the people are unemployed, and from the moment Brett came on the scene he hasn't stopped working. He's a Monday-morning hit man. His pictures are almost uniformly, hugely successful.

"I think his career has just started. I know the things he wants to make, and he's daring in the things he wants to do. And he strives for excellence, he really does." Ratner's been talking with Evans about doing a biopic of his
life; he’s thinking Johnny Depp.

“I was his Hollywood father,” Evans says. “I don’t know whether I should be proud of that or not.” He lets out a big, knowing laugh.

“But I think I hated a contributor to the art. He will become, in his time, a very remembered filmmaker—despite himself.”

He walks me around to the room off the main house where Ratner spent his Sentimental Hollywood Education, telling me about some of the others who once stayed there: “Alain Delon, Henry Kissinger, Ted

Ratner says, “I always got your back!”

Chan, who’s acted in 60 movies and directed over 10 of his own, is patient throughout, but perhaps the repetition is getting to him. The kung fu master stumbles and falls over a stool.

“Cut!” yells the assistant director.

Ratner scrambles out from behind his monitor. “Don’t say ‘Cut!’ Why’d you say ‘Cut’?” he screams. “Don’t say it again!”

There’s a small silence across the set.

“That could have been in the outtakes!” Ratner says, and after a moment. “Do it again, Jackie.”

Everyone laughs.

The collaboration of Ratner and Chan has proved highly fruitful for both of them. It was Ratner’s idea to take Rush Hour, an admittedly mediocre script that had been floating around Hollywood and cast “a black guy”—Tucker and Chan, who had both a read made Chinese-American audience and fans in the hip-hop community as well. Before it, Chan says durin a break from filming, “I’m big, but have my own audience. Not like American family audience know me. After Rush Hour, not big—huge.”

“Brett Ratner he’s like a children growing up and graduated,” he says. “Th first 10 years when I see him until now totally different person. He learn so quick. He ask me something about how to make action look good, look real— ‘How can I do this?’ I tell him once, he know.”

“The closer I get to your ooo...”

Ratner is crooning with Chris Tucker over someone’s iPod playing the Robert Flack song. They get really into it, and everyone’s laughing; someone’s filming Ratner pulls Tucker to him, to kiss him but Tucker pushes him away.

“HE’S A LITTLE BOY, A LITTLE TINY BOY,” SAYS BOB SHAYE, CO-CHAIRMAN OF NEW LINE.

Kennedy, Laurence Olivier, Evelyn de Rothschild, Jack Nicholson, Dustin Hoffman, Prince Rainier... “And Brett Ratner.” He grins.

I n December, Rush Hour 3 is shooting in L.A., and, one day, at an empty hospital in Pasadena.

Chris Tucker is being filmed rolling over a gurney—blasting a 9-mm. handgun.

“Yeah! Yeeeeeaaaaah!” Ratner shouts when the take is over. “You a bad mother-fucker?”

He’s wearing a red Gap T-shirt that says INSPIRED—part of Bono’s (Product) Red initiative to eliminate AIDS in Africa—a paraka that says “Brett,” and Converse sneakers. He’s popping choc-
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of him! So then *Money Talks* came up..."Money talks," Tucker says.

After the success of the first *Rush Hour*, Tucker held out for $20 million for *Rush Hour 2* (Chan made $15 million). He's making $25 million for *Rush Hour 3*, putting him in the same pay category as Will Smith, Tom Cruise, and Brad Pitt.

"Why Dino De Laurentiis?" Ratner asks impatiently. "His kids," says his mother, Marsha Pratts (she's remarried).

Ratner is in his kitchen, checking over his mother's list of invitees to his Hanukkah party, which is supposed to be for kids.

"His kids are 18 years old in college, what are you talking about?" he snaps.

"All right, so relax," his mother says. She somehow sounds as New York as Judy Holiday in *Born Yesterday*. (She lives in New York now; she's visiting.) She has long dark hair and the same trim figure as the party girl who "got knocked up," as she says, with baby Brett back in '68.

"Why are you socializing with these people?" Ratner shouts. "My friends you don't invite!"

"O.K., I'm just trying to be polite," says Pratts.

She gives me a look: "Kids!"

Ratner told me earlier his mother calls him "20 times a day. I went to high school in Israel, she followed me. She lived in a kibbutz in the town next to me. I went to N.Y.U., she got an apartment down the street. Now she wants to move to L.A."

As a young mother, she was more like a big sister or a friend, he said. "I never had one day of discipline—ever. I never had to do my homework. She was like, 'Look, if you want to be a loser and not study, it's your fault.'"

"I remember being a little kid and staying up all night long with her listening to records, singing to Motown records. That's why Russell's fascinated by me, because my favorite records were the Delfonics, the Chi-Lites, the Stylistics. He never met a white kid who knew every word to every black soul record."

Ratner's mother's best friend in those days was Nile Rodgers, the renowned music producer and front man for Chic (of "Le Freak" disco fame). When Brett was seven, Rodgers bought him a guitar, but he found he couldn't play. "So the next year," Ratner said, "he bought me a camera and I started making these home movies."

"All his life he loved movies," his mother tells me now. "He would write his own stories, like superhero stories. Once he made a 30-page book. What was the name of it? *Conan the Barbarian! Remember, Brett*?"

"I don't remember, Mom," Ratner moans."

"What I did, because I was such a young mother," she says, "is I didn't try to dim highlights. Like he would say, 'Let's go to the set of *Miami Vice*,' and I'd go, 'O.K.!'"

I wanted Brett to be a lawyer," says his grandmother Fanita Presman, 82. No, we're out in Ratner's guesthouse, when his grandmother and grandfather Maria, 86, have lived since 2002.

He brought them out to L.A. from Miami in a tour bus, for the première of *Red Drag on*. And they never left.

"He says, 'That's too complicated,'" says Fanita, a striking woman with a Cuban accent. "His whole life was to become a director!"

Now Fanita is filming her own reality show for VH1, *My Grandson the Director*. I was her grandson the director's idea.

"It's Golden Girls meets Entourage," says Ratner. "Fanita has, like, an entourage of all these young girls. Paris is obsessed with her. Lindsay—all these girls hang out with her. Paris came here the other day, the cameras were here, and Paris was like, 'Fanita, let's go shopping,' so she takes her to Robertson [Boulevard]. The paparazzi were going crazy!"

Fanita starts fusing with a piece of paper.

"What are you looking—at, Ratner demands.

"I wrote something down," she says—it's something about her grandson the director, which she wants the reporter to hear.

"Nobody cares!" Ratner shouts. "It's talking! You don't have to read!"

"She's old, she doesn't understand," joke-Mario (also known as "Pipa"). He's a retired radiologist.

Ratner takes his grandfather's hand. "When I was little, we used to go to the movies, Pipa and I, every Sunday in Miami Beach," he says. "We'd go to see action movies because his English isn't perfect *Beverly Hills Cop, 48 Hrs.*—"

"He used to hold my hand all the time, Brett," says Pipa. "When he was bigger. I said, 'Brett, don't hold my hand, the people passing by think that we are in love.'"

"We are, we are in love," says Ratner. Fanita's still rustling the paper.

"What is wrong with you?!," Ratner screams, taking it and tossing it on the coffee table.

"I'm very proud of Brett my grandson, you know," Fanita tells me.

"That's why you have your own reality show," says Ratner.

"He's marvelous," Fanita says, beaming. □
GOOD MORNING
Taking on Guantánamo

Assigned to defend a Guantánamo detainee, JAG lawyer Charles Swift joined up with legal scholar Neal Katyal and sued the president and secretary of defense over the new military-tribunal system. With their 2006 Supreme Court victory overridden by the Republican Congress, and Swift’s navy career at an end, they are fighting on

By Marie Brenner

The whole purpose of setting up Guantánamo Bay is for torture. Why do this? Because you want to escape the rule of law. There is only one thing that you want to escape the rule of law to do, and that is to question people coercively—what some people call torture. Guantánamo and the military commissions are implements for breaking the law. Why build a prison here when there are plenty of prisons in Nebraska? Why is it, when we see photos of Abu Ghraib, we think that it is “exporting Guantánamo”? That it is the “Guantánamo method”?


He could not even get his client a pair of socks. That realization came to Charlie Swift, a lawyer in the navy’s Judge Advocate General’s Corps (JAG), as he landed in Guantánamo. It was December 22, 2006, a few weeks before the fifth anniversary of the arrival of the first enemy detainees at the American naval base in Cuba. Swift had been a JAG defense lawyer for 12 years and was making his 30th visit to Salim Ahmed Hamdan, a diminutive Yemeni who had been held for more than five years. The first time Swift met Hamdan, in January 2004, the prisoner was in shackles. “I am freezing,” Hamdan told him. “Can’t you get me a pair of socks?” After that, Swift brought Hamdan socks. Sometimes his client was given them, sometimes he was not.

Now, nearly three years later, Hamdan was at the center of a landmark Supreme Court case, Hamdan v. Rumsfeld, held up as a symbol of detainees’ rights and the need for the Geneva Conventions, yet he was still mired in legal limbo.

The island, once again, seemed inexpressibly strange to Swift. He always drove past a sign that read HONOR BOUND TO DEFEND FREEDOM. “This is probably not the best sign for this place,” Swift said to himself on one of his first trips. Seeing the rec hall and a McDonald’s, he made notes for a future jury summation: “This is the island of misfit toys.”

An order had been issued just before he arrived. Hamdan was to be taken to Camp Six, a nether zone on the base, and placed
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Swift dialed Katyal. “I have the guy.” He paused. “The only problem is that he was Osama bin Laden’s driver.”

at Guantánamo—under rules that, were he to follow them as a civilian lawyer, would be clear ethical violations. On his first trip to see Hamdan, in 2004, he had made a list of these on a legal pad: no right to habeas corpus, no attorney-client privilege. forced guilty pleas for charges never made public, secret and coerced evidence, juries and presiding officers picked by executive fiat, clients represented even if they declined legal counsel. He and Katyal had won their case in the Supreme Court, but had anything really changed?

“We are right back to where we started,” Swift said. “When I met Salim Ahmed Hamdan, he was sitting and waiting. Now he is sitting and waiting again. And he is still freezing and does not have a pair of socks.” The central question remained for Swift: Could a president hold someone forever without trying him? “What are we defending here?” he asked. “Kangaroo courts where the defendants never knew what they were being indicted for?”

October 15, 2006. The day I meet Charlie Swift, he attempts to sum up the legal morass of Guantánamo. “Justice,” he says, “is based on a simple idea: it can happen to you.” The line comes out minutes after he arrives at a Starbucks in the suburbs of Maryland, and the intensity of his delivery causes the teenagers making out at the next table to look up. It’s a Sunday afternoon, shortly after the announcement that Swift is leaving the navy. A few days earlier, on October 11, The New York Times ran a harsh editorial commenting on the subject:

In 2003, Lt. Cmdr. Charles Swift was assigned to represent Salim Hamdan, a Yemeni citizen accused of being a high-ranking member of Al Qaeda—for the sole purpose of getting him to plead guilty before one of the military commissions that President Bush created for the prisoners at Guantánamo Bay. Instead of carrying out this morally repugnant task, Commander Swift concluded that the commissions were unconstitutional. He did his duty and defended his client… The Navy gave no reason for denying Commander Swift’s promotion. But there is no denying the chilling message it sends to remaining military lawyers about the potential consequences of taking their job, and justice, seriously.

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The Times editorial made it seem as if a navy hero had been slapped down for trying to put a stop to the practices at Guantánamo. On the telephone, Swift was irritated about that. “There is nothing clear-cut about this,” he insisted. “It is not black-and-white.”

The fog surrounding Guantánamo had seemed to lift on June 29, 2006, when Hamdan v. Rumsfeld—a case scholars have compared to Brown v. Board of Education in its ramifications for this country—was decided in the Supreme Court. The court struck down President Bush’s military tribunals, declaring them illegal under long-established U.S. laws, the Geneva Conventions, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In a 73-page opinion, the court said that the administration had established the tribunals without congressional authorization and violated international law. At first, the decision seemed a complete victory for Swift and all the other lawyers in and out of the JAG Corps who had been fighting what they considered Draconian conditions at Guantánamo.

The victory, however, was short-lived. On October 17, President Bush signed the Military Commissions Act of 2006, creating a new system of interrogating and prosecuting terrorism suspects and denying the 430 prisoners at Guantánamo and others around the world the right to file writs of habeas corpus. “The constitutional issue could now be more stark,” Swift declared. “What they are doing is unprecedented.”

Habeas corpus is a sacrilegious principle that dates to before the Magna Carta. The last president who suspended it was Ulysses S. Grant. Under U.S. law, habeas corpus—“you should have the body”—requires judicial inquiry into the legality of detention and, as stated in the Constitution, “shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.” Almost immediately, the Republican Congress circumvented the court decision with new rules for Guantánamo. The Military Commissions Act not only drew away habeas corpus for non-citizens but also expanded the definition of “enemy combatant” in what, for many, was an unconsolable overreach of presidential authority.

At this point of the day, the week I had a ranged to spend time with Swift.

He is late for our meeting. For all of his military training, he can be casual about details. He calls several times from his car complaining about the traffic, explaining that he has to pick up his dog from the kennel. An hour passes, and finally Swift strides in, like a ship stoked to the fullest. He wears jeans, and his shirttail is hanging out. He is husky, with a broad face, a lantern jaw, a shag of hair, and a flying cowlick. The atmosphere changes the minute he enters. I watch the teenagers lounging around a shift in their seats.

People who know Swift make fun of his endless spels. Without prompting, he will burst into flurries of rhetoric on Galtleo, Roman history, or the Mongols. He is 44, and he frames his own history like a performer, occasionally even describing himself in the third person—“Here comes Charlie Swift.” Known for his skill at 10 word sound bites in front of juries, he recalls that a commanding officer once told him, “You could sell ice to Eskimos.”

In another era, the crusade of Charlie Swift might have generated mass protests. However, as a March 2006 Pew Research Center poll found, the country is sharply divided on the issue of detaining suspected terrorists at Guantánamo without charges or trial. For many, detainees with names such as Rasul, Habib, Mohammed, al-Odah, and Hamdan blend into one another with a mind-numbing sameness. Af-
In the first years of the camp's operation, the outrage of legal groups and human-rights organizations ignited a flurry of books and plays detailing allegations of torture and the deprivation of rights. In constitutional-law classes and international forums, activists railed against the unchecked power of the executive branch. There have been thousands of articles in the press describing how the precedents established under the Bush administration could harm future generations. Journalists Seymour Hersh and Jonathan Muhler and legal scholars Ronald Dworkin and Joseph Margulies, among others, have made important contributions to this country's awareness by detailing hunger strikes, suicide attempts, and alleged atrocities within the camp walls.

Historically, there has often been a lag in the country's concern regarding the rights of foreign nationals. It took years for the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II to register as a national embarrassment. Today, the moral quagmire of Guantánamo is, for many Americans, at best a secondary consideration.

Swift's decision to take on the government would cost him his career in the navy and hurt his marriage. I wanted to understand what had gone on behind the scenes in his historic case. Since he was leaving the navy, I hoped that he might finally feel less constrained in what he could say about the events he had set in motion. In our first meeting, hours passed as Swift spoke nonstop, hardly moving in his chair. By the time we left Starbucks, he was late for a jazz concert. He walked ahead of me briskly, his feet splashed outward, trying to remember where he had parked his car. Had he, I asked him, at any time predicted what would happen to his life if he persisted in his legal crusade? For once, he hesitated before he answered. Looking out over the Bethesda traffic, he said, "My view was if you went down, you went down. And I would say now that, whatever happens, there was honor in that. I was upset by what I perceived as arrogance. And the implication that this was a simple fight. That maybe, by implication, we in the military were simple.

I looked at that as an advantage. I knew they were never going to see me coming."

A Special Assignment

Charlie Swift's journey to the Supreme Court began on 9/11 in Florida. He awoke early and was rushing for coffee, knowing that once he was in court outside Jacksonville in his dress whites it would be water for the rest of the day. He was in the process of selecting a jury to hear the case of a chief petty officer accused of stealing $35,000, which he used to bid for women's underwear on eBay. Swift was preoccupied thinking about the case, and it took him a few moments to notice a cluster of people in front of a TV set in a waiting room outside the courtroom. "A plane has flown into the World Trade Center. It is an accident," one person said. Swift's wife, Debbie, was a pilot, and he remembered the last attack on the World Trade Center, in 1993, when six people died and more than a thousand were injured. "Maybe we should cancel the trial today," Swift told the judge. Seventeen minutes later, a second plane hit the other tower.

The next morning at the base, there was a line of traffic four miles long as the Mission Essential call-up started for the military. At home, Swift told Debbie, "This means we have conquered the world. People are going to come and attack us from now on. We are now 'the man.' We are like England in the last century."

Soon an executive order from the White House authorized military commissions. Swift, immersed in his trial work, was not aware of the order, but even if he had been, he would not have had a clear idea of what a military commission was. There have been only a few times in American history when commissions—watered-down trials without possible future review—were instituted. The quality has varied, from exemplary to star-chamber.

A few weeks later, coming out of another trial, Swift was stopped by his commanding officer, who told him, "We're thinking of nominating you to be a defense lawyer in the military tribunals."

"A military tribunal, sir?" Swift was, he tells me, only half listening. The term made him think of The Hague or Spencer Tracy in Judgment at Nuremberg. "I believed that if navy JAG set up the military trials, they would be first-class." He was, however, inexperienced with the practice of what is known as the laws of war—a labyrinth of guidelines based on international agreements such as the Geneva and Hague conventions.

Months passed. As the supervising JAG lawyer in Jacksonville, Swift had a full calendar of cases to monitor or try. The staff would gather and talk about Afghanistan and the threat of war in Iraq, but largely they were absorbed with their personal caseloads—shoplifters, coke users, sailors caught in lewd behavior in public parks.

The navy, army, air force, and Coast Guard each have a JAG Corps. Started during the Civil War with the appointment of a civilian lawyer for a court-martial, the
One day navy captain Dan McCarthy, the JAG chief prosecutor, approached Swift with a sheaf of papers in his hand. “What do you know about the case Ex parte Qui-rin?” he asked.

“Quirin? I never heard of it, sir.”

“I suggest you read it,” McCarthy said. “It is going to be the basis of the military tribunals.”

That night, Swift stayed up until dawn reading the history of the case that would lay the groundwork for the next phase of his life. In 1942 a small band of Nazi saboteurs landed at Amagansett, Long Island, and at Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. All of the men had previously lived in America, and two were American citizens. What marked the case was the seeming ambivalence of some of the saboteurs regarding their assignment. Had they arrived to blow up American targets, or were they attempting to gain asylum? One turned himself in to the F.B.I. but he was initially dismissed as a hoaxer. The F.B.I. found a briefcase stuffed with $82,000 in cash (a million dollars today) in one saboteur’s hotel room. The story captivated the nation.

In charge of the case was Colonel Kenneth Royall, a graduate of Harvard Law School, who understood that his best hope of saving his clients from swift execution was to draw on Ex parte Milligan, a military-tribunal case that dated back to the Civil War, when Abraham Lincoln suspended habeas corpus in order to be able to prosecute Copperheads, those northerners strongly in sympathy with the Confederacy. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled against the president, finding in part that “the Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people . . . under all circumstances.” The court’s decision remained unchallenged for three-quarters of a century.

Royall litigated ferociously on behalf of the eight saboteurs’ right to a fair trial, even trying to appeal personally to several justices for a temporary writ of habeas corpus. Since the Supreme Court was in summer recess, he was able to reach only Justice Hugo Black, who wanted nothing to do with “these Ger-ground American legal policies in Guantánamo?” McCarthy and Swift were adversaries in court but friends outside of it. They often jogged together on the base. For Swift, McCarthy was a prosecutor’s prosecutor, trained at Duke Law School and dedicated to justice. He wrote him, “This is kind of like saying that the Dred Scott case was a great decision. Do we really want to go back to a time when slaves cannot seek redress in the court system? It appears to make no sense for the President of the United States to decide whether or not you are guilty in advance of a trial.” McCarthy replied back, “I am sure the Department of Defense will do the right thing.”

Soon after, Swift received a call from JAG headquarters. “We are planning to nomi-nate you to work on these tribunals,” an officer told him. “Do you have any problems with that? The assignment should not take longer than six weeks.”

“Six weeks?” Swift responded. “I guess I can do anything for six weeks.”

In 1999, Lieutenant Charles Swift caught the attention of Attorney General Janet Reno after a bomb killed a civilian security guard at a naval training facility on Vieques, Puerto Rico. Since Swift was the supervising JAG lawyer in Puerto Rico, Vieques and Guantánamo were in his district and he suddenly found himself in meeting with Pentagon admirals and generals and members of Reno’s staff. He learned, he says, a powerful lesson about the Department of Defense: “There was the legal case and there was politics. Politics drove every decision.” For his part, the mess on Vieques was a portent of Guantánamo. “No one understood what was happening. No one could make a decision.”

Growing up as an adopted child in a family with three other siblings, Charlie Swift always felt like an outsider. His father was an environmental research scientist in Franklin, North Carolina. Charlie went to a small public school with the children of farmers and in the summers he shoveled grave in the local ruby mine. Swift now sees this period as formative for his late career in law. Unable to settle down, he was sent to boarding school and to Outward Bound. When Charlie applied to Annapolis, his family worried that he might not have the discipline for an officer.

At the naval academy, Swift put up a sign above his bed: YOU ARE BEING PAID $545 A MONTH TO GET OUT OF BED. He was often on detention, and once he was almost kicked out for drinking. This was the era when women were first admitted to Annapolis, and Swift was often appalled by how they were treated. According to Gina DiNicola, then a plebe, “Charlie was one of the few men who did not ignore us. Once, after a dance, a group of midshipmen cornered him in the dorm and demanded that he tell them every single detail about me. He refused.” At another dance, Charlie met a town girl, Debbie Bready, who would become his wife.

After graduation, he found his way into defense work as a junior officer on a frigate. During a stopover in Malaysia, he managed to negotiate the release of three sailors arrested for possession of pot. Next he went to law school and learned to channel his exuberance into the flair for telling stories that he would use to great effect in jury summations.

One of his first cases was in Kodiak, Alaska, working under the renowned JAG lawyer

“Might the job of a military officer,” says Swift, “is not normally to make the commander in chief look bad.”
A common belief is that the Department of Defense invariably finds a way to weed troublemakers out of the corps, most often relying on a failure-to-promote policy. JAG lawyers who are not promoted at scheduled intervals are subject to the regulation known as "Up or Out." In fact, according to Sullivan, this is a misconception. "The JAG Corps prefers their career lawyers to be generalists, not criminal-defense specialists." Sullivan also says, "There has always been a psychic and moral division within JAG. Soldier first or Gunn was in charge and immediately put a question to the group: "What do you think is necessary to put on a good defense?" Everyone knew what was at stake, so there was an atmosphere of urgency in the room.

From the first, inside navy JAG, Guantanamo was considered a disaster. In his book Guantanamo and the Abuse of Presidential Power, Joseph Margulies details the protests that came from Europe in response to President Bush's order of

Neal Katyal felt that the lawyers for the detainees "were all behaving as if it was September 10, 2001."

A large poster for the 2004 play Guantanamo, which dramatized the alleged brutalities of the camp, has pride of place in the office of Marine colonelershivist Dwight Sullivan, the chief defense counsel for the Office of Military Commissions, in Washington. Sullivan is known for his work on appellate death-penalty cases. Viry and muscular, he speaks with military precision, but his legal bona fides suggest lefty activism. For years he worked at the American Civil Liberties Union in Maryland, and a number of the JAG lawyers under him reflect his point of view: there are votes from H. L. Mencken in one office, a YOCCOT GUANTÁNAMO sign in Arabic in another, and a DENOUNCE TORTURE sign from Amnesty International in another. Whenever a supervisor from the Department of Defense pays a visit, Sullivan suggests that his staff take down the agitprop.

The first time I visit the offices, there is no sign of Swift. "Who knows where he is," Sullivan says. "These guys are all independent. They're working with their clients. They're living interviews." Sullivan's phone rings often. "Colonel Sullivan!" he snaps when he answers, and he signs off most calls with an abrupt "Roger that!" He tells me, "Rule 5.4: if you have a military lawyer, he is completely independent, even though he is subject to military senior. I would not go to Charlie and say, 'Don't do X,' because Charlie is so independent he would do it anyway."

On vacation with his family when the Military Commissions Act was proposed, Sullivan was outraged. "Now you have the Congress declaring law over the courts! It is not often in the career of a lawyer that you get to rely on the case of Marbury v. Madison," he says. That case, which goes back to the Jefferson era, declares that the courts can strike down laws they find unconstitutional. Sullivan sat down that day and fired off 40 e-mails to lawyers working in military-commission cases. The essence of all of them was "This is wrong."

March 1, 2003. Charlie Swift was given two days to pack and report for duty on the new military commissions. When he arrived at the Pentagon, he met air-force colonel Will Gunn; two air-force litigators; and navy lieutenant commander Phillip Sondel, who had worked on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Sondel was famous for his encyclopedic knowledge of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and was known to quote arcane rules that could turn a case on a technicality. There were no army JAG lawyers. Good deal, Swift remembered thinking, the army has been shut out.

The lawyers were all handed an early draft of what would become the operating rules for tribunals, and as Swift read through it, he could not stop himself from saying out loud, "This is not good. What do they think they are doing?" Colonel November 13, 2001, authorizing trials by military commissions rather than civilian courts. Ten days later, Spain refused to extradite eight terrorism suspects to the U.S. In January 2002, Donald Rumsfeld told reporters that the prisoners were "unlawful combatants" who "do not have any rights under the Geneva Convention." All the JAG lawyers in the room had seen the shocking photographs of shackled prisoners in hoods and orange jumpsuits, wearing blackened goggles and surgical masks. In England, according to Margulies, the Daily Mail ran the photographs under the headline TORTURED and editorialized, "Even the SS Were Treated Better Than This." There had been hunger strikes and serious mental problems in the camp as prisoners realized that they were being held without being charged, detained by an executive fiat that Charlie Swift would later compare to that imposed by King George III on the American colonists. One prisoner, a Saudi named Mashal, hanged himself in his cell and suffered irreversible brain damage.

Suddenly, all the lawyers were talking at once as Gunn scribbled on the whiteboard at the front of the room. "We need to get out of the barrage of the media," one lawyer said. "P.R. is essential! We need to get the reporters on our side!" Another said, "More important is to get our future clients to a federal trial." All agreed that what was happening at Guantanamo was something straight out of the gulags of the Stalin era. "We have to build support from the N.G.O. [non-governmental organization] community and from the defendants' families," Swift said. "There was so much we did not understand," he tells me. "How do we get them to court? What about Arab culture was it necessary to understand? How could we learn enough about Islam to be credible to our clients? Who could translate?" "We were going against the resources of
Committee of the Red Cross. He learned in May, had scheduled a seminar on humanitarian law. Swift sent the planners an e-mail: "I have been assigned to work on the military commissions as a defense counsel for certain non-citizens for the War on Terror at Guantanamo. Since you are going to be talking about me and the job I'm doing, maybe I should be there."

The Law Professor

In May 2003, Neal Katyal, a constitutional-law scholar, learned that Donald Rumsfeld had chosen the lead prosecutor and defense counsel for the military-commissions trials. Several days later Katyal sent Will Gunn, the new lead defense counsel, an e-mail: "I am a professor at Georgetown Law School. I testified on the military commissions in the Senate in November of 2001. I would be willing to help you out with any legal strategy you might need."

Gunn showed the e-mail to Sundel and Swift. "Have you ever heard of Neal Katyal?" he asked. Sundel had, and he promptly downloaded a lengthy article by Katyal from The Yale Law Journal, printed it, and tossed it over the partition that divided his cubicle from Swift's. "Some of it is correct, and some of it is a load of crap, but I think we should meet with him," Sundel said.

In November 2001, two months after 9/11, Katyal then a visiting faculty member at Yale Law School, read of Bush's order for military commissions. He initially believed that it must be a joke. Two days later, however, he walked into his class and said, "I have found something that is truly unconstitutional." In the next months, Katyal grew obsessed with the wrongness of military commissions. "The president could essentially try people at Guantanamo Bay, and he could write all the rules for the trial. He would be able to pick the prosecutors, pick the defendants, pick the judges, and handpick the appeals panel." Katyal was, however, operating strictly on theory, because the Department of Defense had yet to charge anyone. There were no defendants and no commissions in operation.

As a child of Indian parents, Katyal, who was reared in Chicago, saw the commissions as a threat to all foreigners. At 36, the gifted young professor had already represented Al Gore in the 2000 Florida-recount case. Before that, he had been a champion debater at Dartmouth, had gone on to Yale Law School, and had clerked for Supreme Court justice Stephen Breyer. Before he was 30, he had been hired to work on the national-security staff inside the Clinton Justice Department, where he focused on issues including executive power and counterterrorism. He had earned a reputation within the intelligence community and the White House when he prepared a possible military and legal response to Osama bin Laden's 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. As a young man, he had watched his father, an engineer, be forced out of a job. That made him determined to pursue a legal career. Katyal learned to hide his anger under highly reasoned arguments. virtually lived on his BlackBerry, and produced lengthy articles for the Harvard Law Review almost as quickly as he could think them up. He was able to work prodigiously for 16 hours at a stretch, in his office or at the computer in his kitchen, with new baby at home and his wife, Joanne, a doctor at Washington's V.A. Medical Center, on duty. When Katyal told his family that he had to weigh in on Guantanamo and his brother-in-law Jeffrey Rosen, the legal observer for The New Republic, felt that it was a daunting task that he would not be able to push a case to the Supreme Court. In the spring of 2002, Katyal and the Harvard scholar Laurence Tribe co-authored a lengthy dissention of the Guantánamo situtation for The Yale Law Journal. However, much Katyal read about the allegations of torture, he remained adamant that any was required, and he tended to dismiss ranting from the left.

By March 2003, all had gone quiet in the Justice Department and the Department of Defense. There were no new directives, and the meeting of Gunn and his staff at the Pentagon was classified. "I was convinced that in the Justice Department they had come to their senses, and that these military tribunals were being reconsidered. Katyal says, "I thought that nothing would come of it."

From the start, Katyal had mixed feelings about the JAG lawyers. He thought of them as rule-book canards to pediments every he was dealing with in his investigations concerning counterterrorism and Osama bin Laden. In his first meeting with Swift, Katyal recoiled at his schmoozy courtroom dramatics. He thought he was all bluster. It was difficult for Katyal to understand what Swift could bring to the table. For a month, Katyal managed to refrain from telling him to shut up. He simply tuned him out while focusing on Sundel.

For his part, Swift was immediately drawn to Katyal's rigor. He was relieved that Katyal did not present himself as some Yale Law School snot, and he was intimidated a bit by the fact that Katyal had been able to testify in front of the Senate on military tribunals without having practiced as a military lawyer. Both Swift and Sundel knew the law, but appreciated the importance of the Geneva Conventions for the military field. Katyal brought expertise in constitutional law.

One day Swift stood up in Katyal's Georgetown office and called for full attention. In his most booming voice, he announced, "Neal, we are the Geneva Conventions! This is what the military is about! If we do not uphold them, we have anarchy..."
in the battlefield. We will have chaos and complete breakdown of moral codes.”

“That’s great,” Katyal said. “How do you in that in court?”

All through the summer of 2003, the three lawyers tried out theories and strategies on one another in a steady stream of e-mails: Is terrorism a war? Can Guantánamo detainees challenge military commissions in federal court? Does the Uniform Code of Military Justice apply?

Meanwhile, a flurry of cases from detainees—the “ask to be heards”—came before the courts, but they were steadily turned down. The lower courts said that the men in Guantánamo were outside the U.S. legal system. Then, in November 2003, the Supreme Court agreed to hear *Rassul v. Bush*, which would determine the fate of all the other cases. Katyal felt that the lawyers for the detainees were pushing too hard. “They were all behaving as if it was September 10, 001,” he says. An expert on the courts, he also knew that “the Supreme Court rarely says no to a president in wartime.” But, he says, there was more to this than combat and the detainees. The problem, Katyal says, “was the extremeness of the advocacy on both sides.” He told Swift, “Dude, we have to file a friend-of-the-court brief immediately.”

He then called for a meeting of Will Gunn and all the JAG lawyers. “I walked in and thought this was going to be a defining moment in civilian and military relations,” says Katyal. “It was the first time in the recent history of the Supreme Court that it was asked to decide the role of law.

Katyal explained that any other approach could muddy the issue and close the courts to everyone at Guantánamo, even people who were facing execution. Katyal spoke for 45 minutes. “I had my perceptions of the JAG Corps turned inside out,” he says. At the end of his presentation, Gunn asked him, “How soon can we start?”

Under mounting criticism about Guantánamo from the international community, White House counsel Alberto Gonzales agreed to let the JAGs proceed with the amicus curiae brief.

By October 2003 the first affidavits concerning the detainees had begun to trickle into the Pentagon, all of them marked “Top Secret” and “Classified.” Swift saw the raw summary of each one, but in his conversations with Katyal he had to be circumspect. Right after Thanksgiving, the case of Salim Hamdan crossed Swift’s desk.

“The prosecutors have told me this guy wants to plead guilty,” Gunn told Swift. Soon after, Gunn recalls, an ominous letter arrived. “It was made clear to me that our access to the camp was contingent on our getting a guilty plea from Hamdan.”

Swift was convinced otherwise. Without even meeting Hamdan, he had a feeling that he could be just a timid schlemiel rounded up with hundreds of other foreigners in a C.I.A. bounty-hunting mission. He knew, however, that he would have to persuade Katyal to let Hamdan be their test case. “He had never been involved in any shootings or real violence,” Swift says. “O.K., so he was a driver to one of the worst men on earth. All that really links him is that he worked for a motor pool. He wasn’t necessarily a henchman. I thought, I can work with this.”

He dialed Katyal. “I have the guy. There are no other attorneys assigned to him; he never shot anybody; as far as I can tell, he was never part of any plot.” He paused. “The only problem is that he was Osama bin Laden’s driver.”

“Bin Laden’s driver!” Katyal replied. “That’s the client? You’ve got to be kidding.”

The Test Case

The first time Swift saw his future client, Hamdan was shackled hard and foot and chained to a bolt on a slab next to a cell inside a wooden hut. It was “Hannibal Lecter time,” says Swift. “The guards were on us like Velcro.” Driving into Camp Echo, Swift and his translator, Charles Schmitz, an expert on Yemeni culture, had passed rows of the huts, each not much larger than a king-size bed. Swift argued with the guard who told him he had to take his nametag off. “Call the general!” Swift told him, adding, “Let me get this straight. I am supposed to represent this guy and not tell him my name?” Swift put a piece of tape on his badge, but he took it off once he was inside Hamdan’s cell.

The guards insisted that there be two
from the start, Swift sensed that something was wrong. When he and Sundel met with William “Jim” Haynes, the Pentagon general counsel, they were greeted with an odd remark: “If you never try a case, you will have served your country.” Haynes then mentioned Lloyd Cutler, the legal strategist who had counseled the Clintons during the Whitewater imbroglio. Cutler, who had been nominated to work on the military commissions, had died in May 2005, at the age of 87. As a young man he had worked on the Quirin case, and Haynes repeated what Cutler had said about it: “You know, Quirin is the only case I have ever done in the law that I am not proud of.”

“We were sitting there looking at him, thinking, Why is he telling us this?” says Swift. As Sundel and Swift walked out of the room, Sundel said he thought the commissions would never go forward, because smart people would explain that they were dumb. Swift countered by saying, “They have to, because of politics.”

A photo session of Haynes signing the instructions for the commissions was held in a conference room at the Department of Defense. One hour later, an e-mail circulated ordering that all copies of the photographs be returned. That told Swift, he says, that “inside there was extraordinary reluctance about what they wanted to do... There were times when you are doing something again your better judgment. If this is so historic and wonderful, why does Mr. Haynes not want these pictures floating out there?”

All that summer, Swift, Sundel, and Kkatyal brainstormed ways in which the laws of armed conflict, the Constitution, and the Geneva Conventions were interrelated. The three men soon realized that their unworkable legal strategy would be to focus on narrow applications of the Geneva Conventions and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. As early as 2002, in the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel, John Yoo—a professor at U.C. Berkeley School of Law who once clerked for Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas—and special counsel Robert Delahuntz produced lengthy memorandum which concluded that the Geneva Convention could be ignored in the case of Al-Qaeda suspects. Shortly after 9/11 Yoo had been assigned to design the legal machinery for military commissions. Now notorious for the work he did at the Office of Legal Counsel with David Addington, later chief of staff to Vice President Cheney, Yoo considered the main author of the “torture memo,” which was sent to the attorney general in August 2002 and justified interrogations that inflicted pain up to the level of organ failure or even death.

When Swift examined Yoo’s arguments, he grew anxious. “The only person who could view if the executive power was necessary was the executive. I made no sense.” When Yoo’s torture memo came out one year later, Swift surmised it was intended to make statements coerced from detainees under torture admissible in court and to provide immunity for the interrogators.

Swift got more and more irritated: “It keeps striking me, all the phrases they are using—‘The trials will be full and fair’... It was, like, huh? They will be ‘full and fair,’ but different. It was, like, if you use this line maybe we can convince ourselves.”

“Do you think there is anything, really, to these reports of brutalities during the interrogations?” Swift asked Will Gunn. Swift would often wander down the hall and discuss strategy with his boss. Increasingly troubled by the allegations coming from prosecutors and human-rights organizations, Gunn was equally concerned. “May 2004 was one of the odder months I have ever had,” he says. “Every day there was a new headline about what was happening at Guantánamo. When I would sit

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TEAM MEMBERS

JAG Corps defense attorneys in Arlington, Virginia. From left, Charles Swift, air-force lieutenant colonel Sharon Shaffer, air-force colonel Will Gunn, and navy lieutenant commander Philip Sundel.”

“...This situation is a VUCA...”

said Gunn. Then he spelled out the words: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous.

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him a job as a driver. Soon after the American invasion of Afghanistan, bounty hunters poured into the country, and Hamdan was seized. He was chained to the ground and eventually shipped off to Guantánamo, where he did not see daylight for 90 days. He was kept in solitary confinement for more than 10 months, lost 50 pounds, and showed signs of deterioration. After being assigned to the Pentagon, Swift says, “It took me about a month to understand why a military commission? Because if you torture someone, it is the only way you can get their statements in and not have to admit it in public.”
During the weeks Katyal prepared to argue Hamdan's case in front of the Supreme Court, he slept little. He traveled to law schools and law firms around the country, muting his case 15 times, and each time he came away with more critiques and more suggestions. He assembled a team of law students and worked with Joe McMillan, an expert on international law and a senior partner at the law firm Perkins Coie. Eventually, three lawyers at the firm were helping pro bono. In his first practice session at Harvard, Laurence Tribe told him, "Neal, you feel a little small at the podium." Katyal understood that this meant he was overly deferential when it came to addressing the Supremes.

The essence of their case was that the Geneva Conventions and the Uniform Code of Military Justice had to be maintained. That argument, Swift knew, was cut-and-a winner.

About a decade earlier, Swift had met Joshua Karton in a TAG training session. A former actor and director, Karton had appeared in Beverly Hills 90210. In his mid-50s, he was a specialist on voice inflection and how to sell a jury. He was known to be able to unlock lawyers who might freeze in front of a jury. Karton wore flip-up sunglasses, a sweater-vest, and a bow tie, and he pulled his long gray hair back in a ponytail. When he met Swift, he told him, "All this talent, but you have no tools." Swift recalls, "He hammered me for years with how to do it: 'Don't sell hard, sell soft.'"

By August 2004, Swift had been with Hamdan on a monthly basis and had traveled to Yemen to interview the prisoner's family—his wife was a potential corroborating witness. That month Karton called him, having read a New York Times piece on the Hamdan case. "Do you need help?" he asked. "I sure do!" Swift replied. A week and a half later, Karton met him in Washington.

"Neal is not into touchy-feely," Swift told him. "He is going to tune you out."

They arrived at Katyal's office an hour later than they had said they would. "Neal is really, really pissed at me this time," Swift recalls. "He is in his office at Georgetown, and he just shuts down. Joshua sat there and waited him out. At the right moment he said, 'Let me hear the first three minutes of your argument for the District Court.' When Neal was finished, there was
Their Day in Court

March 28, 2006. At three a.m. the night before they were to argue in front of the Supreme Court, Swift was on the courthouse steps in jeans. For days, protesters had been massing in the capital, and students had lined up on the steps for the night, hoping to be let into the trial the next day. A group of high-school students from Wisconsin began to talk with Swift. “Did Mr. Hamdan do it?” one of them asked him.

Swift recalls, “I told them, ‘The question tomorrow is not: Did Mr. Hamdan do it? It is: Who are we? What kind of people are we? That is why it is so important that you are here today, because someday you will be able to tell your children who we are as a nation.... And something else: only in this country can a military officer take a disagreement with presidential power to court as a way of settling. Everywhere else they call that a coup.’”

That night Katyal keyed up in a way his family had never seen him, took a six-mile run and then went to see the movie V for Vendetta. “I turned my cell phone off for the first time in many months,” he says. “When I came out of the movie, there were 70 phone calls.” The first was from a CNN reporter: “Do you have a comment about the attempt to oust Justice Scalia from the case?” While Katyal had had his phone off, a group of retired generals and admirals had written a letter demanding that Justice Scalia recuse himself because of a remark he had made concerning detainees in a speech he gave in Switzerland.

Katyal called Swift. “This is outrageous! What do those generals think they are doing?” he said. “I was furious that they were so irresponsible,” Katyal tells me. “I deeply admire and trust Justice Scalia. We disagree on many things, but it would have been the height of arrogance for me, a litigant, to tell him what to do. The justices are far better judges of recusal than the litigants in a given case, all of whom are self-interested.” He immediately released a statement to scotusblog, the Supreme Court blog run by his close friend and adviser Tom Goldstein.

The next morning Katyal was still angry. He tried to sing “It’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood” in the shower. Walking up the steps of the court, he experienced the same exhilaration he had felt when he went to clerk for Justice Breyer. There were protesters wearing the orange hoods and jumpsuits of the Guantánamo prisoners, and news vans were parked by the courthouse steps. Katyal was wearing a Gucci tie his mother had bought for him. “She left the price tag on it: $150! I said, ‘Mom, I paid that much for my Prada suit at an outlet in Italy. What do you think you are doing?’” Staring up at the courthouse columns, he later recalled thinking how astonishing it was that “a little guy from Yemen” could be heard against “the biggest guys in America—the president and the secretary of defense.”

Charlie Swift recalls that a commanding officer once told him, “You could sell ice to Eskimos.”

F or months Katyal had honed his argument. He would first talk to the jurisdiction and then about the merits of the case. Sundel had found a paragraph buried in the Uniform Code of Military Justice that left scarcely a doubt that the treaty giving the U.S. control of Guantánamo meant that the base was subject to American laws and could not—as the Bush administration was arguing—be a legal black hole. Concerning the merits of the case, I would deal with the government’s outrageous attempt to flout the Uniform Code of Military Justice. “The experts were against this,” he says, “I was convinced it was the right way to go. I did not want to get side tracked into jurisdiction issues, and I knew that if the merits came first they would push me back to jurisdiction.”

He gambled correctly. During Katyal’s argument, Justice Breyer, his former boss, asked Solicitor General Paul Clement a lengthy question, the essence of which was: How much do you want to shake the president, and how much do you want to give the president a blank check? Katyal was expecting it, and he focused his subsequent argument on the merits of the case. He kept his gaze on Justice Stevens, who asked a lot of questions, and on Justice Kennedy, the expert on military law.

Paraphrasing Justice Breyer, Swift recalls the scene: “As I understand it, the petitioner says that the guy is not a combatant because he is not engaged in classic combatant acts.... The war in which you say he was fighting is not actually a war.” I was suddenly quivering in the courtroom, thinking: He’s got it! We have won! I am singing Hallelujah!”

On the day the decision came down, June 29, the telephones began to ring in the JAG offices. Katyal and Swift were at the court, waiting to hear the decision read. Within minutes, the JAG lawyers, reading scotusblog.com, were shouting,
Pomegranate Perfected.

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Hamdan v. Rumsfeld
is a case scholars have compared to Brown v.
Board of Education in its ramifications.

The Aftermath

In the JAG offices, lawyers now use the term “Alice in Wonderland” to describe the ever-changing rules coming at them from the Department of Defense. On his way to work on January 11, Dwight Sullivan was listening to Federal News Radio when he heard Charles Stimson, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for detainee affairs, excoriate the lawyers in top firms who were helping represent Guantánamo prisoners: “I think, quite honestly, when corporate C.E.O.s see that those firms are representing the very terrorists who hit their bottom line back in 2001, those C.E.O.s are going to make those law firms choose between representing terrorists or representing reputable firms.” Sullivan tells me, “I was absolutely amazed and chagrined. Those individuals were giving of their talent to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. What could Swift also had new concerns. Earlier in the week, Dwight Sullivan had forwarded him a memo from the Joint Task Force in Guantánamo making almost anything he said about the base and his client classified. It was clear to him that the Department of Defense was coming down harder on the defense bar than he had ever imagined. If he were prosecuted, he didn’t know how he would afford an attorney. According to the memo, some of what Swift told me for this article was now classified—for example, where Salim Ham-
da was in Guantánamo and his condition. According to Dwight Sullivan, the restrictions included “all sorts of new stuff—the names and identities of the accused and the camps in which they are held! Pictures of the accused! Sitting here in Washington, D.C., I am not sure that I can say over the phone the name of a certain Yemeni detainee whose case went to the Supreme Court. Pictures that we have had in our files for years may be classified today. Every single submission in a commission proceeding may be classified because they have the names of the detainees.” The memo itself was classified, Sullivan said. “The new rules are so ambiguous and so broad that they just have a chilling effect on speech by the attorneys.”

In the end, will Salim Hamdan or any of the other detainees ever be brought to trial? “Absolutely,” said Colonel Morris Davis, the chief prosecutor of the military commissions. “I would anticipate that Hamdan will be in the initial group charged.” Like Katyal and Swift, Morris was waiting for the new Department of Defense guidelines that would control the military commissions. “We are taking a hard look at changing material support to terrorism,” he said. “This is the typical charge you see in federal courts in the United States.”

When Charlie Swift read the guidelines, his first thought was: The new rules are like putting perfume on a pig. “They were written in such a way that it is very clear it is to let you get in evidence that is based on coercion,” he says. What is the difference between coercion and torture?, I ask. “Who the hell knows?” he says. He pauses a moment and adds, “There are two reasons not to use coercion—because of public policy, and because it is not reliable. Clearly, Congress and the administration disagree.”

We won! We won! We won everything!” At court, moments after the decision had been read, two senators Katyal had consulted over to congratulate him. “Soon we are going to have real trials that the nation can be proud of,” one said. By the time Katyal left court at noon, he had been told, “The president is vowing to overturn the decision.”

“I was shocked,” Katyal tells me in an email. “I would have hoped, just for a moment, the president would have thought about the constitutional ramifications of what he did, instead of churning it through the Karl Rove spin machine.”

All that day, the JAG offices were besieged by photographers. Swift went from one TV studio to another; Katyal fielded 300 interview requests but did only two before going home to a sick child.

The next day, Dwight Sullivan announced Jim Haynes is coming to have a conference.

When their boss arrived from the Defense Department, his mood was somber. The JAG lawyers gathered in a small conference room. When Haynes entered, Sullivan called his men to attention. Swift waited for Haynes to say. “At ease,” but he said nothing. Uh-oh, Swift remembers thinking. Finally, Haynes said, We want to congratulate you on your hard work. Especially you, Commander Swift.” Then he delivered a shock: “The decision does not change anything in his office. All of you continue to work on your cases.”

Tom Fleener, the former public defender, was disgusted.

My first impression was that these guys were never going to learn. There was never the slightest chance that they were going to do the right thing and try these people.”

“As I read it, Haynes did not give a crap if the detainees were represented,” says Swift. “They were stunned inside the Defense Department and trying to get the old system back.”

Within days, the Military Commissions Act, which would strip Guantánamo detainees of habeas corpus rights, was working its way through Congress. (Haynes did not respond to numerous requests for comment.)

CHECKING UP

Former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld on a 2002 visit to Camp X-Ray, in Guantánamo, where al-Qaeda and Taliban suspects are held.

In Georgetown, Katyal was listening to the radio. For weeks he had been waiting for a decision from the Court of Appeals on Rasul v. Bush in order to decide whether to mount his next challenge in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals or to go directly to the Supreme Court. Swift, alone at home, was spending unhappy hours with reporters on the telephone, mooting about what had become of the Hamdan case. He had begun interviewing with law firms around the country, but so far there were no takers for a soon-to-be-retired JAG lawyer who had gone up against the president. He was writing an article arguing that Guantánamo had been chosen by the military for one reason only: torture. “It was as if I were doing a closing for a jury,” he tells me, adding, “It is time to close Guantánamo.”

be more patriotic than that?” (Stimson later apologized.)

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Washington's $8 Billion Shadow

Mega-contractors such as Halliburton and Bechtel supply the government with brawn. But the biggest, most powerful of the "body shops"—SAIC, which employs 44,000 people and took in $8 billion last year—sells brainpower, including a lot of the "expertise" behind the Iraq war. The authors unearth the company's secrets.

By Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele

One of the great staples of the modern Washington movie is the dark and ruthless corporation whose power extends into every cranny around the globe, whose technological expertise is without peer, whose secrets are unfathomable, whose riches defy calculation, and whose network of allies, in and out of government, is held together by webs of money, ambition, and fear. You've seen this movie a dozen times. Men in black coats step from limousines on wintry days and refer guardedly to unspeakable things. Surveillance cameras and eavesdropping devices are everywhere. Data scrolls across the movie screen in digital fonts. Computer keyboards clack softly. Seemingly honorable people at the summit of power—Cabinet secretaries, war heroes, presidents—turn out to be pathetic pawns of forces greater than anyone can imagine. And at the pinnacle of this dark and ruthless corporation is a relentless and well-tailored titan—omniscent, ironic, merciless—played by someone like Christopher Walken or Jon Voight.

To be sure, there isn't really such a corporation: the Omnivore Group, as it might be...
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SAIC has become the invisible hand behind a huge portion of America’s national-security state.

are worth more than $1 billion. The company’s annual revenues, almost all of which come from the federal government, approached $8 billion in the 2006 fiscal year, and they are continuing to climb. SAIC’s goal is to reach as much as $12 billion in revenues by 2008. As for the financial yardstick that really gets Wall Street’s attention—profitability—SAIC beats the S&P 500 average. Last year ExxonMobil, the world’s largest oil company, posted a return on revenue of 11 percent. For SAIC the figure was 11.9 percent. If “contract backlog” is any measure—that is, contracts negotiated and pending—the future seems assured. The backlog stands at $13.6 billion. That’s one and a half times more than the backlog at KBR Inc., a subsidiary of the far better known government contractor once run by Vice President Dick Cheney, the Halliburton Company.

It is a simple fact of life these days that, owing to a deliberate decision to downsize government, Washington can operate only by paying private companies to perform a wide range of functions. To get some idea of the scale: contractors absorb the taxes paid by everyone in America with incomes under $100,000. In other words, more than 90 percent of all taxpayers might as well remit everything they owe directly to SAIC or some other contractor rather than to the IRS. In Washington these companies go by the generic name “body shops”—they supply flesh-and-blood human beings to do the specialized work that government agencies no longer can. Often they do this work outside the public eye, and with little official oversight—even if it involves the most sensitive matters of national security. The Founding Fathers may have argued eloquently for a government of laws, not of men, but what we’ve got instead is a government of body shops.

The unhappy business practices of the past few years in Iraq—cost overruns, incompetence, and corruption on a pharaonic scale—have made the American public keenly aware of the activities of megacollectors such as Halliburton and Bechtel. Although SAIC takes on government projects such as those pursued by contractors like these, it does not belong in exactly the same category. Halliburton and Bechtel supply government’s brawn. They pour concrete, cut concertina wire, build infrastructure. The call on bullheaded men to provide protection.

In contrast, SAIC is a body shop in the brain business. It sells human beings with a particular expertise—expertise about weapons, about homeland security, about surveillance, about computer systems, about “information dominance” and “information warfare.” If the C.I.A. needs an outside expert to quietly check whether its employees are using their computers for personal business, it calls on SAIC. If the Immigration and Naturalization Service needs record-keeping software, it calls on SAIC. Indeed, SAIC is willing to provide expertise about almost anything at all, if there happen to be a government contract out there to pay for it—as there almost always is. Whether SAIC actually possesses all the expertise that it sells is another story.

What everyone agrees on is this: Washington contractor pursues government money with more ingenuity and perseverance than SAIC. No contractor seems to exploit conflicts of interest in Washington with more zeal. And no contractor cloaks its operations in greater secrecy: SAIC almost never tells its activities in public, preferring to stay well below the radar. An SAIC executive once gave a press interview and referred to the enterprise as “stealth company,” a characterization that is accurate and that has stuck. “Nobody knows where we are,” says Glenn Grossenbacher, a Texas lawyer who has battled SAIC in court on a whistle-blowing case. “Everybody knows Northrop Grumman and G.E., but if you went out on the street and asked who the top 10 [defense] contractors are, I can guarantee you that SAIC would not be one of them.”

Which is all the more remarkable in light of two developments.

The first is a mounting collection of government audits and lawsuits brought by former employees for a variety of reasons, some of them personal and some coming under federal whistle-blower statutes. In a response to written queries, SAIC characterized itself as a “highly ethical company and responsible
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government contractor, committed to doing the right thing.” But a review by Vanity Fair of thousands of pages of documents, including corporate e-mail messages, offers disturbing revelations about the company’s inner workings, its culture, and its leadership.

The second development is that several of SAIC’s biggest projects have turned out to be colossal failures, failures that have occurred very much in public.

One involves the National Security Agency, America’s intelligence-gathering “electronic ear” and for many years SAIC’s biggest customer. The volume of telephone, e-mail, and other electronic communications that the N.S.A. intercepts worldwide is so massive that the agency urgently needs a new computer system to store it, sort it, and give it meaning—otherwise it will keep missing clues like the Arabic message “Tomorrow is zero hour,” intercepted the day before 9/11 but not translated until the day after. SAIC won the initial $280 million, 26-month contract to design and create this system, called Trailblazer. Four years after the failure in history.” The failure was due in part to the bureau’s ever shifting directives, which points up the perverse nature of government-by-contract. When the government makes unrealistic demands, the contractors go along anyway: they are being paid not to resist but to comply. If it turns out they can’t deliver, new contracts will simply be drawn up. Responding to questions about the F.B.I. project, the company conceded that “there were areas in which SAIC made mistakes, particularly where we failed to adequately communicate our concerns about the way the contract was being managed.”

These and other SAIC activities would seem to be ripe targets for scrutiny by the new Democratic Congress. But don’t be surprised if you hear nothing at all. SAIC’s friends in Washington are everywhere, and play on all sides; the connections are tightly interlocked. To cite just one example: Robert M. Gates, the new secretary of defense, whose confirmation hearings lasted all of a day, is a former member of SAIC’s board of directors. In recent years the company has obviously made many missteps, and yet SAIC’s influence in Washington seems only to grow, impervious to business setbacks or even to a stunning breach of security. Much to the embarrassment of a company entrusted with some of the nation’s most precious secrets, its San Diego offices were mysteriously burgled in January of 2005. A censored San Diego police-department report reveals the basic outline. The report notes that the building “is protected by DOD certified security” and that “the interior lights are on motion sensors and would have been activated by the suspects.” Nevertheless, burglars managed to break into SAIC’s headquarters, pry open 13 private offices, and walk out with one desktop-computer hard drive and four laptops. By SAIC’s account, the computers contained personal data on thousands of present and past employees, presumably including the company’s many former C.I.A. operatives, N.S.A. executives, and Pentagon officials. To date, the burglary remains unsolved.

SAIC has displayed an uncanny ability to thrive in every conceivable political climate. It is the invisible hand behind a huge portion of the national-security state—the one sector of the government whose funds are limitless and whose continued growth is assured every time a politician utters the word “terrorism.” SAIC represents, in other words, a private business that has become a form of permanent government.

No Washington contractor seems to exploit conflicts of interest with more zeal, or operates in greater secrecy.

and more than a billion dollars later, the effort has been abandoned. General Michael V. Hayden, the former head of the N.S.A. and now the director of the C.I.A., blamed the failure on “the fact we were trying to overachieve, we were throwing deep and we should have been throwing short passes.” Happily for SAIC, it will get the chance for a comeback in the second half. The company has been awarded the contract for a revised Trailblazer program called Execute_Locus. The contract is worth $361 million.

Another failed effort involves the F.B.I., which paid SAIC $124 million to bring the bureau, whose computer systems are among the most primitive in American law enforcement, into at least the late 20th century. The lack of information-sharing is one reason why the F.B.I. failed to realize that in the year leading up to 9/11 two of the future hijackers—including one with known “jihadist connections”—were actually living in the San Diego home of an F.B.I. informant. SAIC set to work on a system called the Virtual Case File. V.C.F. was supposed to become a central repository of data (wired transcript, criminal records, financial transactions) from which all F.B.I. agents could draw. Three years and a million lines of garbled computer code later, V.C.F. has been written off by a global publication for technology professionals as “the most highly publicized software

A Plain Brown Envelope

On the evening of January 17, 1961 Dwight D. Eisenhower came down from the White House living quarters to the Oval Office and delivered his last address to the American people as president. This was the famous speech in which he warned against the “dangerous rise of misplaced power” in the hands of what he called “the military-industrial complex”–the study hybrid formed by crossbreeding American corporate interests with those of the Pentagon and the intelligence community.

As Eisenhower spoke, a quiet ambitious man on the other side of the country, John Robert Beyster, was going about his business as head of the accelerator-physics department at the General Atomic corporation, in La Jolla, California, one of many secretive companies that sprouted early in the atomic era. Beyster had grown up outside of Detroit, served in the navy during World War II, and earned a Ph.D. in nuclear physics from the University of Michigan before migrating to South-
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Defense Atomic Support Agency: he was given the task of calculating “the output of nuclear devices.”

Beyster understood that this particular moment of the American Century was the perfect time for shrewd consultants to get into the war business. The conflict in Vietnam was still raging, and the Cold War seemed to have become a permanent fixture of the geopolitical landscape. The Nixon administration was promoting a missile-defense system to protect its ICBM installations. Scientists were hard at work on a host of nuclear projects, including the fabled neutron bomb. Although computers had yet to revolutionize government and business, visionaries like Beyster could see that eventually they would, and so, for SAIC, computer systems represented another target of opportunity.

Joined by research scientists from General Atomic and elsewhere, Beyster developed a straightforward business plan. As he later explained it, “People who came into the company went out and got contracts.” Everyone who worked for SAIC had to carry his own weight. You might have a Ph.D. in physics or applied mathematics, but at SAIC your job fundamentally was to sell your high-tech ideas and blue-chip expertise to the army, navy, air force, C.I.A., N.S.A., Atomic Energy Commission, and any other government agency with money to spend and an impulse to buy. Contracts were everything. There is much to be said for SAIC’s approach: in its four decades of existence, the company has turned a profit every single year.

Beyster aggressively packed his company with former generals, admirals, diplomats, favored executives and board members, whose identities were kept secret. A lucky recipient would learn of his good fortune when a messenger appeared in his office carrying a plain brown envelope containing a newly minted stock certificate.

SAIC had its own brokerage subsidiary, licensed by the S.E.C., a kind of in-house Merrill Lynch called Bull, Inc. The name accurately predicted the stock’s vitality. Beyster and his board managed every aspect of the stock—the number of shares, who received them, and, most important, the price. Unlike on Wall Street, where individual stock prices go up and down, the SAIC stock price, controlled by Beyster and his board, usually moved in one direction only: up. The more contracts you landed, the more stock you received. Even if you stayed at SAIC for only a short time, you could in the long run earn a lot of money. And if you left SAIC to go back into government service, you had considerable incentive to keep SAIC’s continuing good fortunes in mind.

SAIC’s internal stock market was instrumental in the company’s early success. Peter Frierser, a San Diego attorney who has represented former SAIC employees in civil complaints against the company, says, “You find somebody [in government] who wants a job with SAIC, later, and he sees the steady rise in the stock price over the years and knows he can get a job with stock options and stock bonuses, then he’s going to be sending business over to SAIC. And it worked.”

SAIC opened its Washington office in 1970. Although San Diego would remain SAIC’s home base, the workforce in the Washington area soon eclipsed the workforce everywhere else. To ensure support on Capitol Hill, corporate outposts were promptly set up in key congressional districts. Meanwhile, scores of influential members of the national-security establishment clambered onto SAIC’s payroll, among them John M. Deutch, undersecretary of energy under President Jimmy Carter and C.I.A. director under President Bill Clinton; Rear Admiral William F. Raborn, who headed development of the Polaris submarine; and Rear Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, who served variously as director of the National Security Agency, deputy director of the C.I.A., and vice director of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

SAIC’s relative anonymity has allowed large numbers of its executives to circulate freely between the company and the dozen or so government agencies it cares about. William B. Black Jr., who retired from the N.S.A. in 1997 after a 38-year career to become a vice president at SAIC, returned to the N.S.A. in 2000. Two years later the agency awarded the Trailblazer contract to SAIC. Black managed the program. Donald Foley, a current SAIC director, came out of a top position at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the Pentagon group responsible for developing new military technology. SAIC might as well operate an executive shuttle service between its McLean, Virginia, offices and the C.I.A., the F.B.I., the Pentagon, and the Department of Energy. Technically, federal ethics rules stipulate that former government officials must wait...
Beyster packed his company with generals, admirals, diplomats, spies, Cabinet officers—people with access.

The Young-Boy Network

The driving force behind SAIC, the man who shaped its personality and culture across nearly four decades, until he was forced out in 2004, was of course Bob Beyster. From the beginning Beyster as indefatigable, constantly on the road, promoting SAIC to any government official he would listen. On a 10-day trip, he'd jam as many as 80 appointments. If he had an hour between planes, he'd order his secretary around them and dealing directly with their staffs. Bernice Stanfill King, a former SAIC executive who managed the company's internal stock program, says that Beyster would often assign a single job to two executives. "He would call in one high-level guy and put him on a project," she explains. "Then he would call another guy in a totally different part of the company and put him on the project. Then these guys would bump into each other and [wonder], 'What's he doing?' You never honestly knew what was going on inside. Nothing was ever in the open."

As befits a company with deep ties to the intelligence and national-security community, SAIC's culture has always had a military cast to it. Employees are expected to follow orders. Even former employees are wary of discussing SAIC. One former manager who has worked on sensitive, even dangerous assignments abroad spoke about SAIC only after receiving assurances of anonymity, saying, "This is a very powerful company."

In the years when most corporations had glass ceilings for women, few were lower or thicker than the one at SAIC. Although Beyster was married (and the father of three children), his behavior toward women often ranged from coolness to open hostility. His former secretary, Linda Anderson, once testified that Beyster was "uncomfortable with women." She recalled that when a woman came into a meeting Beyster's manner became stiffled. "Even his posture changed," she said. King, who sued the company for sex discrimination and won, said in an interview with Vanity Fair that when passing Beyster in the hall she was not to speak to him or even to look at him. Women were made to ad-


dress the boss as "Dr. Beyster": men called him "Bob." When a woman made a mistake, Beyster typically called her on it, using words like "stupid" or "incompetent." When a man made a mistake—well, it was just that, a mistake. Beyster's former secretary testified that he once instructed her, on the eve of a major corporate function, to make sure she wasn't seated next to SAIC's one female board member, "because all women talked about was where they got their hair done."

Beyster's close associates within SAIC were a succession of young men. Known as aides-de-camp, they were usually handsome, well educated, and intelligent, with a facility for numbers and a willingness to perform personal tasks for their boss. Beyster was an ardent sailor, and in the summertime he liked to spend afternoons cruising the waters off San Diego aboard his yacht in the company of these young men. George Wilson, who once headed SAIC's public-relations operation, has stated in a legal proceeding that the young men provided a variety of personal services for Beyster, including using SAIC equipment to make copies of pornographic movies that Beyster would watch aboard his boat.

When Beyster traveled on business, he often took one of the aides-de-camp with him, and asked his secretary to arrange for them to stay in the same hotel room—this according to the secretary's courtroom testimony. Wilson said in a deposition that one of the young men he knew who slept in the same room with Beyster
It is Wednesday afternoon, March 25, 1998, and David A. Kay, who had been a U.N. official in Iraq in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, is on Capitol Hill testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Americans generally remember Kay as the head of the Iraq Survey Group, the man who showed that Saddam Hussein didn’t possess W.M.D. when America invaded in 2003, and that the war was launched under false pretenses. But today, in 1998, he is not David Kay, weapons inspector, but David Kay, director of SAIC’s Center for Counterterrorism Technology and Analysis. He is a stockholder in a company known to cognoscenti in the hearing room as a fraternal twin of the intelligence establishment. With great authority, Kay tells the committee that Saddam Hussein “remains in power with weapons of mass destruction” and that “military action is needed.” He warns that unless America acts now “we’re going to find the world’s greatest military with its hands tied.” Saddam posed an imminent nuclear danger to the United States—would in time receive paychecks from SAIC. Although his evidence had long been discredited by weapons experts, Hamza was among about 150 Iraqi exiles designated by the Pentagon as members of the newly chartered Iraqi Reconstruction and Development Council. The plan was that, once American troops secured Iraq, the I.R.D.C. recruits would move into influential positions in a rebuilt Iraqi government. SAIC served as the paymaster for the Iraqi exiles under a $33 million government contract. It brought them all together in the Washington, D.C., suburbs, rented apartments for them, paid their living expenses, provided various support services, and, later, after the invasion and occupation, flew them to their jobs in the new, democratic Iraq. This SAIC operation reported to Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense for policy at the Pentagon, a key assistant to Rumsfeld, and one of the architects of the Iraq invasion and occupation. Feith’s deputy was Christopher “Ryan” Henry, a former SAIC senior vice president.

Beyster’s close associates within SAIC were a succession of young men. He called them his “baby boys.”

Over the next four years, Kay and others associated with SAIC hammered away at the threat posed by Iraq. Wayne Downing, a retired general and a close associate of Ahmad Chalabi, proselytized hard for an invasion of Iraq, stating that the Iraqis “are ready to take the war . . . overseas. They would use whatever means they have to attack us.” In many of his appearances on network and cable television leading up to the war, Downing was identified simply as a “military analyst.” It would have been just as accurate to note that he was a member of SAIC’s board of directors and a company stockholder. (Downing was also the chief proponent of a weapons system called Metal Storm, capable of firing a million rounds of ammunition a minute: SAIC received $10 million from the Pentagon to develop prototypes, but in the last two years the Metal Storm company has lost millions.) In the run-up to the war, David Kay remained outspoken. He told NBC News in October of 2002, “I don’t think it’s possible to disarm Iraq as long as Saddam is in power and desires to maintain weapons of mass destruction.”

On all these points Kay and Downing were buttressing the views of Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and others in the Bush administration. They were also echoing the assertions of Iraqi exiles living in the United States, who had been trying to overthrow Saddam Hussein for years. Many of those exiles—people like Khidhir Hamza, a onetime atomic-energy official in Iraq, who insisted that
It's hard to believe. Here's a 16th-century Baroque master whose bold naturalistic painting style first created a sensation, then a movement. A guy whose life was filled with the turbulence and excess of more than a dozen Mario Puzo novels. This guy who, while troubled, ultimately found redemption and immortality in his art. But does the average kid on the street even know who Caravaggio is? Fuhgedaboutit.

Too bad. Especially when you consider how much our children can learn from the conflicted life of a great artist like Michelangelo Caravaggio.

He grew up in less than ideal circumstances. Most of his family died in the plague. Much of his youth was misspent on the mean streets of Rome. And as a young artist he struggled for years to make a living. He was angry. Yet the angry contrast between light and darkness in his work is the very reason why it now hangs in countless museums around the world.

If nothing else, it's a case study of the importance of having art as an outlet. Unfortunately, one we're fast removing from our kids' lives.

If the arts are indeed a vital part of your child's education (and studies show you believe they are), then you should demand his or her fair share. To find out how to help, or for more information about the benefits of arts education, please visit us at AmericansForTheArts.org. Because, as Caravaggio would tell you, life without art is torture.

ART. ASK FOR MORE.
SAIC had been involved in a Pentagon program designed to feed disinformation to the foreign press. The program was overseen by a Pentagon entity with the Orwellian name of Office of Strategic Influence, and its aims proved sufficiently odious that someone inside the Pentagon leaked its existence to The New York Times. An unrepentant Donald Rumsfeld stated that he would shut down the Office of Strategic Influence—but in name only: “There’s the name. You can have the name. But I’m going to keep doing every single thing that needs to be done.”

To create its Iraqi Media Network, SAIC hired professional newsmen from the United States as consultants. One of them was a former NBC News staff member, Don North, who had launched his career as a cameraman in Vietnam and eventually rose to become the NBC News bureau chief in Cairo. North began with high expectations. Once Saddam Hussein was ousted, he and his colleagues hoped to create a BBC-like news operation, instilling “standards of international broadcasting and news reporting” that Iraqis had never known before. It soon became clear that the Pentagon and the Coalition Provisional Authority had other ideas. To them, the Iraqi Media Network represented an opportunity to push the U.S. agenda in Iraq in the most simplistic sort of way. With SAIC’s cooperation, the network quickly devolved into a mouthpiece for the Pentagon—a little Voice of America,” as North would put it. Iraqis openly snickered at the programming. Every time North protested, he recalls, he was rebuffed by SAIC executives. “Here I was going around quoting Edward R. Murrow,” North says, “and the people who were running me were manipulating and controlling a very undemocratic press and media that was every bit as bad as what Saddam had established.” In the end the network was turned over to Iraqi control. Today it is a tool of Iraq’s Shiite majority and spews out virulently anti-American messages day and night. “And to think we started it,” says North. The SAIC-created television network may be the only functioning weapon of mass destruction in today’s Iraq.

As everyone now acknowledges, no other such weapons have ever been found, although search teams ran through more than $1 billion looking for them. The closest they came was the discovery, in May of 2003, of a “mobile bioweapons lab” in the form of a tractor-trailer whose interior configuration looked suspicious. David Kay was on hand to lend credence to the notion that the trailer was a weapons lab. “This is where the biological process took place,” he explained in one NBC News broadcast. “You took the nutrients. Think of it sort of as a chicken soup for biological weapons. You mixed it with the seed stock, which came from this gravity-flow tank up here into the fermenter, and under pressure with heat, it fermented.” Kay outlined the process step by step. The discovery of the trailer was, as the NBC News interviewer allowed, “very close to that elusive smoking gun.”

It turned out, however, that the mobile weapons lab was nothing of the kind. To be sure, the military, back in the United States, did have in its possession something that looked a lot like the Iraqi trailer. In advance of the invasion, SAIC had built its own version of a mobile bioweapons lab, intended to help U.S. troops recognize such a facility if they ever came across one. SAIC had built, in effect, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

After failing to find the WMDs, Kay told Congress in January of 2004: “Let me begin by saying we were almost all wrong, and I certainly include myself here.” The next month President Bush appointed a commission to look at how American intelligence managed to miss the truth about Iraq’s weapons programs. The commission delivered its report one year later, and although it sternly pointed to obvious intelligence failures, it kept its gaze, as it had been told to do, at a very low level—and far away from the issue of whether senior policymakers had deliberately manipulated intelligence findings. “The Commission found no indication that the Intelligence Community distorted the evidence regarding Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction,” the report concluded.

Three of the commission’s staff members had direct ties to SAIC. One was Gordon Oehler, the commission’s deputy director for review. When Oehler left the C.I.A., in October of 1997, after a 25-year career, he in essence walked down the street and into the McLean offices of SAIC to become a vice president for corporate development. A second commission staff member with ties to the company was Jeffrey R. Cooper, vice president for technology and chief science officer in one of SAIC’s major subunits. The third member was Samuel S. Visner, who holds a graduate degree in Washington’s revolving-door system. From 1997 to 2001, Visner was an SAIC vice president for corporate development, and also a business-development manager. Next, he moved into a government spy-master job, becoming chief of signals-intelligence programs for the National Security Agency. During this time SAIC was one of several firms to receive a $280 million contract from the N.S.A. to develop one of its secret eavesdropping systems. In 2003, Visner returned to SAIC to become a senior vice president and the director of strategic planning and business development of the company’s intelligence group.

As for General Downey, he has become
Explore the finer points of exotic chocolate indulgence.

The world of chocolate is experiencing a renaissance. The finest beans from around the world have been matched with the best artisanal processes to create Cacao Reserve by Hershey's™. Discover the nuances of fine chocolate.
a regular contributor on television as a military expert on the war in Iraq and America's options. Everyone seems to have forgotten his earlier bellicosity.

The Flying Hummer

SAIC's ability to prosper is all the more remarkable given its record of lawsuits, charges brought by whistle-blowers, allegations of profiteering, fines assessed by federal judges, and repeated investigations and government audits. According to one former executive, in a sworn deposition in 1992, the practice of "mischarging" became "institutionalized within the company." (SAIC denies such allegations.)

The job of establishing the Iraqi Media Network's infrastructure—cables, transmitters, dishes—was rife with corruption and waste. In one instance, government auditors questioned an SAIC invoice for approximately $10 million. (SAIC says it is unaware of the auditors' report.) In March of 2004 the Pentagon's inspector general found widespread violations of normal contracting procedures: improper payments to subcontractors, unsubstantiated equipment purchases, unauthorized personnel on the payroll. One of the more blatant transgressions concerned SAIC's overall manager of the media effort in Iraq. The investigators discovered that he had bought a Hummer and a pickup truck in the United States and then chartered a DC-10 cargo jet to fly them to Iraq. When a Pentagon official refused to allow the charge, the inspector general reported, "SAIC then went around the authority of this acquisition specialist to a different office within the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to gain approval and succeeded." SAIC's performance on the Iraqi Media Network contract is now, indirectly, at issue in a lawsuit brought by an employee who alleges that she was fired after she tried to draw the attention of SAIC executives to what she described in the suit as "unethical, illegal, and unsafe practices" by the company in Iraq. Because of the pending legal action, this employee declined to be interviewed, but considerable documentation is already part of the public record, including portions of her personnel file. SAIC's corporate priorities would not have dissipated in the interim. But technicians at SAIC's lab tested some samples after the deadline and then backdated the results. SAIC mounted a high-powered behind-the-scenes campaign to escape prosecution. A member of SAIC's board of directors, former secretary of defense Melvin R. Laird, wrote a personal letter to Attorney General Dick Thornburgh. "I can assure you there was no wrongdoing on the part of the corporation," Laird stated. Criminal prosecution of SAIC, he went on, would be "entirely inappropriate." Ultimately the company was accused by the government of making "false, fictitious and fraudulent statements," and pleaded guilty to 10 counts of making false statements or claims. SAIC paid $1.3 million in fines and restitution.

9/11 was a personal tragedy for thousands and a national tragedy for all of America, but it was very, very good for SAIC.

A few years later SAIC was in trouble again this time over its efforts to design a flat-panel liquid crystal-display screen to be used as a navigational device in the cockpits of air-force fighter jets. The initial contract had been awarded in 1987, but SAIC kept going back for more money. The government would shell out millions—even as SAIC assured the air force that steady progress was being made. And in fact air force officials had no reason to believe otherwise: they had seen what they thought was a demonstration model when SAIC officials unveiled a slick-looking compact box with a backlit screen. SAIC officials traveled to military bases around the country to show off the prototype. A respected magazine, Engineering Design News, published a photograph of the display screen on its cover.

But the box was a fake. SAIC had been unable to develop the actual technology. The prototype—in effect, nothing more than a cheap video game—had been cobbled together with components taken from TV sets, computers, and everyday consumer appliances. When two SAIC employees complained to their superiors, both were fired. Two employees later filed whistle-blower lawsuits charging SAIC with defrauding the government. While denying any wrongdoing, in 1995 SAIC settled the suit with the government and paid a fine of $2.5 million.

The ill-fated cockpit-display project was hardly an isolated case. A recent case revealed one method SAIC employed to increase the profits on a contract. In San Antonio, the air force awarded SAIC a $24 million contract to clean up contaminated waste sites at Kelly Air Force Base. Once the project was under way, the SAIC manager overseeing the job realized that the work would cost much less than the amount SAIC had negotiated. "It was massively overstuffed," Michael Woodlee, the former manager, said in an interview. "I didn't need that many [people]." Woodlee said he told one of his superiors that "there was no way under the moon we could spend all this money."

This is not what SAIC wanted to hear. Woodlee said that, because he couldn't spend everything in his budget, his SAIC superiors suggested that he "harvest money out of [his] project and send it up the cor-
S

SAIC’s response was audacious. It told federal officials, in effect, that the government was right: the company does increase the profit margin beyond the terms of the contract. But there’s a reason: risk is involved, and the additional profit is compensation for that risk. According to documents in the case, SAIC explained that it employs something called “Quantitative Risk Analysis” to identify potential business risks, and that it factors those costs into its contracts, although without ever mentioning the fact to customers. In a written response, the company stated that this kind of risk analysis is “commonly used throughout industry” and “such purely judgmental information was not required to be disclosed under [federal law] based on longstanding legal principles.” But by failing to disclose that information to federal negotiators, the air force maintained, SAIC induced it “to agree to much higher prices than [the air force] would have agreed to had SAIC truthfully disclosed its cost and pricing data.” After SAIC’s “risk defense” surfaced, the air force issued a written alert to warn other agencies about SAIC’s business methods, which it said SAIC “intends to continue using.”

Although the amount of money in contention was relatively small, the principle involved was large, and it had potentially national implications. Was SAIC using the same formula in thousands upon thousands of other contracts it had with the government? We’ll never know. For reasons that remain unclear, the Justice Department decided against expanding the probe beyond San Antonio. Is it possible that a call was made from one well-placed individual to another? In April of 2005, SAIC, while denying wrongdoing, settled the San Antonio lawsuit by paying a fine of $2.5 million.

More important, the company had fore-
bicycles, reclining rockers, earrings, frying pans. It also could be used in construction.

Lest any of this sound improbable, in the 1980s radioactive table legs began turning up in the United States everywhere from restaurants to nursing homes. A radioactive gold ring cost a Pennsylvania man his arm. The public outcry was so great that in 1992 Congress set out to ban this form of recycling. The N.R.C., D.O.E., and nuclear industry saw the ban coming and were not happy about it, but they also saw a way out: maybe it would be possible to develop broad guidelines that would allow the contaminated waste to be recycled based on what were deemed “safe” exposure levels.

The synergy of this arrangement was discovered accidentally by a Washington lawyer, Daniel Gutman, whose longtime passion has been conflicts of interest that inevitably—purposely—arise from government outsourcing. Gutman called attention in public hearings to what was happening, thoroughly embarrassing officials at the N.R.C. and the D.O.E. and stirring the ire of public-interest groups. The N.R.C. killed its contract with SAIC. The recycling project was put on hold. And the N.R.C. filed suit against SAIC, alleging “false and/or fraudulent representations to the effect that [SAIC] was providing services to the NRC which were free from bias.” SAIC has denied the conflict-of-interest claims, and the suit is still pending.

But SAIC is by no means out of the nuclear business. It may be under a cloud at the N.R.C., but it’s still a partner, with the construction giant Bechtel, in the largest nuclear project of all—the $3.1 billion effort to build a repository for America’s high-level radioactive waste. The firm Bechtel SAIC is constructing the repository deep under Yucca Mountain, Nevada, where the buried waste will remain lethal for at least 10,000 years. It could provide a revenue stream for SAIC as far into the future as one can imagine.

The Permanent Government

Bob Beyster turned 79 in 2003. He was in his 34th year with the company. A writer for The San Diego Union-Tribune, granted a rare interview around this time, observed that Beyster was a “little more stooped now,” but still vigorous. He continued to run three or four miles almost every day. Over the years numerous executive rumored to be his successor had come and gone as it became apparent that Beyster has no intention of relinquishing power. But the sheer size of the company and its aggressive, internally competitive style were catching up to Beyster. Even Pentagon officials had begun to complain that SAIC’s over-lapping divisions were creating confusion. When the Pentagon talks, contractors listen. In 2003 the SAIC board forced him out. By 2004 SAIC had a new chairman, Kenneth Dahlberg, a top executive at General Dynamics with long experience in the defense industry.

In October of 2006, SAIC carried out a long-anticipated I.P.O., selling 86 million shares at $15 a share in its debut on the New York Stock Exchange, raising $1.2 billion. Reflecting investor bullishness, shares rose to $21 in a matter of days. Its prospects have never looked brighter.

Unlike traditional wars, which eventually come to an end, the Global War on Terror as defined by the Bush administration can have no end: it is a permanent war—the perfect war for a company that has become an essential component of the permanent government. Political change causes scarcely a ripple. As one former SAIC manager observed in a recent blog posting: “My observation is that the impact of national elections on the business climate for SAIC has been minimal. The emphasis on where federal spending occurs usually shifts, but total federal spending never decreases. SAIC has always continued to grow despite changes in the political leadership in Washington.”

And the revolving door never stops spinning. One of the biggest contracts ever for SAIC is in the works right now. It’s for a Pentagon program called Future Combat Systems, which is described as “a complex plan to turn the U.S. Army into a lighter, more lethal, more mobile force” and also as “the most difficult integration program ever undertaken by the U.S. Department of Defense.” The contract runs into the billions of dollars. The man who helped craft this program at the Pentagon was Lieutenant General Daniel R. Zanini. Zanini recently retired from the army, and he now has a new job. Can you guess where it might be?
Dear Ketel One Drinker
A half empty glass
is no way to go through life.
GUESS
BY MARCIANO
The last time I saw Herb Ritts we spent a few hours chatting about his next photo book, which he was then planning. I had pitched in as an editor and writer on a couple of his earlier volumes, and he'd come by to charm me into signing on again. It didn't take any coaxing. I always found the lack of pomposity in his work, the absence of artifice and pretense, to be a relief. I liked the fact that most of his portraits are natural, direct, and really just driven by whether the light is good, or by some simple graphic element.

In the business of celebrity portraiture, which is the genre Ritts mostly worked in, people can get awfully agitated over nothing. Ritts wanted to bag unforgettable, revealing pictures (and certainly did), but he preferred to keep shoots fluid and to leave the Sturm und Drang to others. Still, his powers of persuasion were renowned. Sylvester Stallone supposedly once said, “Herb, you should be an agent, you whine so terrifically.” Somehow, he knew how to talk a subject into a picture in such an easygoing way that there was never blood on the floor, and the personalities he photographed (some of them as high-maintenance as it gets, and that’s high) were almost always happy to come back for more.

That made Ritts a magazine editor’s dream. (If one needed a portrait of Julia Roberts, say, one knew that the promise of Ritts was serious catnip.) But it wasn’t just pragmatic reasons that made him an ideal partner. As you can see in the following portfolio of Oscar winners taken for Vanity Fair over the years, Ritts found real joy in photography, which in turn made everyone who was on a Ritts shoot get into it, too. He is profoundly missed.

At our last meeting Ritts had a wish list of subjects he was keen to shoot for the upcoming book—images which were never brought into the world. Ritts died a few months later, on December 26, 2002, of AIDS. It’s a loss that knows no bounds.
JULIA ROBERTS  
OCTOBER 1993

Best actress, for
CLINT EASTWOOD
APRIL 1995

Best Director: Midnight in the desk (1992)

Best actor and best picture:
Mediatriot (1998)
Best actor, for Kramer vs. Kramer (1979) and Rain Man (1988).
MARLEE MATLIN, ELLEN BURSTYN, KATHY BATES, MARISA TOMEI, WHOOPI GOLDBERG, LIZA MINNELLI, SOPHIA LOREN, HOLLY HUNTER

APRIL 1995

NICOLE KIDMAN
JULY 1995
Best actress, for The Hours (2002).
NIP-cv

DENZEL
WASHINGTON
OCTOBER
1995
Best
supporting
actor,
for
Glory
(1989).

Best
actor,
for
Training
Day
(1993).

MARYL STREEP
SEPTEMBER 1998
Best supporting actress,
for Kramer vs. Kramer (1979);
best actress for
Sophie's Choice (1982).

ROBIN WILLIAMS
APRIL 1998
Best supporting actor
for Good Will Hunting (1997).

ROBERT DUVALL
APRIL 1998
Best actor, for
Tender Mercies (1983).
SIDNEY POITIER
APRIL 2000
Best actor, for Lilies of the Field (1963).

SEYMOUR:
MAN
2000

JESSICA LANGE
OCTOBER 1988
Best supporting actress, for Tootsie (1982); best actress, for Blue Sky (1994).

JAN PENN
MARCH 1986
Best actor, for The River (2003).
WARREN BEATTY
NOVEMBER 1991
Best director, for Reds (1981).

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See your richest black shine through with new Midnight Expressions, a collection created for black hair. The Kromashine pro-vitamin system moisturizes to enhance depth and restore dull hair's vibrance for 100% more shine enhancement.* For more deep, dark secrets visit pantene.com/midnight.

*2003 E.G. Shampoo and conditioner shine improvement vs that of shampoo alone.
Emily Blunt

AGE: 23, PROVENANCE: London. YOU KNOW HER AS... the cold-eyed young Brit who stole The Devil Wears Prada, delivering the performance most comically evocative of what editorial assistants are really like at... oh, certain publishing companies we’ve heard of. "I kind of knew that girl—she’s a total impersonation of various people whom I would find...

CONTINUED on page 384
I have, upon occasion, been mildly diverted by those awkward lunes at wit performed, with such tedious regularity, by the present Queen of England, Lilibet, though in my experience royalty and Merriment make the most peculiar bedfellows.

Nevertheless, there are, as Montaigne used to put it, always exceptions. It was on a visit to Los Angeles to stay with my Kennedy cousins in the baking-hot summer of 1947 that I first met King Kong. As I remarked at the time to my neighbor Tennessee Williams, who had, as I recall, just completed reading *Burr*, my historical novel about the early days of the American phone system, King Kong was almost criminally hirsute.

Never was a King so unutterably hairy. Kong was also undeniably large, particularly when set against the dwarf-like figure of Margaret, Princess of England, seated to his left. At 90 feet, he was, one might almost say, too tall. He proved himself a model of erudition. “I am deeply impressed by the cogency of the prose in Gore’s new book and the liquid-smooth style,” he intoned whilst polishing off yet another bunch of bananas as an *amuse-gueule*. He then added, as an afterthought, “So very much better than Capote’s half-witted last volume. Truman is, let us face it, the archetypal second-rate.” I remembered the tragic: eeteara, news that Truman had died.

Apropos that considerable repast, I met King Kong on only one further occasion, when we found ourselves the guests of Evangeline Bruce, wife to our ambassador, and friend of Lady Diana Cooper, who spent her honeymoon with the aptly named Duff at Villa Cambrone situated at the back of our Ravello house.

He was full of praise for all my books, in all their various editions. But he seemed to have put on weight, his clumsy way with tableware making him unwelcome in polite society. His long-awaited autobiography had not, to my knowledge, emerged from that furry head of his. What, I asked the poor benighted Kong, was he up to these days? He was hoping, he said, for another picture, but these days it was all sensitive family dramas, damn and blast them. He told me he had complained of it to Barbra Streisand only the night before. Like my old friends Greta Garbo, the Duchess of Windsor, and Albert Einstein, Kong was always the most tireless, not to say tiresome, name-dropper.

Every time I ride in a motor automobile, the familiar twirl of the wheels transports me back to the singularly ill-favored city of Dallas in the November of 1963. I had known Jack and his lamentably less masculine wife, Jackie, for years, though intimacy had always, at my insistence, stopped short of the carnal.

At some point in the late 1950s, Jack and I had met to discuss which of us should run for

the office of president. Jack had insisted that was by far the better candidate, and who could blame him, but I had informed him in the requisite tone of mild regret, that the arriviste interior decoration of the White House was not to my taste, and thus I was prevented from accepting his kind invitation. Jack took little persuasion; he was never backward, as my old friend Princess Grace used to say to Eleanor Roosevelt when the two of them were in flagrante, in coming forward. So he had become president instead, in public at least; he tended to leave the day-to-day running of the country, and major decisions, to my own good self.

And so back to Dallas. Sitting with the Kennedys in their showy vehicle as it solemnly ploughed its way through the bovine denizen of what I once memorably, though perhaps a little too humorously (!), described as the only city in America to rhyme with “phallic,” I found the adulatory cheering of the crowd, frankly embarrassing. As I knew myself to be stealing attention away from my hosts. Then a shot “rang out,” as they will insist on saying in the two-dime thrillers, and the white leather—or rather faux-leather (parsons) was, perhaps even the Kennedy trait)—car seats were spattered with blood.

“Quel dommage!”, I purred to the distraught Jackie, as she attempted, with the panicc maladroitness of the female, to recover the remains of Jack’s by now alarmingly unempted head from the nether regions of the automobile.

Quel dommage, indeed: my new suit had to pay an immediate visit to the very driest of dry cleaners. But one must be thankful for small mercies: assassination may be a nuisance, particularly if it is one’s own, but at least it afforded Jackie a free lift to the hospital, and a chance, later in the day, to wear black—always the most becoming color for her.  

—as told to Craig Brown

Originally published in *Private Eye.*

**DIARY**

**GORE VIDAL**

VANITIES

Emily Blunt continued from page 383 personally excruciating,” says Blunt, who is also a 2007 Golden Globe winner for her performance in the BBC drama *Gideon’s Daughter.* “But what I liked about that character was that there was the opportunity to glimpse something beyond sarcasm. There’s a vulnerability that’s transparent to me, when someone defines herself just by having an association with someone else.” And you’ll know her better still after you see her this year in... Wind Chill, a thriller produced by George Clooney and Steven Soderbergh ("I literally went from wearing Manolos to huge snow boots covered in blood and mud"); The Great Buck Haward, with John Malkovich, Tom Hanks, and Colin Hanks; Don in Real Life, in which she gets to “have a dance-off” with Steve Carell; and The Jane Austen Book Club, an ensemble piece in which Blunt plays “a total nerd—a different part for me, because I often play the fast-talking, manipulative sort of character.” Extraordinary, considering that… "I had a really bad stutter as a child. It never occurred to me that I would want to be on the stage, because I couldn’t even bloody talk. My parents tried everything: I had speech therapy, I had [recordings of] dolphins squeaking at me at night to try and relax me, cranial osteopathy, everything you could do. And then I had a rather wonderful teacher who encouraged me to do the class play when I was about 12. I think he had the faith in me that I’d rise to the occasion. Or maybe he just had the smarts to say, ‘Why don’t you be someone else?’ And now she’s smooth-talked her way into a relationship with swingin’ singer Michael Bublé: “It’s wonderful. I love him. We met at some awards ceremony and I was a bit of a fan and told him, and he liked compliments, obviously.”

—Krista Smit

**MARCH 2007**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Best Actor</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Height (inches)</th>
<th>Best Picture</th>
<th>Height (inches)</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>David Niven</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6'09 3/4</td>
<td>A Lane Divided</td>
<td>6'11 1/2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Golden Brown</td>
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<td>Ronald Colman</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6'07</td>
<td>His Girl Friday</td>
<td>6'10 1/4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>Fredric March</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6'05 1/2</td>
<td>The White Sister</td>
<td>6'11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Blonde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>John Barrymore</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6'06 1/2</td>
<td>The Real American</td>
<td>6'10 1/2</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<td>54</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>Silver/gray silver/gray</td>
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Hollywood being Hollywood, debate and dispute abound, not least with height and date of birth. Age is at time of award; hair color is, of course, subjective, variable, and assisted.

1 Indicates that the actor or actress won their award appearing in that year's best picture. 2 Indicates that the individual refused to accept their award. Peter Finch's 1976 Oscar was awarded posthumously and accepted by his widow; he died in January 1977. Key to astrological symbols: ♈ Capricorn ♉ Aquarius ♊ Pisces ♋ Aries ♌ Taurus ♍ Gemini ♎ Cancer ♏ Leo ♐ Virgo ♑ Libra ♒ Scorpio ♓ Sagittarius.
The NEW Old Hollywood

Say “Old Hollywood” and people think of Gable and Lombard, moguls in oversize eyeglasses. Groucho and Jack Benny on the putting green. Spanish-roofed villas in Beverly Hills, cocktails at the Mocambo. Even today, there remain some vestiges of this world: the Paramount Pictures gates; the booths at Nate ‘n Al’s deli; Army Archerd.

But with the last of the old-style power brokers, Lew Wasserman and Ray Stark, having passed on in 2002 and 2004, respectively, and with the maverick boomers of the Easy Riders, Raging Bulls generation now at or near Social Security age, Old Hollywood has assumed a different meaning. Indeed, there is a New Old Hollywood in place, regal presided over by the likes of Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks, and the indefatigable Warren and Jack as surely as Billy Wilder, Bogie, and Spencer Tracy once ruled the roost.

The New Old Hollywood is distinct from what might be called Young Hollywood or Today’s Hollywood. Owen Wilson and Will Ferrell may be stars, but they’re recently minted ones, relative pups; they’re not New Old Hollywood. To qualify, you have to have some miles on the odometer, an authentic track record. You have to have a mature swagger, an earned, gray-tempered sense of entitlement, a Clooney-Soderbergh belief in the idea that This is our town.

Herewith, BRUCE FEIRSTEIN and the Vanity Fair staff differentiate the New Old Hollywood from its Golden Age forebear.
Find someone special in 6 months or we'll give you 6 MONTHS FREE!* It's only at the all-new Match.com.

"Cats. It's them or me."

USERNAME: Levrige - ONLINE NOW!

* Oct: It's them or me

all new! match.com
IT'S OKAY TO LOOK™
### OLD HOLLYWOOD

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<th>Lew Wasserman</th>
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<td>John F. Kennedy</td>
<td>Charismatic presidential pal</td>
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<td>The young Robert Evans, George Hamilton, and Dennis Hopper</td>
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### NEW OLD HOLLYWOOD

| David Geffen | |
| Barry Diller and Diane von Furstenberg, Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones, Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson, Jeffrey and Marilyn Katzenberg, Steven Spielberg and Kate Capshaw | |
| The Coppolas, the Douglasses, the Sutherlands | Sally Field |
| Carrie Fisher | Sue Mengers |
| Bert Fields | Don Cheadle, George Clooney, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts |
| Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson, Sean Penn | |
| Albert Brooks, Billy Crystal, Larry David, Whoopi Goldberg, Steve Martin, Martin Short, Robin Williams | |
| Nikki Finke | Jerry Bruckheimer, Brian Grazer, Joel Silver |
| Jonathan Demme, Curtis Hanson, Ron Howard, Michael Mann, Mike Nichols, Sydney Pollack, Ridley Scott, Tony Scott, Steven Soderbergh, Steven Spielberg | Brett Ratner |
| Clint Eastwood | |
| Jim Gianopulos, Brad Grey, Kevin McCormick, Ron Meyer, Amy Pascal, Jeff Robinov, Tom Rothman | Bill Clinton |
| Arnold Schwarzenegger | The old Robert Evans, George Hamilton, and Dennis Hopper |
I promise
to go where you go

canine cuisine in 15 gourmet flavors
love them back with cesar
A Politician Oscar Could Love

Jack Valenti on 38 Years at the M.P.A.A. and Memories of J.F.K. and L.B.J.

Jack Valenti, 85, a former aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson, pioneered the Motion Picture Association of America and served as its chairman and C.E.O. for nearly four decades. He retired in 2004, but his presence long bridged the gap between Hollywood and Washington. With his memoir arriving in stores in June, Valenti takes our correspondent back in time.

George Wayne: I'm guessing that the first two names to head your Oscar 2007 ballot are Forest Whitaker and Dame Helen Mirren.

Jack Valenti: I learned what you never do is tell anyone, including your wife, whom you voted for.

G.W.: What is this Dreamgirls bandwagon? I say enough already with the minstrel show.

J.V.: Minstrel show? I have never heard it called that before, George.

G.W.: The most unforgettable day in Mr. Valenti's life has to be November 22, 1963.

J.V.: That is exactly right.

G.W.: You were three cars behind J.F.K.

J.V.: I was actually six cars back. Because the wind was going in a different direction, I didn't hear the shot. The car in front of us went from 8 miles per hour to, like, 80 miles per hour, and I saw people milling on the street, so I knew something was wrong. But I merely thought the president was late for his speech at the Dallas Trade Mart. So I told our driver to go to the Trade Mart. And when we got there, there were about 2,500 people, but no president. I went up to a Secret Service agent, who then told me that the president had been shot. He got us in a deputy sheriff's car with the siren on and took us to Parkland hospital. And there in the basement I was wandering around and an aide came up and said that Vice President Johnson wanted me, and that he was told to bring me to Air Force One. And then he leaned down in my ear and said very softly, "The president is dead. You know." Well, hell, I didn't know, and I just came unglued. When I came up to Johnson at Love Field, he said, matter-of-factly, "Jack, I want you on my staff, and I want you to fly back to Washington with me." At that moment, my life, like the country's, the lives of so many of us, changed radically.

G.W.: You were on that flight back to Washington.

J.V.: My first time on Air Force One and first time at the White House. On the flight back I remember saying to the president, "I don't have a place to live." And he said, "Well, you can live with me until your family comes up." So I actually lived on the third floor of the White House for two months. I think there have been only two assistants to a president who lived at the White House. One was Harry Hopkins and the other was me.

G.W.: There is a photo of you on Air Force One witnessing the swearing in of Johnson.

Jackie was also in the photo in that bloodstained suit.

J.V.: Mrs. Kennedy would not take off anything. And not only was it stained with the president’s blood, but that gray matter from his brain was also on her jacket.

G.W.: You had an unfiltered view of a First Lady in the throes of a monumental crisis. What was she really like?

J.V.: That day she was in a catatonic trance. I had never seen that before, but when she came from the rear of the plane her eyes were cast downwards, but they were opaque. I just don't know how she got through the day.

G.W.: Did President Johnson ever talk about that day in Dallas?

J.V.: Yes, he did. He believed—though there was no evidence for it—that Castro had done that as revenge for Kennedy trying to assassinate him.

G.W.: Jack Valenti was born to be in politics. There is a story of you as a 10-year-old child giving a speech.

J.V.: I made my first political speech at 10. It was at Luna Park in Texas, a rally for the sheriff, a man named T.J. Denver. He was six foot five and carried two pearl-handled .45s strapped to his waist. And no, I don't remember what I said. But, you know, George, I gotta say, I am quite impressed with you. Not only professional but very well prepared.

G.W.: Well, Jack, coming from an old pro like you, that is the highest compliment. Is your wife still around?

J.V.: Yes, she is, and still as beautiful as ever.

G.W.: And can you still get it up for her?

J.V.: I never answer questions like that, George.

G.W.: And I will never stop asking them. Thank you, Jack Valenti.
Menace behind every shadow... fear in every dimly lit scene!

KILLERS KILL, DEAD MEN DIE

THE 2007 HOLLYWOOD PORTFOLIO

You'll never guess the ending... even after you've seen it!
Menace behind every shadow... fear in every dimly lit scene!

You'll never guess the ending... even after you've seen it!
STARRING

AMY ADAMS  as The Society Girl
BEN AFFLECK  as The Shamus
JESSICA ALBA  as The Kid Sister
PEDRO ALMODOVAR  as The Club Owner
ALEC BALDWIN  as The Homicide Detective
ADAM BEACH  as The Swell
JESSICA BIEL  as The Lady in Red
ABIGAIL BRESLIN  as The Orphan
JENNIFER CONNELLY  as The Informer
PENÉLOPE CRUZ  as The Songbird
JUDI DENCH  as The Maiden Aunt
ROBERT DE NIRO  as The Racketeer
ROBERT DOWNEY JR.  as The Boxer
KIRSTEN DUNST  as The Heiress
AARON ECKHART  as The Unsuspecting Husband
JAMES FRANCO  as The Cop
DJIMON HOUNSOU  as The Champ
JENNIFER HUDSON  as The Thrush
ANJELICA HUSTON  as The Society Broad
RINKO KIKUCHI  as The Queenpin
DIANE LANE  as The Restless Wife
DEREK LUKE  as The College Boy
TOBEY MAGUIRE  as "Jimmy"
JAMES McAVOY  as The Aristocrat
HELEN MIRREN  as The Mystery Woman
JULIANNE MOORE  as The Killer
JACK NICHOLSON  as The Preacher
BILL NIGHY  as The Undercover Cop
ED NORTON  as The Watchman
PETER O'TOOLE  as The Trainer
SYLVESTER STALLONE  as The Society Dame
SHARON STONE  as The Debutante
KERRY WASHINGTON  as The Skirt
NAOMI WATTS  as The Corner Man
FOREST WHITAKER  as The Gumshoe
BRUCE WILLIS  as The Pretty Boy
PATRICK WILSON  as The Undercover Lady Cop
KATE WINSLET  as "Betty"
EVAN RACHEL WOOD
A clean print of the lost film noir classic Killers Kill, Dead Men Die was miraculously discovered at a Mulholland Drive lawn sale last month, resolving a mystery that has transfixed noir fans for decades. Little was known about the film for certain, though it has been the subject of wild rumors ever since the screenplay was written, probably in 1942, by Raymond Chandler (based on “The Big Blood,” a story by James M. Cain, and later revised, as No Orchids for Oscar, by Dashiell Hammett and William Faulkner). It is believed that Humphrey Bogart and Robert Mitchum were originally cast in the roles of private detectives Oscar Slade and Dan O’Bannion, only to be replaced, several years later, by Sterling Hayden and Glenn Ford, and then—most intriguingly—by Peter Lorre and Sydney Greenstreet. We know that Lauren Bacall loved the original script. But she passed her troubled-heiress role to Barbara Stanwyck when Fritz Lang replaced John Huston as director. (Lang later ceded to Stanley Kubrick, who let Joseph Losey take over when RKO sold the project to Republic Studios.) It is suspected that additional scenes were shot with Joan Crawford, Richard Widmark, Gene Tierney, Lee Marvin, Gloria Grahame, Ida Lupino, and Jimmy Stewart throughout the 1950s, when the picture was known by its two shooting titles, Dame Danger and He Died by Murder. After acquiring the Republic library in the 1980s, Ted Turner reportedly planned a colorized version of the film, which, curiously, is one of the few noirs actually shot in color. In this period certain scenes are also thought to have been reshot with Kathleen Turner, William Hurt, Melanie Griffith, and Michael Paré, under the direction of Brian De Palma. Based on a close examination of the newly discovered film stock (and the movie’s credit sequence, opposite), several noir scholars have even gone as far as to suggest that the picture was not completed until this year.

It’s too bad, since this delay has deprived us of viewing an undeniable film noir classic. Every element of the genre is here: The Femme Fatale, sultry, scheming, and doped up on tranquilizers; The Private Dick, crawling through the gutter in search of a diamond garter; The Chanteuse and The Champ; The Doll and The Aristocrat; The Spy who knows too little and The Moll who knows too much; mistaken identity and double indemnity; high life and low society; shocking—though possibly nonsensical—plot turns; despair, lust, blood violence, and the cruel fist of fate. Finally, lurking in the shadows behind all this is the menacing figure of The Killer. And what does he do? Why, he does what all killers do: he kills.

Vanity Fair is proud to present an exclusive first look at the noir masterpiece, Killers Kill, Dead Men Die.
Like any private eye worth his money clip, Oscar Slade (Bruce Willis) is not a talkative man, especially when he's in the company of his junior partner, Dan O'Bannion (Ben Affleck), and their young protégé, Jimmy (Tobey Maguire). But this night is different. Oscar's got something on his mind.

Oscar: There's only two types of people in this town: the Killers and the Killed. If you're not the one, you're gonna end up the other.

Jimmy: What about the dames, chief? Where do they fit in?

Oscar: Have you seen the dames in this town? Warm beneath the sheets, hot under the collar, and ice-cold under the skin. That reminds me— I've got an appointment. Don't wait up, fellas. I might be a while.
**THE CRIME SCENE**

**EXT. SUNSET & VERDUGO—NIGHT—RAIN**

On a hard bed of wet L.A. pavement, Oscar (Bruce Willis) has begun his eternal rest. Sweet dreams, detective. Someone has seen fit to tip off shutterbug Sam Brady (James McAvoy), formerly of The Sun, lately of Confidential. The doll with the .44 (Kirsten Dunst) appears to be none other than Laura Lydeker, an heiress whose father owns half the lemon trees in the state of California and whose mother owns the other half. Laura says she has no idea how she ended up here with a pistol in her hand. “I’ve never been fond of guns,” she tells the police. “They make an awful racket.”

She also says she’s not sure she’s Laura Lydeker. It seems she has suffered a light blow to the skull. The only thing she’s certain of is that she would like to slip into something nice and dry, preferably a martini—with a kiss of Benzedrine. Funny, though, the bullets in her pistol don’t match the lead souvenirs in Oscar’s back.
LAST RITES
EXT. HOLLYWOOD MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY—DAY

There are three types of funerals: celebratory, sad, and sad-sack. This sparsely attended affair punctuating the life of a private dick must be filed under the last category. Tamiko Ohira (Rinko Kikuchi), “queenpin” of Japantown’s numbers racket, is intent on making sure Oscar stays in the ground, while skid-row preacher Abelard (Bill Nighy), who engaged in petty heists with the deceased during their misspent youth, can’t say he didn’t see this coming. The guttersnipe orphan girl (Abigail Breslin) is the only one able to produce anything resembling real tears, but what’s her angle? Just because she’s a kid doesn’t mean she’s on the level. Mourning attire suits the lovely songbird Dña Perfecta (Penélope Cruz), but if that’s how she dresses for a funeral, imagine what she puts on for the late show (and peels off for the later show). O’Bannon (Ben Affleck) takes notice. Beautiful girls need protection in this town. And O’Bannon’s got a watchful eye.
Sociolite Eve Greeley-Waddington (Anjelica Huston) finds it amusing, but not surprising, that the Lydeker name has arisen in connection with the murder of a low-life shamus. "Lemons grow on trees," she says, alluding to the Lydeker-family business. "Reputations, decidedly, do not." Estelle Willisford (Sharon Stone), of the department-store Willisfords, could not agree more, once she's through applying lip paint. And if Ethel Barringsley (Diane Lane) seems less than enthralled by the topic at hand, she probably has her reasons—and damned interesting ones, at that.
THE INTERROGATION

INT. HOLLYWOOD PRECINCT HOUSE—NIGHT

Detective James Archer (Alec Baldwin), of the L.A.P.D. homicide squad, hears out the soliloquy of surprise informant Muriel Slade (Jennifer Connelly), twin sister of the murdered man. Her story holds together very well—too well, in fact. Beat cop Mack Shaughnessy (Aaron Eckhart) keeps a grip on his stick, just in case her tale starts making even more sense.

Det. Archer: Murder is a savage affair, Miss Slade.
Muriel: And what kind of affairs do you prefer, Detective?
Det. Archer: That’s my own business, Miss Slade.
Muriel: Your own business, huh? Any chance I could make partner?
Det. Archer: Lady, your partner is murder. And it’s a silent partner.
Shaughnessy (thinking): If it’s silent, why don’t you two lovebirds shut it? This ain’t the El Havana.

Wipe to . . .
THE CLUB

INT. EL HAVANA—NIGHT

Who says money can’t buy happiness? It had certainly better, especially when a cocktail in this establishment costs upwards of three clams. Torch singer June Holliday (Jennifer Hudson) warms up her pipes with “My Man (Is No Longer Around)” for a roomful of Toluca Lake swells (from left: Jessica Biel, Patrick Wilson, Kerry Washington, Adam Beach, Amy Adams, and Derek Luke), none of whom has a motive in the slaying of Oscar Slade, which is exactly what makes them suspicious. The only one seemingly not enjoying himself this evening is Confidential photographer Sam Brady (James McAvoy), but he revels in misery, which means he’s content in his own way. Is that cigarette girl (Evan Rachel Wood) really a cigarette girl? Are her intentions as dark as those chocolates?

Sam: Or is it that those chocolates are as sweet as the look in your eye?

Cigarette Girl: Sorry, Sam. They’re caramels.
THE DRESSING ROOM
INT. EL HAVANA, BACKSTAGE—NIGHT

The Cuban (Pedro Almodóvar) runs a nice, clean club. He doesn’t want any trouble. He may have heard things, though. What kinds of things? Just things, that’s all. Things that make a man whisper “murder” in the night. His number-one songbird, Dona Perfecta (Penélope Cruz), who’ll be closing tonight’s bill with her signature medley—a rousing patriotic number, a love ballad, and a sassy rumba—elaborates: She says she may or may not have heard that Oscar, on the night he was killed, had placed a certain bet on a certain prizefight. Beyond that, she knows nada. Except that the fight in question may or may not be taking place at the Forum this very night, and that School Boy Simmons may or may not be planning to taste the canvas in Round Four of his bout with Sugar Foot Robinson.
Champ turned trainer Mike “Tiny” Galento (Sylvester Stallone) has taught Sugar Foot Robinson (Djimon Hounsou) the true meaning of boxing: when they tell you to take out your opponent in the fourth, you take him out in the fourth, and you don’t ask questions—got it? Bootlegger turned trainer Magic Pete (Forest Whitaker) has similarly instructed his fighter, School Boy Simmons (Robert Downey Jr.), that the only sweet thing about “the sweet science” is the wad of bills they hand you during the post-fight rubdown. Tonight’s wad will be fat indeed. The lady in red (Jessica Biel) doesn’t mind if you take a dive, so long as you can keep her neck in chinchilla. Private eye Jimmy (Tobey Maguire) has made the scene because he knows Oscar placed a not-so-friendly wager on tonight’s entertainment. He knows something else too: dead men don’t collect their winnings.

Spin dissolve to...
THE SNOOP
INT. O'HANLON STABLES, SAN FERNANDO VALLEY—NIGHT

When a big-time gambler like Oscar Slade ends up dead (and therefore unable to pay off his racetrack debts), a big-time dealer in Thoroughbred flesh like James O'Hanlon (Peter O'Toole) gets suspicious. And when O'Hanlon gets suspicious, the first name that comes to his mind is Lydeker—a family known not only for its lemon trees, but also for its distressingly beautiful female scions. O'Hanlon trembles to think of what he might do if he were to get within striking distance of that kind of horse flesh. Oh yes, he knows a thing or two about breeding, he does... Luckily for Rebecca Lydeker (Naomi Watts), Laura’s older sister, she developed an expertise in keeping herself hidden, at the girls’ boarding academy she attended not so long ago: Stay real quiet-like... and very still... Don’t even breathe. (Is that the rustle of a skirt, or just the Santa Ana winds?) And once the prefect is gone, a girl is free to resume her nocturnal mischief without interruption.

Still, sneaking off to the clubs on Central Avenue to dig some junkie horn blower is one thing. Snooping around the O'Hanlon Stables... well, it’s no roll in the hay, even when it is. But if Rebecca can’t find the thing she’s looking for—the thing that holds the key to everything—anything could happen, and very well might!
Cue swirling, maddening violins. Tilda Lydeker (Helen Mirren), aunt to Laura and Rebecca Lydeker, paramour to three-fourths of Beverly Hills circa 1929, and the brains behind the city’s third-largest citrus fortune, must drive, and she must drive fast. She knows just how lemonade is made in this town, and she knows Oscar learned the tricks of her trade all too well, and she knows how it all went sour. Oscar may have been just some low-life private dick, and he may have been too free with his fists, but sometimes a woman needs a man who’s man enough to remind her that she’s a woman—that is, if she’s woman enough to take it. And Tilda could take it. Oh, how she could take it. She took it, and she took it, and she took it again. And then once more for laughts.

Along for the ride is Tilda’s older half-sister, Alma (Judi Dench), issue of their father’s youthful dalliance—or was it something more sinister?—with the beautiful daughter of migrant citrus pickers. They say Almo’s “slow,” but, like her halfsister, when it comes to trouble she’s awfully swift on the pickup.
Making like lovebirds, undercover police detectives Sloan (Ed Norton) and Minsky (Kate Winslet) are working the Hotel Lo Brea on a tip. The place is a rattrap, but that's why they're here: to trap rats. And, with any luck, exterminate them.

The owner, blind racketeer Marlon Doppel (Robert De Niro) knows who offed poor Oscar, but he's not saying. Neither is Muriel Slade (Jennifer Connelly), who has so deftly misled the law for reasons having to do with saving her own skin. The languid drink of water in the corner (Julianne Moore) is content to know not much of anything beyond which gentleman will take on the job of keeping her in silk.

Tilda Lydeker (Helen Mirren) arrives in search of answers, unaware that she may be checking in one last time before checking out for good.
END OF THE PART

INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOME OF LAURA LYDEKER—DAWN

For most of L.A., it's morning. For those here it will always be last night. Jimmy (Tobey Maguire) searches the piano keys for a melody that will make sense of it all. The youngest Lydeker, Lydia (Jessica Alba), may be willing to carry his tune, but Ethel Barringsley (Diane Lane) listens without hearing a note. She hasn't been the same since Oscar died and her husband, Robert Barringsley (James Franco) hasn't been the same since she hasn't been the same. Behind Daddy's bookshelves, Laura Lydeker (Kirsten Dunst) finds herself almost fully recovered from her amnesia, but the young lemon heiress wishes she could forget what she's seen all over again. School Boy Simmons (Robert Downey Jr.), now a wealthy ex-prizefighter, has helped her through her darkest hours. Speaking of which, what did happen last night? Shouldn't Aunt Tilda have slunk in by now the usual cheap aftershave on her breath?

Dissolve to
Is this a flashback, or did the projectionist mix up the reels? Even the director can't be sure. Back at the Hotel La Brea, undercover cop Minsky (Kate Winslet) would like a word with Tilda (Helen Mirren), but if not, the flatfoot femme is more than happy to let her lady pistol do the talking for both of them. And when her pistol starts talking... well, like a lot of ladies, it's hard to shut up.

Once the cartridges are emptied, we find two beauties taking the big sleep in the L.A. night. A sleep that won't be haunted by the secret Tilda is taking with her to the Lydeker-family mausoleum (a ways down Halcyon Lane from Oscar's sorry plot). A sleep that won't be disturbed by the visage of the man she may or may not have hired—for a cost beyond price—to plug poor Oscar. A mad face, leering and twisted. And the most devilish eyebrows. It is the face of...
THE BIG REVEAL
EXT. SOMEWHERE IN L.A.—DUSK

... the face of this man (Jack Nicholson), who kills for love, or money, or some combination of the two. Or maybe it's just for kicks. Wherever people try to make themselves into something good and decent, wherever a man tries to make that one last score, wherever a woman feels like yielding to a fellow, he is there. In a town where the law is kill or be killed, die or die later, he is always watching, always waiting for his chance, and revealing himself only in the final reel, with the City of So-Called Angels spreading below him like a still-warm bloodslick.

Forget it, Oscar. It's... somewhere.

Pull back to reveal: a wild, unpruned lemon grove.

THE END
DAVID YURMAN
Between the Great Depression and the start of the Cold War, Hollywood went *noir*, reflecting *Smell of Success*, and *Double Indemnity*, where the shadows of L.A. and New York pulse with kill.

Exploring the genre's origins, its look, its politics, and its geography, ANN DOUGLAS shows
Idly, weary, wised-up undercurrent of midcentury America. In classics such as *Laura*, *Sweet Roses*, and perilous romance, failure is not only a logical option but a smug-talking seduction. *Laura*’s poignant cynicism took hold—and why it remains embedded in the national psyche today.
belong to the last movie-centric generation; my family didn’t own a television until I was eight. It was not on the small screen but in the art houses and rerun theaters springing up everywhere during my college years that I discovered the noir movies of the 1940s and 50s. Launched just before this country’s entry into the war and peaking in the Cold War years, whether one calls it a genre or a style—critics disagree—noir was a hybrid of glamour and grittiness. exposing the enticingly seamy underside of midcentury America, a world untouched by the national sport of self-justification then reaching Olympic proportions.

Directed by such outstanding artists as Fritz Lang, Samuel Fuller, Robert Siodmak, and Nicholas Ray, and shot by the best cameramen in the business, noir was peopled not with the gratingly ill-timed figures blotting much of Hollywood’s mainstream fare but with wised-up men and worldly women who had none of the right answers but all the smart moves, whose motives were always mixed and quite possibly malign, and who spoke some of the sharpest lines in American film history. “You’re a cookie full of arsenic,” Burt Lancaster tells a hustling publicity agent played by Tony Curtis in *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957). “Is there any way to win?” Jane Greer asks Robert Mitchum in *Out of the Past* (1947). “There’s a way to lose more slowly,” he replies.

But cynicism is not all noir’s protagonists offer. Many of them are in the grip of an intoxicating metaphysics of utterness that creates signature moments of total theatrics. A suicidal Burt Lancaster, dressed in pants and an undershirt, abandoned by Ava Gardner in Siodmak’s *The Killers* (1946), smashes a chair through the window of his Atlantic City hotel room and starts to jump, all in one seamless rush of magnificence, amour fou movement. (Lancaster’s body, trained by his early years as a high-wire circus performer, was almost always a great actor, whatever the face was doing.) A cleaning lady stops him, saying, “You’ll never see the face of God!” an intervention, though it only postpones his destruction, he will never forget—he makes her, years later, the sole beneficiary of his life-insurance policy.

In Fritz Lang’s *Clash by Night* (1952), Robert Ryan, wary to the point of paranoia and transparently defenseless, his face beautiful, frightening, and worn with the wrong kind of waiting, begs Barbara Stanwyck, “Help me—I’m dying of loneliness!” Ryan, one of the finest actors of his day, was noir’s theologian, mixing purity and guilt into lethal new combinations, poisons he administered, despite the corpses often mounting around him, solely to himself. The protagonists of this vein of noir were among those Amiri Baraka would describe a few years later as “the last romantics of our age.” They may not believe in the American pieties, but they believe in something.

The term noir was coined in 1946 by French critics reviewing a group of American thrillers, including Billy Wilder’s *Double Indemnity* and Otto Preminger’s *Laura*, both from 1944, to mark a phenomenon they thought new to American cinema, a “harsh,” “true to life” quality, a mood of “pessimism and despair.” Noir was the last product of the studio system, itself now fighting for survival, and unlike the genres that preceded
in noir, it's possible to be both archetypically American and irredeemably unhappy—a good thing for Heflin, a bugaboo war hero, who has a vengeful Robert Ryan on his trail. After fleeing to downtown L.A., Heflin deliberately gets himself shot, then jumps onto an auto that crashes and explodes for good measure, leaving a young widow and infant son to fend as best they can in an upscale suburban housing development for which he served as contractor. The inner city was Heflin's all but inevitable destination. Noir, in Tony Curtis's phrase, was a "feel-bad" genre, and America's metropoles, shadowy, glittering, perilous netherworlds, "too vast to know," in Allen Ginsberg's words, "too myriad windowed to govern," hemorrhaging their middle classes even as they spawned a teeming new multi-ethnic underclass, provided its natural habitat.

Roughly 75 percent of American noirs are set in cities; of these, two-thirds take place in New York or Los Angeles, the twin capitals of American movies. Finding its sources and setting its stories in roughly equal numbers in both locales, noir constituted an arena of cooperation and competition for the two cities, now rivals on the national and international stages: one bursting upward from its claustrophobic island base, densely settled in the European manner, its infrastructure already riddled with decay, the other the world's first suburbanopolis, sprawling outward at a rate only cars, not people, could cover, gripped in the sci-fi grotesqueries of gestation and waste, both surreal in scope and ambition, both inventories of noir contrasts, with outrageous possibilities of darkness and light, isolation and contact.

In Anatole Litvak's chilly shocker, Sorry, Wrong Number (1948), a repentant Burt Lancaster warns Barbara Stanwyck by phone that he's hired a hit man to kill her—tonight. She's on Sutton Place, "the heart of New York City," in his words. "Walk to the window," he urges, "scream out on the street!" But we've looked out that window over the course of the film, repeatedly. There's no neighborhood there, no sidewalk, just the East River, its highway, and an elevated train, all distant and impervious. Besides, the killer is already in the house; the camera follows him into her room, then shows the murder, without ever revealing his face—only the camera and the city know who he is, and neither is talking. The credits for Fritz Lang's The Big Gardenia (1953), a crisp, proto-feminist whodunit set in L.A.'s garden-court apartments, newspaper offices, and nightclubs, unroll over shots of a traffic-laden freeway with an overpass; then the camera pans to City Hall, moving next to a strip, where it finally cuts to Richard Conte, the male lead, in a convertible. Los Angeles, as Lang saw it, had to come first.

When noir protagonists live in small towns, like the restless notary stuck in Banning, California, in Rudolph Maté's bedeviled whirligig of a movie, D.O.A. (1950), or the Bonnie-and-Clyde couple
in Joseph Lewis’s bravura Gun Crazy (1950), they dream of big-city excitement. Others use obscure towns as hideouts from enemies made on urban ground—in vain. Both Siodmak’s The Killers and Jacques Tourneur’s Out of the Past begin with the ominous arrival in innocent villages of hit men in sinister cars, tracking their quarry down. Even when noir’s protagonists live in brand-new suburbs, the ever thickening nooses encircling America’s urban centers, the suburbs are implicitly seen from the viewpoint of the metropolis.

In noir movies, people who live in suburbs, like the nice young couple played by Loretta Young and Barry Sullivan in Tay Garnett’s Cause for Alarm! (1951), set in L.A. not at nighttime but on the sunniest of days, have entered into a pact with one another and themselves not to exceed their limits. Not to turn into somebody else—promises they prove unable or unwilling to keep. Sullivan, who becomes a psychopathic invalid, dies of a heart attack while trying to shoot his wife. Believing she will be suspected of murdering him, Young undertakes a cover-up for which she’s frighteningly ill-equipped—the suburbs have disarmed, not protected, her.

From one perspective, noir painted a grim picture of what could happen to Americans if they stayed in the city, but its view of what was replacing urban life was at least as troubling. How will Americans live, noir asks, without the dense places of face-to-face human interaction where the truth is revealed to strangers liberated from permanent proximity? The hero of Edgar Ulmer’s Detour (1945), a specialist in accidental homicide played by B-movie icon Tom Neal, plans to go to a “big city” where he can be “swallowed up,” “safe” to become the nobody he really is. Moving to the suburbs spelled successful upward mobility amidst America’s unprecedented postwar prosperity, but noir was the suburbs’ antidote, a pledge that the downward slide was still a career option, too. In the cities of noir, perhaps the only fully class-conscious genre Hollywood ever produced, the Depression—if only in the form of the economic inequities that helped precipitate it and the rackets that then expanded their control of the nation’s pleasure supplies—stubbornly refuses eviction. As surely as in Balzac or Marx, wealth here bespeaks crime; there is definitely not enough to go around.

Whether native-born veterans of the economic collapse of the 1930s such as Orson Welles and Nicholas Ray or European refugees from Nazism such as Siodmak and Lang, noir’s greatest artists were well acquainted with the losses, and promise, of wreckage. In noir, Fascism, the loser in the war, finds multiple new incarnations not only abroad but also at home, while the defeat America had missed on the global stage comes to pass in some unintended quarter of the country’s creative unconscious. Noir is premised on the audience’s need to see failure risked, courted, and sometimes won; the American Dream becomes a nightmare, one strangely more seductive and euphoric than the optimism it repudiates. “He’d had everything,” the novelist and screenwriter Jim Thompson remarks of a character in The Killer Inside Me (1952), “and somehow nothing was better.” Noir provided losing with a mystique.

Noir was never confined to the movies. A many-authored Zeitgeist, it was a modernizing agent and a fashion statement, adding a proto-hipster sheen of self-consciousness to everything it touched; different parts of the culture seemed to be talking to one another in their sleep, learning a new common language without knowing its source.

The vogue began in literature, in the hard-boiled murder mysteries of the 1930s—the French called them...
I WORE HIS HAT WAS ALMOST AS IMPORTANT ANGLE FROM WHICH THE CAMERAMAN SHOT IT.

DOUBLE INDEMNITY
Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray in Billy Wilder's classic 1944 study of love and hate.
In 2004, having made his name as Steven Soderbergh’s agent, Pat Dollard was the stereotypical Hollywood operator: coked-up, Armani-sheathed, separated from his fourth wife, and rapidly self-destructing. But when he hit bottom, Dollard didn’t go back to rehab; he went to Iraq, embedded with the Marines, and filmed a pro-war documentary, which has the industry buzz and right-wingers hailing him as the anti-Michael Moore. But whether he’s surviving mayhem in Ramadi or dining with Ann Coulter in Los Angeles, EVAN WRIGHT reports, Dollard’s life is a one-man combat zone.
Bad Agent

Pat Dollard, photographed at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills.

Pat Dollard's Hollywood

Photograph by Art Streiber

Vanity Fair 115
he day before Thanksgiving 2004, Pat Dollard, a Hollywood agent who represented Steven Soderbergh, sent an e-mail to just about everyone he knew containing one word: “Later.” Friends worried it was a suicide note. Dollard, 42, had spent nearly 20 years in the film business. On a good day he seemed little different than any other successful operator, a sort of hipper version of Entourage’s Ari Gold. But often in his turbulent career, bad days outnumbered the good. Once a rising star at William Morris, he was fired in the mid-90s for chronic absenteeism brought on by drinking and drug abuse. He attended 12-step meetings and bounced back, playing a critical role in getting Soderbergh’s Traffic made. Propaganda Films tapped him to head its management division, and in 2002 he produced Auto Focus, the Paul Schrader–directed biopic about the murder of Hogan’s Heroes star Bob Crane—a film in which Dollard has a cameo in drag. Dollard co-founded Relativity, a firm which would assist the Marvel Entertainment Group in its half-billion-dollar production deal and went on to produce, after Dollard’s exit, Talladega Nights. But by 2004, Dollard was binging again. His fourth wife left him, and his third wife was suing for sole custody of their daughter. News that his daughter would be spending Thanksgiving at the home of Robert Evans—for whom his ex-wife worked as a development executive—sent Dollard into a morbid depression. Late one night he phoned a friend and suggested that everyone might be better off if he were dead. Then he sent his good-bye e-mail.

But Dollard was not planning a suicide, at least not a quick one. Dressed in what he would later describe as his “scumbag hipster agent’s uniform”—Prada boots, jeans, and a black-leather jacket—he boarded a plane for New York, then Kuwait City. From there he hopped a military transport to Baghdad and embedded with U.S. Marines in order to make a “pro-war documentary.” Given the decades of substance abuse, the idea of the chain-smoking, middle-aged Hollywood agent accompanying Marines into battle was sort of like Keith Richards competing in an Ironman Triathlon. But Dollard thrived: “My first time in a combat zone. I felt like I had walked into some bizarre fucking ultra-expensive movie set,” he would later say. “I had this vivid clarity, like when I used to take LSD. I felt joy. I felt like I had a message from God, or whoever, that this is exactly what I should be doing with my life. I belong in war. I am a warrior.”

To those at home it seemed that Dollard had entered dangerous mental territory. Around the New Year in 2005, he e-mailed a photo of himself to friends. In it he is clutching a machine gun, surrounded by Marines. Dressed in combat gear, his hair in a Mohawk and the word “die” shaved into his chest hair, Dollard looks like the mascot of camp Lord of the Flies.

The H’wood Warrior

Midsummer 2006. Dollard sits across from me at a restaurant near the Los Angeles airport, staring at a breakfast of waffles, bacon, and black coffee, talking about his ambition to become a “conservative icon, the Michael Moore of the right.” He is wise, his hands in no small part to a terrible incident that occurred last February in Iraq. While filming U.S. troop Ramadi, a Humvee Dollard was riding in was struck by a bomb. Two Marines were killed, but Dollard—in keeping with a streak of freakishly good luck—was thrown clear from the fiery wreck and emerged unharmed but for a two-inch cut on his right leg. Bombing was, appropriately enough, first reported in Variety. Dollard was soon invited on Tony Snow’s radio show on Fox and as much time railing against Hollywood liberalism as he diding about Iraq, Snow, weeks away from becoming White House press secretary, loved it. He called Dollard a “true believer” and invited him back for two more appearances. Dollard was soon heard by conservative columnists in U.S. News & World Report and Washington Times. The New York Post dubbed him the “H’wood Warrior.” No small part of his appeal to the right is the fact that Dollard was once a “doctrinaire liberal” who could even both close ties to Robert Kennedy Jr., but now speaks of his position in the most militant terms: “This is a propaganda war, and I can fight with a camera the same as a Marine with his rifle. I will.

Last May he launched a Web site (patdollard.com) and began airing a five-minute trailer of his as yet unfinished documentary Young Americans. The response was overwhelming: 100,000 hits in the first week, hundreds of supportive e-mails, and unsolicited offers of money. “Dude, I’m becoming a national hero,” Dollard tells us.

Compactly built, Dollard dresses in clothes—jeans, Wallaby work boots, and an olive-drab T-shirt—which look like they slept in. His hair is close-cropped, but nevertheless manage to appear disheveled. He hasn’t shaved in a few days. His teeth are cracked and stained, and worst of all, from a health standpoint, his right eye is obscured by a milky blob: a cataract that opened in Iraq which he has never treated. Also in need of attention is a wretched cough, which sounds like a snow shovel scraping on the sidewalk. If he were a homeless man, you’d probably walk your hands after giving him your change.

Beneath the unkempt appearance, Dollard projects unstated gestures. He is a world traveler, and his most traveled region is the Middle East. “The world is a arena for men to compete against each other. And my place is there in the arena. I am the arena.”

In the wake of Operation Iraqi Freedom, he is in a position to critique the military and act as a watchdog over the military industrial complex. “I’m not myself. I’m not a Marine. I don’t know what it’s like to be a Marine. I’m a civilian. I’m a product of the Hollywood machine.”

For all the talk of the “natural,” Dollard is a creature of this milieu, and few related to him have traveled the same path. He was born in the lower middle class in the West Loop, a neighborhood that has since been gentrified. His father was in the steel business, his mother was a homemaker. “Growing up, I was a heartbreaker. I’d go to parties and every girl would fall in love with me. I was a heartbreaker. You can’t change it.”

After a year of high school, Dollard entered the Army, and served in Vietnam. “I was a buddy of Robert Duvall’s. We were in the same platoon. When we were in the Battle of Huey City, we were on the same side. I was a buddy of his.”

Dollard did, however, have some early success as an actor, appearing in numerous minor film roles in the mid-90s. He landed a role in the mid-90s film the Disappearance of the fabled Charles Lloyd, a character he played for five minutes. Dollard has since gone on to co-star in several successful movies, including a role in the upcoming film the A-Team.

Despite his success, Dollard remains a contradiction to others in his field. He is a committed conservative, and has often been criticized for his outspoken views. However, his passion for the military and his commitment to the fight against terrorism have earned him a loyal following among the military community.

Dollard is a man of many passions, and his dedication to his work is evident in all he does. From his military service to his work in the film industry, he has a strong sense of duty and a commitment to making a difference in the world. His dedication to his craft and his commitment to his country make him a true H’wood Warrior.
Upon returning from his second trip to Iraq, last March, Dollard moved from Los Angeles to an undisclosed location out of state to complete his film. (He is so obsessed with secrecy he recently had the OnStar system yanked from his S.U.V., fearing it might be used by “enemies” to locate him.) He is in L.A. today at the invitation of Andrew Breitbart—longtime contributor to the Drudge Report and self-described “right-leaning Hollywood basher,” but, a free-thinker, who helped create the Huffington Post. Breitbart plans to introduce him to potential financial backers.

Dollard’s film teaser is less like a documentary than agitprop. It opens on two young Marines hunched over their machine guns at a roadblock. It’s the winter of 2005. Both are shivering from the cold, warily eyeing the civilian cars which at any moment they may be called upon to shoot. The Marines pass the time speculating about what kids their age might be doing back home. One of them turns to the camera, concluding, “They’re over at home smoking blunts, fucking watching MTV, sitting on their fat ass. Well, fuck you.”

A montage of violent clips slides past—an Arab fighter being shot to death by American soldiers; a Marine rifleman dancing and clustering his groin, then firing a machine gun into an Iraqi town; the minaret of a mosque being blown to pieces. The violence is intercut with iconic images from American pop culture—the smiling face of Jackass prince Johnny Knoxville, college kids dancing at an MTV beach party, anti-war rallies, the faces of arch-liberals Jane Fonda and Michael Moore. The soundtrack is provided by

**HEN YOU GET A CALL FROM PAT YOU NEVER NOW WHAT TO EXPECT,” SAYS SODERBERGH.**

ered. It’s a tragedy she lost her son. Anyway, we all lose family ilers. So, fuck Cindy Sheehan.’

rom hilarity to rage in less than two minutes. In laymen’s terms, ard is “intense.” Some might use words like “manic” or “bipo-
a condition Dollard’s mother believes he might suffer from—Dollard bristles at any suggestion he is clinically off balance.
e,” he says, chewing a strip of bacon. “I was told to get a cat
—at being blown up in Iraq—but I feel fucking fine.”

nd, true, Dollard was pretty much the same before he got m up. He possesses a quality common among celebrities, chil-
, and the insane. You are compelled to watch him because never know what he will do or say next. His third wife, Alicia in, sums up her ex-husband, saying, “He may be the biggest ole I’ve met, but he’s got twisted charisma.”

ot everyone succumbs to it. When Dollard first posted the sto-escaping death in Iraq, his younger sister, deeply opposed to war, speculated that her older brother was just “too evil to die.”
der dismisses her as a “nutecase—even nuttier than I am.”)

hen it comes to practicing the Hollywood art of salesman-
Dollard was among the best. Steven Soderbergh says, “Pat a quality that’s essential to selling movies: making people see gs that can’t be seen yet. I mean, if Pat says he saw a U.F.O., ill convince me it was there, even if I didn’t see it.”

itality. Even with the cataract, his green eyes are alert and en-

Words tumble from his mouth at a rapid clip, his voice a ed growl acquired from a lifetime of cigarettes and liquor.
moment he is laughing at the time he picked up hookers he set of Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story; a film his second wife efed on as an assistant to producer Raffaella De Laurentiis—ment later he is pounding the table, railing against Cindy han’s anti-war protests. “Cindy Sheehan is pathologically self-
Boston hard-core punk band Blood for Blood. Their song “Ain’t Like You (Wasted Youth II),” with its chorus of “Fuck you. I ain’t like you,” becomes the refrain of the troops as they blow away insurgents and give the finger to anti-war activists and kids at home enjoying the fruits of America’s mindless civilian culture.

There is evidence of a possible war crime in the trailer: a Marine clutches the head of a dead Iraqi and raises it in front of the camera like a jack-o’-lantern. (This footage was given to Dollard by troops, and he claims not to know the provenance of the decapitated man, or why a Marine was playing with his severed head.) In Dollard’s presentation, the act of desecration, accompanied by the faces of grinning Marines, is treated as a macabre joke. By intercutting this with actual Jackass footage, the trailer seems to suggest that, for the young, wild, and patriotic American, war in Iraq is sort of like the ultimate Jackass.

When I mention to Dollard that his severed-head scene might turn more Americans against the war, or even against the troops, he laughs. “The true savagery in this war is being committed by the American left on the minds of the young men and women serving over there by repeatedly telling them that their cause is lost.” He adds, “My goal is to desensitize young people to violence. I want kids to watch my film and understand that brutality is the fucking appropriate response to a brutal enemy.”

Dollard’s target audience is the same as any rock band’s—kids—the more disaffected the better. He aims to alter the course of pop culture. “What we’ve celebrated since at least the 1950s is the antihero,” Dollard says. “Today, even though our country has been attacked, nothing has changed. If you are a young man in America right now, the coolest fucking thing you can aspire to is like a gangsta rapper, or a pseudo bad guy. The message of my movie is simple: If you’re a young person in America, the coolest, fucking most badass and most noble thing you can be today is a combat Marine. Period.”

Breitbart believes Dollard is onto something important. “There needs to be a confrontation at the pop-culture level of the kids who are out there fighting versus the kids at home who are totally disconnected, immersed in this mindless Abercrombie & Fitch–MTV culture,” Breitbart adds. “There needs to be a revolution, and Dollard is the man who can kick it off. I don’t care if older conservatives are offended by Pat Dollard. I was not looking for someone pristine. He brings to our cause this whole spirit of, like, the Merry Pranksters Two.”

Perhaps it’s no surprise that Ann Coulter adores his work. Like Breitbart, she recognizes his ability to reach young people in ways that other conservatives don’t. She says of his Web postings, “What’s great about them is that they have the panache of a professional aMTV video with a very un-MTV message.” In an e-mail she sent to Dollard after an initial viewing of his trailer, she simply gushed, “wow! wow! that certainly is attention-grabbing! I like it—especially the ‘fuck you’ melange with michael moore and [former Democratic Party chairman] terry mcauliffe. I like it!”

The reaction to Dollard from soldiers and their family members has been even more enthusiastic. One Marine officer he encountered in Ramadi expressed his admiration in a terse note: “To God and Chesty Puller for people like you, Pat Dollard, who will get us. Semper Fi.”

As for those Americans who believe in the conspiracy liberal-controlled media, Dollard tells them that their worst fears are true, that the entertainment industry is run by a form of conservative McCarthyism. “If you’re conservative in Hollywood you’re not necessarily getting blacklisted, but you essentially blacklisted. You are reviled and treated like shit.” That a for-hollywood big shot would descend from the heights and act as the people that he was once part of the liberal cabal electing him—The father of a Marine Dollard met while filming in Ramadi wrote him, “[My son] told me that you were one of those rare media types that didn’t suck and had nuts equal to that of any Marine infantry rifleman. [Your film] will be mighty powe ordance deployed against the bed-wetting peaceniks on the Left.”

Most important from Dollard’s standpoint, he is reaching a target audience—the MySpace crowd. Typical of the many e-mails he receives is this: “Hey Pat im a 17 year old high school student. I lived most of my life as a liberal and over the last year realy [sic] was only a product of the leftist school system and the media. The clips I’ve seen of ‘Young Americans’ are an inspiration it’s time someone tells the truth. Thanks for putting your life on the line for the better of the country.”

When you consider that just 18 months earlier I lard was a confessed whore-loving, alcoholic, coked-out Hollywood agent, his transformation into the great hope of conservative America is nothing short of astonishing. “It’s fucking cool, dude,” he admits as he stands at the entrance to his hotel, smoking and watching planes take off from LAX. “I was afraid conservatives wouldn’t have me, but they’re fucking all over me.”

He brings up George Clooney and Steve Gaghan, both of whom he knew through his work with Soderbergh. In Dollard’s view, the two of them represent everything wrong and shallow about liberal Hollywood. Dollard claims that he was having lunch with Gaghan—who wrote Traffic—a few years ago when Gaghan was struck by his inspiration to make Syriana. “He literally held up the bottle of olive oil on the table and said, ‘Oh, God! It’s all about the oil.’”

(Though Gaghan remembers the lunch, his version of events differs from Dollard’s. And by that point, Gaghan says, he was already a few years into his research for Syriana, which was based on Robert Baer’s 2002 book, See No Evil.)

Nothing irks Dollard more than the praise Clooney received for making Syriana and Good Night, and Good Luck. “Cloon actually goes around letting people say he was ‘brave’ for making those movies. Everybody in Hollywood is obsessed with wanting to be perceived as tough. Is it brave making...
CAMERA CRUSADER

Dollard with his former inmate and assistant, photographed in late 1985 at Dollard's apartment, Sunset Boulevard.
PILLOW TALK
As beautiful as they are revealing, MARIO TESTINO's photographs have made him welcome in a zone of privacy—the intimate, undefended spaces of everyone from Demi to Madonna to Gwyneth—that few others can enter. With a selection of images from Testino's new book, *Let Me In!*, MICHAEL ROBERTS explains why, in the presence of that skillful camera, Hollywood stars can't help but let themselves go.
reclines on a gilded chaise longue in a corner of his cathedral-size white marble studio. Toy- ing distractedly with the sparkling diamond-studded platinum Leica dangling from his wrist, he listens to a soothing soundtrack of violins and harps as legions of lissome assistants diligently heave wind machines and digital hardware to and fro across the vast acres of Aubusson. "Increeeedible," sighs Mario. Inspired by the sunlight flooding down onto their cherubic curls from the cantilevered skylight, he waves away the liveried footmen holding a gold carved sedan chair ready to whisk him off to the latest location, as he has decided to stay. Suddenly the doors burst open and a Very Grand Star sweeps in, her face a mask of grief. "Oh, Mario, Mario," she sobs, "you haven't photographed me for hours, days, weeks!" Prostrating herself in a pitiful heap of chiffon and sable on the floor, she weeps softly into the honey-beige carpeting as the music swells to a crescendo.

Without a word Mario puts the Leica to his eye and snaps. Faster and faster. Then he raises another glittering gem-encrusted camera to his other eye and snaps them both in unison. The air is filled with a thousand twinkling flashes, each one affirming the star's placement in the galaxy of stellar entities.

"Mmmm. Increeeedible, no?" Mario says, pointing a languid forefinger toward the digital screen. The Very Grand Star staggers to her feet and recoils in amazement. Gone are the careworn features of her high anxiety. Gone, too, are the worry lines etched from troubling over which profile to present to her voracious public. Instead, the woebegone creature who staggered in has been transformed into a movie legend, a thing of Lustrous Allure, Vivacity, and Remarkably Few Blemishes.

"Oh, Mario, Mario," she says, "you are just

Excerpted from Let Me In!, by Mario Testino. A signed, limited edition of 1,000 copies to be published this month by Taschen; © 2007 by the author.
I first called Mario many years ago, when he was not celebrated solely by his first name. It was the early ’80s, and I seem to remember him living in a London squat, a grand squat (something like an abandoned hospital) but a squat nonetheless. He was the budding photographer.

I was the peripatetic fashion editor of the English social monthly Tailor. His first glossy-magazine shoot was not spectacular—just a model wearing some Ralph Lauren lounging against a gruesome crumbling wall in a Soho tenement. It was cold, squalid, and damp, a far cry from the gold-plated, private-jetted, tropically heated Marioworld of today. In the years since then we have run into each other in Tangier, London, Rio, Milan, Paris, and New York as the trajectory of his fashion career blazed a trail that inevitably led to innermost Hollywood and the singularly revealing pictures in this book. What makes them unique? “It’s the intimacy,” says Mario. “The feeling of total privacy.” Thus we have the entire spectrum of Hollywood royalty larking about in their undies (or less) as candidly unembarrassed as alcohol-fueled students at a slumber party. “There’s a certain amount of trust because I’m not going to make them look bad,” says Mario. Some of them may say, ‘Oh, stop taking pictures,’ but I think it’s an obligation. I’m allowed to see things that most people are not—so I should show them.”

All of which reminds me of the opening scene from Too Too Mario. The mega-budget credits sweep us through winter in Gstaad, spring in Paris, and summer in Peru, and finally we alight on autumn in New York. Central Park. Mario is snapping Demi Moore. Her clothes drop like autumn leaves as she hides behind her super-luxurious leather handbag. “Pleeease, Demi,” Mario coaxes. “Just a leettle more skin. Really, it would be increeedible.” “Oh, Mario,” sighs Demi, thwacking him about the head with her priceless iguana-skin Birkin. “You are awful—but I like you.”

That was a scene from the musical Too Too Mario, an epic from Farfetched Productions destined for an imaginary cinema near you (provided you live in an area with suitable style credentials), in which we discover over several lush hours why Mario Testino is just so very Mario. We are treated to soaring duets (“I love you!” “I love you, too!”) warbled by Mario and Demi Moore, showstopping harmonies (“You make me look so interesting!” “I know!”) trilled by Mario, Gwyneth, Madonna, and many others. We have a tender aria (“Where’s my helicopter?”) crooned by Mario with one eye on his BlackBerry and the other on his luggage, and everything ends with a rousing chorus (“My heart says take my clothes off, but my publicist says I shouldn’t”) sung by the entire membership of the Hollywood Actors Guild. All of which goes to prove that when the stars want to be in pictures nowadays they don’t call the studios. They call Mario.

so... “Increeedible, no?” cries Mario, leaping onto his prancing white stallion, gathering himself into his shaved-mink cape, and, with a cavalier wave of his light meter as rose petals fall, galloping off into the brightest of bright-pink sunsets. Cut!
LIC FACES, PRIVATE LIVES

THE SECRET SNAPS OF SAMMY DAVIS JR.

Chameleon, voyeur, outsider—Sammy Davis Jr. used his camera to capture 1940s black America and then the Rat Pack, 50s and 60s, shooting candids of pals such as Frank Sinatra, Marilyn Monroe, and Milton Berle. Seventeen years after the pioneering entertainer's death, Davis's friend BURT BOYAR, in his new book, Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr., shares previously unpublished images from one of the greatest unknown picture archives in show-business history.
Opposite, Sammy Davis Jr. puts in face time with his Rolleiflex in the early 50s. Above, picking up pointers from a 1967 issue of Popular Photography.
ne of my best friends died of throat cancer, at 64, in 1990. But it was only recently that his widow—his third wife, Aliovise—granted me access to his belongings, kept for years in a nondescript Bekins warehouse in Carson, California. Once inside that musty storage room, I opened box after box with two cohorts of mine (film producers Robert Bloomingdale and Howard Burkins), and we discovered one of the greatest untapped photo archives in the history of entertainment.

My friend had begun taking pictures as a hobby in the late 1940s. He traveled the country shooting rural landscapes and urban street scenes in the style of Walker Evans. He chronicled life inside African-American clubs, homes, and hotels. Then, beginning in the 1950s, with intimate, un-

This article is excerpted and expanded from Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr. by Burt Boyar, to be published this month by HarperCollins; © 2007 by the author.

paralleled access to the offstage lives and late-night high jinks of the celebrities he met, he went on to record the glamour of Hollywood, the rise of Las Vegas, the allure of Miami Beach’s resorts and Broadway’s nightclub and theater scenes—from inside the stars’ private domains.

He was, it turned out, a sort of house photographer for the storied Rat Pack—shooting Dean Martin backstage, Peter Lawford in his bathrobe. Frank Sinatra in pajamas. On his contact sheets, Marilyn Monroe tucks a friend’s son into bed, Milton Berle does card tricks for Kirk Douglas, and Nat “King” Cole prowls the town. On faded transparencies, Red Buttons clowns by the pool, Tony Curtis sits before an easel, painting, and Mel Tormé and his family sprawl on the shag rug on Christmas morning.

My friend, I realized as I pored through his photos, was a Zelig with a Rolleiflex. He snapped unusual pairings: Rex Harrison with Martin Luther King Jr.; a young politician named Richard Nixon in Jerry Lewis’s Copacabana dressing room. He took pictures of Sidney Poitier during the 1963 March on Washington. Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe at a pro-Israel rally. parade-route revelers as he walked alongside Bobby Kennedy and his sister-in-law Jackie. Everywhere he went he recorded theater marquees and quiet still lifes. He also shot models and dancers and cigarette girls of every shape, size, and creed, in various states of undress, along with portraits of many of the stars with whom he’d become romantically linked, among them Romy Schneider, Lolita Falana, and Kim Novak.

My friend was named Sammy Davis, Jr.

And from the time I met him, in 1950, he was never without a camera. As revealed in a new book, Photo by Sammy Davis, Jr., and in the previously unpublished images displayed on these pages—only a fraction of his archive has ever been seen, let alone appeared in print. Until now.

During the 50s and 60s, watching Sammy perform in a nightclub or concert hall was like the most exhilarating experience in American popular culture. Having started in vaudeville at age three (where he would routinely do 12 shows a day), he had learned how to get an audience by instinct and respond, minute by minute, to what he sensed the crowd craving. He would dance, sing, tell jokes, did impressions, played musical instruments, even throw in a few gun tricks. Sammy was one of those rare entertainers who don’t have a set act. He would tell his music director, George Rhodes, “I’ll open with...” and he’d name two songs—different each night—and then he’d ad-lib for the rest of the hour or more. And he did it all with aAbove the photo: Frank Sinatra, in a rare photo taken by Burt Boyar. Opposite: Sammy and his wife, Jane, in the 1950s. 

HE WAS A SORT OF HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE RAT PACK—SHOOTING PETER LAWFORD IN HIS BATHROBE, FRANK SINATRA IN PAJAMAS.
Davis chronicled his famous friends throughout the 50s and 60s. Above, Milton Berle dazzling party guests.

Opposite, from left: Frank Sinatra talking on the phone in his pajamas; Red Buttons lounging poolside; Senator Robert Kennedy with his family and campaign staff during his 1968 run for the presidency (from one of Davis’s marked-up contact sheets).
Midcentury scenes,
mostly.

(1) Spectators at a rally.

(2) A stoop.

(3) A friend downs a drink.

(4) A San Francisco fashion show.

(5) Peter Lawford.

(6) Towering.

(7) Marilyn Monroe.

(8) A disrobing.

(9) Samuel Goldwyn on the lot, 1959.

(10) Johnny Carson and Milton Berle.

(11) Eartha Kitt.
SHOOTING STARS

Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin prep before a performance in their Rat Pack heyday. Opposite: left, 1950s bathing beauties at Miami’s Lord Calvert Hotel; right, Davis’s then girlfriend, Kim Novak, reluctantly poses in 1957.
WHEN STEVE LAWRENCE BOUGHT Poloroid Stock, DAVIS SAID, “STOCK? I GOT A Poloroid SO I CAN TAKE PICTURES OF CHICKS' BOOBS.”

Styne had co-produced to showcase my myriad talents. I was writing a syndicated newspaper column, and one him up, as I did many stars who went to town, hoping to get a few items suggested dinner at Danny’s Hideaway, and house popular with comedians and show-business types. That first even as our meal ended, he apologized for having a moment before continuing—"I thought it had extraordinary chemistry from our first minute, and as luck would have it, we dinner seven nights a week the entire time he was in town. It was the start of my professional collaboration that would be in two autobiographies, which we co-wrote, Yes I Can and Why Me?

Although it all, he snapped his pictures. During the early 50s,” Sammy once said, “Jerry [Lewis] gave me my first instant camera, my first 35-mm. … and he taught me. Then in [1957] I met [fashion photographer] Milton [Greene, a confidant of Marilyn Monroe]. He got me involved in serious photography and using available light.”

Time, Sammy would have a cabinet run the length of a 25-foot wall in his Beverly Hills home. It was waist-high and had two sides filled with Minxes and Rolleis and Bolex cameras—the best and newest, very high-end model. “Of course, once I had a little education,” Sammy said. “I bought a new Nikon this and a Canon that, with 18 lenses and 62 filters. In terms of addiction I think there is nothing more powerful than men’s toys. This may sound a little paranoid, but I am positive that somewhere in Germany, in Japan, there are men awake in the middle of the night, thinking, ‘Now, Sammy Davis Jr. has an extra $50,000. Let’s think of something he doesn’t have. I’m positive of it. man.’

When Sammy started taking pictures, as a teenager in his 40s, he used a Brownie and whatever inexpensive camera came his way. “We were in Florida and I was at the Beachcomber. [Singer] Steve Lawrence was down there. He was in the army, doing a show, and he came to the dressing room, and then we went to my hotel and hung out. He said, ‘Oh, you’ve got a Polaroid, the new Polaroid. I just got some stock in that. You ought to buy some, too.’

“I said, ‘Stock? What stock?’ He said, ‘I bought it for two dollars a share.’ ‘Two dollars? For a piece of paper? I got a Polaroid so I can take pictures of chicks’ boobs.’”

Obviously, the years—and Sammy’s adolescence—passed on, and he became a serious amateur. “The best pictures I ever took,” Sammy told me in the early 80s, “were in New York, during Mr. Wonderful. I’d walk the streets… get down to 42nd Street, walk up and down, and cats would be stumbling around, bums, and I had my Rollei around my neck, blue jeans, and a pea jacket, and just take pictures, and nobody’d notice you or bother you…. In the 40s they talked about war photographers. Well, a guy that does street photography today, he’s a war photographer. He really is. He’s out there with that 35-mm. camera. Oughta get combat pay. Because when you see those gritty stories about the drug operations and this cat’s in there shooting, he’s taking his life in his hands. At any moment, cat’ll turn on him because his drugs tell him, ‘This motherfucker ain’t bein’ right. I don’t like the way he looks. Why the motherfucker he takin’ a picture of me? Wipe him!’

“I carry a lot of my cameras on the road with me. I’ve gotten some of the greatest pictures from the penthouse suites of every important hotel all over the world… Paris, the Philippines, Australia… The flip side of this popularity is I no longer have the privilege of walking the streets without attracting crowds, so being confined to the hotels, that’s where I shoot from.”

Sammy’s fascination with photography fit in with his persona. He was small of build (only five feet four), which allowed him to move easily in tight situations and, in a way, aggrandize the world around. He was a consummate voyeur (as evidenced by his parade of women friends) and chameleon (the best impressionist of his age) traits that the finest photographers possess. He was a man among whom others felt comfortable, an attribute that made him easier to catch candid moments. He loved L.A., a land fixated on gadgets and screening rooms, and a virtual factory of American dreams rendered visually.

His pictures from the early 50s of his life on the road with the Will Mastin Trio (a song-and-dance act that included Sammy Davis Sr.), are his most accomplished. His scenes of bleak desert towns and bustling big-city life are exquisitely composed. By day, he would explore inventive shadow play, human figures dwarfed by their environments, the clean lines of buildings that vanish, straight and true, into the horizon. By night, he would find Miró-like patterns amid the neon.

His pictures from the late 50s onward are remarkable less for their artistry than for their incomparable access—Jack Warner on his Hollywood back lot; Jack Benny and Bing Crosby on the golf course, dinner parties with Yul Brynner, Jack Lemmon, and Billy and Audrey Wilder. This stands to reason: 1954 was the year Sammy lost his left eye in a car crash (a life-changing experience that also prompted his conversion to Judaism). Even so, Joshua Greene, the photo archivist and son of photographer
Milton Greene, contends, “It may sound rough, but having one eye was an advantage to Sammy as a photographer because it eliminated the peripheral vision and depth. With only one eye he saw as a camera lens sees.”

Sammy, in many ways, was an outsider, as the best photographers often are. (I remember one nightclub routine in which he talked about his golfing prowess: “I’ve got a three handicap—black, one-eyed, Jewish.”) Truth be told, he sometimes used the camera as a security blanket—a way to place some distance between himself and the white world that was constantly branding him as uppity and unworthy, a stranger in their midst. In society’s eyes, he was an interloper who often dated white women and married out of his race (his second wife was the actress May Britt). He was rich, talented, and phenomenally successful—which further fueled resentment. Yet within the confines of his ever present camera, he could focus on whatever world he wanted to see or imagine.

Through it all, Sammy used photography as an extension of his artistic side. You can’t sing, dance, and tell jokes 24 hours a day. So, when he could, he’d take his camera to swank New York parties and Hollywood bars. TV soundstages and Vegas rehearsals, smoky nightclubs and dazzling movie sets. He often stood in the wings, focusing on the hubbub around him, as showgirls and singers came and went. He also took roll after roll of his front door, which was never locked (there were always armed guards outside the gate). We looked up and there was Michael Jackson, in his 20s at the time. He waved and said, “Hi, Mr. D. Just going downstairs to your archive.” Michael disappeared into a private office where there was a large-screen TV and a collection of tapes of Sammy’s nightclub and television appearances. In fact, in the early footage of Sammy from his days with the Will Martin Trio—during which the performers had a brief eight-minute onstage to do or die—Sammy, as a breather between frenetic tap-dancing sequences, can be seen doing an early “moonwalk,” a generation before Michael would make it his trademark. Sammy’s response that day, as his admirer headed downstairs, was wonderfully warm: “Can there be anything more flattering than when the kids appreciate what you’ve done?”

wives and children. And when he wanted to get a sense of the goings-on outside his celebrity cocoon, he wandered the streets in his oversized peacoat and preserved whatever passed his way: an old woman sitting on a stoop in her Sunday finery; a drunk sleeping it off in front of a sign that read, FINE WINES. Then he’d share his creations with his friends, mailing dozens of 11-by-14 prints, often stamped: PHOTO BY SAMMY DAVIS JR.

There are countless stories that the pictures can’t capture. In 1960 the so-called Rat Pack stormed the Sands Hotel and Casino, in Las Vegas. Sammy was shooting the movie Ocean’s 11 by day, with Frank, Dean, Peter Lawford, and Joey Bishop, and performing onstage every night. My wife, June, and I were living at the Sands, too, interviewing Sammy for his first book. One night, Senator John F. Kennedy interrupted his presidential campaign for a quick visit. Sammy introduced him from the stage, then we all went up to Frank’s suite for the late-night party. Along, too, came the gorgeous, friendly Copa Girls. (“Senator, we’re gonna miss our plane,” someone whispered. “I’ll wait,” said J.F.K.)

Around four A.M., Peter beckoned Sammy from the next room and whispered, “Would you like to see what a million dollars looks like?” Hell, yes—we all did. Jean and I followed Sammy into a side room. Peter closed the door and opened a satchel he’d been guarding. It was filled with $100 bills—purportedly a gift from the casino owners for Senator Kennedy’s campaign. (How ironic it would seem, three years later, when Sinatra had his heart broken as President Kennedy, wary of the star’s Mob connections, rebuffed Sinatra’s overture to stay with him during a West Coast swing.)

In the early 80s, while beginning work on Sammy’s second book, Jane and I were living with him for a time at his home, in Beverly Hills. With a tape recorder going, we would sit in his sprawling living room, in deep armchairs that swiveled, as Sammy told tale after tale, perched on a stool behind the bar.

During one interview session there was a rustling sound. Someone had come in the front door, which was never locked (there were always armed guards outside the gate). We looked up and there was Michael Jackson, in his 20s at the time. He waved and said, “Hi, Mr. D. Just going downstairs to your archive.” Michael disappeared into a private office where there was a large-screen TV and a collection of tapes of Sammy’s nightclub and television appearances. In fact, in the early footage of Sammy from his days with the Will Martin Trio—during which the performers had a brief eight-minute onstage to do or die—Sammy, as a breather between frenetic tap-dancing sequences, can be seen doing an early “moonwalk,” a generation before Michael would make it his trademark. Sammy’s response that day, as his admirer headed downstairs, was wonderfully warm: “Can there be anything more flattering than when the kids appreciate what you’ve done?”

The camera, in the end, often serves as a shield, a barrier to conversation didn’t want to have with people he didn’t want to know. Nobody interrupts a picture to ask, “What’s that guy doing in here?” To the white men who judged him, in a glance, apparatus in front of his face helped butt out the pain of rejection, even as it let define, in a shutter chick, the world that defining him.

Behind the camera, Sammy Davis Jr. ways seemed to belong in the room. He though he was at a remove, he was more than in control, omniscient, his worldpregnate—if only through the viewfinder he held up to his eye.
standing with friends on the playground when his dad, dressed in shabby clothes and an orange reflector vest, approached. "I told the other kids I didn't know him—he was a crazy drunk."

That was the last time Dollard saw his father. He died within a year, at age 45, of cirrhosis of the liver. "I was chowed up by guilt for treating him like that," Dollard says. "I stopped believing in God, and felt guilier because my mom was this big Catholic. I seriously believed I must be some kind of psychopath."

In addition to her faith, Eva possessed a commitment to liberalism that was once almost a birthright of working-class Catholics. "My mother had this belief in, like, the nobility of being poor and the eternal fight for social justice," he says.

No one was more touched by Eva's faith than her eldest child, Ann, eight years older than Pat. Ann's involvement in activism would, strangely enough, put her on a fairy-tale ascent into the highest reaches of the American social strata. In 1976, a year after graduating from high school, Ann took a job as an extra in Hal Ashby's Coming Home, which was being filmed at a nearby hospital. During a break, Ann chatted up one of the film's stars, Jane Fonda. The conversation resulted in Ann's taking a job with Fonda's husband Tom Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy, then with César Chávez's United Farm Workers of America. Her work inevitably took her deeper into Hollywood's activist-entertainment circles. By the early 80s, Ann had found her professional niche as a junior agent at Leading Artists Agency. Her activism continued, particularly in the nuclear-freeze movement, which led to an intimate friendship with Robert Kennedy Jr., who says, "Ann was one of my closest friends. She was extremely smart and extremely forceful and was absolutely committed to progressive issues, a vision of social justice for America."

In the Dollard family, no one was closer to Pat than Ann. Kennedy recalls, "Ann would bring Pat to whatever she was doing. Pat idolized her, and she adored him." Through his middle-school years, Dollard followed his older sister to marches and fund-raisers and spent weekends canvassing door-to-door for her.

But he was also beginning to follow in his father's footsteps. Dollard had become a blackout drinker by age 15. Nevertheless, with the help of his parish priest, he won a scholarship to a Jesuit prep school. The priests nicknamed him "Nemesis." He was the smart-ass who debated them about religion based on his extensive readings of South American writer Carlos Castaneda, and the kid who, when asked to do a book report on Colombia, brought in a live pot plant as a visual aid. Dollard claims he was nearly thrown out after being implicated in a plot to put LSD in the priests' drinking water. By his junior year, Dollard had discovered L.A.'s punk scene, which only accelerated his drinking. "I remember being in honors algebra, drunk out of my mind every fucking day."

Yet Dollard believed fate held something grand in store for him. Some nights he would take a girlfriend drunken-driving in the hills above Los Angeles, and when she would scream, "Slow down! You're going to kill us!" he would say, "Maybe you'll die. But not me. I can't die. I have a destiny." At 17, believing he was onto that destiny, he dropped out of high school to become a rock star. "I didn't play an instrument, and I couldn't sing," he says, "but I thought I could make it on ego and mouth."

He formed a band but admits, "I was too loaded to ever get up onstage." His most memorable performance would be at another band's show: the time he cracked his skull stage-diving at a Black Flag concert, then stayed in the mosh pit slamming for hours, despite later requiring 12 stitches. "I remember coming out covered in blood and everyone telling me how cool I looked," says Dollard.

"That was as far as my career went in music." Married briefly at 21, Dollard became a telemarketer, spending the next few years in various boiler rooms, selling pens, printer ink, and charity vouchers for the Long Beach Police Department. "It was dismal," he says. "But I learned how to close."

When Dollard was 22, Ann performed a career intervention, hiring him to answer her phone at Leading Artists. He lasted two years before she fired him. But destiny, which he still believed in, had other plans. He would get his break, but only through enduring the greatest tragedy of his life. Two days after Ann fired him, she was killed in a freak horse-riding accident. Dollard was offered her job and her client list, which included a then unknown Steven Soderbergh, about a year away from releasing his breakthrough, Sex, Lies, and Videotape.

Dollard was 25 when Soderbergh shot to fame, and quickly proved himself in his own right. In the early 90s he moved to William Morris, where he worked with Mike Simpson, today a senior vice president of the agency, whose best-known clients are Tim Burton, Quentin Tarantino, Wes Craven, and Trey Parker and Matt Stone. "Pat was outspoken, very articulate, and knew how to operate in the world," Simpson says. "He became an important soldier in our army."

His biggest contribution was to help establish the agency's independent-film division, which, Simpson says, "was extremely important to our success in the 90s." In addition to Soderbergh, Dollard represented Billy Bob Thornton and his writing partner Tom Epperson: Mike Werb, who wrote The Mask.
Pat Dollard

and Faceoff: Don Mancini (writer of the Child’s Play series); director Alan Rudolph; writer Fina Torres; and actor Malcolm-Jamal Warner.

To Dollard, the sudden success felt as if “someone handed me a basket of power.” One of his favorite movies as a teenager had been Stanley Kubrick’s Barry Lyndon, based on the Thackeray novel about a fatherless Irish rogue who fakes his way into the aristocracy. For Dollard, becoming an agent fulfilled this fantasy. “It was like being a fucking duke or count in Europe back in the day,” he says.

Dollard did what many other twenty-somethings in his shoes would have done: he became a swine of the first order. He wore Armani suits, drove whatever car was “tasty” at the time—from a Miata to a Porsche, to a Range Rover—and “plowed through more pussy than I thought was imaginable.”

Outwardly, Dollard was the consummate Hollywood player. A former client says, “Pat seemed like the archetypical agent. He was hyper-slick in that hyper-glib, dismissive, hipper-than-thou, bullshit-Hollywood way. He was your basic Young Turk prick.”

Simpson saw something different in him. “The main thing I always liked about Pat from day one is that I felt like he had a soul. There was something else going on besides just who his clients were, what the deal was, that kind of agent veneer. ”

Dollard was earning a reputation for intense but passing infatuations, such as the time in the early 90s when he converted to Judaism and took the name Schlomo Bin Avrihim. (“The rabbis who held my bath din,” says Dollard, referring to the council that determines a candidate’s suitability for conversion, “told me afterwards that they wished all converts could reach my spiritual level.”) The conversion didn’t last. Dollard’s second wife, for whom he’d become a Jew, divorced him not long after his romp with hookers on the set of Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story.

While visiting his wife on the Dragon set, Dollard found the time to chat up one of the hairdressers, Alicia Allain, who would become his third wife, in 1994. Alicia, 19, had come to Los Angeles from Louisiana with ambitions of becoming a producer, though was still relegated to the hair-and-make-up department.

The Dollard Alicia met “always wore these very tasteful Italian suits and was so gifted I believed he was going to end up running a studio.” Alicia was open-minded in a way that should have made theirs the ideal Hollywood marriage. When I ask her if she was aware that her future husband was having sex with hookers at the same time he was wooing her on the set of Dragon, she corrects me. “No. Pat didn’t have sex with those girls,” she says. “They just gave him some blow jobs.”

But as tolerant as Alicia was, Dollard’s increasing drug use plunged her into despair. While he controlled it at the office, after hours he typically functioned in a chemically induced haze. She says, “Those guys at William Morris loved Pat. They saw him as this happy-go-lucky dude. They didn’t see Pat locking himself in his bedroom at our apartment, him high as a kite, and me and my mother finally having the police and firemen get him because we’re afraid he’s killing himself in there. I saw he hated himself for what he was doing. After these runs Pat would just be bailed up on the floor crying.”

Dollard estimates that he wound up in emergency rooms half a dozen times for overdoses. By 1995, at age 30, Dollard was barely functioning. Mike Simpson tried to intervene. He says, “I talked to him, kind of like up against the wall, and said, ‘What are you doing, man? You’re gonna kill yourself.’ ”

According to Simpson, Dollard simply laughed and said, “You’re right.”

That year, he was fired from William Morris. Pat and Alicia moved back to her hometown, near Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where initially she supported them working at a hair salon. “We lived on clipping coupons for pizzas,” Dollard recalls. He began attending A.A. meetings and took a job at a Baton Rouge commercial-production house, and in 1996, Alicia gave birth to their daughter. He and Alicia produced two independent films, Notes from Underground and Lush, a portrait of a man suffering from alcoholic blackouts who is accused of murder. Neither film put Dollard back on the map. Nor was Soderbergh, who remained a client, doing especially well. After he failed to connect with audiences with films like The Underneath and Schizopolis, Soderbergh’s relations with major studios had chilled. “For a while there,” says Dollard, “the most successful film I was involved with was a Louisiana State Lottery commercial I worked on.”

Everything changed in 1998 when Soderbergh’s Out of Sight was released to critical acclaim. Dollard’s career came roaring back to life. In short order he set up lucrative deals for Soderbergh to make The Limey, Full Frontal, and Erin Brockovich. But Traffic was Dollard’s biggest coup. Dollard is credited by Soderbergh and others with getting the film made after it fell apart during pre-production. When Traffic won four Academy Awards, including Soderbergh’s first as a director, Dollard was a made man in Hollywood.

Propaganda Films hired Dollard to be president of its management division. Then at its peak as a commercial-and feature-production company, Propaganda’s stabilized some of the hottest directors to include David Fincher, Michael Bay, Spike Jonze. Dollard moved into a home in Bel Air. He and Alicia had separated in 2011 but continued to work together as a producing team.

With Traffic having moved the native debate on the war on drugs to the forefront, Dollard spoke candidly to the press on his own struggles with addiction. Telling reporter that his practices as an agent now “consistent with A.A. principles.”

Despite preaching about sobriety, Dollard began using again. Initially, he attempted to hide it. “I would take drug vacations,” he explains. “I’d check into a hotel on Sunset just bingé for a few days.” Soon his addiction spilled into his work life. According to Dollard, in 2001, after starting at Propaganda he initiated monthly drug-and-hooker parties which he dubbed “the Hotel Club.”

Dollard claims that the Hotel Club became part of his executive plan at Propaganda, not saying we imposed any of this.” Dollard says. “Once a month, a variety of execs at the company would have non-wedded connected bachelor parties with drugs and hookers we’d book at all the different hotels—the Avalon, Four Seasons. Argyle would invite potential clients and get them loaded and get them laid. I was participating in the fucking Roman orgy.”

Propaganda soon went belly-up—industry watchers blame a post-9/11 recession in commercial production, not Dollard—but landed on his feet, taking a senior position at Catch-23, the management firm that represented Renee Zellweger, among others. In 2002 he and manager Ryan Kavanaught co-founded Relativity Management, with up to $150 million in financing and ambitious plans to produce films as well as manage talent. “My career had never been better,” Dollard says. “Personal life was this ongoing disaster.”

In 2000 he had married for the fourth time. He and his wife moved into a Hollywood Hills mansion previously inhabited by Kirstie Alley. It was owned by Alley’s former boyfriend Melanie Price, actor James Wilby, who lived next door. After Dollard reverted to old habits and began locking himself in his master bedroom to binge in privacy, his wife enlisted Wilder’s help breaking in climbing across a walkway that connected the two homes—in order to check on husband. She says, “Poor James went to Kirstie Alley to Pat and me.”

At a dinner party at Stockard Channing residence, Dollard’s third wife, Alicia, alarmingly stories about her ex-husband. Says, “Pat was seen running naked down street waving a sword.” (Dollard disputes details of the account, saying, “I was wear my boxers and I never left my balcony.”)

What’s not in dispute is that police
I to Dollard’s house in the spring of handcuffed him, and took him to the unit at Cedars-Sinai for observation. And this time he began his political con-

omm. Somewhere between the Roman orgy he mental war he became a staunch proponent of George W. Bush’s.

show his support for the war in Iraq, he red vanity plates for his Hummer that did, us wins. He told friends, “President is the Che Guevara of our time. He’s dyed liberated two countries from tyrants. Those kids walking around in T-shirts with Che on them in a red beret, someday I’ll be wearing shirts with Bush’s face on in a cowboy hat.”

ul Schrader, who became close to him g the making of Auto Focus, says, “Pat resoundista, just like Jim- ock or John Milus. Those are guys who have never read logic or, actually, their hought process to inter-

ments of an sting argument. The dan-

that Pat comes when he gets into that territory where thing gets blurred, and comes the object of his imagination.”

on, Dollard was telling e that it was his intention personally fight al-Qaeda.” He told me, “If I could, I’d headis with my bare hands. That’s really the goal.”

Kidnapped

my first encounter with Dollard takes place in spring of 2004. We are flung by a mutual friend believes Dollard might be listed in representing the rights of a book I wrote about Marines q. “He’s a little crazy,” my friend warns, he’s Steven Soderbergh’s agent. This guy i movies.”

e meet in the offices of Relativity, on the n floor of a reassuringly solid concrete-glass building on Beverly Drive. The re-

area is a jumble of cardboard boxes partially assembled desk components, phone lines snaking through the mess. Looks like the company is just moving in, expending, or folding. (As it would out, it was doing all three at once.) It’s lated by attractive, young, female as-

ts who seem to be doing nothing when ard—still in his Prada-boots-jeans-and-

shirt phase—stripes in, shakes my hand, and tells me he’ll be right back. He has to the bathroom. I can wait in his office at the hall.

Dollard returns 20 minutes later. We sit jacker leather chairs around a chrome-

and-glass coffee table. He smokes, ashing in a paper cup, and rambles about killing jihadis and his dream of making a pro-war film.

Despite his ease in discussing his travels with drugs, he lowers his voice when discussing his incipient Republicanism. “Dude,” he says, “when I have meetings with George Clooney, I’m afraid to drive my Hummer on the lot. I’m afraid if I come out as a Repub-

ican it will jeopardize my business relations. How fucked is that, dude? I live in fear of George Clooney.”

At the end of our meeting Dollard offers to become my manager. “Seriously, dude, I could get something set up for you like that,” he says, clapping his hands to indicate how fast he is going to make a deal.

But Dollard never becomes my manager.

with good intentions, but Pat twisted their inter-

vention around until they thought the right thing to do was buying coke and hiring prosti-

tutes for him.”

On Election Day 2004, I receive an urgent phone call from Dollard. I must come to his office immediately. When I show up, two agents from Relativity are on the couch. Dollard paces, making introductions at a rapid clip.

His eyes are glassy. He speaks with those shallow breaths I’d heard when he phoned after the “kidnapping.” I get the feeling he may be seriously messed up. The two agents slink from the room.

Dollard reveals why he asked me over. New York Times reporter Sharon Waxman, a friend of mine, has completed a book on directors of the 90s, Rebels on the Back Lot, for which she interviewed him. He wants to know if he is quoted in it. I tell him I believe he is.

Dollard summons an assis-

tant. “I want you to take a letter for me,” he tells her. “Send it to all my clients. Tell them I might be quoted in Sharon Waxman’s book. I don’t recall what I told her. I was on drugs and I retract my quotes.”

“Hollywood Yuppie Faggot”

Three weeks later Dollard leaves for Iraq. He persuaded a former client—a di-

ector who had previously won accolades at Sundance for a small, gritty film—to accompany him. The director says that when he first glimpsed Dollard on their way to the airport “he looked like he was detoxing. He didn’t have any proper gear. I knew this would be a disaster.”

As it turned out, disaster befell Dollard’s partner. Shortly after their arrival, he was severely injured in a Humvee accident and had to be medevac’d home. Dollard decided to push ahead on his own. The military embed-

ded him with Marines at a forward operating base about 25 miles south of Baghdad in an area troops dubbed “the Triangle of Death.”

About 200 Marines occupied the camp, a dusty crater surrounded by concrete blast barriers and razor wire, which insurgents showered with mortars every other day or so. Dollard wandered the camp befriending anyone who would talk to him. Sergeant Brandon Welsh, then 22, recalls their first encoun-

ter. “He came up and said, ‘I’m Pat Dollard from Hollywood.’ He talked fast, was all uppi-

shy and shit. We thought he was a cokehead.”

The troops nicknamed him “Hollywood Yuppie Faggot.” Welsh’s section leader, Ser-

gt John Callan, says, “Pat came up with

BASKET OF POWER
Dollard in his Los Angeles office in 1990, soon after the success of Steven Soderbergh’s Sex, Lies, and Videotape.

In the coming weeks, he breaks several appointments. One day he phones. Rapid, shal-

ow breaths come across the line. “Dude, I am so, so, so fucking sorry for not calling you.” No explanation is required, but Dol-

lard offers one anyway. “I was fucking kid-

dapped.”

Dollard claims that members of an A.A. meeting abducted him after promising his wife to get him sober. Instead, they held him prisoner at a hotel in Palm Springs while plying him with call girls and coke. Meanwhile, they used his credit cards to charter a yacht and a plane for business deals they were conducting. The story is incredible, but Dollard’s fourth wife later confirms its essential truth, adding, “I’m sure those A.A. people started

2007. www.vanityfair.com
Pat Dollard

these stories about partying with movie stars and rock stars and models, and the Marines just ate it up.”

Dollard pulled the ultimate trump card. Using his sat phone, he called Lucy Walsh, daughter of former Eagles guitarist Joe Walsh. Lucy, a client of Dollard’s, had toured as a keyboardist for Ashlee Simpson. Dollard managed to catch her when she was visiting with Simpson. Callan says, “Pat put this kid from West Virginia on the line with Ashlee Simpson. I was told she was like, ‘Well, thanks for going out there and getting your dumb ass blown up. I gotta go.’”

As far as the troops were concerned, Dollard was now in. Says Callan, “For the younger guys he became, like, their leader. Nobody from the command ever told us he was attached to us. He just kind of went out for a ride with us one time, then said, ‘I’m gonna get my stuff,’ and he moved in.”

From a First Amendment standpoint, it’s to be applauded that commanders never sought to supervise the activities of their embedded reporter from Hollywood. But to Callan, Dollard was a constant headache. “I’m the guy that has to talk to these guys’ mothers if one of them gets killed. With Pat around, it was hard to get people to do their jobs.”

Dollard claims he was sober when he arrived in Iraq, but he soon fell off the wagon. As one Marine describes it, “One afternoon, on patrol, we bought beer from a hajji.” Later, back at the base, he says, “we all got buzzed, and Pat was like, ‘Let’s go Mohawks.’”

After Dollard shaved the word “die” in his chest hair, the night was immortalized in the photo he e-mailed back to friends in Hollywood. By then, Dollard was wearing Marine fatigue. Another reporter at the camp recalls, “I was there when the commander, a lieutenant colonel, saw this clown running around in cammies with a Mohawk. The colonel called over the platoon sergeant of the unit he was with and asked, ‘Is that your fucking reporter?’”

Welsh and the others were ordered to shave off their Mohawks. Shortly after the incident, the platoon Welsh and Culland belonged to was ordered to Al-Musayyib, a town of an estimated 10,000 on the Euphrates where a few days earlier insurgents had destroyed one of two main bridges with a truck bomb. Their platoon was sent in to hold the remaining bridge. Dollard accompanied them—fewer than two dozen troops in three light armored vehicles—as they rolled into the center of Al-Musayyib. At sunset, a muzzin sang calls to prayer from loudspeakers on a nearby mosque, and the Marines were ordered on foot patrols through the narrow streets surrounding their position. Dollard joined them.

Unfortunately, the patrol Dollard accompanied encountered an Iraqi selling whiskey. Dollard purchased several bottles and drank himself into a blackout. Callan says, “He was wandering around singing and spewing stupid shit. It was the middle of the night, and he was turning on the light to his camera to film us, putting a spotlight on us in the middle of our security patrols.”

Sergeant Brandon Wong, another Marine in the unit, who was then 22, says, “When Pat first showed up in Iraq he was all, like, he’s an alcoholic and can’t drink.”

“We saw what he meant that night. He was fucking trashed. Pat ran up to a mosque and ripped the fucking sign off it”—a cloth banner with hand-painted Arabic on it. Later that night, Wong says: “a patrol of Humvees was driving by and I look and there’s Pat just standing in the middle of the fucking road trying to wave them through, like he’s directing traffic.”

The Marines returned from their patrol before dawn and were allotted a couple of hours to sleep. Dollard continued babbling and singing—a sort of shanty that went, as Callan recalls, “‘Three bottles of whiskey and a couple of hajja sodas and just got shitty.’”

The antics pushed Wong to the breaking point. “I could not fucking sleep because of his ass,” he says. “I flipped out on him.” Wong, who later became friends with Dollard, regrets what happened next. “I pulled my gun on him. I put it to his head and told him he’d better shut the fuck up or I would pull the trigger.” Wong adds, “It’s fucking up to say now, but I really didn’t care if he lived or died.”

Other Marines talked Wong out of shooting Dollard. Callan wasn’t told about Wong’s threat on Dollard’s life until the next day. He recalls, “When I heard about it, I said, ‘You should have just shot him.’”

The following morning Dollard returned to the main base with another unit, while Callan’s platoon remained in Al-Musayyib. At about noon, a mob gathered in front of the mosque whose banner Dollard had stolen as the imam delivered an angry denunciation of the American occupiers. Soon, the Marines came under fire from gunmen surrounding the mosque. “Our whole platoon opened up on that side of the city,” says a Marine. “We could never prove Pat is the one who caused it, but that’s what we thought started it.”

No Marines were injured in the engagement. Among some, affection for Dollard actually grew. “It wouldn’t make sense to anyone who wasn’t there,” says Welsh, “but Pat brought this civilian craziness to our lives. He made being in Iraq fun.”

Among troops, Dollard’s next stunt gave him almost mythic status as a wild man. For several weeks an urban legend circulated on the base that a derelict former palace beyond their perimeter was a whorehouse. Marines talked of seeing attractive young women dressed in provocative clothes, makeup, and coming and going from it. After the abductions and beatings were out of sight, one dared to approach a fort with a fort or investment—until Dollard informed us that he was going out alone to search for the alleged brothel.

According to Wong, he and other Marines decided to help. “We gave him a to and a grenade and showed him how to do the shit. We told him, ‘If you start shooting, we’ll come running after you,’ but, you know, we weren’t allowed to leave the patrol base.”

As Marines watched from the base, Dollard walked alone into the city. He says he found a woman’s body in the shattered palace was a woman in the rubble of the building. Walking to the rear of the building, he found a hole blasted through a concrete wall. He peered in. After the hole, he saw something and said, “I don’t remember it. I was better at crescent on it or not.” Dollard says, “I don’t remember it.”

He set off into the city toward the blue.”

His instincts proved correct. The shop was a pharmacy, where Dollard bought a drug addict’s dream. Armed, dressed in American military attire, he entered the shop to take any thing he wanted. “I was a counter just looked at me,” Dollard says, “I showed my weapons and pointed at the drugs on the shelves. The man started speaking Arabic, but I heard the word ‘analgesia’ and knew that was the shit I wanted.”

Dollard left with several bottles of Valium and other substances he wasn’t sure of. “I never pointed my gun at the guy,” he explains. “But it was robbery by implication.”

Dollard at one point claimed that a dealer in L.A. sent him an unsolicited package of coke through military mail. He retracts this story and denies it.”

Several Marine interview confirm that Dollard shared Valium and other substances with men in his unit, and say he told them they were legally acquired in Iraq. Two Marines claim to have seen coke provided by Dollard to their armored vehicle after their patrol on the way back to Kuwait. “The we got into with Pat was crazy,” says one of them.

Dollard himself contradicts one of his statements later when showing me raw footage he shot. “You can tell we’re all on Valium,” he says, “because everyone is heavy-tongued when we talk.”

H
He leans in the window and shouts, got any bombs, dickface? Any bombs? Omen?"

laid backs away, laughing, then shouts rby Marines. "Will you fucking kill ring while I am here?"

laid argues that his reckless behavior calculated to get the Marines to loosen front of his camera. Leaving aside whatmage he did to the combat effective-

the unit by distributing drugs, as well harm he did to American-Iraqi rela-

vandaling a mosque and robbing a cre while dressed as a U.S. soldier, his e from Iraq stands as a peculiar and of-

mpelling record of war.

sted documents emerging from Iraq, after how scrupulously their makers to be neutral, have the feel of an adult ac, an intermediary at the controls. In-

r's work. there is no filter. It's not the of a grown-up. There's no authority in-

how the young troops ought to feel their experiences. It's the kind of film or 20-year-old Marine would make to his buddies. It captures the raw expe-

ria of a combat zone about as well as any-

I seen—short of actually going to that zone. No small part of the loyalty rd engenders among young Marines from what they see as the honesty of his-

"No one else out there I know of," says-

"has gone as far as Pat to show people our lives are like.

ore are some Marines Dollard never won-

"His presence endangered lives," says-

"I have no doubt that he's insane.

Escape and Evasion

laid returned to L.A. in March 2005 to find that his business and personal had imploded. Relativity was in the of outsting him. An ex-business part-

an unrelated venture was seeking a 00 judgment against him. His fourth-

Megan, had filed for divorce. Even-

the three most influential women in-

Megan. Alicia, and his mother—had-

gether, like a freak alignment of stars, egal action to deny him custody of his-

His Porsche and Range Rover were sessed. Megan sold their furniture to-

laid still had his Hummer, but a tole his US win vanity plates.

laid dealt with everything by going on sive binges, living alone in the empty Hol-

Dills home. The four-story house was in the side of a cliff, with panoramic-

an open steel-cage elevator running g his center, and walls adorned with-

ction (not yet sold off) of African ords, and battle helmets. Soon he was-

like a bum. The Electricity was turned e slept on a mattress on the floor of a bo-

mid-April, when an agent colleague

showed up at his house to check on him, she found the front door open. The place was filled with trash. It smelled. As she entered the kitchen, Dollard stumbled in, so filthy she initially thought he was a homeless man. Dollard lunged and threatened, "I'm going to fucking kill you."

She fled and called the L.A.P.D., who showed up in force. "They had shotguns out," she says. "I was terrified they were going to kill him."

Dollard left peacefully, but given his prox-

imity to neighbors like Bill Condon, Russell Crowe's agent Bill Freeman, and James Wil-

der, his arrest was a bizarre industry event. "Everyone came out to see what was going on, and there was Pat being taken away in handcuffs," says Dollard's colleague. "It was one of the most traumatic experiences of my life."

No criminal charges were filed. Police deposited him at the Los Angeles County/ U.S.C. Medical Center for psychiatric evaluation. Dollard describes the place as a "ghetto ward full of true nut jobs and power-

mad nurses." They tied him down and shot him full of Ativan. He was held for three days and released.

Dollard returned to his home and picked up where he'd left off. Two of the Marines he'd befriended in Iraq, Welsh and Wong, flew out to L.A. to visit. Dollard was still wearing his hospital bracelet, doing lines, and downing jug vodka when his visitors showed up.

As the Marines left, Dollard promised them he'd taper down. Shortly thereafter, someone—Dollard still doesn't know who—again called the cops. This time Dollard, on foot, led police on a pursuit through the hills. Even his landlord, James Wilder, became in-

volved, grabbing a stick and thrashing the bushes in an attempt to corner Dollard. But Dollard evaded capture. He crawled into a hole and hid out Saddam-style through the night. "In my ability to run and find cover, my experience in Iraq really paid off," Dol-

lard would later tell me. "It's what the Ma-

riines call 'E and E.' escape and evasion."

By May, Dollard was ready to call it quits. He voluntarily entered Impact House, a live-

in, highly regimented rehab in Pasadena.

Always the Truth

In early June 2005, I see Dollard after his departure from Impact House. Friends have helped him move into an apartment on Sunset Boulevard, where he is staging a comeback. Outside his window the dome of the ArcLight Cinemas appears to be melting in a liquid sunset. Inside, the air-conditioning blasts. It's on because Dollard actually abs-

hors cigarettes: the smell, the taste, the ruin-

ous effects on the lungs—everything about cigarettes, except, of course, smoking them. He paces beneath the ceiling vents, chain-

smoking and discussing his newfound sobri-

ty. "I had this realization about my drug use," he tells me. "Until my last binge, I held on to the idea that I could just drop out for a day or two and do drugs. I would have this James Bond fantasy where I'm in, like, the Mondrian [hotel], drinking martinis and shit with beautiful women, then having, like, great cocked-out sex." He laughs. "But I always seem to end up, like, homeless within a matter of hours."

Dollard has acquired his new, post-agent look: crew cut. Marine Corps fatigues, the haggard, unshaven face. The cataract is just starting to appear over his right eye. He looks wrecked, but Dollard insists he has never felt better, saying, "I wasted 20 years of my life on the narcotic of being a Holly-

wood agent. Iraq gave me a shot at redemption, but I didn't realize it, dude, until it was almost too late."

Dollard is full of new morality. "Ultimate-

ly, you realize that the purpose of life isn't just to take from it whatever you can get," he says, bending over the stove to light another cigarette on the gas flame. "You can't spend your life as a sexual libertine and end up be-

ing at peace." He walks up to me and points to my chest. "We were not just born to be sexual pirates."

I ask if he is involved in outpatient ther-

apy or going to A.A. meetings. "I've just been through a war," he says. "How can I sit around listening to a bunch of grown men whine about their fucked-up childhoods? I'm part of something bigger than myself—the war, the conservative cause. I can't get load-

ened anymore."

Dollard shares a profound discovery he's recently made. "I'm a warrior, dude. I am of the class of people whose role has been genetically determined to be protectors. My role is to fight the battle against Islamic-fundamentalist Fascism."

There are people in Dollard's life who be-

lieve he's gone completely out of his mind. His mother believes that at a minimum he may be bipolar. His third wife, Alicia, offers a blunter assessment: "I think he brain-damaged himself in one of those last drug runs."

Exhibit A in her argument that he has gone mad is his recent announcement that he is terminating his relationship with Soder-

bergh. "Pat owned 10 percent of Steven Soderbergh, and he goes and fires him," Alicia says. "How crazy is that?"

Dollard tells me, "I'm a director now. A director can't represent a director."

His future lies in 243 hour-long videocon-

rols piled on the floor in the corner. There is no furniture, just wall-to-wall white car-

et and a sleeping bag. Dollard can't afford a computer yet on which to edit his tapes. What keeps him motivated is a tattered Iraqi flag tucked to the wall, signed by Marines and inscribed, "Always the truth." I later ask Captian Brian Iglesias, who signed the flag,
about the inscription. He answers, "‘Always the truth,’ because the truth is what Pat Dollard champions.”

Most people in Dollard’s life have written him off. Yet for an industry where relationships are reputed to be calculated solely on the basis of self-interest, loyalists remain. From Soderbergh—who helped pay for Dollard’s stay at rehab—to William Morris’s Mike Simpson. (After my visit, Simpson will give Dollard an editing system.) Prior to moving into his apartment Dollard couch-surfed at the Bel Air home of Erik Hyman, an entertainment lawyer and the partner of photographer Herb Ritts until his death, in 2002. Explaining his surprising bond with Dollard, Hyman says, “Our friendship transcends whatever nuttiness he’s involved in at the moment. After Herb died, Pat showed up for me. He wouldn’t let me be alone. He is an extremely caring friend.”

Dollard argues that those most critical of his career abandonment are either his ex-wives and mother, who depend on him financially, or those whose "empty lives making crap films" he now rejects. "People expect me to regret going to Iraq, because I lost everything," he says. “What’s really going on here is I left the whorehouse. The people who stayed behind are the ones saying I’m a psychopath. Why? Because I rejected being a self-centered, moneygrubbing pig, which is what you are supposed to be in this town if you want to be considered sane.”

Dollard’s mother believes that her son is a near genius “at taking any information and transferring it into self-serving data.” A case in point is his argument that his recent trips to area mental wards prove his mental health is solid. “Psychiatrists checked me out. If I were truly pathological, they never would have released me,” he says, accidentally banging his cigarette against the side of his face. Sparks fly from his smoldering whiskers. “I have often asked myself the question ‘Am I a psychopath?’ But it just doesn’t add up. I am one of the sanest people I know.”

Dollard sucks mightily on his mangled cigarette. The aroma of burnt hair lingers. “The only exception is if you fill me with drugs and alcohol I do become insane. I concede that point.”

I ask him whether there is any difference in his thought process when he’s sober or on drugs. Dollard laughs. "None. When I’m on drugs, the same garbage comes out of my mouth, only it’s amplified.”

The Pitch

Late August 2005. Pat Dollard is bombing down Sunset Boulevard at the wheel of his new, gray Hummer, on his way to a meeting at William Morris. He handles the massive vehicle with about as much caution as the average 11-year-old at the wheel of a carnival bumper car. “I love the Hummer,” he says, weavion through the lanes. “It’s like driving your fucking living room from your Barcalounger.”

Sober for nearly 120 days now, Dollard’s comeback is well under way. He has created a 90-minute rough cut of his documentary, now titled Young Americans. Both Soderbergh and Simpson viewed it in his apartment and, as they say in Hollywood, “went crazy.” Soderbergh has offered to help arrange distribution. Simpson has scheduled a screening at William Morris this morning at 11, with the idea that the agency that once fired Dollard will take him on as a client.

A couple of weeks ago, Dollard received an unexpected cash windfall. Hence, the new Hummer, including a new set of US wins plates. His military fatigues—what he now refers to as his “Travis Bickle uniform”—are neatly pressed. His hair is slicked flat on his head, and he is clean-shaven.

Three days a week he’s been training in knav magna, Israeli martial arts. “I have to get my body up to the level my mind is at,” he says. “When I was in Iraq, I learned all this will-to-power shit. I could kill now.”

The exception to his new, squared-away life is his failure to obtain treatment for the cataract clotting his right eye—a result of Dollard’s fear of doctors and hospitals. Driving partially blind has become a sort of experiment. Cutting recklessly through traffic, Dollard laughs. “I’m just a puppet in the hands of God, dude,” he says, repeating a saying he picked up at an A.A. meeting.

Nowhere is God’s grace more evident than in Dollard’s resurrection in Hollywood. People who long ago wrote him off have begun to pop out of the woodwork. In the past few days, even one of the most powerful men in town, ICM’s chairman, Jeff Berg, has been asking him for a chance to see Young Americans.

“It’s a sensitive matter,” Dollard says, sounding oddly calculating—more like an agent than I am accustomed to hearing. “I can’t blow him off, but I have an obligation to show it to Mike Simpson first.”

“How do you know Berg?” I ask.

“Business,” Dollard says. “We crawled through the slime together.” (Dollard later explains that Berg once provided him with helpful advice on a deal.)

Outside William Morris, Dollard is seized by a fit of self-objectivity. He admits to qualms about involving an old, loyal friend like Simpson in his current scheme. “People who get involved with me tend to end up feeling that they’ve been put through the wringer at some point,” he says. “Oh, well. What the fuck.”

Inside the lobby, receptionists do double takes as he approaches their desk and announces himself. God only knows what they make of him. He’s too old to be a recluse but his digital camouflage trousers, with futuristic abstract pattern, have only recently become standard issue. Perhaps they’re a homeless man from the future.

An assistent escorts us to a screen room on the fourth floor. Mike Simpson sits six feet tall, lanky and fair-haired, appraising the wall, grinning. In his early 50s, dressed in his regulation William Morris suit, Simpson looks more like a small-banker than an industry player. Origin Texas, Simpson’s voice retains a twang. Patting Dollard’s shoulder, Simpson seems slightly in awe of him, like the laced kid in high school who secretly to be accepted by the delinquents.

To help evaluate the potential of Doll film, Simpson has invited fellow agent Ferriter to the screening. Simpson bet the agency ought to sell Young Americans a hybrid documentary-reality-Television episode which Dollard’s rough cut would be a part.

When I ask Simpson if he’s at all worried about representing Dollard, whose drug histories are a known quantity, he replies. “It’s like we look at is the success of films like Fahrenheit 9/11 and the ability to go into that territory with Pat’s very different point of view as his personal issues, this is the entertainment business. It’s not banking.”

John Ferriter enters the room, dressed in a baggy black suit like the hit men in Pulp Fiction—a look that has never gone out of style among some agents. In his early Ferriter has earned a reputation as one of Hollywood’s top reality-TV agents. As make introductions, Ferriter drops his messenger card (Senior Vice President World Head of Non-Scripted Television) on table, then flips it like a blackjack dealer. Ferriter appears momentarily unsure of him. He tries shaking Ferriter’s hand, but I firmly connect on the first pass.

“How are you?” Ferriter asks.

“Fine, good,” Dollard says, sitting down. “You just got back from Iraq?”

“A few months ago.”

“Are you O.K.?” Ferriter leans close to Dollard.

“Fucking fine.” Dollard fidgets.

“I mean, how are you doing?” Ferriter diaries deep concern.

“Dude, I didn’t fucking come here fucking psychotherapy,” Dollard says.

(Dollard later tells me, “It’s important to show your agent he’s just the fucking coding lady. Ferriter obviously has good a training. He didn’t even act insulted when I insulted him.”)

Simpson, watching from the back, laughs quietly.

Dollard feeds his DVD into the players the TV at the head of the conference. Ferriter sits about four feet from the screen, shaking his foot, tugging at his collar.
Soderbergh's office is off Gower, where he is in pre-production for *The Good German*. Soderbergh enters the reception area wearing jeans and heavy black shoes that look as if they have paint spattered on them. He greets Dollard with a quiet hello. Like Simpson, Soderbergh is genuinely enthusiastic about Dollard's project. He believes *Young Americans* transcends Dollard's political message and is simply "riveting." He tells me, "I knew Pat was going to come back with something pure, I believe in Pat's sense of what's compelling."

Soderbergh works from a drab office fairly typical of those on studio back lots. He and Dollard sit opposite each other on threadbare lounge chairs. Soderbergh has often spoken of his need for anonymity in order to function as an artist—"So I can eavesdrop, sit in an airport behind somebody and listen to their conversation, spy on people and hear stuff in undiluted form." The drive for self-effacement seems to guide his social interaction as well.

Soderbergh's presence in the room is like this: he arranges his body on the chair, then somehow astrally projects himself into a corner of the ceiling to watch himself interacting with his guests. To a guest, being seated across from Soderbergh is like sitting in front of a two-way mirror. You know someone is there, but you can't quite make him out, just shadows and indecipherable movements. A throat clears. A chair scrapes. Dollard fidgets nervously, as if he's straining to rein in his normal impulses to do and say the wrong things. He appears paralyzed.

Soderbergh breaks the ice: "Did you bring the DVD?" His voice is as lively as a pre-recorded message.

It turns out Dollard had a change of heart. He doesn't want Mark Cuban to have it. He wants Cuban to see it, but he doesn't trust him to possess it. "It's like laying my dick out," Dollard tells Soderbergh. "This guy could be in a hotel and might lose it."

Soderbergh reveals the faintest annoyance: "Pat, we should move fast on this."

"I'll fly to New York or something, and show it to him there," Dollard says.

Soderbergh shakes his head.

"We'll work something out," Dollard grins, as if oddly satisfied to have put a spanner in the works. I am seated between Dollard and Soderbergh, what would be the therapist's position if they were a couple in need of help, which they in fact are. I ask Soderbergh if he was surprised when he found out Dollard had gone to Iraq.

"No," Soderbergh says, "I've known him a long time. When you get a call from Pat you never know what to expect. It could be 'I just got married,' 'I'm making a new film.' 'I'm in Mexico getting an operation.' Pat is sort of an adrenaline junkie."

Dollard leans around me to bicker with Soderbergh. "I have no history of being the adrenaline junkie, an adventurer, blood-fucking-thirsty, or anything like that," he says.

"I'm saying you were looking for a change in your life," Soderbergh says.

"I didn't change intentionally by going to Iraq," Dollard argues. "It wasn't so much this noble thing where I was trying to change myself."

Soderbergh measures his words carefully.

"I think you had created a circumstance last fall in which, if there was ever a time when going to Iraq would seem like an appealing thing, that was the time."

"It's really easy to say that," Dollard says, "but I was not going to go to Iraq and risk my life just to not deal with some hassles. It's almost insulting to, like, fucking say that."

Soderbergh sticks to his point. "Do you think if you'd been totally happy and things were great, would you still have gone to Iraq?"

"There was no fucking way I was running away," Dollard gives a feeble wave of his hand, running out of steam. "That's my argument and whatever."

Soderbergh turns to me. now animated. "When you look at Pat's narrative, which I think for Pat is probably really exciting, for a lot of the supporting people it can be crazy."

It's an odd reversal that he, the star director, would cast himself in the supporting role.
Pat Dollard

with his agent. I ask Soderbergh about his friendship with Dollard, and he says, "The formative years of our relationship were strange because we were really young"—Soderbergh 23 and Dollard 22 when they first met. "We had nothing in common with people in Hollywood." Soderbergh says, "no interest in the high-school aspects of the social life in Hollywood."

Dollard says, "We'd just sit around fucking talking about chicks."

"Yeah, we would," Soderbergh says, laughing. "We'd swap stories about fucking chicks." Soderbergh corrects himself. "I don't mean fucking chicks. I mean..."

"Steven, we would talk about fucking chicks," Dollard insists.

Soderbergh leans closer to me. "I was just so close to Pat's family. And of course because of the horrible event that happened, it stepped up the relationship with Pat several levels. It made us much closer."

Dollard twists in his chair. The subject of his sister's death makes him uncomfortable. He says, "Let's talk about whatever, dude."

Soderbergh ignores Dollard. He says, "There are certain people who have an integrity, whether you can articulate it or not." He pauses. "I guess I fall back to the word 'soul' for lack of a better term. It's just a feeling. You meet them and you have an instantaneous reaction to them. It's certainly the reaction I had when I met Ann."

Ann

I was Pat Dollard's great fortune and misfortune to have Ann as his sister. She was so good, when people talk about her, you wonder if canonization would do her justice. Robert Kennedy Jr. says, "She was beautiful and she was charming and you couldn't meet her without loving her." Larry Jackson, the president of Northern Arts Entertainment and former executive V.P. of acquisitions and co-productions at Miramax, says, "There was something magical about Ann. She had such a rosy expectation of what the world could become."

No small part of Ann's expectations were poured into her little brother, Pat. Their mother, Eva, says, "Ann was probably more of a mother figure to Pat than I was." Both Ann and Eva believed Pat would be the first in the family to attend college. After he dashed those hopes by dropping out of high school, Ann continued to try to guide him until finally hiring him as her assistant at Leading Artists.

Initially, Dollard cleaned up his act. Other agents nicknamed him "Beaver Cleaver." Ann began grooming him to become an agent, but Dollard began screwing off on the job. On the last workday before the Fourth of July week-end in 1988, Ann fired him. Dollard claims he had already decided he didn't want to be an agent and was relieved.

Two days later, Ann went horseback riding with friends and fell while crossing a field. Though it was a relatively minor fall, Ann wasn't wearing a helmet and her brain stem was crushed. She lingered for two days in the hospital before being removed from life support. Scott Kramer, a producer and close friend, arrived at the hospital about the same time as Dollard. "Pat literally couldn't bear to see her." Kramer recalls. "He began hitting his head on the wall to the point where we had to grab him and hold him down and take him out of the hospital."

Dollard says, "I was blown apart by the horror. I'll never forget trying to see Ann's face and looking down at these two massive purple lumps of flesh sticking out like eggs where her eyes were supposed to be. For years after, if I saw a hospital I would start crying."

Her death was no less mourned in Hollywood. Ann's memorial service, held at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, became an industry event, drawing more than 700 people. Julia Phillips described the gathering in her 1991 book, You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again, as "all of young Hollywood looking stricken." Stephen Stills sang, and eulogies were delivered by filmmaker Lionel Chetwynd and Robert Kennedy Jr., who later held a private ceremony with Eva at his home in Mount Kisco, New York, where they spread her ashes.

Among Ann's clients, Steven Soderbergh was one of the closest to her. When they met, Soderbergh was 22 and had just finished directing his Grammy-nominated documentary about the band Yes, but a couple years later he was drifting, uncertain of his next move. Their meeting wasn't so much a typical agent-client encounter but the start of an intense creative collaboration. Ann encouraged Soderbergh to continue work on his own scripts. Scott Kramer says, "Ann believed in Steven in such a way that it filled him." Production on Sex, Lies, and Videotape was about to begin when she died.

Soderbergh was devastated. "The idea of replacing Ann was something I couldn't contemplate," he says. He and a few of Ann's other clients decided to ask Pat to fill her shoes, which, Soderbergh explains, "felt like a way to process and transcend the awful thing that had happened." He approached Dollard and told him. "I want you to be my agent. If you won't be my agent, I just won't have an agent, because I can't."

"My family was ripped apart by Ann's death," says Dollard. "I felt like I had to take her job, to hold it together." At the time of her death, Ann hadn't yet come into her own as an agent. Had she lived another year, it would have been a different story.

In addition to Soderbergh, clients on her list such as screenwriters Michael (Dances with Wolves) and Scott Frank (Sight, The Interpreter) became major cences shortly after her death.

Inheriting most of Ann's list, Dollard assumed her sister's life (much as the tagonist of his favorite film, Barry Lyndon, had risen by assuming the life of a deon nobleman), and though he loved the pings of success and power that came it, he says it filled him with self-loathes. He had this idea that I was going to be a success inside the system and do great things. "But when they said, 'O.K., Steven Soderbergh's agent'—and suddenly Steven becomes the biggest filmmaker world in terms of the hype—all my green power lust and alcoholism kicked in, "It's like I went to hell when I become an agent, and I've been trying to fight way out ever since."

The Dark Arts

A day after his meeting at William M Dollard sits across from me at Ka restaurant near his apartment, eating a bratwurst meal of ribs and flank, while lung on his former profession. All the cliches true, he tells me. Agents are "assholes," morons who have an entirely superior tude. They believe that they are better everybody else because they think they pulled off this scam, where they're doin coolest thing in the world."

Though Dollard is loud and obnoxious most matters, when it comes to discu the dark Hollywood arts he practiced as agent, he looks over his shoulders, aecting a squad of agent hit men to sho in their black suits, armed with buns and Uzis. Leaning forward, he claims th much as he embraced every possible during his rise to the top, the life appalled "There was just so much fucking money whores and power that people actually bored with it," he says. "An agent I wor with—I guess he was bored out of his fuckin—he trained his fucking Chihuahu licks his balls and would have people come his office to watch." He continues: "There was another guy worked with—Dollard names a promi manager—who was such a pathological they did a whole intervention, like a 12 thing on him to get him to stop lying, get freaking psychiatrists and brought, like mother and wife in to confront him in office."

What troubles Dollard the most about past as an agent were the business pract "A lot of what we did was just your basic ty, lying, backstabbing stuff that's part of normal business world," he says. "But s of what we did, it's like The Firm, like billing." He explains that during the hey of the speculative-script market, in the
Pat Dollard

a form of over-billing commonly perpetrated against clients was creating side deals with producers for secret commissions. He says, “You’re talking about, like, white-collar crime here—virtually—about some of this stuff.”

He adds, “I was taught when I was a kid that you’re supposed to grow up and contribute to society and be a good person. No kid thinks. When I grow up, I want to fuck other people.” He laughs. “I always used to tell myself it’s all going to be worth it because eventually I’m going to make good films.”

The Delivery Dude

A few days later Dollard phones with good news. One of the Marines from Young Americans is visiting him. Sergeant Brandon Welsh greets me at the door of Dollard’s apartment. Dressed in jeans and a knit suri shirt, Welsh is compactly built and fair-haired with a gravity to him which seems at odds with his boyish smile.

Dollard saunters in, looking unusually relaxed. His apartment has been transformed. There’s an Oriental rug, velvet couches, African art on the walls, and a six-foot-tall statue of Buddha by the entry—all purchased out of hock with his recent cash windfall. Dollard drops onto a velvet chaise.

For Welsh the war is a deeply personal matter. Friends of his died in Iraq. Welsh nearly died. And he believes the fatal patrols undertaken by his unit helped stabilize the area and will in the long run improve the lives of Iraqis. Still, terrible things, which trouble him today, did happen. He tells me of one instance when his unit came under fire and, in the confusion that followed, Marines may have ended up killing innocent civilians. Welsh shakes his head. “It was so fucked up.”

“Welsh, you’re a killer, and that’s a good thing.” Dollard says, walking up behind him and gesturing toward him like he is an exhibit in a science project. “Earlier today, Welsh was having anxiety about killing and I had to tell him, ‘Look, dude, appropriate killing is one of the most sacred and noble and greatest things to go on in the world. The world cannot survive without killing. Good killing is required to hold society together and to protect it. This involves nobility and sacrifice. It’s about subsuming the self to the whole.’ Welsh volunteered to kill on behalf of our society. That is a good, noble thing.”

I point out that Welsh’s anxiety was about killing innocent people.

“Chotic and terrible and tragic things are just part and parcel of the natural laws of war,” Dollard says, pacing. “War is its own state of being. It’s like another planet, Planet War. And the people who live on Planet Peace read about the terrible things that happen on Planet War—friendly fire, innocents killed—and are shocked. They naturally say we need to punish these boys”—Dollard points to Welsh—“because they’re not playing by the rules of civilization. The point is these are two worlds, each with their own set of natural laws. And they just don’t get it. Everything that’s happening in Iraq is completely in line with the rules of war state.”

Welsh runs his hands through his hair, worn out by Dollard’s frenetic arguing. “I’m fucking hungry,” Welsh says. “You said we were going to get takeout.”

“We can’t call on my phone.” Dollard says. “You’ve got to make the fucking call on your fucking phone.”

Dollard explains the problem: His favorite delivery place is a nearby Brazilian restaurant, but a couple of nights ago he had a run-in with the delivery dude. Dollard ordered a meal, and the delivery dude showed up more than an hour late. Dollard demanded the delivery dude give him his chocolate cake for free, but he refused. Dollard sent him packing. He fears the restaurant won’t deliver to his address. The plan is for Welsh to have the food delivered to the security guard in the lobby.

But Welsh runs into an unforeseen glitch. The woman taking our order doesn’t understand English very well. He tells her we are at the building on the corner of Sunset and Vine, but she doesn’t understand. Welsh holds the phone up. We hear the heavily accented voice of the woman on the other end. “Vane?” she asks. “Where is Vane Street?”

Dollard grabs the phone and shouts. “Vine, you dumb bitch!” He throws the phone across the room. Welsh collapses, laughing. Dollard broods. “There are all these people in this town I’ve been waiting to get back at. It’s going to start now.”

Dollard suggests the three of us go to the restaurant, hide out in the parking lot until closing time, and fuck up the delivery dude. “This whole war started with him,” Dollard says. “Fucking delivery dude was two hours late and wouldn’t comp me with a $4 slice of chocolate cake on a $50 order.”

Welsh punches his fist into the palm of his hand. “I’m down.” (Welsh later says he wasn’t serious.)

Dollard rushes to the front door. Then hesitates. “The thing is, this restaurant has gotten me through so many binges.”

They decide not to fuck up the delivery guy, and instead we go to the 101 Coffee Shop. Welsh leaves the next day.

American Jihadi

In mid-September, Dollard screens Young Americans for Bob Greenblatt, the president of entertainment for Showtime. Afterward, Dollard leaves a message for me: “Hey, Dude. They fucking loved it. man. I was fucking shocked. They watched the whole thing. First thing out of Greenblatt’s mouth: ‘These Marines are movie stars!’”

The next day I visit. He greets me, door drinking root beer and ice cream, an enormous bowl. “You want a root float?” he asks, nodding toward a quart of Häagen-Dazs vanilla melting on the counter. Dollard admits last night was a little rough. After the fantastic news from Showtime, learned of a setback in his custody battle, his daughter. Dollard is particularly incensed that his ex-wife Alicia has been taking daughter to Robert Evans’s house. Dollard fumes. “Alicia tells me that Bob bought this fucking bicycle for her,” (Evans recalled bringing her daughter to his home times, but laughs at the suggestion he her a bicycle.)

He stayed up all night writing letters, therapist and a lawyer involved in his custody battle. Dollard insists I read some of communications. He says, “You will understand the fact that I am not a paranoid schizophrenic about all of these people. But I am. They are all psychopaths.”

I have scarcely digested one of these letters when Dollard leads me into the evening room to reveal his next inspiration. The setting is set up against the back wall: the bedroom. Along the opposite wall—a child’s bed with an ornate iron frame—a ruffled cover, which was his daughter’s old home and is set up for a visit from a friend. I sit on the bed as Dollard plays jihadi videos: YouTube-quality, made by insurgents to showcase attacks Americans, beheadings, and other violentings. Designed to recruit young men intussuous, many are set to jihadi hip-hop. Watching them Dollard becomes our (even as I am struck by how similar they to his own film.) “This is the Islamo-Fascist death machine at work,” he says. “This breath of Darth Vader.”

Dollard has long conceived of his film work of guerrilla cinema, a sort of American version of a jihadi video to galvanize the street-level audience. But recently the videos inspired him further. Dollard wants to take an anti-jihadi action cell in the West. He plans, “This will be an educational, a moral, and political organization dedicated to waging final war on modern jihadiism. It will be a manifesto, guides for maintaining political pressure in favor of the overthrow of the Syrian and Iranian governments, regressive militarism in support of these will generally be encouraged, dependent on current conditions within the target nation and regimes.”

He tells me that he has already regist the domain name, jihadikiller.com, it shows me a note to his business manager, Evan Bell, telling him to incorporate a names of Jihadi Killer, Inc.

(Dollard forwards me the e-mail from responding to his request: “Pat you sure want this name?... I do think it is a mistal
homey's, and was arrested and charged with possession of stolen checks. He is out now on bail, pending trial. If convicted, he could face another four years in prison.

Josiah claims he is a changed man since going to rehab and meeting Dollard, "I fucking take responsibility for my actions," he says. "They want to throw me back in prison, so be it, eh? But if I stay out, I've got a new life now. I'm fucking clean, eh? I work for Pat fucking Dollard. I'm a movie assistant."

Dollard gazes affectionately at Josiah. "For the first time in probably six, eight years, Josiah's clean and sober. He's working for me and flourishing at Hamburger Hamlet. He's leading a really good, squared-away life. I trust Josiah completely."

There's no more compelling evidence of his trust than the large sums of cash piled on the coffee table where Josiah is sorting laun-

dry. Owing to Dollard's pronounced fear of banks, he prefers to keep his money in liquid form. One-hundred-dollar bills are bundled in $10,000 bricks, which Josiah delicately brushes aside as he stacks the socks.

Josiah says when he met Dollard—whom the staff nicknamed "Saddam Manson" due to his crazed appearance and wild talk of Iraq—he "had no idea Pat was a rich Hollywood agent."

Dollard checked himself out of Impact ahead of Josiah. The day Josiah left, Dollard picked him up and drove him to his father's house. "I told Josiah's father I was adopting him," Dollard says. "He turned Josiah over to me." Though Dollard's claim has no legal standing whatsoever, Josiah enthusiastically nods.

Dollard himself had no money or place to go. He and Josiah spent a weekend sleeping at Dollard's mother's house, then split up. But the two have kept tabs on each other ever since. In the wake of Dollard's recent scare over using drugs, both feel it's prudent to live together.

For Josiah, the move comes at a convenient time. As he explains it, owing to his incredible good looks, charm, and sexual prowess, he has been experiencing female trouble. Until a couple of days ago he had been living with a girlfriend. But, according to Josiah, she had recently grown unreasonable. "Dumb bitch didn't want me seeing other bitches," Josiah says. Their contretemps grew to a head. The other morning Josiah awakened to find himself being held prisoner. "Bitch took all my clothes, told me I couldn't leave," Josiah says. "I don't hit bitches. But I said, 'You don't give me my clothes, I'm gonna kick the shit out of you, bitch.'"

"Tell him about the bitch you fucked up in seventh grade," Dollard says, egging him on. "It only happened one time," Josiah says. "In elementary school there was this bitch, she was so big she used to fuck up the dudes."

Although he was the smallest boy in his grade, Josiah stood up to the giant bully girl, telling her he wasn't afraid. "Bam!" Josiah says. "Bitch hit me in the face. Tore off my shark-tooth necklace."

Josiah re-enacts the fight, throwing kicks and punches to demonstrate how he felled her. "I got that big bitch down and whaled on her, eh?" Josiah straddles an imaginary human on the floor and pummels. "Boom, boom, boom." he says. "Bitch was all lumped up and drooling."

armed up by the fight tale, Josiah dances across the room, recounting his years of being the littlest guy in youth camps, county jail, and then prison, but who was always ready to throw chingos with the big rats. He drops onto a couch, seemingly exhausted. "I been fighting my whole life."

Josiah points to Dollard. "But thanks to this dick, for the first time I got a reason to stay clean." Josiah's mouth wobbles. He chokes back tears, thumping his chest to regain composure. "This motherfucker's been there for me."

Dollard turns to me. "We're friends against all probability. When we met at Impact, we were a gangbanger and a Hollywood agent. It was funny because Josiah came from this hard prison culture and yet
Pat Dollard

he became my vassal. Everyone thought he was my bitch.”

“I wasn’t his bitch, eh?” Josiah clarifies.

“Josiah.” Dollard explains, “in the sense that I was your friend and protector, you were my bitch.”

“I wasn’t your fucking bitch.” Josiah’s face darkens.

“Josiah, you are my lieutenant. I am the general.” Dollard gestures to the apartment.

“Someday, you will inherit everything.”

On Fire with Sobriety

September 19, 2005. I accompany Dollard to a screening of his film for a small company seeking content for outlets like Spike TV. Dollard meets the head of the firm’s film division—a tall, wiry, cerebral-seeming man whom Dollard nicknames “Spock”—in a spacious Beverly Hills suite. A few minutes into the screening, things start to go badly when Spock leaps from his couch to turn down the obscenity-laden soundtrack. “They can hear this outside,” he says.

Dollard immediately jumps from his seat and twists the volume up. To my astonishment, the two go back and forth like this until Spock finally has enough. He hits the pause button and stands blocking the equipment from any more interference from Dollard. “This is great.” Spock says through a tight grin, “but I’m having trouble getting my head around it.”

“This is cinéma vérité,” Dollard says, standing up, beginning to rant. I time Dollard on my watch. He talks for 12 straight minutes. The cords on his neck pop out. Spit flies. By the end of the tirade he paces, talking about whores in Iraq, robbing pharmacies, liberals, Valleum. He finally sputters to a stop.

Spock breaks the silence. “I don’t even know how we could market this.”

“I don’t want you to market it.” Dollard yells. “I don’t want an audience talked into watching this by marketing tricks. Fuek that.”

Spock shakes Dollard’s hand. “The thing is, I totally respect you as an artist.”

Careening down Wishire Boulevard minutes later, Dollard groused, “He turned my shit off. You do not tell the artist to turn his shit off early.” Then his face brightens with inspiration. “Let’s take $10,000, go to Las Vegas, get a bunch of hookers and blow, and have fun for a few days.”

“What makes you think you’d be able to stop?” I ask.

“What we’ll do is hire a couple of big niggers to shut us down at the end of five days and put us in suitscases and bring us home.”

Dollard catches me writing down the word “nigger” in my notes.

“I can say that word,” he says. “I’m half Puerto Rican, and if I’m Puerto Rican, then I’m a nigger. End of story.”

He also insists for the record that he has no desire to actually get high, that he is merely joking. “The fact is Josiah and I are on fire with sobriety.”

Megan

It seems the gods do favor Pat Dollard. Mike Simpson informs him that the HBO executives who saw the film in L.A. have recommended it to the head of the documentary division in New York, Sheila Nevin, arguably the single most influential person in America in the realm of documentary. The plan is for Dollard to fly to New York for a screening.

After sharing this news with me, Dollard says, “I called Megan”—his fourth wife, who left him a year ago. “I told her I’d be getting eight million bucks. I told her I’d pay her $10,000 if she’d come over here and suck my dick.”

“Calling me up and saying disgusting things like that to me is Pat’s idea of a joke.” Megan tells me when we meet a few days later. She is 25, tall and blonde, and speaks in a silky Louisana accent. We sit outdoors at a restaurant near Dollard’s apartment. He has invited her over to watch his film. She has agreed to go only because she needs to pick up papers related to their divorce.

When I sit down, Megan is reading a cheap romance novel. “One of my vices,” says Megan, who has been known to often carry one in her purse. But her worst vice, she allows, is still caring about her soon-to-be-ex-husband.

From the moment Megan met Dollard it was as if his almost supernaturally good luck was working on her, only in reverse. She was 21, about to graduate from college in Baton Rouge, when early one evening she burned down her apartment trying to heat potpourri on the stove—something she’d read about in a magazine article. After the firemen left, Megan walked to the bar where she worked part-time as a waitress to commiserate with some co-workers, who pried her with free drinks. Soon she was plastered. Then her girlfriend pointed out that there was a celebrity in the bar, Billy Bob Thornton, who was in town filming.

Megan’s friend dared her to say hello. At that moment Billy Bob happened to be sharing a cigarette with his former agent. Pat Dollard, who was in town visiting his ex-wife, Alicia. Megan approached Billy Bob and said, “I’m Megan. Want to drink some martinis with me?”

Billy Bob declined the invitation. He was due to pick up Angelina Jolie at the airport and excused himself. Megan was alone with Dollard. She admits that by this point “I was too drunk to know anything.” (Dollard claims, “Megan was so drunk she thought I was Billy Bob.”) All Megan knows is that when she woke up the next day she was smitten. A couple months later, they flew to Las Vegas, where Soderbergh had just wrapped the location shooting for Ocean’s Eleven in Bellagio, where Dollard was comped a room. According to Megan, “Our second night Pat was like, ‘Hey, you want to marry and I was like, ‘Yeah,’ and we got married in the Little White Wedding Chapel.”

A few days later she moved into Dollard’s Bel Air home. “My first week in L.A.,” Megan says, “I met Brad Pitt and George Clooney. Pat introduced us on the Ocean’s Eleven set, and Brad gave me this knowing look and said, ‘I’ve heard a lot about you.’ And I like, Holy shit, Brad Pitt has heard of me? Then I went to Cannes with Pat, and I hung out with Julia Roberts. I would call friends back home every night and I’d be, ‘Guess who I just met tonight.”

Megan tamps out her cigarette. “It’s very surreal, for sure.” She adds, “I grew with very little, and Pat offered me this fantasy of staying at home, not working, raising children.”

The fantasy quickly bumped into the realities of his addictions. Initially, Megan prepared to help. She encouraged him to attend A.A. meetings and opened their home to informal gatherings of recovering addicts. It didn’t work. Once, she says, she saw “grant walking around” outside the house turned out to be “Pat’s drug dealer leaning underneath the rocks.”

The relationship went terminal soon Dollard began “sponsoring”—serving as step adviser—to a young, recovering cocaine addict he’d met at an A.A. mee “Pat told me it would help him stay sober if he was helping another addict,” Megan says. Dollard got his “sponsee” a job and moved her into their house. Megan moved out and later discovered e-mails Dollard written his “sponsee” in which he suggested that both their lives would be better off if she killed Megan. (Dollard says, “Anyone knows me I knew I was only joking.”) At a controversy played out, Dollard made his trip to Iraq.

Megan now works as a waitress at a swanky Sunset hotel. As a result of her ten years of marriage to Dollard, she is left with tens of thousands of dollars in debts. “Pat when we first got married that it would help build my credit if we put everything in my name,” Megan says as we enter his bar. “As awful as this sounds,” she confesses, “sometimes I wish he was dead.”

Dollard greets us at the door. He is not shaved. The living room is pristine. Jo kneels in front of a TV Dollard purchased him and is playing Hitman 2, a game he because “it teaches you how to become a fessional killer.”

“Is this your new little slave?” Me says, nodding toward Josiah. She says to “Pat always manages to get a little slave. I was.”
Dollard laughs indulgently and corralrs her in his editing room for her viewing of Young Adam. Megan sits on the bed and watches for a few minutes with a stony expression. She starts to sob.

Jesus, they’re so young,” she says of the scenes on-screen. “They’re like the boys I used to school with.”

told you this was good.” Dollard says. Have you talked to your mother?,” Megan asks. “You need to call her.”

low’s that fucking bitch!” Dollard says. You don’t talk about your mother that way.

Watch me—I just did. I just did.”

Your mother is the most wonderful woman I’ve ever met,” Megan says. “I want to hug you in the face right now.”

He sits up and inadvertently knocks over a jar of concealed under the blanket on the bed. She leaps up, brushing ashes from her dress. “This brings back memories,” she says, growing angry. “This is definitely why you left me.”

You left because you’re a quitter,” Dollard says. left because you are an alcoholic and won’t get help,” Megan says.

You didn’t stick around like Bill Wilson’s ghost,” Dollard says, referring to the co-founder of AA. “Bill Wilson’s wife didn’t sob because his side when he was drinking there was no A.A.”

My husband was hiring hookers on my t-card—to buy coke [for him],” Megan says to me.

He walks to the door. Dollard hurries her and hands her the papers he promised. She kisses him on the cheek and he cracks.

Dollard stares at the door. “This really is,” he says, “Am I over her? Maybe not, but he question with having a woman is, to what extent do I want to continue to engage civilization?”

Jesus Christ, Pat,” Josiah says, still playing Hamlet. “You said she was hot, eh? But really fucking hot.”

The Jesus Room

Dollard’s screening with Sheila Nevins, in New York, is scheduled for mid-October, two weeks before his scheduled return, his behavior becomes increasingly erratic. He phones early one morning and says, “I need your help.”

ask him what’s going on.

“I’m taking steps,” he says, “but they ain’t 2 steps.” He won’t explain any further, before he feels it’s unsafe to talk on the phone.uple hours later he shows up at my apartment. There is a massive safe in the back of the room. All his money is in there, he tells me. He plans to hide it to that end, he needs to have his cell phone at my house so no one can find him while he’s on his mission. Several days later he phones from a new telephone number and leaves a message: “Driving on Washington Boulevard I clutch the receipt for my new .45-caliber Glock and the feeling that I will be very disappointed if I die before I kill jihadis with this gun.”

It turns out that in the state of California people who have been taken into custody as a danger to themselves and others and held for psychiatric evaluation—as Dollard has been—are potentially ineligible to purchase firearms for the next five years. Days later, he calls: “Yo, call me as soon as you get this, please. I need to know if you have a clean record in California, and if you could purchase guns. I will pay you.”

I decline the offer.

Dollard is eager for me to accompany him to New York and witness what he expects will be his triumphant screening for HBO. The day we are to fly out, a girl named Sunshine (I’ve changed her name) phones and introduces herself as one of Pat Dollard’s assistants. She is calling to arrange the final details of our flight. An hour later Dollard phones to say his new assistant will be flying to New York with us. “Oh, yeah,” he says, “Sunshine will be smoking meth.”

The two never show up for the flight.

Josiah phones the next morning from New York. He has taken it upon himself to rescue Dollard’s appointment with Nevins by hand-delivering the screener DVD. He took the red-eye to New York—his first time on an airplane and his first trip outside of California. When he checked into the Times Square Quality Hotel moments before phoning me, something happened that totally tripped him out. The hotel put him in Room 316. “Can you fucking believe it?,” Josiah shouts. “I’m in 316, the Jesus room. That’s who I am. My middle name is Jesus.”

I tell Josiah I don’t get the relationship between the number 316 and Jesus.

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son,” Josiah says, quoting the Scriptures. “John 3:16.”

“Have you guys been smoking meth?,” I ask. “Yeah, I ain’t going to lie,” Josiah answers. “Pat’s fucking up. He’s fucking psychotic, fucking psycho, fucking a, fucking weirdo. We all are, you know?”

Dollard phones minutes after Josiah hangs up. Unlike Josiah, Dollard sounds supremely relaxed, groggy, maybe a little drunk. He informs me that he was unable to fly to New York because he has fallen in love with Sunshine. “She has a golden heart,” he tells me.

There is a complication. Sunshine is Josiah’s girlfriend, one who, at times, meant a great deal to him. “This is rough for Josiah,” Dollard says. “She came here to see him and...” He whispers. “What happened between us had to happen. She’s the one.”

I ask him why he skipped his meeting in New York, and he cuts me off: “Dude, I can’t talk right now. I’m having my dick sucked.”

No Redemption

Auto Focus, the film that Dollard produced and Paul Schrader directed, is about Hogan’s Heroes star Bob Crane’s self-destruction through his addiction to sex as well as the murky homoeroticism of his relationship with a hanger-on who films Crane’s exploits with women and ultimately beats him to death with a camera tripod. The film did not do well at the box office, but Schrader remains pleased with his collaboration with Dollard. “He wasn’t scared about doing stuff that may offend people,” Schrader tells me. “I knew that if we did something warped he would get it.” Despite its lackluster reception, Schrader believes the film stands as a pure story, unencumbered by hack studio convention, which he attributes in part to Dollard’s influence. “Pat was attracted to the idea that we just weren’t going to redeem or glorify our main character. That this was the story of the life of an extremist, what happens if you release the reins on a normal powerful passion and let the horse run. Will you achieve some kind of balance, or will it break you apart?”

Unlike the fictionalization of Bob Crane’s life in Auto Focus, Dollard since he has known him has been obsessed with redemption. This was the whole point of going to Iraq. While I’m not totally surprised that he has apparently gone out on a bender, I hadn’t expected he would so casually skip the all-important meeting with Nevins. As a practical matter it also seems potentially dangerous to be having sex with the girlfriend of a violent felon.

Josiah phones after delivering the film to Nevins’s apartment. “There I was, eh, in this rich bitch’s apartment,” Josiah says. “These broads were fucking all into me, saying how handsome I am. They thought me and Pat were gay. I was all ‘Wait, I know I’m fucking fine, eh? But that doesn’t mean I have to be gay and shit’. Josiah states for the record, “Gay is not my position.”

I ask Josiah what’s going on with Doll-ard and his girlfriend. “He’s fucking fucking her,” he says. Josiah admits this was initially hard for him to take. He and Sunshine have known each other for several years. “Then I got busted and went to prison and she wrote me, giving me hope. ‘cause she was the only broad there for me,” Josiah says.

But when Sunshine, who hadn’t seen Josiah in months, showed up at Dollard’s apartment several days ago, she turned the tables. She refused to have sex with him and, as Josiah saw it, was trying to make him jealous by flirting with Dollard. “It hurt, eh, ‘cause I fucking love that girl.”

About this time, Josiah says, he and Dollard, then Sunshine, began smoking
Pat Dollard

meth. Soon, Dollard advised Josiah on the best way to handle the situation with Sunshine. Josiah says, "Pat told me she was trying to play a game on me." Dollard gave Josiah a pep talk to remind him who he is: "I’m the pimp. I’m the one that plays the games. She thinks she’s playing me? I’ll use her to my fucking advantage. So I pimped her out." Josiah laughs. "Last night he gave me $5,000. She got fucked, and I got paid."

When I later speak with Dollard, he laughs off the notion that he talked Josiah into pimping his girlfriend to him. "The fact is," Dollard says, "Josiah can’t stop watching her fuck me." Dollard informs me that Josiah filmed him as he had sex with his girlfriend.

I point out to Dollard that he has now entered the realm of Auto Focus. He says, "The difference is in Auto Focus the girls Bob Crane was fucking were just girls. But Josiah’s filming me fucking the love of his life." Dollard laughs. "People get killed over this."

Three Days

Mike Simpson phones me in the midst of this to ask how my story on Dollard is going. I don’t want to divulge anything that will screw up Dollard’s prospects at William Morris. Moreover, there’s something so strangely decent about Mike Simpson, so at odds with Dollard’s portrayals of agents as whoremongering, borderline-serial-collars. I’m at a loss to say anything. I tell him Pat is certainly an interesting subject.

"We’re hearing such good things about his project at Showtime and now HBO," Simpson says, sounding pleased. "Pat is really coming into his own as a filmmaker."

On an unseasonably hot October afternoon Dollard invites me to his apartment to show me something. Josiah greets me outside the door. He asks if I’ve come alone. Dollard is afraid I might have brought his mother. Ever since the first time his family had the police take him to the psyh ward, he’s grown wary. (As he once told me, "They figured out they could pick up the phone, and, boom, I’m in a mental hospital. It fucking sucks. dude.”) I assure Josiah I’ve come alone.

The apartment is a rat’s nest. One couch is overturned. Cigarette butts are burned into the carpet. Tear-gas grenades—part of an arms cache Dollard hoped to acquire to launch his anti-jihadi network—are scattered on the floor. The bathroom looks like someone skinned a deer in it: everything is covered in tufts of hair and blood from Dollard’s effort to cut off the beard that grew during the past couple of weeks.

Dollard enters in shorts and sandals, drinking vodka and cranberry juice from a plastic cup. "I’m tapering down," he says. "This is medicine."

Gesturing to the wrecked apartment, Dollard attempts a joke. "I go on a drug binge for 10 days, and when I come out of it I find out my agents have done less work than I have."

Dollard boasts he has just completed a new film which he plans to send to Sheila Nevins. "This is the woman who is the grande dame of interesting, weird documentaries. Part of what I am trying to sell them is that I am a madman—this, quote, insane genius."

"It’s called Three Days," says Josiah, kneeling at the coffee table and playing with a large hunting knife.

Dollard says, "I want to send Three Days to Sheila as an explanation as to why I missed my meeting with her." He adds that Three Days may be one of the greatest films ever made, whose meaning is, well... I just have to watch it.

I sit on the tiny bed in the editing room. Josiah is next to me, his hunting knife now sheathed. Dollard hunches by the monitor and starts the film. The face of a girl with long black hair fills the screen. Sunshine. Though she is of legal age, she speaks in a child’s voice, plaintive and quavering, as Dollard, still offscreen, barks at her, "What’s your job on the team?"

She giggles. "To sexually satisfy you and clean the house."

Dollard enters the frame, totally nude, a decapitated satyr. A montage ensues of him performing various sex acts with her, intercut with close-ups of the girl smoking a glass pipe. There is unintended comedy: while Dollard is having sex with her on the couch, it catches fire, and the two fail to notice until flames engulf their feet. There is intended comedy: Dollard performs anal sex with her while simultaneously talking on the phone with an agent at William Morris.

In the film, Josiah, who serves as cameraman, does not have sex with Sunshine. He later explained that he enjoyed watching it and pleasing himself. His most significant on-screen presence is to lean close to Sunshine and offer encouragements: "What’s his name? Say Pat. You’re fucking a rich man with accomplishments, not a fucking loser."

In the room with me, Dollard and Josiah howl and tap knuckles. I stand up.

Dollard shoots me an annoyed glance. "You have to pay attention," he says. "You’re going to miss that this is not really a porn film."

The film fades to black. Jim Morrison comes across the loudspeakers singing "The End." Dollard narrates in the background about immortality, death, and the horrors he witnessed in Iraq. It cuts to Dollard readying to make his money shot on Sunshine.

In Auto Focus, when Bob Crane and his sidekick watch their homemade porn together, they masturbate. Thankfully, Dollard takes a different route. He turns to Josiah, speaking excitedly. "You love this girl, Jos. But you know what? You wandered off a room by yourself to fucking jerk off tape of her fucking somebody else. That’s who we are. That’s who people are! These scumbags!"

"This is so fucked up," Josiah shouts, I like it."

"Exactly, dude!" Dollard claps his hands like a teacher whose pupil is about to ace a test. "That’s what I told you! That’s the whole point to everything around here, this whole thing, all of it, beyond! It’s everything in my life is about. It’s.viewing all those truths and those fucking encaences that other people just don’t get."

Josiah seems paralyzed, staring at screen, his huge eyes unblinking. "This is so fucking up," he repeats.

"That’s what we do here," Dollard pounding the editing table. "We take everything to its furthest limits. We go out. We get in cars. We fucking kill people. We are terrorists."

I’m guessing that Dollard has veered from the realm of his jihadi-filler fantasies, or he is in some sort of meth psychosis. The moments of the film play. Dollard stares the decrepit-saty version of himself on-screen executing the money shot. When it’s over, I turn to me. "So what do you think?"

All I can think of is Ben Stiller’s line from Meet the Parents: "One reason I urge Dollard not to send it to HBO."

"Our taste may be too cutting-edge, too extreme," he admits. Despite these reservations, Dollard stands. "We need to film to shine more."

He tells Josiah to phone her and ask her to come back over. It turns out Josiah has a really good day job. Josiah says to phone her, but she refuses to come over. Dollard takes the phone and pleads, "We’ll make it up! On the mistake from when you were here last time. I promise."

He hangs up and drops onto the partly-burned couch in the living room. Josiah says, "we need to reconcile ourselves to the fact that she may not be coming back."

The Geographic Cure

Dollard does not get a deal for Yo Americans. Nor does he send New a copy of Three Days. He drops out of sight for nearly a month. About a week before Thanksgiving he resurfaces in a phone message: "Where you been, dude? I’m having DT’s—it’s awesome. Give me a call. Bye."

We speak. "I feel like suicide, or go into a hospital," he tells me. Dollard says he nearly died recently while smoking marijuana. "I couldn’t move. It was like my body turned to ice. He mourns wrecking the projects of his film, then adds, "I failed Joe..."
The Third Act

The Marine Corps sends Dollard to Ramadi. After the relatively calm national elections on December 15, 2005, a new wave of insurgent attacks erupts in Ramadi, making it one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq for U.S. troops. The media largely ignore the city. Dollard becomes one of the few Western journalists to continuously cover the battle for the city throughout the winter and early spring of 2006.

Dollard is the first reporter on the scene on January 5, 2006, when insurgents bomb a recruitment center for Iraqi police. An estimated 40 men are killed and 80 wounded. Lieutenant Aaron Awtry, a Marine platoon commander who arrived with Dollard at the blast site, says, "We were the first ones at the scene, where a formation of Iraqis had been blown apart. Body parts were everywhere. Pat was really struggling with what we were seeing. We both were, but Pat was doing his job filming. On that day, he became part of our platoon like any other Marine."

This time in Iraq, Dollard does not engage in the antics that had so entertained and enraged troops on his first tour. In the course of nearly five months, Dollard films Marines on well over 200 combat patrols. Says Lieutenant Awtry, "Nobody covered the war like he did."

While in Iraq, Dollard sends me an e-mail, revisiting his Hollywood past:

I was like a junky who never kicked because someone kept throwing me a bag of heroin every Friday. Who loves you, baby? If you’re an agent, you really don’t want to know the answer. You ever watch terrified 55-year-old men begging for praise every week in a staff meeting? It’s not pretty. Any Hollywood agent or executive who criticizes my career doesn’t understand how much of a geek they sound like. "He wasn’t really one of us." No shit, Maynard. I didn’t want to be a geek like you. Go back to your cappuccino, auto-fellatio, and faux tough-guy posturing. It took me forever to escape, and that’s arguably pathetic, but I have the whole third act of my life left, and there’s an old Hollywood maxim: The first two acts of a movie can suck, but if the third act rocks, everyone leaves the theater saying, "Damn, that was a great movie."

All of Dollard’s efforts seem geared toward that third act. When he survives the February 18 bombing that killed two Marines, Dollard continues to join patrols, surviving yet another vehicle bombing on March 9. At the ceremony troops hold in Iraq for their brother Marines killed there, Dollard is given a place of respect.

Homecoming

In late March, Dollard flies home with the Marines. An ex-girlfriend of Dollard’s drives to the base at Twenty-Nine Palms, California, to join military families at the welcoming ceremony. Dollard had phoned her asking if she would take him back to L.A., promising that he had cleaned up his act. "The parents of the boy Pat was with when he died met him and were hugging him and it was so powerful," she says. "Then we went out to a restaurant and Pat started drinking and told me he wasn’t coming back to L.A., and he disappeared."

In April he calls me from an undisclosed location. Dollard says he is not doing well, and insists he must tell me about the February 18 bombing which killed Second Lieutenant Almar L. Fitzgerald, 23, and Corporal Matthew D. Conley, 21. Dollard says he was in the lead Humvee of a patrol going through Ramadi when a bomb hit the Humvee behind his. The patrol stopped. Nobody could see what was going on, because it was the middle of the night and the city, with no electricity, was pitch-black. Adding to the confusion, the Marines’ radios stopped working. Lieutenant Fitzgerald, the officer seated next to Dollard, ordered Conley, the radioman, to exit the vehicle and see what was going on with the Humvee behind them that had just been hit. As Conley stepped out, insurgents detonated a second bomb buried in the asphalt, underneath their Humvee. Conley was blown to pieces. Dollard’s armored door flew open, and he was thrown from the Humvee. A four-inch piece of shrapnel had penetrated his calf muscle, and he was covered in diesel fuel, but he was otherwise O.K. As insurgents began to rake the area with machine-gun fire, he crawled back to the crumpled, smoking Humvee and climbed inside for cover.

I ask him what happened to Fitzgerald. "He was next to me," Dollard says, "pushed forward in a prone position, dying." Over the phone Dollard emits a series of sharp noises. He’s sobbing. He hangs up, then phones back about half an hour later. "This is why I’ve got to stop doing drugs and finish this project," he says, sounding desperate. "It’s their film."

He turns to two former Marines to help him complete his project. Sergeant Brandon Welsh, honorably discharged in early 2006, and another young vet offer Dollard a place to stay at a town house they rent in a Sunbelt metropolis. (Dollard requests that the city not be named.) By early May, Welsh helps Dollard create the Web site that draws the attention of Andrew Breitbart and his invitation to return to Los Angeles for a series of meetings with operatives on the right.

The Evil Genius

Our breakfast at the LAX hotel is the first time I have seen Dollard since his return from Iraq. A couple days later I accompany him to an invitation-only pool party on the roof of the downtown Standard hotel. Breitbart has introduced Dollard to Morgan Wartler, a thirtysomething entrepreneur who dabbles as a conservative operative. Wartler has promised to be Dollard’s "evil genius."

We meet Wartler, an impish redhead with
Pat Dollard

an uncanny resemblance to Danny Bonaduce), by the pool. Dressed in jeans and a green baseball cap, he invites Dollard to sit on some plastic cube chairs by the dance floor. While sipping a rum-and-Coke, Warstler lists his credentials. "I was a national-champion debater," he says. "I made the president of the Yale debate team cry. I called him a dillo in front of 500 people."

"Mad props to you," Dollard says, drinking a black coffee.

"I deal in ideas," Warstler continues. "People are hosts to ideas, like viruses. When two people meet, ideas jump out of their heads, looking for new hosts. What I'm after is for my idea to jump out of my head and crush the ideas in someone else's head."

Warstler lays out a series of schemes for Dollard to spread his conservative, pro-war views, using viral-marketing techniques. "There is a whole vast, untapped market of Americans who don't know shit about geopolitical bullshit, but who want this war to succeed," Warstler says. "Those people need arguments. So if there's in a bar somewhere arguing with somebody they can just hold up their cell phone, play the latest installment from you, and be like, 'End of argument.'"

Dollard warms to the plan. "I'm like this gonzo character, but I fucking support the whole conservative agenda."

Warstler takes a long, reflective pull from his drink. He tells Dollard that he personally digs "the whole Hunter S. Thompson direction you've been going in." He says, "I loved the guy. I once spent a night drinking with him, but once he killed himself, that brand died."

Blowing Smoke

A few days after their dinner, Coulter e-mails me her impression of Dollard: "The main thing I'd say about Dollard is that when you first meet him, he looks like a bad-ass degenerate and then the moment he starts talking, you realize he's highly intelligent, interesting and funny... I would trust anything he says implicitly."

Through Breitbart's tireless networking, Dollard travels to New York in July to meet with a magazine editor, who offers him a job as a war correspondent. In an e-mail to Dollard, the editor reveals the mixture of awe and obsequiousness Dollard increasingly receives from the swelling ranks of new acolytes:

"So... I shit my pants just thinking about all the shit you've been through... Your shit is so raw and real... The knives must be out for you... Hollywood eats your young so God they must be sending some liberal fucking hit squad out after you... I want to know everything about your project and I want to promote it in a good way with your voice and diary... I'm sure you think [the magazine is frivolous shit is part of the problem but we are read by the soldiers... We are the dick that is to be sucked by the vapid, MTV bullshit, I know all that but imagine if your shit ran on MTV... You can trust me, I'm one of the good guys..."

While in New York, Dollard also appears on Hannity & Colmes. Introduced by Colmes as a former talent agent who left "Tinseltown behind to see what the Iraqis themselves think of the liberal anti-war movement," Dollard plays a clip of an Iraqi translator who calls Michael Moore a "little bitch" and crashes a DVD purporting to be Fahrenheit 9/11 (but appears to be I. Robot). Dollard rambles about "an incredibly strong [anti-Republican] bias in Hollywood that denies people work... Hannity adds, "The truth isn't being told, is it? The left is undermining [the soldiers'] effort and stabbing them in the back."

After viewing her ex-husband on the show, Megan Dollard tells me, "It's really scary that a person who is completely crazy can go on TV and have that influence... Having seen him come unglued so many times in front of me, I hadn't anticipated how effective he would be on TV. Isn't somebody going to notice he's insane, I had wondered while watching him trade sound bites with Hannity? But of course he would fit in. In the pro-wrestling world of opinion TV, Dollard is a natural.

In conversations I've had with Breitbart, he, like other conservatives, harps on the "nililism of the left." Breitbart brings up anti-Vietnam War protests, like yuppies, who attacked the Establishment "by spitting on people. They debase people and institutions and values with anger and disrespect."

Despite his outrage, Breitbart advocates a right-wing version of the Merry Pranksters led by people like Coulter and Dollard. Perhaps America has experienced a circular movement in its social history. The freaks are now on the right. Dollard takes this further. With his drug-fueled excursions to combat zones, his lust for booze and bitches and porn, and, above all, his mad-for-life, he is an authentic anti-Establishment figure and is certainly in the running to be the first true gonzo journalist to emerge out of this war. And yet he supports the Republican Party platform, George Bush, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Four days after Dollard's Hannity & Colmes appearance, I receive a call from a security guard at the W Times Square where Dollard is staying. The guard tells the N.Y.P.D. is on their way to possibiliest Dollard. Throughout the call, I was drunk slurring in the background. It's Dollard. The guard tells me that earlier morning a woman from room service brought him cigarettes and found the trash can flushed, covered in what she thought was blood. (Dollard would later claim it was a kiddie's doll.) Dollard allegedly told the woman the room service, "I killed someone..." We who accompanied Dollard to New York tell me that after his appearance on Hannity & Colmes a magazine editor "tried to kiss Pat's ass and believing all his Hu S. Thompson bullshit" gave him "a bag of coke, and Pat got all retarded so we had to leave him a few days ago.

When the cops show up at the W, instead of arresting him, they have an ambulance take him to St. Vincent's hospital for observation. He is released hours later and back home.

Welsh informs me that he and an Marine buddy plan to tie Dollard up use a Taser gun if he acts out. Dollard so far for a few weeks. But in early September Welsh moves out an incident in which Dollard shoots a hole through the ceiling his bedroom while playing with a .45 "motherfucker's out of his mind," Welsh tells me, "I'm just fucking tired of being a 23-year-old babysitting a 42-year-old..."

Two weeks after Welsh's departure, I hear from Dollard. He contacts me. He has finished cutting a second version of Young Americans (with or without pornographic scenes). According to Dollard, since the new version of his film included footage of the two bombings he survived graphic footage of Marines in close-quarter firefight. "William Morris thinks it's going to be fucking big. Fucking liberals aren't going to buy this. It's the story about all this dark-side stuff I've done, which I didn't understand until now, it's appealing to everybody. I guess that's why in the bottom of hearts most people fucking love war."

Epilogue

Dollard and I meet for dinner at a SoHo steak house a couple of nights before Christmas. He claims that on November 12 he underwent an experience—
Having recently learned of an illness in my family, Dollard has bombarded me with phone calls and e-mails inquiring about my well-being, providing me with leads on experimental medical clinics offering non-traditional cures. Dollard, when he is not off in a war, on an anti-liberal rant, or locked away on a binge, becomes an obsessively and at times intrusively caring friend. Tonight, he scolds me for not being at the hospital with my mother, and offers “anything, anything I can do to help. Just ask, dude.” After I decline, Dollard switches gears, asking if I have read his latest e-mail. In it he writes that liberal enclaves in Manhattan and Los Angeles “basically need to be exterminated in order for the planet to move ahead into peace.” In Dollard’s view, the liberal media based on both coasts are “literally allied with the Islamic Fascist Imperialists out of a short-sighted grab for domestic political power. You are seeing the age of treason in America.”

The screening—a series of interviews Pat conducted with Marines complaining about the liberal bias of the media—concludes with polite applause.

Back in the kitchen, Ann Coulter resumes her assault on the guacamole and chips.

A male guest approaches, slips Coulter his number, and delivers what must be the ultimate pickup line at a conservative party: “I’m having dinner tomorrow night with Richard Perle. Would you like to join us?”

I find Dollard on the balcony conferring with a producer. The producer tells him he could help him walk into a major studio and get a deal. Dollard listens attentively. The producer says, “My problem is the title. Young Americans—I don’t like it.”

One thing you can’t criticize is Dollard’s title. He believes it is not only one of the best things he’s ever come up with but that it’s been plagiarized at the highest levels. He believes that last summer President Bush himself checked out his Web site, saw the trailer, and began slipping the phrase “young Americans” into speeches as a not-so-subtle nod to his film. Dollard turns from the producer and pulls the last cigarette from a pack of Marlboro Lights. “Fuck, I’m out.”

The producer slinks back into the living room. Dollard lights his last cigarette and looks up at the twinkling lights on the hills. I point out that he is now essentially back at a Hollywood party.

“It’s like I never left,” he says. I remind him of his e-mail arguing that Los Angeles needs to be wiped off the face of the planet.

“After I get my deal.” Dollard shrugs. “Fuck that. I just want to get back to Ramadi this spring. I’m supposed to die there.”

He turns to me. “Dude, drive down to a gas station and buy me some cigarettes.” --
VANITY FAIR

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BEAUTY & GROOMING

COVER: BEN STILLER’s and OWEN WILSON’s hair styled by LEONOR GREYL. Hair Gel with Keratin, and Serum De Soie Sublimateur; Renato Campana and Natasha Brulotte for the Wall Group. On their faces, KIEHL’S Facial Fuel; Pat Debroff for Dior; The Wall Group. CHRIS ROCK’s hair styled with MATRIX MEN Energizer; on his face, AYEDA Men Pure-Fume Tonic, and Tourmaline Charged Hydrating Creme; Lisa Devaux for Island Girl Productions, Inc. ALEXIS TANNA’s hair styled with Aveda Control Paste; on his face, AYEDA Men Pure-Fume Tonic, and Tourmaline Charged Hydrating Creme; Roz Music for Hamady Beauty.magnetl.com. PAGE 13: Nathaniel Rich’s grooming by Aleksandra and Timothy Usmani.com. PAGE 18: Krista Smith’s hair and makeup by Tansehman. PAGE 208: GEORGINA CHAMPION’S hair and makeup by Bregin Philppides for Kholy’s Vernon Jolly. PAGE 220: ALEXIS TANNA’s hair styled with PRIVE Weightless Amplifier, and Finishing Spray; on her face, JACk BLACK’s face cleanser; on her hair, BROWNE, LAUREN Taglapietra from For Fifth Avenue. PAGE 244: WOMEN’S HAIR.COM, the New Collection. PAGE 239: GEORGINA CHAMPION’S hair and makeup by FREDERic FERKAI Instant Volume Root Lifting Spray, and Luscious Curls; Dave Newskir for Frederic Fekkai avantgroupe.com. On her face, Dior DiorSkin Eclat Satin in Ivory, and Poudre Libre in Transparent Light; on her eyes.

ON THE COVER

2 Colours Eyeshadow Duo Wet and Dry in Dupont, Dimliner in Black, and Diorsnow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Diorblush in Nude Rose; on her lips, Dior Addict Rouge à Lèvres in Numerical Red, Justin Henry for Dior/artbeauty.com. 


**BRUCE WILLIS’S** hair styled with **MAISON VOGUE’s** hair. Renato Campora for the Wall Group, with Argan Oil. Their faces, on film with **CLINIQUE’s** Skin Supplies for Men M Gel-Lotion; on their eyes, Daily Eye Hydrator; on their lips, Lip Balm SPF 15. 

**PATRICK DUFFORD’s** for **Dior/The Wall Group, with Maï Quynh and Kaelyn McAdams.** Manicure by Ashlie Johnson for OPI/The Wall Group Special-effects makeup by Roger Dubois for Dior/The Wall Group, with Maï Quynh and Kaelyn McAdams. 


**JENNIFER HUDSON’s** hair styled with L’OREAL’s Studdedline Mega Spritz. On her face, Dior 5 Colour Eyeshadow in Night Dust, and Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Diorblush in Peach Veil; on her lips, YVES SAINT LAURENT Rouge Patronne Lipstick in Magenta Raspberry; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in French Vanilla. Pati Dubrow for Dior/The Wall Group, with Maï Quynh and Kaelyn McAdams. pages 422-23.

**JUDI DENCH’s** hair styled with **LEONOR GREYL’s** Sérum de Soin Sublimateur. On her face, MAX FACTOR Lasting Performance Liquid Makeup in Natural Honey, Lasting Performance Loose Powder in Translucent Light; on her eyes, Mayeline in Dollar Signs. Volupte Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Natural Brush-Off Balm in Cinnamon; on her lips, Lip Shine in Split Person. Ashley Ward for Max Factor/Terri Tanaka. HEMEL MISRA hair styled with L’OREAL’s Studdedline Mega Spritz. On her face, Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her lips, Diorshow in Rouge 9; on her nails, Addict Rouge in Le Cade, Mirror Brown; Dubrow for Dior/The Wall Group. Pages 426-27.

**KATE WINSLET’s** hair styled with **KESTREL’s** Nutri Scalp, and REDKEN Ringlet 07 Curl Paste. On her face, Diorshow Éclat Satin in Print, and Diorskin Perfect in Buff Beige; on Translucent Light; on her eyes, Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her lips, Dior Addict Lipstick in Vider Tint; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in Mulberry Street. 

**PEDRO ALMODOVAR’s** hair styled with **AVEDA’s** Dry Conditioiner. His face massaged with **LAB SERIES** Skincare for Men Instant Moisture Gel; on his eyes, Instant Moisture Eye Gel. On Peepshow Cruze’s face, L’OREAL’s Colorista Perfect in Buff Beige, and Translucent Naturally Luminous Loose Powder; on her eyes, Wear Infinity Quadt in Smoky Eyes, Microblend in Black Point, and Volume Shocking 2-Step Volume Construction Mascara in Blackest Black; on her lips, Bronzer Make Up Harmony de Blush in Sunset Sienna; on her lips, Dior Addict Lipstick in Vider Tint; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in Lincoln Park After Dark. DANE LANE’S hair styled with **KESTREL’s** Nutri Scalp, and Resistance Lacque Double Force. On her face, Diorshow Éclat Satin in Peach, and Poudre Libre in Transparent Light; on her eyebrows, crayon sourcils Poudre in Sand; on her eyes, 5 Colour Eyeshadow in Sweet Illusion, and Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Bronze Make Up Harmony de Blush in Sunset Sienna; on her lips, Dior Addict Lipstick in Vider Tint; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in Lincoln Park After Dark. DANE LANE’S hair styled with **KESTREL’s** Nutri Scalp, and Resistance Lacque Double Force. On her face, Diorshow Éclat Satin in Peach, and Poudre Libre in Transparent Light; on her eyebrows, crayon sourcils Poudre in Sand; on her eyes, 5 Colour Eyeshadow in Mystic Jade, Diorliner in Black, and Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Bronze Make Up Harmony de Blush in Sunset Sienna; on her lips, Dior Addict Lipstick in Vider Tint; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in Lincoln Park After Dark. DANE LANE’S hair styled with **KESTREL’s** Nutri Scalp, and Resistance Lacque Double Force. On her face, Diorshow Éclat Satin in Peach, and Poudre Libre in Transparent Light; on her eyebrows, crayon sourcils Poudre in Sand; on her eyes, 5 Colour Eyeshadow in Mystic Jade, Diorliner in Black, and Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Bronze Make Up Harmony de Blush in Sunset Sienna; on her lips, Dior Addict Lipstick in Vider Tint; on her nails, OPI Nail Lacquer in Lincoln Park After Dark. 

**KIERNAN SHIMES** hair styled with **MAX FACTOR’s** Lasting Performance Liquid Makeup in Natural Honey, Lasting Performance Loose Powder in Translucent Light; on her eyes, Mayeline in Dollar Signs. Volupte Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Natural Brush-Off Balm in Cinnamon; on her lips, Lip Shine in Split Person. Ashley Ward for Max Factor/Terri Tanaka. HEMEL MISRA hair styled with L’OREAL’s Studdedline Mega Spritz. On her face, Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her lips, Diorshow in Rouge 9; on her nails, Addict Rouge in Le Cade, Mirror Brown; Dubrow for Dior/The Wall Group. Pages 426-27.

**JUDI DENCH’s** hair styled with **LEONOR GREYL’s** Sérum de Soin Sublimateur. On her face, MAX FACTOR Lasting Performance Liquid Makeup in Natural Honey, Lasting Performance Loose Powder in Translucent Light; on her eyes, Mayeline in Dollar Signs. Volupte Mascara in Black; on her cheeks, Natural Brush-Off Balm in Cinnamon; on her lips, Lip Shine in Split Person. Ashley Ward for Max Factor/Terri Tanaka. HEMEL MISRA hair styled with L’OREAL’s Studdedline Mega Spritz. On her face, Diorshow Mascara in Black; on her lips, Diorshow in Rouge 9; on her nails, Addict Rouge in Le Cade, Mirror Brown; Dubrow for Dior/The Wall Group. Pages 426-27.
Rise Rapoport, on her lips. Super Lustrous Lipstick in ne. JAMES FRANCO' s hair styled with AYEDA Paste on his face. CLINIQUE Skin Supplies for Men on his eyes. Daily Eye Hydrator, on his lips, Lip Balm S.P.E.F. effects makeup by Mario. Harro Renato CamaFro. The group, with Toma Nakajima and Natalia Bruschi. stool for Desi. The Wall Group, with Mai Quynh and McAdams. manicures by Ashely Johnson for OPI. CLARINS. Pure Powder in Translucent 01; on his eye, Eye Liner Pencil in, and Pure Volume Mascara in Pure Black; on her o' Colour Tint in Strawberry.

To FIND BEAUTY PRODUCTS:

Can CREW, Rick's, N.Y.C., and other specialty hair nationwide. AYEDA, Aveda stores nationwide, or go to bumble and BUMBLE, Bumble and Bumble, NYC; or go to bumbleandbumble.com. CHANEL, boutiques and counters nationwide, or go to Chanel.com. CLARINS, Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue, and other selected department stores, or go to claire's, CLINIQUE, Bloomington's stores nationwide, or go to Dior, Dior boutiques and major department storewide. FREDERIC FEKKAI, Frederic Fekkai salons, N.Y.C. Av., or go to sephora.com. GIORGIO ARMANI, Giorgio's, N.Y.C., and Saks Fifth Avenue stores nationwide. FRIDA, drugstores nationwide, or go to drugstore.com. TASE, selected hair salons, or go to kerastase.com. S. Kiehl's and Barneys New York stores nationwide, or ehs.com. LAB SERIES, selected fine department stores. LOROH GRELV, go to beautyhabit.com. ANN COLLECTION, go to lippmanncollection.com. MAC, drugstores nationwide, or go to local.com. MATUX, stores and department stores nationwide, or go to L'oreal.com. MATRIX and MATRIX MEN, go to matrix.co.uk. MACT, MATRIX FACTOR, drugstores wide. OPI, go to opi.com. PAUL MITCHELL, salons wide. PRIVE, Privé salons nationwide. REDKEN, Redken N.Y.C., or go to redken.com. REYLON, drugstores wide. SHU UEMURA, Shu Uemura, N.Y.C. and San. Seeho and Sephora stores nationwide. YVES SAINT LAU, Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C., and Boggamoor's. In Marcus, and Saks Fifth Avenue store nationwide.

TOGRAPHS AND MISCELLANEOUS


Gamma (Casiraghi), from Bettmann Coro (West); © by Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation, DACS, London 2006 (Mic West Lips Sofa, Sergio Pitmanz-Cor, (Monte Carlo), © by Snowdon (Tetras). PAGE 221. Top left, © by Martin Munkacsi from Martin Munkacsi (C.P. Steedl), bottom, by RM Auctions, from Steve McQueen: The Last Mile (Dalton


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888-770-7994
GLAMOUR GIRLS Penélope Cruz, Mary-Kate Olsen, and Ashley Olsen mingle among many pretty young things at the Dolce & Gabbana soirée at the Chateau Marmont, December 13, 2006.

NOSTALGIC FAVORITE PAGE 496
Kirk Douglas, surrounded by beloved family and friends, blows out 90 candles.

HOLLYWOOD HILLS PAGE 497
Dolce & Gabbana hosts an intimate after-hours party.
Family and friends celebrate Kirk Douglas on his 90th birthday at L'Orangerie, the bastion of old-world glamour that recently closed its doors.

**When**

December 9, 2006.

**Who**

Betsy Bloomingdale, Daniel Melnick, George and Jolene Schlatter, Barbara Sinatra, Dominick Dunne, Selma Archerd, and others.

**Photographs by Jonathan Becker**
Dolce & Gabbana honor Penélope Cruz for her performance in Volver and raise awareness for the Art of Elysium, a charity benefiting critically ill children, in the penthouse at the Chateau Marmont.

December 13, 2006.

Lawrence Bender, Dylan McDermott, Ginnifer Goodwin, Josh Holloway, Tatiana von Furstenberg, Beau Flynn, Gael Garcia Bernal, Christian Slater, Justin Chambers, and others.

Photographs by Peter Wintersteller
Film Noir

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 442 ROMANS NOIRS—by
Dashiell Hammet, James Cain, Raymond Chandler, and the too little known Cornell Woolrich, the greatest and gloomiest of Poe's demented heirs. "First you dream, then you die" was Woolrich's bitter summation of his worldview. An alcoholic, closeted homosexual who lived with his mother in paranoid seclusion in New York, Woolrich poured forth a stream of hallucinatory urban poetry in the shape of some 25 novels and several hundred short stories. By the mid-1950s, 14 movies, including Siodmak's Phantom Lady (1944) and Alfred Hitchcock's Rear Window (1954), seven radio shows, and 47 television programs had dramatized various of his works.

making Woolrich, despite the fact that he worked on none of the adaptations himself, a one-man noir industry, affecting all the media of his day.

Like Chandler, Woolrich possessed an insomniae's knowledge of all that is still moving after the city is officially abed, the uncanny sights and sounds urban sites give off when they become posthumous reminders of their daytime function: the "service station glaring with wasted light" in Chandler's The Big Sleep (1939), or the "lighted oblong...mark[ing] an all-night luncheonroom" in Woolrich's The Black Curtain (1941). Despair gains its cachet by its uselessness.

The Hollywood Citizen News headlined a story about Edward Dmytryk's Murder, My Sweet (1944): IT'S MURDER, BUT GOWNS ARE SWEET, and Dick Powell's suits were every bit as sharp as Claire Trevor's dresses. The noir style for men ranged from Powell's meticulously tailored outfits to Robert Mitchum's casual, rumpled yet elegant look, with trench coats, hats, and cigarettes indispensable to both. Smoking streamlined the noir protagonist's persona, elaborating or shifting the rhythm, the power balance, of a scene. In H. Bruce Humberstone's I Wake Up Screaming (1942), the ominously large and soft Laird Cregar, a specialist in sotto voce threats and transparently homosexual innuendos, is being hustled out the door by Victor Mature, his prey; Cregar balks, nonchalantly striking a match on the back of the door—a cigarette is an affront and a come-on.

The angle at which a man wore his hat was almost as important to a noir scene as the angle from which the cameraman shot it. Troubled, beautiful Alan Ladd, who survived a nightmare childhood, finally breaking through to stardom as a mentally disturbed killer in This Gun for Hire (1942), was a virtuoso of hat-wearing. He knew exactly when to push his hat back, brim up, boyishly high on his forehead, when to pull it down in a menacing diagonal over one eye. Much of Ladd's too often undervalued genius lay in his expert intimacy with his fashion accessories, including his gun. Told in Lewis Allen's Appointment with Danger (1951) that he knows nothing about Jove, he disagrees, saying, "It's what goes on between a man and a .45 pistol that won't jam."

Rita Hayworth's Hispanic descent and erotic, smoky beauty put her front and center in wartime America's "Good Neighbor"—conscious infatuation with Latin-American style. With her peerless dancer's carriage, luxuriantly buoyant red hair, and coolly level gaze that almost veiled the extreme fragility within, in her noirs as in her musicals, she showed to perfection the full spectrum of 1940s feminine fashion. For dress-down occasions, she wore casually athletic short shorts or brief pleated skirts with enchanting, midriff-baring tops and platform heels: in lulls between catastrophes, engaged in a fiction of everyday life, she modeled gracefully tailored suits, wide, soft-brimmed hats, and large yet light handbags. But best of all was Rita in fluffy-and-frounced furs and swooningly profligate evening dresses, ready for love-goddess drama. In Charles Vidor's Gill-da (1946), for "Put the Blame on Mame," a torchy striptease number, Hayworth donned a floor-length, slit-knee, black satin strapless gown with elbow-length black gloves, an instant-legend ensemble audaciously copied by designer Jean Louis from a John Singer Sargent portrait. When she held her arms down by her sides, she looked like standoff high-society: raising her arms above her head, she was top-drawer still, but slumming, even raunchily, a willful provocation to predators.

Trendsetter Joan Crawford, with her short, stocky legs and heavy shoulders, less suited than Hayworth for either super-casual or daring nighttime wear, epitomized the female professional look: pencil skirts, blouses or jackets with massively built-up shoulders (MGM designer Adrian wisely turned nature's excess into fashion's artifice), tops sometimes organized by braid or buttons into military formations, turbans, and hats at moments so startling that they resembled extraterrestrial bodies taking over the human face below. More often the victim than the villainess, Hayworth brought a seductive, masochistic softness to her best noir roles: her men slap her, or walk out on her, or begs them to stay. In contrast, despite preternatural graciousness in which draped them, Crawford's heroines are class competitors, relaxing only by day and for display. Dominatrices dishing as hostesses, they stalk jungles they themselves have almost stripped of prey. The years, as Crawford moved down food chain, weak gigio types such as Scott and Gig Young replaced Gable and Spencer Tracy as her on-screen partners. But, whether a cold-blooded scout drive a la Crawford or a teasing to inflict pain a la Hayworth, femme glamour was uniting with neurosis in a kind of style.

No arts were more closely allied noir than photography and jazz. A "Weegee" Fellig was the most flamboyant of the extraordinary crime photographers who explored the seedy side of noirs' en scène and established its visual vocabulary at New York's Daily News in the 1930s and 40s. An Eastern European immigrant, hustler of genius, Weegee came of age, homeless, in the city's subways, piazzas, and railroad stations; his flash gun in New York's, without their permissive point-blank range, asleepl in their urban wear on fire escapes, singing their lungs out in Harlem churches, and as corpses, on sidewalks, as graphic and ugly as pectsened.

Versions of Weegee's subjects turn extras and bit players on the periphery noir, scrubbing floors in the background Mildred Pierce (1945), cleaning office-running elevators in Double Indemnity...see himself, whose photographs inspire noir policiers The Naked City (1948), a bit part as a timekeeper in The S. (1949), the heartbreakingly stark story over-the-hill boxer played by Robert R. Hostages from the ordinary world hek awares, they watch or pass by, as near far from the action as a criminal's unsuited conscience.

Many critics agree that the first bob-ord, on which Charlie Parker played sax with Jay McShann's Kansas City band and the first noir, Stranger on the Third I directed by Russian emigre Boris Ingri and featuring Peter Lorre, appeared at simultaneously, toward the end of 2 Like noir, bop was an infiltrator, sube every piety it encountered. And Parker of the towering geniuses of 20th-cent music, was its unpeachably charism handsome, and mischievous lord of a notorious con man, a heroin as "always in a panic," as he once described himself, no stranger to the police but the mental institution, dying young hausted at 34 in 1955. Parker seems...
nation of noir's most extravagantrope impulses. An avid moviegoer, he impressed his own lush yet nervous virtuosito of the title song of Laura, by David Ben and Johnny Mercer.

Verker's unmistakable musical line, its and eddies packed with hot, impossi- nes, turning old Tin Pan Alley stan- outside, exteriorizing their harmony they emerge electrified by the process transformation, felt like a musical clue to the restless mobile visual style of the great noir cameramen as they rede- objects and objects into sensational new neurons of light and dark, ostentatiously putting any fallback on conventional con- Noir also shared hop's fondness for jazz clubs, perfectly suited to bop's down-ensemble groups, and the other urban seas where identities were flouted, risked, fashioned. Multiplying in the 1930s until suburbanization shrank and graded its clientele, achieving iconic in noir, the cocktail lounge beckoned, words of Elizabeth Scott in André de Pifall (1948), seducing Dick Powell, fried, harried L.A. commuter, into a world where the, those who "want to completely cut out of the step with the rest of world," exchanging sunshine for discrete égocérum.

ough bebop, a musician's music that found a mass market, was almost used on noir soundtracks, various main- n jazz/pop performers, usually people or, appeared in pivotal cameos in dozz- noir films. In Fritz Lang's The Blue Nile, Nat King Cole is singing the title by Bob Russell and Lester Lee), an in- leau around his neck, in a brightly Cheyennet-themed L.A. nightclub, a tipsey Anne Baxter meets Lorthario and Burr—Burr will be dead by morn- possibility by her hand. At the start of Art Aldrich's Kiss Me Deadly (1955), he's heard again, this time singing Frank Ofs' "I'd Rather Have the Blues" on the theme of detective Ralph Meeker's sleek car just after he's picked up a barefoot hitchhiker, naked under her rain- she, too, will be dead by morning, who met the sometimes ferocious race encountered with an implacably dig- costly reserve, was about mystery: he feels the consequences without revealing the cause. As the French were quick to see, "le noir" meant "the Negro," too.

A number of noir's best-known artists, including Fritz Lang, John Garfield, Orson Welles, Nicholas Ray, Clifford Odets, Abraham Polonsky, and Dalton Trumbo, turned up on the suspect lists of J. Edgar Hoover and the House Un-American Activities Committee. The noir generation was the blacklist generation. Yet whatever the convictions animating its makers, noir at its best avoided proelyzing not just because of the conservative censors and studio bosses who patrolled movie content but also because noir's own rhythms spontaneously eject it. "Is there a law now I gotta listen to lectures?" the small-time crook played by Richard Wid- mark in Sam Fuller's Pickup on South Street (1953) sneers at a detective reminding him of his civic obligations.

It is precisely noir's resistance to obvious political and ethical explication that constitutes its elusive appeal—in the words of a delightfully corrupt Walter Slezak in Edward Dmytryk's Cornered (1945), a spy thriller, "I deplore the present growth of moral purpose!" At a time when the tides, either or mentality so marked throughout American history was at its sharpest, noir offered its viewers the Utopian relief of a world without obligatory responses, a respite, if only for an hour or two, from cheerleader duty in what was rapidly becoming the world's most blatantly triumphantist soci- ty. The value of a getaway spot depends on what is being gotten away from.

air was eclipsed in the late 1950s by the melodramatic Actors Studio case studies of pampered young males in a new kind of definitely post-Depression crisis, and by science-fiction fantasies about nuclear fallout and outer space, subjects noir, largely a city-bound genre and certainly an earthbound one, was not equipped to ad- dress. Yet after its apparent demise in the 1960s, noir made a brilliant comeback in the 1970s, led by Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, and Brian De Palma. A neo-noir vogue still flourishing today in such films as David Cronenberg's A History of Violence, Robert De Niro's The Good Shepherd, and Scorsese's The Departed. The cable channels Thriller Max, Turner Classic Movies, Sleuth TV, and the Mystery Channel provide a steady stream of noir and neo-noir thrillers, while Walter Mosley, George Pelecanos, Andrew Vachss, and others have continued to mine the crime novel's territory.

Noir serves as a screen memory for its times, a strangely displaced form of memory that occurs, according to Freud, when someone doesn't want to recall a painful event or unpleasant reality, yet cannot forget that it is, in fact, the cause of the ill, he suffers. He compromises by re- membering a part of it but not the whole, focusing on the corner but not the room, the angle of light but not the object in it. A screen memory records the unmistakable residue of a loss, a catastrophe de- nied. Other countries, including Germany, China, and Argentina, also have important noir traditions, but in the U.S., noir peaks in popularity at times like the postwar decade, when the U.S. began its full-fledged career in domestic surveillance and foreign interventions, like, indeed, the present, as the Constitution is flouted at home and detainees are subjected to "gangster-style methods" (in the phrase of a scathing re- port of 2006 for the Council of Europe) in American "black sites" abroad, all in the name of an ill-defined, omnivorous "war on terror"—times when the divide between high-minded, self-serving official rhetoric and the nation's actual aims and operations achieves toxic dimensions.

At the start of Cyril Endfield's Try and Get Me (1950), working-class noir at its fin- est, an earnest, blind evangelist on a street corner, a bit player who will contribute nothing to the movie's story, urgently asks pass- ersby, "How much is each of you guilty for all the evil in the world? Why do you do the things that you do?" Needless, the shoppers and pedestrians knock him over, scattering his pamphlets on the sidewalk and street, there to join noir's many lost documents and messages—missing evidence, refusing clarification, yet demanding attention. A quasi-theological nexus of buried, persistent political hopes and apotopical style. noir is one of the places where the nation explores the history, meaning, and limits of its own staggering power. □

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ELLEN DEGENERES

When Johnny Carson asked Ellen DeGeneres over to the couch after her first appearance on The Tonight Show, his intuition couldn’t have been more spot-on. Twenty years later, she has won America over with her self-deprecation and dance moves. As she takes the stage as the host of the Academy Awards, DeGeneres shares her thoughts on Burt Reynolds, SeaWorld, and Journey.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
I don’t know how happiness could get any more perfect, but I think it would involve more puppies.

What is your greatest fear?
Finding a panther in my bathroom.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
Burt Reynolds.

Which living person do you most admire?
Is Teddy Roosevelt still with us? I liked him. He was a good president.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
That I don’t really know the definition of “deplore.”

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Tardiness. No, wait, arrogance. How about being late and then being arrogant about it?

What is your greatest extravagance?
I hope this doesn’t affect your opinion of me, but I have a garbage can that you don’t even have to touch for it to open. You put your foot in the sensor zone. It’s very extravagant.

What is your favorite journey?
When ever one “Lovin’, Touchin’, Squeezin’” is on.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Small wrists.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
I don’t despise anyone. That’s a waste of energy.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
I say “By Jove!” way too much. Either I do or Sherlock Holmes does. Whoever it is, it has to stop.

What is your greatest regret?
I don’t have any regrets or I wouldn’t be the person I am today. Although, my 80s mullet does come close.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
PDR.

Which talent would you most like to have?
I’d like to play the piano. Just the black keys.

If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?
I’m going to save this answer for my memoirs.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Being able to do what I love, and being able to install a dimmer.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
I’ve always thought I’d come back as an animal, preferably one that has no predators. So either a tiger or a killer whale. Watch, I’ll end up in a SeaWorld with some kid shoving an oversized toothbrush in my mouth.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
That’s a bummer of a question.

What is your most marked characteristic?
I, like Popeye, am what I am.

What do you most value in your friends?
Availability to play poker.

Who are your favorite writers?
My writers.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Madonna and Garp.

What are your favorite names?
Off the top of my head, Tabitha, Darrin…let’s see…Samantha. Basically the whole cast of Bewitched. Great fake names.

What is it that you most dislike?
What’s with focusing on the negativity?

How would you like to die?
No, thank you.

What is your motto?
“Let’s try to beat that.”
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THE SOPRANOS

WHO POISONED THE RUSSIAN AGENT?
INVESTIGATING THE LITVINENKO MYSTERY BY BRYAN BURROUGH

HOW A PRISON GANG TOOK OVER A CITY OF 20 MILLION
BY WILLIAM LANGEWIESCHE

HOW THE GREATEST SHOW IN TV HISTORY GOT MAD AND HOW IT ALL ENDS
BY PETER BISKIND

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MAIN CAST (INCLUDING THE DEAD)
BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

James Gandolfini as Tony Soprano, "a friend," and series creator David Chase.
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"YES, MR. PRESIDENT!" Think Robert McNamara, Henry Kissinger, Peggy Noonan: for good or ill, every president’s inner circle helps forge his legacy. With George W. Bush pushing executive power to new levels, a historic V.F. portfolio re-unites 77 advisors, Cabinet members, and confidants, from the Truman White House onward, while Todd Brewster grades their performances. Photographs by Jonathan Becker, Harry Benson, Jonas Karlsson, David Hume Kennedy, Nigel Parry, Mark Seliger, Art Streiber, and Christian Witkin.

**224 LEO GRANDE** Amy Gross spotlights the late Leo Lerman, whose journals capture his dazzling orbit as a *V.F.* editor and dean of New York’s cultural scene. Photograph by Irving Penn.

**226 THE KREMLIN’S LONG SHADOW** The murder in London last November of former K.G.B. agent Alexander Litvinenko had all the elements of a spy thriller: an exotic poison, an exiled tycoon, and plenty of hidden agendas. But can the polonium 210 that killed Litvinenko be traced back to Moscow? Bryan Burrough investigates.

**232 THE POWER OF POIRET** Michael Roberts and Amy Fine Collins spotlight the avant-garde vision of Paul Poiret, the early-20th-century French designer whose work is on show next month at the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute.

**234 AN AMERICAN FAMILY** Veteran scriptwriter David Chase dreamed of breaking into movies. Instead, he revolutionized television—and put HBO on the map—with a rule-breaking show about a Mob boss in midlife crisis. Eight years later, as *The Sopranos* heads toward its finale, Peter Biskind asks what will become of Tony Soprano and his creator. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

**242 IT’S HAUTE IN HERE** With a new album (*Wild Hope*) releasing, and another movie (*License to Wed*) on the way, Mandy Moore jets to Paris, modeling the latest couture in private fashion show for *V.F.* Photographs by Michael Roberts.

**GULF PRO**

Colin Powell served under both Bushes ........... 208
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THE PANAMA BAG
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

246 NIGHT OF THE GENERALS Six retired generals shocked the Pentagon, their comrades, and in some cases themselves last spring, when they called for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to resign. Tracing their different paths to the same moment of truth, David Margolick learns why some of the military’s finest look back in anger and anguish. Photographs by Nigel Parry.

252 MAKE MINE IBIZA! Fifty-seven miles off the coast of Spain, blessed with virtually eternal sunshine, Ibiza is either a freethinking paradise or a hedonistic hellhole, depending on whom you ask. Crashing the 24-hour party George Gurley discovers what has lured the world’s most glamorous people—from Elizabeth Taylor to Kate Moss—to the uninhibited isle. Photographs by Philipp von Hess.

FANFAIR

101 30 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF THE CULTURE Oscar Niemeyer’s modern beauty. The Cultural Divide: A. M. Homes on Florence Broadhurst’s legacy; Kate Reardon as Emily Post for a new generation. John Brodick kicks back in Wasp Style; Olivia Strand layers it on. Elis Schappell’s Hot Type. Victoria Mather raises a glass to iconic bars around the world. Private Lives—Lisa Eisner gets a house tour from the Boyds. My Stuff—Fiona Kotu Marin; Bruce Handy reviews Year of the Dog; Lisa Robin listens to Deborah Lippmann’s Vinyl. Emily Poenisch gets made up organically with Stella McCartney; Hot Looks; Judy Bachrach sniffs around Ojai.

COLUMNS

130 HOLIDAY IN IRAQ Saddam Hussein’s chemical war left the provinces of Iraqi Kurdistan utterly devastated; in 1991 the Gulf War gave them a chance to rebuild. Intrigued by an ad for investment in the region, Christopher Hitchens returns, to find the most hopeful vision yet of a free Iraq.

136 CAUGHT IN THE SPIN CYCLE After covering Lew “Scooter” Libby’s perjury trial, Michael Wolff identifies the real crime involved: how the West Wing message machine sold America a needless war. Illustration by Daniel Adel.

146 IRAQ’S MERCENARY KING When the Pentagon awarded Aegis Defence Services a $293 million contract to coordinate thousands of private military contractors, its British C.E.O., Tim Spicer, became de facto commander of the second-largest army in Iraq. Looking into Spicer’s tumultuous past, Robert Baer explores the shadowy work of the modern gun for hire.

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CITY OF FEAR  In May 2006, São Paulo was brought to its knees by a prison gang, whose cell-phone-coordinated attack shut down Brazil’s largest metropolis, and whose word is still law in the city’s vast slums. William Langewiesche delves into the dark side of globalization.

LAST OF BREED  Jonas Karlsson and David Friend spotlight photojournalist David Douglas Duncan, whose new book recalls the way his dachshund, Lump, became his friend Picasso’s unlikely muse.

BRITS BEHAVING BADLY  Instead of their tired, their poor, and their huddled masses, it seems the British have given New York their dilettantes, their cheapskates, and their snobbish cliques. At Soho House and other exp haunts, A. A. Gill wonders how anyone can stand his compatriots. Illustration by André Carrilho.

WHEN GALANOS SPELLED GLAMOUR  As designer James Galanos broke fashion-industry records, with devotees such as Rosalind Russell and Nancy Reagan spanning half a century, he kept his eye on a single ball: beautiful—and beautifully made—clothes. Amy Fine Collins details the re-inventions of a master.

WILD CHILD  Nell Scovell eavesdrops on the rich; John Malkovich transforms into an ingenue, a vile construction worker, and a drug dealer; what was then and what is no longer. George Wayne develops a rapport with Will Arnett.

EDITOR’S LETTER  All the Presidents’ Men (and Women)

CONTRIBUTORS

LETTERS  The High Price of Oil

PLANETARIUM  Fresh Aries

FAIRGROUND  Another opener, another show

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Picture-Perfect Style

On November 9, Hickey Freeman and Vanity Fair hosted a festive night of holiday shopping at the Hickey Freeman store in New York City. With Vanity Fair photographer Gasper Tringale on hand to take portraits of guests, the evening drew enthusiastic Hickey Freeman VIP clients and Vanity Fair readers to enjoy cocktails and savories, listen to seasonal tunes spun by a D.J., and shop the Hickey Freeman collection.

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EDITOR’S LETTER

All the Presidents’ Men (and Women)

as much as we attempted to impeach one president for trying to cover up a political espionage campaign, and another actually was impeached for trying to cover up an inappropriate sexual liaison with a consenting adult, what does it say about this country, and us, that we b little allowed a third chief executive to lead us into a catastrophic and wholly unnecessary war that has cost tens of thousands of lives, nearly a trillion dollars, and the respect of our long-term allies? You really have to wonder about this nation’s sense of proportion. With every reason for the invasion of Iraq now proved to have been a lie, and with the situation now approaching a graphic novel’s level of human madness, the Bush administration—still claiming success: still claiming the invasion was the right thing to do—is beginning to show uncomfortably serious stress fractures. In his most feverish moments, the president finds comfort in comparing himself to Washington, Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Truman. Many outside the commander in chief’s increasingly tiny circle lean more toward the Hoover–Harding–(Andrew) Johnson pantheon of presidential competence and place in history. As Bush increases his executive powers and steps up the rhetoric for an air war in Iran, it is terrifying to think that he has more than 600 days left on the meter.

Last December, several members of another administration—John F. Kennedy’s; average age 83—got together for a Vanity Fair group portrait in the New York apartment of historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. A speechwriter and special assistant for Latin American affairs under J.F.K., Schlesinger, now 89, had a health scare the week before, nearly forcing the photo shoot to be canceled. But there he was, back from the hospital and gamely hosting his old friends and peers. He realized, as all of them did, that this might be among their last opportunities to attend such a gathering.

Talk naturally turned to the White House and a new Washington parlor game: who were the worst presidents in U.S. history? “Well, you’d have Harding, for one,” said J.F.K.’s defense secretary, Robert McNamara, 90. “Nixon is another.” Kennedy adviser and special counsel Ted Sorensen, at 79 a spring chicken in this group, responded by saying, “Bush has gotten us into more trouble than Harding ever did. And it will be decades before we recover.” Schlesinger—who coined the term “the Imperial Presidency” to describe how wartime presidents amass and sometimes misuse extraordinary authority—added his votes: “Buchanan, Harding, Hoover.”

Throughout the late fall and winter, many such reunions were held—in Athens (Georgia), Atlanta, New York, and Washington—as Vanity Fair assembled members of previous administrations for an unprecedented 17-page photo portfolio of the men and women who commanded the attention of presidents over the course of the last half-century. (See “Yes, Mr. President!,” page 208.) Spread over 17 photo sessions, and the product of some 3,300 e-mails, the result is a historic panorama of 77 official and unofficial advisers from 10 administrations. The sessions were marked by lighthearted banter (politics, movies, golf—Clintones Donna Shalala and Vernon Jordan discussed the relative merits of South Florida courses), war stories (literally and, at a few shoots, withering criticism of the Bush administration’s handling of the Iraq conflict. The Gerald Ford administration got together, held 14 days after his death, was hosted by his former chief of staff Dick Cheney, at the vice-presidential residence in Washington. Members of the Lyndon Johnson White House convened in a loft space in Manhattan. “I thought Vanity Fair would have fancy studios,” said 79-year-old Ben Wattenberg, a speechwriter for Johnson. “Instead, I end up in the Meatpacking District sitting on a crate with some guy with a British accent ordering me around. They made us change clothes in the bathroom!”

V.F. editor David Friend and his team managed to track down two members of Franklin Roosevelt’s administration who are still with us—Boyece Price and George Elsey (the latter also served Harry Truman)—but both had worked in the White House map room and lacked the requisite F.D.R.-era status we were looking for. Several current-day TV-news personalities sent us their regrets: Bill Moyers (Johnson’s press secretary) and Diane Sawyer and Roger Ailes (both of whom had worked for Nixon). ABC’s George Stephanopoulos, a senior adviser to Bill Clinton, agreed to pose but had a last-minute travel glitch. Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, a White House fellow and aide to Johnson, withdrew from two planned photo sessions.

Ronald Reagan’s vice president, George H. W. Bush, politely declined. Bush’s own vice president, Dan Quayle, said he would pose, but wouldn’t travel to our shoot—and we politely declined. Jimmy Carter’s vice president, Walter Mondale, was photographed, but former vice president Al Gore’s intense international travel schedule never matched with our two Clinton shoots. Carter’s chief of staff, Hamilton Jordan, a cancer survivor who has been a longtime inspiration to others battling the disease, did not feel up to a photo session. Travel and scheduling issues prevented us from including willing participants in various administrations: Eisenhower (we limited ourselves to five top aides); Johnson (Liz Carpenter, Harry Middleton, and Harry C. McPherson); Nixon (Anne Armstrong, Dwight Chapin, Melvin Laird, JEB Magruder, William Ruckelshaus, and David Gergen). Carter (Harold Brown, Hedding Carter, and Warren Christopher), Reagan (Ed Meese, William Bennett, and Gergen). George H. W. Bush (Norman Schwarzkopf and campaign adviser Gergen), and Clinton (Gergen again).

Perhaps not surprising, the most difficult grouping was Nixon’s. After all, more than 30 government and campaign officials in and around the Nixon White House would ultimately plead guilty to or be convicted of crimes, mainly Watergate-related. So it was no surprise that certain figures didn’t want to be depicted with others. Alexander Haig and Henry Kissinger, both pictured in our story, agreed to pose with fellow administration members but ran into scheduling conflicts. John Dean, former White House counsel, begged off, insisting he was on a book deadline. Speechwriter adviser, and special assistant Pat Buchanan called in with an eleven-hour conflict. Leon Garment, counsel to the president, changed his mind when he heard he might have to appear alongside two Watergate figures: “I will not pose with convicts who have a criminal record.”

At the final photo session, Illinois congressman Rahm Emanuel, who had been a senior adviser to Clinton, was the last to show up, having been delayed because of a vote on the House floor. When he arrived and encountered the 10 others assembled near the set, he exclaimed, “Look! We’re all together again... And it’s not because of a subpoena!”

GRAYDON CARTER
A Beautiful Afternoon

To celebrate the Golden Globes, Clarins, Paul Mitchell, and Vanity Fair teamed up for a special afternoon of beauty at the Argyle Salon and Spa, in Los Angeles on January 12. Hosted by Clarins celebrity makeup artist Nick Barose, the event featured Clarins signature face and body treatments, makeup applications, and blowouts compliments of Paul Mitchell. Actresses Kim Raver, Rachel Harris, Dominique Swain, and Navi Rawat were among the guests, who completed the beautiful experience with champagne and decadent chocolate truffles.

Peter Meyer, Jessica Flint, David Friend, and Todd Brewster

For this month's portfolio on the presidents' lieutenants all the way back through Truman's time ("Yes, Mr. President!", page 208), Vanity Fair mobilized a crack political team. The package was coordinated by V.F.'s editor of creative development, David Friend, author of Watching the World Change: The Stories Behind the Images of 9/11. The text was written by Todd Brewster, formerly of ABC News and co-author, with Peter Jennings, of two books on American history. Peter Meyer, who has written six books, and V.F. editorial associate Jessica Flint, who recently co-founded the popular Web site urbanistaonline.com, helped wrangle the 77 participants, fielding 3,000 e-mails since the project's inception, in the summer of 2005. Friend, Brewster, and Meyer first worked together in the 80s in Life magazine's news department, covering stories on the Pentagon's war room, Vietnam veterans. and, yes, the presidency.

Harry Benson

Contributing photographer Harry Benson has worked with every American president since Eisenhower, whom he snapped in 1956 wincing over a bad putt on a Scottish golf course. This month, he turns his lens to some of the surviving members of both Ike's and Nixon's administrations for the portfolio "Yes, Mr. President!" on page 208. "I prefer working with Republicans," says Benson. "They're not so tricky. I'm not talking about philosophy—it's just that they have more manners." Benson credits the intimacy of his iconic shots of Nixon crying or of Ron and Nancy Reagan dancing to his preference for working alone. "Things happen on the spur of the moment," he says. "Maybe the president or the First Lady wouldn't mind you coming in a bit close, but you can't if you've got about five morons with you."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 79
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David Hume Kennerly

Of his portrait of Gerald Ford's senior staff, David Hume Kennerly says, "I should've been in it instead of taking it!" The White House photographer for President Ford, Kennerly has remained close with many of his colleagues from that time, including Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, both of whom he personally asked to participate in the shoot. "Nobody was reluctant to do it," Kennerly says. "They did it to honor President Ford, out of love and respect for their old boss." Kennerly, a Pulitzer Prize winner who has photographed more than 35 covers for Time and Newsweek, is currently working on a book about his photographs of the Ford administration, entitled Extraordinary Circumstances, which will be published this fall by the University of Texas at Austin Center for American History.

Jonathan Becker

Photographing the surviving statesmen of Harry Truman's two administrations for this month's "Yes, Mr. President!" portfolio (page 208), Jonathan Becker, one of the magazine's veteran contributors, could not help feeling a touch of longing for a bygone era of politics that seems charming, even earnest, when looked back on now. "We did the picture in a suite of the Hay-Adams hotel, overlooking the White House, with these four venerable creatures," says Becker. "In contrast to what we have today, they were heatedly debating various contemporary political issues with a sort of integrity that was stunning. It was something like being in a wonderful time warp to listen to this."

Amy Gross

In reading The Grand Surprise: The Journals of Leo Lerman (Knopf), Amy Gross, editor in chief of O, The Oprah Magazine, found the real revelation to be Lerman himself. "He was insatiably hardworking, had exquisite taste and a colorful, completely idiosyncratic way of expressing himself," Gross observes. "His journals open a door into a really glorious world. He led a glamorous life and was constantly in contact with fabulous people, but he never forgot where he came from." As Lerman's former assistant, Gross, whose Spotlight on the Writer, critic, and editor begins on page 224, had firsthand experience of his genius in the magazine industry (he was an editor in chief of Vanity Fair) and reveals, "The greatest asset of his journals is his humanity—most of us wouldn't imagine such a sophisticated man being so tender, loving, or self-aware. That was a very touching discovery."
Maybe Just Because
TIFFANY CELEBRATION RINGS
Spring Romance

The spring trend for dresses is all about empire waists, full length, and florals. This feminine dress, from the Reba collection exclusively for Dillard’s, says it all with flowers and an airy fabric that blends silk and cotton. Pretty and seductive in the softest possible way, it perfectly expresses the new romantic mood of spring. Find it at Dillard’s stores and at dillards.com, or call 800-345-5273.

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Bryan Burrough

Special correspondent Bryan Burrough calls the poisoning death of former K.G.B. agent Alexander Litvinenko (“The Kremlin’s Long Shadow,” page 226) “a kind of postmodern spy scandal. Murders like this used to happen in the 50s, 60s, and 70s,” he says, “but you knew there was no way to make people talk. Now you know who the likely perpetrators are and you can see them on national TV talking about it.” Burrough has traveled to Russia several times since the fall of the Soviet Union and says, “I always love an excuse to talk to Russians. They’re warm and fun and easy to talk to, and insightful and paranoid.” Burrough’s fifth book, The Big Rich: Four Texas Oil Families and the American Century, will be published by Penguin Press next year.

Peter Biskind

Reporting for his piece on page 234, “An American Family,” contributing editor Peter Biskind played the role of television’s Dr. Melfi, getting the actors, writers, and producers to open up about the family that the Sopranos team has become under the Tony Soprano-like role of creator David Chase. Biskind believes the series is singly responsible for raising the bar of TV since its first episode, in 1999. “You could now spend all your time watching television,” he says. “When could a college-educated adult ever say that before?” A best-selling film historian, Biskind has for several years been working on a biography of Warren Beatty, which he hopes one day to finish. “But Warren will probably outlive me and have the last word.”

David Margolick

In order to understand the events surrounding the so-called Seven Days in April from last year—when six retired generals individually called for the ousting of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld—contributing editor David Margolick delved into a world which, by his own admission, was unacceptably unfamiliar to him. “As with many people of my age and background, this vital component of American culture, the military service, I had only known from a great distance,” he says. “My image of generals was of people older, fatter, more brutal and belligerent. I could not have been further off base.” In “The Night of the Generals,” page 246, Margolick profiles these varied and complex men. “Did they change the threshold for officers speaking out? I think these instances were rooted in this particular war, with this particular secretary of defense. But their example could encourage other generals, both active and retired, to protest when they believe it’s necessary.” The paperback edition of Margolick’s book Beyond Glory: Joe Lewis vs. Max Schmeling, and a World on the Brink (Random House) was published last fall.
OME PEOPLE CREATE POETRY WITHOUT EVER PICKING UP A PEN.

Lang Lang’s technical command of the piano is unquestioned. His boundless enthusiasm leaves audiences breathless. He has introduced classical music to an entirely new generation of listeners. All reasons why this young pianist has joined the ranks of the world’s best. Maybe they should add poet to the list as well.
Michael Wolff

Contributing editor Michael Wolff has been covering the Valerie Plame leak case since the beginning, and the courtroom drama it has culminated in has not disappointed him. “What everyone thought would be a marginal sideshow trial—they didn’t get the big guys, after all—turns out to be remarkable in every way,” he says. “It peels back so many layers of this administration that I think we suddenly get that ‘Ah!’ moment. The prosecution and the defense provide a very, very insightful, devastating narrative of the Bush years.” Wolff is not so thrilled, however, by what Washington, D.C., has to offer as a city: “It’s hard to get a good meal. I can’t figure that town at all. It’s full of extraordinary squares.”

George Gurley

In his piece “Make Mine Ibiza!,” George Gurley explores the tiny island, which so many celebrities and jet-setters frequent to “relax.” However, upon his arrival, the renowned New York Observer columnist found himself plotting an escape. Says Gurley, “I was pretty horrified. I felt like a freak. all pasty and overfed and uptight, wearing the wrong clothes on a beach where everyone was running around half naked or naked naked.” Luckily, Gurley acclimated and soon fell in love with the oasis. “It’s hard to explain, but there’s something in the air that grabs you, and all of a sudden you get it and you have a tremendous amount of energy.” And while he hasn’t been back since he visited Ibiza for this article, Gurley, a V.F. contributor since 2000, is eager to return soon.

Lisa Eisner

In this month’s issue, Lisa Eisner profiles Gabrielle and Michael Boyd, the husband-and-wife team who restored the only American residence designed by world-renowned Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, for Fanfair’s “Private Lives.” “Almost everyone was surprised that there was even a Niemeyer house in L.A.,” says Eisner, who has contributed to Vanity Fair since 1997. The Boys’ passion for modernism—they own one of the most significant collections of museum-quality modernist furniture—and their reputation for impeccable architectural restoration made them a perfect fit for the project. For Eisner it was important to illustrate how accessible the Boys have made the house. “They have two teenage sons and don’t make everything so precious. It is not a museum: it feels like a home that people love and live in.” Eisner, the editor and publisher of The Book on Vegas (Greybull, November 2006), is currently working on a project documenting Native American culture.

Amanda Hearst, Ivana Trump, Nina Griscom, Beth Ostrosky, and Vicky Ward

Dana Delany, Bebe Neuwirth, and David Yurman

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes

On November 28, Vanity Fair partnered with Cinema Society for a V.I.P. screening of the classic film Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, followed by a celebration of the newly opened David Yurman shop at Bloomingdale’s SoHo. Notable guests came out to toast Sybil and David Yurman, listen to the sounds of D.J. Beverly Bond, and enjoy the evening, which was hosted by some of New York’s own blondes, including Amanda Hearst, Amy Sacco, Beth Ostrosky, Debbie Bancroft, Ivanka Trump, Jackie Astier, Jessica Stam, Nina Griscom, Renée Rockefeller, Theodora Richards, Vicky Ward, and Yalesca Guerrand-Hermès.
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THE HIGH PRICE OF OIL

It’s a crude business; no takers for the Straight Talk Express; readers eat their own; dispelling the newspaper myth; flagged down; and more

Thank you for the engaging piece on the Niger Delta ["Blood Oil," by Sebastian Junger, February]. I am from the “upland” area of the Niger Delta, in Rivers State, a few minutes from Port Harcourt. The recent kidnappings and turmoil in the news, as well as information from relatives, have convinced me that Port Harcourt as we used to know it—peaceful, fun-loving, paradisical—is no more. It was very interesting for me to hear from someone other than my storytelling relatives, who have seen these boys in action.

I want to note a frequently missed fact in the discussion about the history of oil-related violence in Rivers State. It started in 1990 with the Umuechem community, about 30 minutes north of Port Harcourt. The money from oil did not trickle down fully to the youth, who took to the streets in protest. Police were sent, and violence ensued. Innocent villagers were killed; houses were destroyed. More than a decade later, Umuechem is a ghost of its former self. The social structure was completely destroyed by this incident, because many became refugees for a long period of time. This community was the first in Rivers State to suffer the wrath of the oil industry, because its members demanded their rights to jobs and oil revenue. Their sacrifices came a few years before the Saro-Wiwa struggle and should not be forgotten just because they did not have the sophistication to engage the world media. Thanks again for having the courage to give those of us who now reside in the U.S. a glimpse of what a nemesis oil has been for us.

O. ONWU
Washington, D.C.

WHAT MAKES Nigeria any different from all the other places on earth where there is an upper class, a massive lower class, and barely a middle class? There needs to be a worldwide policy—overseen by a United Nations-type organization—that forces all foreign interests to leave 1 to 5 percent of their gross profits in the country they exploit, and actively apply those funds to improve the health, living conditions, and environment of the native people, many of whom help make those companies unbelievably rich. Is it too much to ask that Shell, BP, Agip, Exxon, and every other giant multi-national start to show compassion for people?

MARK DANIELS
Toronto, Ontario

IT IS NOT SHELL’S responsibility to provide electricity to the villages of the Niger Delta. The people of Nigeria are suffering for one reason and one reason only—the total corruption of the Nigerian government. Hundreds
Very famous amongst very few people

BEDAT & C°
of billions of oil dollars pour into its economy every year. The Nigerian people will continue to suffer as long as the bureaucrats care more about lining their own pockets than about providing necessities to their people.

KAREN ROTH
Indianapolis, Indiana

THE PICTURE on page 112, with that bunch of “lawless terrorists,” calls to mind the famous painting George Washington Crossing the Delaware (1851), by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutz. Let’s see. Big Brother comes in, sets up operations, squeezes the populace, and they revolt. The only difference? The Nigerians were born there!

ART DAVIS
San Diego, California

McCAIN’S LAST STAND

JOHN MCCAIN absolutely used to be a man of conscience: a man who spoke out in the name of what was right, regardless of which party it favored (“Prisoner of Conscience,” by Todd S. Purdum, February). Now it seems, however, that he knows this is his last chance to become president, and he is going to say or do anything to get there. The interesting issue will be whether his apparent abandonment of his principles to achieve his goal will actually be his downfall with those whose support he needs: independents like myself, who have lost respect for him as a result of his about-face.

ELIZABETH MONTAIGNE
Coral Springs, Florida

HAVING GIVEN George Bush a free ride in 2000 (while trashing Al Gore over singularly fictional examples of “inauthenticity”), our overpaid and egocentric lazy press corps now seeks to elevate Saint McCain to the presidency. The Bush lovefest gave us Iraq. McCain is champing at the bit for more of the same—perhaps even war with Iran. Reporters, including Todd S. Purdum, need to put aside their boy crushes and expose this right-wing Keating Fiver for the fraud he is. Case in point: when Purdum challenged McCain over his trashing of Kerry post—“Yawn,” McCain said he “accepted Kerry’s explanation.” Decidedly not so. In fact, at the time, McCain said he wasn’t surprised by Kerry’s alleged “attack on the troops,” because, after all, Kerry had called Vietnam vets “murderers” when he came back home from the war. Purdum accepted McCain’s demonstrably untrue response, just as his colleagues embraced the even then laughable “compassionate conservatism” of Bush 2000.

CHARLES NAU
Washington, D.C.

SENATOR MCCAIN’S support for a war that was never in our national interest, his defense of intelligent design, his schmoozing with “agents of intolerance,” and his acceptance of donations from the “Wile E. Coyotes” merely confirm that the Straight Talk Express has a steering problem.

JACQUES RONDEAU
Washington, D.C.

NOT YOUR FATHER’S WAR

YAWN. That was my initial response to Brian Borger’s long-winded, condescending, and thoroughly sanctimonious letter criticizing Graydon Carter’s attitudes toward President Bush and the Iraq war [Letters, February].

Borger’s comparisons of the Iraq war to W.W. II are tiresome. They are very different wars of very different times. For one thing, F.D.R., for all his faults, was a true statesman who, unlike Bush, was smart enough to know that we couldn’t defeat the enemy alone. And at least Bush 41 knew that removing Saddam Hussein—monster that he was—from power would cause Iraq to implode. Unfortunately, it has.

Since innocent lives are at stake, the more Bush is held accountable the better, whether it’s by the Democrats, Graydon Carter, or whomever. My question to Borger: How many U.S. troops and innocent Iraqis have to die in vain before Bush sees the Iraq war for the disastrous quagmire it is? As far as I am concerned, it’s attitudes like Borger’s that epitomize everything that’s wrong with the right.

RENEE NEWBOLD
Newport News, Virginia

IS “Brian Borger” an alias for Barbara Bush?

KEVIN KOERPER
New York, New York

BRIAN BORGER’S LETTER left me perplexed. While I am quite in agreement with Borger’s overall sentiment (vigilance against terrorism), I do not understand his reasoning with respect to Iraq. Iraq was invaded, according to Borger, because it “was one of the Middle Eastern nations most likely to harbor terrorists and allow terrorist activities.” The Bush administration never said anything of the sort prior to, or even during, the invasion. There were only two reasons proffered in support of the invasion, and the reason Borger offers is not one of them. His is an argument that has only lately gotten any currency, and is no more true now than it would have been four years ago. A poll conducted in September 2006 by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, at the University of Maryland, found that 94 percent of Sunnis in Iraq had a some-

what or highly unfavorable attitude toward al-Qaeda and that 98 percent of Shiites and 100 percent of Kurds felt the same way.

The notion of Iraq’s being a haven for terrorism and an exporter of it is absurd. Specifically because Saddam Hussein was such a brutal tyrant, the presence of an independent faction having weapons, training, and a willingness to attack a powerful government was intolerable.

I do not know whether Borger is someone who is amenable to reconsideration of his criticisms, but I would hope that he is and that he would reconsider the assertions set forth in his letter and then withdraw them. It seems to me to be the honorable thing to do.

GRAYDON WILSON
Burlington, Vermont

BRIAN BORGER asks, “If Japan had not attacked Pearl Harbor and pulled the U.S. into W.W. II, how much damage would F.D.R.’s Democratic administration have allowed Nazi Germany to inflict on Europe?”

If Borger will check his history, the answer will surprise him. A year and a half prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Nazis started bombing London, and it was F.D.R.’s inclination to send help. Republican isolationists in Congress, led by Senator Robert Taft of—yes—Ohio, wanted nothing to do with the “European war” and did their best to keep F.D.R. from getting us involved in any foreign conflict. The Republican Party of the day was populated by isolationists who thought that the two great oceans off our coasts provided protection from the bad guys in the rest of the world. They also saw no great need for a strong military—primarily because they didn’t want to pay for it. It is somewhat ironic that the Republican Party of today advocates a strong military, but it apparently still doesn’t want to pay for it.

JOHN FREDERICKSON
Clayton, California

BLACK AND WHITE AND READ ONLINE

IN “BILLIONNAIRES AND BROADSHEETS” [February], Michael Wolff paints a picture of a newspaper industry in decline. Unfortunately, he neglects to explain that it is not the decline of newspapers that should be of concern, but rather the decline of journalism.

Format influences content but should not be confused with content. Because daily newspapers are subject to news deadlines and are distributed as unchangeable hard copy, their readers assume that newspaper writers check facts and then make every effort to write what is true. Digital media, on the other hand, is viewed as the source of intriguing, up-to-the-minute news items that
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I believe Michael Wolff should have been more honest in his article on the future of newspapers and addressed the industry changes across all traditional media. Radio listeners have been tuning in less and less frequently since 1994. CDs, iPods, and satellite radio have all taken a huge bite out of the free-radio market. Broadcast-televison ratings have been steadily declining since cable television and the Internet came into existence.

Newspapers, I believe, are going through a transitional period, shifting from print to digital. When I look at all those nontraditional “news” Web sites (the Drudge Report, for example), I see that their content is composed primarily of links to or passages from newspaper articles from around the world. What would Matt Drudge do without the “dying” newspaper industry? The newspaper remains the most efficient way of accessing information, whether in print or online. The alternative online world is a mishmash of left-wing and right-wing blogs all offering their slanted view of the “truth.”

JIM PIGA
St. Paul, Minnesota

VAVING THE WRONG FLAG

One would hope that the error in “Hot Tracks” [by Lisa Robinson] on page 76 of your February issue—the Italian green-white-and-red flag, as opposed to the correct green, white, and orange of the Republic of Ireland, accompanying the short piece on rising Irish musicians—was a mistake in the digital-color process rather than a gross display of cultural ignorance.

ANNA STONE
Toronto, Ontario

EDITOR’S RESPONSE: It was indeed an error. We apologize for the mistake and hope

POSTSCRIPT

In February 2003, Vanity Fair revealed in “Searching for Mullah Omar,” by Edward Grazda, what experts have called the most recent pictures of Mullah Omar, the spiritual leader of the Taliban, who disappeared after being driven from Afghanistan, in November 2001. (Recent news reports indicate that Omar may be in hiding in Pakistan.) Photos of Omar are rare. After he assumed power, in 1996, he decreed it a crime to depict the human form, especially with a camera.

One of the pictures featured, from late 2001, was supposedly taken by a confidant of Omar’s involved in the opium trade, and was obtained for V.F. by Khalid Hadi, a former photographer for the Afghan government, who has been living in the U.S. since 2000. The other shot was by Hadi himself, who would routinely photograph wounded combatants who needed official pictures that plainly displayed their injuries in order to receive monetary compensation. In 1993, Hadi took just such a picture of Omar, who had lost his right eye in a battle with Soviet forces during the 80s.

Grazda confirmed through Pakistan intelligence sources that the 1993 headshot was indeed of Omar. V.F. authenticated the 2001 close-up through Western intelligence sources. Once V.F.’s article appeared, Pakistani journalist Rahimullah Yusufzai wrote in The News International, “The American media has finally printed pictures of Taliban supreme leader Mullah Mohammed Omar that are real.”

Even so, faux Omar images continue to surface. In 2003 and again this January, The New York Times ran an A.P. shot of one-time rebel leader Mullah Malang mislabeled as Omar. Despite Grazda’s e-mail entreaties, government Web sites have continued to post the wrong photos, though the State Department’s Rewards for Justice home page recently removed its false headshot. Says Grazda, “After a while you come to the conclusion the government doesn’t really want to find Omar, that it’s better for regional stability not to.” Or perhaps it’s a symptom of lumbering bureaucracies unable to amend their old files.

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The Chemistry of Taste

On January 4, The American Chemistry Council and Vanity Fair hosted a globally inspired wine- and food-pairing event at the council’s conference, in Bonita Springs, Florida. The evening was inspired by the development of mixed cuisines, which make old pairing rules seem passé. Guests enjoyed several innovative hors d’oeuvres and wines with which they conducted their own experiments on the chemistry of taste.

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TELLING BUSH’S FORTUNES

IT IS NO ACCIDENT that Graydon Carter turned to Gail Sheehy’s October 2000 article, “The Accidental Candidate,” to make his point about Bush’s obsession for do-overs in his February Editor’s Letter, “The Measure of the Man (or Woman),” Of the tens of thousands of words I’ve read about Bush and his administration in this magazine alone, Sheehy’s portrait was a standout for its revelatory, meticulously sourced insights and conclusions. I quoted from it endlessly until the details eventually faded from memory. With the wisdom of six years of hindsight, I suspect a rereading would confirm just how dead-on—and, as Carter says, “prescient”—every word was. Any chance you would rerun it? I’m convinced it would have even more impact than it did before we knew what we now unequivocally know.

LYNN STEPHAN
Wichita, Kansas

LETTERS

LABORING OVER TYRA

NANCY JO SALES wrote that Tyra Banks made more than $18 million last year (“A Model Mogul,” February). But in your article about her budding empire, there was no mention that when her America’s Next Top Model writers asked to join the Writers Guild of America—of which I am a board member—and be provided with basics such as health care, Tyra’s network, the CW, refused, and Tyra hung her 12 writers out to dry.

Her writers, who worked on her show for six seasons and who adored her, felt certain that she appreciated their hard work and dedication and that she would use her influence to help them. As the creator and executive producer of the show, she could have done so in a heartbeat. But Tyra was silent. After two months of protesting, the writers were fired. By contrast, when The Daily Show’s writers wanted to join the W.G.A., Jon Stewart went to the mat for them. As a result, his writers joined our guild—a first at Comedy Central.

We’re all for someone like Tyra living the American Dream, but not on the backs of the loyal employees who helped her to the top. Isn’t $18 million a year enough for Tyra to have her personal chef and to help her writers feed their families? Let them eat cake, right, Tyra?

TOM SCHULMAN
Los Angeles, California

THE HUMOR GAP, TAKE TWO

I READ, with some amusement, Christopher Hitchens’s column “Why Women Aren’t Funny” [January]. As the surprised (and unwilling) Stanford researcher whom Hitchens quotes, I thought a rejoinder might be appropriate, and, after 20 years in academia, I feel completely confident in my ability to respond to Hitchens’s fool-hardy comments in a dispassionate, unbiased manner.

First, some background about the Stanford humor study. Our desire to study humor arose from a project focused on the brain disorder known as narcolepsy. Cataplexy, a common symptom of narcolepsy, is characterized by sudden attacks where one loses all voluntary muscle control. What is particularly fascinating about cataplexy is that attacks are often precipitated by humor! (This naturally leads one to wonder if selected sections of Hitchens’s prose might be utilized as a preventive agent for afflicted individuals when an attack is imminent.) Thus, our initial humor studies were setting the stage for later research on individuals with brain disorders.

Furthermore, as a pediatric neuropsychiatrist, I have cared for many children with behavioral problems, such as acting out and aggression. The hyperactive child who acts out and attracts (often negative) attention in school is a good example. Most professionals agree that for these individuals a counter-intuitive paradigm exists that might best be described as “negative attention is better than no attention.”

Though I admit to only a cursory look at the history of his literary contributions—I will wager that my “cursory look” exceeded the time Hitchens spent reading our humor article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences—it seems clear that he enjoys the role of provocateur. Thus, I speculate that Hitchens’s writing is, in fact, a form of literary “acting out.”

In conclusion, I have no idea whether Hitchens will be delighted or disgusted with my commentary. If it is the latter, I have only this to say: negative attention is better than none at all.

ALLAN L. REISS
Director, Center for Interdisciplinary Brain Sciences Research; professor, psychiatry and behavioral sciences, Stanford University Palo Alto, California

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS REPLIES.
Way to prove my point. I tried reading Reiss’s
THE FRAGRANCE

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THE HOUSE OF BLACK

WITHOUT DOUBT, Maureen Orth’s remarkable story on Conrad Black is the most revealing, deepest dig into the man and his empire, and the most novelistic narrative written about the adventurer yet (“Black Mischief,” February). The research is staggering and yet presented clearly, with less of the muck and wiggles one usually finds so bothersome.

JACK VALENTI
Washington, D.C.

MAUREEN ORTH extrapolates that Lord Black’s lawyer’s argument regarding the inadequacy of the “typical Chicago juror” to understand palatial living implies that the British House of Lords might be the only venue where Black could find his true “peers.” I am given to understand that, in this day and age, the majority of its members are in fact relatively unpretentious and unassuming, live somewhat modestly by the standards of the wealthy, and are dedicated to some degree of selfless public service. The image we have received in recent years of Lord and Lady Black, without presuming to judge whether it is entirely accurate or not, does not accord in any significant sense with this reality.

MICHELE HAAPAMAK
Hamilton, Ontario

CORRECTION: On page 141 of the February issue (“Blue Is the New Red”), we misidentified Mitch McConnell (Republican, Kentucky). He is minority leader of the Senate.

Letters to the editor should be sent electronically with the writer’s name, address, and daytime phone number to letters@vf.com. Letters to the editor will also be accepted via fax at 212-286-4324. All requests for back issues should be sent to subscriptions@vf.com. All other queries should be sent to vfmail@vf.com. The magazine reserves the right to edit submissions, which may be published or otherwise used in any medium. All submissions become the property of Vanity Fair.

MORE FROM THE V.F. MAILBAG

Dem Moore? Seriously?” Well, as a matter of fact... “Were Ally Sheedy and Molly Ringwald busy? Do you guys owe her money or something? Yes, it’s nice that she’s happy and not fat...” Say, easy does it there, Caroline J. Savit, of New Garden Township, Pennsylvania! We have a Mailbag to cobble together, and we need to compose ourselves.

“There is an amusing cartoon [October, page 268] on how celebrities should disembark from a luxury vehicle,” notes Alex Selkirk, of Lompoc, California. “The caption for the last panel reads: ‘After vehicle comes to a halt and bodyguard opens car door, pivot hips parallel to door. Wait a beat before standing up.’ Since the bodyguard is holding the door open at a 90-degree angle to the car’s body, a more accurate description would be ‘pivot hips perpendicularly to the door’ or ‘parallel to the doorsill.’”

Thanks for pointing that out—our humiliating crab-like exits were taking their toll on various seldom-used muscles.

“Hey, Graydon—how could you do it?” wonders Ron Schumër, of Edina, Minnesota. “How could you change that great casual photo of you sitting on the edge of the conference table with blazer, jeans, and open collar? Well, even so—why not give New Graydon a chance? (And, for the record, it’s his desk, not a conference table.)

“Hello Editor In Chief, I will like to place an Adverts of my Little Yorkie Puppy for sale on your newspaper.”

And another: “Hello. Its my pleasure to informed you that I will like to place and Ad for my little baby which is English Bulldog so let me know the price to advert her for sale.”

O.K., what’s going on here? Both of those are from Brooklyn, both seek to unload dogs, both—let’s not be coy—sound a tad English-as-second-(seventh?) language. Listen, Graydon doesn’t have time to broker canine transactions, what with running a magazine and opening a restaurant and those after-dark scaffold-dismantling escapades (for which, entre nous, he is seeking treatment).

Finally, once again, part of a fax from a certain West Coast U.F.O.-buff organization has sadly gone missing (see February’s Mailbag). This time, out of what were apparently nine pages, only the cover sheet has reached us. On it is scrawled, “PUBLISH NEXT ISSUE OR BE ABDUCTED BY ALIENS!” Sure, no problem. But when you say “publish next issue” do you mean this one—April? Or the next one, May? Heck, we’re going to play it safe and publish both.

APRIL 2007
WATER IS MICHAEL PHELPS' NATURAL ELEMENT, PLANET OCEAN IS HIS CHRONOGRAPH.
THE SITTING ROOM.
Designed by Charlotte Perriand in 1953, this door leads to the chair gallery in Gabrielle and Michael Boyd’s Oscar Niemeyer home, in Santa Monica, California. For more, turn to page 122.
I remember when rock was young
Me and Suzie had so much fun
Holdin' hands and skimming stones
Had an old gold Chevy and a place of my own

- Elton John
& Bernie Taupin
Chevy Impala SS in black, just off the Miracle Mile.
THE TOP IS DOWN
ON THE BLACK CORVETTE
AND ITS FLY
'CUZ IT'S SITPIN ON DAYTONS
Corvette convertible in Monterey Red, somewhere west of Vegas.
We're Innocent In Every Way
LIKE APPLE PIE AND CHEVROLET
— Motley Crue

Mike HHR in Sunburst Orange at Canoga Park Cruise. AN AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Warhol's Soup Can and Jasper Johns's Targets will be on display at the Princeton University Art Museum in celebration of an anonymous gift of 44 works by important Pop artists, including Roy Lichtenstein and Tom Wesselmann, among others. The exhibition coincides with the publication of Pop Art: Contemporary Perspectives. (3/24–8/12)

Become an instant philanthropist at the opening-night preview of New York City's Antiquarian Book Fair, "Lions at the Armory." Purchase titles for the New York Public Library's private collection or add volumes to your own shelves from the impressive collections of more than 190 rare-book dealers, featuring signed first editions of The Waste Land and Ulysses, and an original Beatrix Potter watercolor, among others. (nypl.org/rare)

Antiques at the Armory
Beneath the vaulted ceilings of Philadelphia's 33rd Street Armory, antiques dealers from more than 30 U.S. cities and abroad showcase furniture and other decorative art, as well as fine jewelry from the 18th and 19th centuries and rare Art Deco pieces from the early 20th century. (4/14–4/17)

CHIC BOUTIQUE
The newly opened Lily Savitch boutique, in Los Angeles, carries lines from Chaiken and Cacharel to newcomers Sydney Azria (Max's nephew) and Burning Torch. Shopping here is better than raiding the closet of the best-dressed person you know.

Kevin Spacey returns to Broadway as ne'er-do-well Jim Tyrone in Eugene O'Neill's A Moon for the Misbegotten. Spacey stars alongside Eve Best and Colm Meaney at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. (4/8–6/10)

Singing sensations Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón perform scenes from three operas for the 40th Anniversary Gala of the Metropolitan Opera.

BARING DESIGN
David Bromstad, the newly minted design star on HGTV's Color Splash, transforms old spaces into fresh rooms using his trademark bright colors. (Mondays at 9 P.M., HGTV)

108 VANITY FAIR | www.vanityfair.com
More impresario than artist, Australian design pioneer Florence Broadhurst was a self-styled scene-maker, unconventional and original, reinventing herself again and again. Born in rural Queensland, Australia, in 1899, by the early 1920s Broadhurst was traveling from India to Southeast Asia and China as musical-comedy performer Miss Bobby Broadhurst. In 1926 she opened a finishing school for girls in Shanghai called the Broadhurst Academy.

By 1933, she was in London as Madame Pelier, with an exclusive dress shop on New Bond Street. Married, divorced, and re-attached, in 1949 she and her young family returned to Australia, where she began painting and exhibiting her work. Known for her Flamboyance and eccentricity, and as a fiercely controlling businesswoman, Broadhurst launched her internationally successful wallpaper company in 1959.

Her designs were works of art: hand-drawn, hand-screened images with a Warholian parallel in terms of repetition, color sense, and an inclination to take advantage of mistakes in the registration of the screens. The imagery is lush, ranging from the formal and intricate—exotic birds, florals, and Oriental patterns—to wild abstraction and psychedelia printed on Mylar. Broadhurst called her prints “vivorous designs for modern living.” There is debate as to whether she actually drew any of the patterns herself, but clearly she had an eye for talented people—hired many, paid them very little, took full credit. Now, more than 100 years after her birth, her work has been rediscovered. The Broadhurst collection of 530 hand-drawn patterns was acquired by Signature Prints and is once again being sold around the world. Her life story was the subject of a recent film by Gillian Armstrong, Unfolding Florence: The Many Lives of Florence Broadhurst. And this spring Chronicle Books will publish Florence Broadhurst: Her Secret & Extraordinary Lives. by Helen O’Neill, which not only tells the Florence Broadhurst story and catalogues many of her designs but also examines the mystery of her brutal murder, in 1977. The homicide remains unsolved—some believe it was a robbery gone wrong, others are convinced that the killer was someone Broadhurst knew well, and still others swear that she was the first victim of Australian serial killer John Glover, who hung himself in prison in 2005.

—A. M. HOMES

A sassy young Brit has just joined the circle of immortal matrons Emily Post, Abigail Van Buren, and Amy Vanderbilt. Former fashion editor, writer, and contributing editor to Vanity Fair, Kate Reardon has culled advice on politesse and decorum as well as on household practicalities, adding her own characteristic wit, and posted it in her recently launched Wikipedia-like online manual, Top Tips for Girls. The site allows visitors to rate tips and to share their own, so the collected wisdom of a world of women is available at the click of a mouse.

**ON GIVING**

The best present ever

How about paying for someone’s house to be totally spring-cleaned? Just be careful how you word the card

**HOW TO**

**Tame a rogue eyebrow**

Apply hair spray to old toothbrush and comb upward.

**HOW TO**

**Make a candle fit into a too small candlestick**

Hold the end of the candle in very hot water and it will become soft enough to be jammed in tight.

**HOW TO**

**Stop luggage from smelling musty**

Keep old slivers of scented soap in the pockets.

**HOW TO**

**Fill small nail holes or cracks in a wall**

If you haven’t any plaster, try using white toothpaste.

**HOW TO**

**Stop ladders from marking walls**

Tie old socks over the tops of stepladders so that they don’t make marks on the walls they’re leaning against.

A Life in Prints

Florence Broadhurst’s Colorful Legacy

A true gentleman is always a gentleman. This applies to you, me and us. Good manners are an absolute putting others at ease. And they give you a long way in life—particularly in the absence of looks or talent.
Every so often the tribe called Wasp pokes its prosgrain headband into the popular imagination—the Princetonians of F. Scott Fitzgerald, the suburbanites of John Cheever, and Thurston Howell III of Gilligan's Island. Now comes Susanna Salk's A Privileged Life: Celebrating Wasp Style. In this coffee-table-book-cum-memoir, Salk attempts to codify the look of America's fading aristocracy. Waspdom, to the author, is more about appearances than about power. "Being a Wasp has nothing to do with religion or money," says Salk (née Hodges, of the West Hartford Hodges). "It's about childhood images: my father mowing our lawn in his faded Harvard crew T-shirt... Triscuits and Cracker Barrel cheese for hors d'oeuvres." To her, the mores of the Protestant supermen who created the Central Intelligence Agency, the military-industrial complex, and the Southside cocktail have become in this day and age a mere fashion statement, the stylistic equivalent of comfort food.

Unlike clever re-inventors of patrician elegance, such as Robert A. M. Stern or Ralph Lauren, Salk leaves the reader hankering for the real thing, namely Slim Aarons's A Wonderful Time: An Intimate Portrait of the Good Life. The most iconic photos in Salk's book—such as C. Z. Guest at her Long Island estate and Babe Paley at Round Hill, in Jamaica—are from Aarons's picture book. And she admits to being disappointed by her inability to get modern chroniclers of Old Money—including the photographer Tina Barney and the playwright A. R. Gurney—to participate in A Privileged Life. "When I approached people, I discovered that the word 'Wasp' is a touchy subject, a pebble in their shoe," she says. And pebbles can be especially irritating to those who spend their weekends in boating moccasins without socks.

—JOHN BRODIE

BUNDLES OF CHARM

Designers might have taken things down a notch for spring, but jewelry-makers have decided that everything is more. The trend for necklaces is toward bundling—layers of materials and moods—and elegant excess. Some prefer to pile an array of tulle-wrapped pearls from Lanvin, strands of beads and skulls from Prada, or loops of semi-precious stones and pearls from Chanel's Mademoiselle collection. Others like the mixed metaphor, such as Erickson Beamon's Black Widow necklace, Tom Binns's skull-and-crystal necklace, or Lulu Frost's gold chains bearing four-leaf clovers and Plaza Hotel door-number replicas. The baroque assemblages of Subversive Jewelry have names like Sunken Treasure ("Imagine all the jewelry you ever owned tied in knots and worn as a single piece," says designer Justin Giunta). Meanwhile, uptown, women are living the multi-charmed life: Louis Vuitton's trademark trinkets are now for the neck; Kazuko's pink stones wrapped in gold wire can be bundled together for drama; and Oscar de la Renta's Edith Taichman put her boss's chunky charm bracelet on a chain when it didn't fit her wrist. "I'm not really a pearls girl," she says, summing up the trend.

—OLIVIA STRAND
Actually, he's my boyfriend.
My son is slightly older.
**HOT TYPE**

**ELISSA SCHAPPELL**

It's *Logan's Run* redux! In Christopher Buckley's *Boomsday* (Warner Twelve), generational warfare erupts when the youth of America, ticked at the enormous Social Security debt baby-boomers have run up, propose they either clean up their mess or submit to euthanasia.

They fuck you up, your mum and dad. The fearless A. M. Homes rattles the family skeletons in *The Mistress's Daughter* (Viking), constructing the circumstances of her adoption. Before his murder, Dinah Lenney's father was *Bigger than Life* (University of Nebraska) but looms larger in death. Nico Lalli's *Nothing* (Prometheus), a memoir of being raised without religion, offers something to believe in. *Nirvana* (Da Capo), a memoir by Kurt Cobain sidekick Everett True, is slammed with grunge-era gossip.


V.F. contributing editor Leslie Bennetts persuasively details the dangers in making *The Feminine Mistake* (Hyperion) of opting out of a career to raise children. Boomers, let's keep those checks rolling in!

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**MATCHMAKERS**

Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen's Sculpture in the Form of a Match Cover—*Match*, 1987.

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**Walter Isaacson's illuminating bio of Einstein (Simon & Schuster) posits that it was the German refugee's restless imagination and zeal for nonconformity spiced with a reverence for the rhythms of nature that led to his coining up the general theory of relativity and $E=mc^2$. Isaacson also puts Einstein's tumultuous personal life under the microscope, onalyzing his miserable first marriage, which the world's most famous scientist bought his way out of, banking on his hypothesis that he would one day win the Nobel Prize and recoup his losses. The result? The freedom to later happily wed his first cousin. Creativity $=$ Freedom$^2$. Now, that's genius. —E.S.**

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**BRILLIANT**

Walter Isaacson's *Einstein.*
Raising a Glass

VICTORIA MATHER DRINKS THE WORLD

music in the evening is groovy without being frightening. Bemelmans said that on his tombstone he’d like them to inscribe: TELL THEM IT WAS WONDERFUL. It is.

THE FIX: This is the shrine of the Perfect Manhattan; Tommy Rowles makes a magnificent Bloody Mary from his own, secret recipe; and the frisky should try a Gin-Gin Mule (gin, homemade ginger beer, fresh mint, and lime juice).

ADDRESS: 35 East 76 Street, New York; thecarlyle.com.

Moscow

THE CONSERVATORY
Ararat Park Hyatt

The best rooftop view in the city is from the summer terrace—steel and glass, shrieking contemporary, where one can raise a glass of Cristal to the Kremlin, the Bolshoi, the Duma (the parliament), and Christ the Savior Cathedral. From May until September there are fabulous barbecues. In winter the snow covers the glass roof, and one tucks up inside the Art Deco scene with its big floor candles and fresh flowers. The staff are exquisitely pretty and actually smile—a breakthrough for Russia.

THE FIX: Try a winter mojito: rum, lemon juice, fresh mint, and peppermint tea. Remember, the petrodollar classes no longer drink vodka (so lower-class) but very expensive red wine.

ADDRESS: 4 Neglinnaya Street, Moscow; moscow.park.hyatt.com.

New York City

BEMELMANS BAR
The Carlyle

The secret here is discretion and tradition. The murals of a fantastical Central Park, with picnicking rabbits, were drawn in 1947 by artist Ludwig Bemelmans, creator of the Madeline children’s book series, in return for his accommodations. A 2002 face-lift by designer Thierry Despont preserved the murals but enhanced the glamour with clever lighting and a longer, black granite bar. Bartender Tommy Rowles poured Old Grand-Dad bourbon on the rocks for President Truman when he nipped in to escape a mob of reporters. Cocktails such as the Valencia—laden with sherry—date from Prohibition, and the homemade foie gras and the marinated mini-lamb chops are the ladies’ dream lunch.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis lived at the Carlyle with children Caroline and John after her husband’s assassination. The live
See and be seen. Be the first to indulge in a completely new resort experience, The Cove Atlantis. A world of tropical sophistication set between two stunning beaches. As you enter, a cool ocean breeze greets you in the open-air lobby designed by Jeffrey Beers, which shifts in ambience from day to night. From every suite, there is a breathtaking view of the azure waters of The Bahamas. Hide and seek. Feel the thrill of poolside gaming at the all-adult pool, or retreat in a lavish private beach cabana. Temptation meets indulgence. Absorb the rhythm of the private beach club, delight your palate with creations from Bobby Flay’s Mesa Grill, and rejuvenate at the new Mandara Spa.

Be the first to experience The Cove Atlantis. Opening March 28. Suites from $660.
**Jaipur, India**

**THE POLO BAR**  
**Rambagh Palace**

In this sporting haven one can have 1973 Ladybump, 1964 Girvan, 1971 Balvenie Vintage Cask, and 30-year-old Glenfiddich. That's after you've fallen off your polo pony. This bar, newly redecorated in clean, calm, cream-green Jaipur polo colors, oozes glamour. A fountain tinkles in the middle of the bar, and the cocktail stirrers are miniature silver polo sticks.

**THE FIX:** The head barman, Amit Kumar, is a whiz with a Martini Flight: a selection of martinis, from the Jaipur (Bombay sapphire, fraises des bois, martini rose, and rose petals) to the Choco-Chip Bloody Marys are also an essential here, but do talk to Suddhir at the bar about wine, particularly the Indian Zinfandel rosé (Ivy White) and the Chateau Indage. Very refreshing, and pink is, of course, the navy blue of India.

**ADDRESS:** Bhuvani Singh Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India; tajhotels.com.

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**Phnom Penh**

**THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB BAR**

Harry Lime should be here, lurking in the shadows by the glassless windows overlooking the Tonle Sap River. For diplomats, intrepid travelers, photographers, and itinerant journalists, the horseshoe bar at “the F”—which opened in 1993 when a tenuous peace broke out—is a social nexus. The restaurant is excellent, provided you don’t mind the lizards on the walls.

**THE FIX:** Extra-dry martinis, margaritas.

**ADDRESS:** 363 Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; feccambodia.com.

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**Miami**

**THE SETAI BAR**  
**South Bar**

**THE FLIRT**

South Beach with a twist and a new twist on bar booths: they are sunk into pools of water, and you sit on cushions with the infinity line looping above you. The bar glitters with transparent fridges filled with champagne, fabulous white Burgundies, Iranian caviar, and truffle-infused Pecorino-Romano cheese. The Setai is Asian in feel, with hardwood and sleek Art Deco bronze—much classier than the rest of the brash, predictably white South Beach.

**ADDRESS:** 5 Connaught Road, Central Hong Kong; mandarinoriental.com/hongkong.

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**Tokyo**

**THE STAR BAR**  
**Roppongi Hills Club**

**THE BIG DEAL**

Beg, borrow, or steal a member to take you to this 51st-floor club, designed by Sir Terence Conran, in the Mori Arts Centre on the edge of Roppongi, Tokyo’s hot new district. It’s like being suspended in the sky as the 360-degree view of the city twinkles like an unearthly universe. Eat truffle macaroons to the sound of live soul music.

**THE FIX:** Single-malt whiskies.

**ADDRESS:** Roppongi Hills Mori Tower, 6-10-1, Roppongi, Minato-Ku Tokyo; roppongihillsclub.com.

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**Cape Town, South Africa**

**THE PLANET CHAMPAGNE BAR**  
The Mount Nelson

Designer Graham Viney recently transformed the old wood-paneled bar with velvet, satin, pearlised leather, and fiber-optic lights that form the Milky Way and the stars of the Southern Hemisphere. The bar opens out onto a garden terrace, under the African sky, so you can look up and see the real thing. This is now Cape Town’s cool place to meet. Guests sit on white patent-leather banquettes inspired by the chairs on the Union-Castle ocean liners of the 1950s.

**THE FIX:** The head barman, Benson, makes a Stardust (citron vodka, peach schnapps, blue curaçao, sweet-and-sour, pineapple juice, and grenadine), a Shoot to the Moon (rum, vodka, cranberry juice, grenadine, and lemonade), plus something evil called Liquid Cocaine, which involves Red Bull and vodka.

**ADDRESS:** 75 Orange Street, Cape Town, South Africa; mountnelson.co.za.

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**Hong Kong**

**THE M BAR**  
**Mandarin Oriental**

**THE SUZY WONG**

The sparkling new M Bar overlooks the harbor and is a cocoon of charcoal velvet, silver leaf, and lacquered walls. Sample a kaiti crab claw or a lobster summer roll—tappas from Man Wah, the Mandarin’s renowned Chinese restaurant.

**THE FIX:** Mixologist Angus Winchester creates cocktails such as the Espresso Martini, which hits all of one’s buttons, and a Bermejo Margarita with aquamiel and tequila.

**ADDRESS:** 5 Connaught Road, Central Hong Kong; mandarinoriental.com/hongkong.

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**THE LOOKOUT**

**Phnom Penh**

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**THE FIX:** Extra-dry martinis, margaritas.

**ADDRESS:** 363 Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; feccambodia.com.

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**Miami**

**THE SETAI BAR**  
**South Bar**

**THE FLIRT**

South Beach with a twist and a new twist on bar booths: they are sunk into pools of water, and you sit on cushions with the infinity line looping above you. The bar glitters with transparent fridges filled with champagne, fabulous white Burgundies, Iranian caviar, and truffle-infused Pecorino-Romano cheese. The Setai is Asian in feel, with hardwood and sleek Art Deco bronze—much classier than the rest of the brash, predictably white South Beach.

**ADDRESS:** 5 Connaught Road, Central Hong Kong; mandarinoriental.com/hongkong.
Taste Paradise.

Drink Responsibly
www.tommybahamaram.com
Five years ago, word swept through town like a wildfire in Malibu about the Oscar Niemeyer house in Santa Monica. Who even knew there was a Niemeyer house in North America? Just in case you're not up to snuff on your midcentury cool, Oscar Niemeyer was—wait—is the great master of Brazilian modernism. (He's still alive and kicking at 99 years old.) The genius behind Brasilia, he was barred from entering the U.S. due to his Communist sympathies. So it would make sense that there wouldn't be a Niemeyer house here. Except Los Angeles doesn't make sense, and so there you have it.

In 1963, Joseph and Anne Strick (their son Jeremy is director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, in Los Angeles) commissioned Niemeyer to design a house for them. They sent him aerial views of the land, soil tests, topographical plans, and some notes on what the family needed. And without ever setting foot on American soil, Niemeyer orchestrated the creation of their home.

In 2002 the house was bought by a developer who planned to level it and build a McMansion. The City of Santa Monica Landmarks Commission blocked the demolition, and a friend contacted Michael and Gabrielle Boyd, the husband-and-wife team renowned for rescuing architecturally significant houses. They had just sold Paul Rudolph's home, on Beekman Place in New York, which they had recently restored. "Some are good experiences and some aren't," the Rudolph

house was beautiful, but it didn’t function for us," says Michael. "Like a museum conservator, I follow a simple routine of minimal invasiveness—never replace what can be revived—and exhaustive attention to detail. I like to swing a hammer and find the layers of years.”

The Boyds, both native Californians, finished restoring the Niemeyer house three years ago. They are crazy collectors known as “modern hunters,” and they’ve been chasing modern for 25 years—scouring flea markets, secondhand shops, auction houses, collectors’ homes. Their love of houses and furniture grew out of a love of art. Their house—it’s architecture, landscaping, and interior design—and their jaw-dropping collection of modern furniture, paintings, silverware, ashtrays, and books (they have 10,000) are the subject of a new book, Modernist Paradise, written by Michael Webb and photographed by Tim Street-Porter, out this month from Rizzoli.

This Niemeyer house is the sixth house the Boyds have adopted and surgically enhanced, creating a better version than what had existed when they arrived on its doorstep. The Boyds say no more moving. This is the mother ship. Gabrielle reflects, "By embracing modern we have found the right balance between art and function. There is a great quote from Le Corbusier about ‘life is always right.’ Houses need to morph. You are your lifestyle; you can’t get too uptight. We like finding the balance in both worlds.”

—Lisa Eisner
intage brocades and Asian textiles inspired Fiona Kotur Marin’s retro-glamour handbag line, Kotur. The former Tory Burch partner has launched an international collection of minaudières, clutches, handbags, and totes, which come in everything from brass metallics to exotic skins, and are available at such stores as Scoop N.Y.C. and Harvey Nichols in London, Dubai, and Hong Kong.

**FAVORITE ART** 
**MY SLIM AARONS PRINT** 
OF BASS PALLEY—sheets 650-thread-count 
**SCHWEITZER LINEN,** COFFEE TABLE: NFESPRESSO, 
**STATIONERS:** TED HARRINGTON FOR TERRAPIN, 
WHERE DO YOU LIVE: THE PEAK, HONG KONG. 
**FAVORITE COCKTAIL:** VERY DRY VODKA MARTINI.

Fiona Kotur Marin at her home, in Hong Kong; inset, various Kotur bags and clutches.

**LIPSTICK:** CHAPSTICK, WINESARC ESTEE LAUDER PROJECTIONIST HIGH DEFINITION VOLUME MASCARA, 
**NEVERVON KIEHL’S LECHIN CONDITIONING SHAMPOO,** MOISTURIZER, PATRICIA WEXLER SKIN BRIGHTENING DAILY MOISTURIZER S.P.F. 30, BAIN PRODUIT KIEHL’S HEAT-PROTECTIVE SILK-Straightening CREAM, 
**PERFUME:** GARDENIA BY MOLINARD, TOOTHPASTE: COLGATE, SOAP: AESOP GERANIUM LEAF BODY CLEANSER, WHERE DO YOU GET WAXED FOR BROWS: BETTY AT THE MANDARIN ORIENTAL SALON, HONG KONG; BROWS: KIM NAILS ON LEXINGTON, WHEN in NEW YORK.

**Songs with Polish**

Deborah Lippmann’s ravishing voice evokes the lush life of smoky jazz clubs and a more glamorous time. On *Vinyl,* her extraordinary new CD, she also re-creates songs written by the Rolling Stones, the Police, Bon Jovi, and others. The “celebrity manicurist” who tends to the fingernails of Meryl Streep, Mary J. Blige, and Renée Zellweger, she also heads the multi-million-dollar Lippmann Collection of nail products. Next month, Lippmann will release both *Vinyl,* the album and *Vinyl,* her new line of nail polishes, in 1,600 Bath and Body Works stores nationwide. She recorded with producer Darrell Brown in Nashville and the result is a stunning CD with standout original material as well as those cover songs. The combo of classic and modern is what Lippmann is all about, and with the release of this CD (also available on iTunes), she’s poised to be the new voice in the girl group that includes such jazzy singers as Norah Jones, Dianne Reeves, and Diana Krall. Message in a bottle indeed. —Lisa Robinson
**STELLA McCARTNEY’S ECO-FRIENDLY SKIN-CARE LINE**

**S** tella McCartney’s new organic skin-care line, Care, is purity perfected. “People expect luxury from their organic products,” explains McCartney, “yet those two words are never linked. I eat organic food and live a fairly healthy lifestyle, so I demand that of my skin care.” Available at Sephora and launching at Barneys mid-month, the unisex products (husband Alasdair Willis loves the cleanser) combine 100% percent-organic active ingredients, rich textures, and sleek packaging. Hawthorn, horsetail, linden blossom, and pink tea are just a handful of the natural treats sourced globally to satiate the skin. Certified by the organic-market over-seer Ecocert and developed over three years with YSL Beaute, the line, devoid of petrochemicals, silicones, or parabens, is a lean one. “Call me cynical, but we all lead busy lives,” says McCartney, who recruited friends and family as guinea pigs. “I don’t want a product you have to mix with a spatula and wait five minutes to apply. I want things that are easy to fit into my bag and do what they say.” Four simple steps include a Gentle Cleansing Milk or Purifying Foaming Cleanser, Toning Floral Water, 5 Benefits Moisturising Cream or Fluid, and a choice of three powerful elixirs chock-full of nutritious might. Spoiling yourself never felt so virtuous. —EMILY POENISCH

**TRANCE ENCOUNTER**

Janna Sheehan’s new perfume line, Trance Essence, includes scents called Abbey Rose and White Rabbit and will be launched (along with a line of candles, Trance Aura) at a store in Ojai, California, called Bhavantu, Sanskrit for “Let it be.” “But I don’t want people to think I’m just an airy-fairy, hippie Ojai girl,” the lovely Indiana native says fiercely. This is serious business. Sheehan says Goldie Hawn just bought the complete line of Trance roll-ons for her daughter, Kate Hudson. And Fred Segal in Santa Monica carries the perfumes. Sheehan’s patrons include Oak Mass, Rose Absolute, and—why not?—Organic Black Pepper. Delicious. —JUDY BACHRACH

**Hot Looks**

1. **Tuberose mingles with other fragrant blossoms to create a bouquet in a bottle for Michael Kors’s eponymous women’s perfume.**
2. Yves Saint Laurent’s new Lip Twins duo has a fashionable case and built-in mirror.
3. **Clé de Peau Beauté’s creamy Essence Contour des Yeux Anti-Cernes formula reduces the appearance of dark under-eye circles.**
4. **Orlane’s ultra-luxe, Myrobulent Anti-Age Eye Contour cream fights rapid aging.**
5. **Sisley’s Phyto-Khol Star Glittering Eyeliner is bejeweled with a Swarovski-crystal finish.**
6. **Strike a chord with Ralph Rocks, a citrusy fragrance from Ralph Lauren.**
7. **Chanel’s Body Excellence Firming and Rejuvenating Cream tightens and tones skin.**
8. **Dior’s showstopping Backstage eyeshadow comes in six shimmering shades.**

—JESSICA FLINT
Why is Wynn Las Vegas the only casino resort in the world to have the Mobil 5 Star and AAA 5 Diamond rating?

That's for us to know and you to find out.

Wynn
THE TOWER SUITES

770-7994
wyennlasvegas.com
With Mars’s transit of your 11th house making you more impatient than usual with anyone who plays with your head, it must make you want to scream (or shoot somebody) to hear that this is supposed to be your spiritual period and that you are supposed to feel compassion for those who trespass against you. It’s true, though. For as long as Uranus is in your solar 12th house, get yourself busy, barking angrily, or lashing out violently can and will land you in solitary. Face it. It’s hard to know whom to trust.

Some people think Taureans are lazy sybarites who just lie around waiting for servants to bring in a tray of tea and crumpets. Your critics would be surprised to see how creative and motivated you can be when Venus is ruled by a culminating Mars and Neptune. You want to be truly happy. Start making a contribution to humanity and stop obsessing over whether you feel loved.

When Uranus and the Dragon’s Head pass through your solar chart, careers can be made or broken in an instant. Even C.E.O.’s can get unceremoniously pink-slipped, but there’s also the chance that an out-of-the-blue opportunity could elevate you to a post so high you’re not sure you can handle it. That’s only if you climb out of bed, get scrubbed and combed, and leave the house. So if you’ve been suffering from agoraphobia or an inflated sense of responsibility toward sick family members, get over it.

Passions rule this month, or at least they try to. A simultaneous transit of three planets in your 8th house can’t be ignored, but you might choose to channel your animalistic desires into more creative and socially acceptable pursuits. Unlike most people, who are content to use their lower minds and plod along from day to day, you are on a more evolved quest. An eclipse in your 9th house is lifting you out of humdrum reality and into the firmament of spiritual exploration—if you can stand it.

If you could just stay the course, keep generating income, and resist the endless barrage of seductive distractions, you wouldn’t be torn between who you want the world to think you are and who you would be if you were true to yourself. Luckily, the Uranus-north node connection in your solar 8th house is helping thousands of Leos resolve that dilemma. They are finally acknowledging that they have creative talent worth exploring and that many of their recent exploits have been, horror of horrors, sexually motivated.

If work would just disappear so you could do what you want to do, you’d have no problems. That’s what the south node’s transit of your 12th house is telling you. Trouble is, the north node in your 6th house means that you have to work. Libras always have a tough time with the nodal transits, mainly because they generally want to do whatever it is they are not doing. The secret to bliss right now: Embrace the work you are doing, pretend it’s a lover you’re mad for, and voilà! The drudgery will go away.

There’s supposed to be a feeling of compassion for those who trespass against you. It’s true, though. For as long as Uranus is in your solar 12th house, get yourself busy, barking angrily, or lashing out violently can and will land you in solitary. Face it. It’s hard to know whom to trust.

Some say you’re as predatory as a prehistoric raptor, but you can be tender and nurturing too—and not just when you’re selling something. To be happy this year, you have to develop that loving, compassionate side. With a solar eclipse occurring in your solar 8th house, there are three ways to do that:

1. Become a parent, if that makes sense for you.
2. Take on a creative project you can pour yourself into.
3. Find a lover and forget the rest.

All the fame and fortune in the world won’t make you feel secure and whole. Far from it. You’d only end up having to compromise your integrity in political schemes that are far beneath a person of your standards. The transit of the Dragon’s Head through your solar 4th house means that the only real recipe for success now, no matter how restless you get, is to walk away from your attachment to being recognized and devote at least some energy to taking care of business at home.

With your ruling planet still in your solar 8th house, you’re more nervous than usual about what the future holds, but this is no time to go looking for answers in fortune cookies. Judging from the eclipse in your 3rd house, you probably shouldn’t even be reading this column, since good news makes you just as jittery as bad. Trust your own observations. Doing so will help you relate more honestly with siblings and neighbors; it will also reveal that you’re the only one who has an answer. So find your voice and speak up so we can hear you.

The simultaneous transit of Neptune and Chiron could make it hard for you to keep both feet on the ground, mainly because you’re more relaxed when you’re flat on your back. Even Aquarians on Ritalin are having trouble staying focused. No matter how woozy or hungover you are, this is a time when you have to keep your eye on the prize. Don’t give in to the fantasy that art and sex conquer all. They don’t. In the real world life costs money, and you are still in the real world.
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Holiday in Iraq

Over Christmas break, the author took his son to northern Iraq, which the U.S. had made a no-fly zone in 1991, ending Saddam’s chemical genocide. Now reborn, Iraqi Kurdistan is a heartrending glimpse of what might have been.

Last summer, you may have been among the astonished viewers of American television who were treated to a series of commercials from a group calling itself “Kurdistan—The Other Iraq.” These rather touching and artless little spots (theotheriraq.com) urged you to consider investing in business, and even made you ponder taking your vacation, in the country’s three northern provinces. Mr. Jon Stewart, of The Daily Show, could hardly believe his luck. To lampoon the ads, and to say, in effect, “Yeah, right—holiday in Iraq,” was probably to summarize the reaction of much of the audience. Sure, baby, come to sunny Mesopotamia, and bring the family, and get your ass blown off while religious wack jobs ululate gleefully over your remains.

Well, as it happens, I decided to check this out, and did spend most of the Christmas holiday in Iraqi Kurdistan, bringing my son along with me, and had a perfectly swell time. We didn’t make any investments, though I would say that the hotel and tourism end of things are wide open for enterprise. Yet we did visit the ancient citadel in Erbil, where Alexander the Great defeated the Persians—my son is a Greek-speaking classicist—and we did sample the lovely mountains and lakes and rivers that used to make this region the resort area for all Iraqis. Air and road travel were easy (you can now fly directly from several airports in Europe to one of two efficient airports in Iraqi Kurdistan), and walking anywhere at night in any Kurdish town is safer than it is in many American cities. The police and soldiers are all friendly locals, there isn’t a coalition soldier to be seen, and there hasn’t been a suicide attack since May of 2005.

It wasn’t my first trip. That took place in 1991, in the closing stages of the Gulf War. With a guerrilla escort, I crossed illegally into Iraq from Turkey and toured the shattered and burned and poisoned landscape on which Saddam Hussein had imprinted himself. In the town of Halabja, which has now earned its gruesome place in history, I met people whose hideous wounds from chemical bombardment were still suppurating. The city of Qala Diza had been thoroughly dynamited and bulldozed, and looked like an irretrievable wreck. Much of the area’s lavish tree cover had been deforested: the bare plains were dotted with for-
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sonian democracy and Iraq in the same breath: try sniggering when you meet someone who is trying to express these ideas in an atmosphere that only a few years ago was heavy with miasmic decay and the reek of poison gas.

While I am confessing, I may as well make a clean breast of it. Thanks to the reluctant decision of the first President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, those fresh princes of “realism” the United States and Britain placed an aerial umbrella over Iraqi Kurdistan in 1991 and detached it from the death grip of Saddam Hussein. Under the protective canopy of the no-fly zone—actually it was also called the “you-fly-you-die zone”—an embryonic free Iraq had a chance to grow. I was among those who thought and believed and argued that this example could and should be extended to the rest of the country; the cause became a consuming thing in my life. To describe the resulting shambles as a disappointment or a failure or even a defeat would be the weakest statement I could possibly make: it feels more like a sick, choking nightmare of betrayal from which there can be no awakening. Yet Kurdistan continues to demonstrate how things could have been different, and it isn’t a place from which the West can simply walk away.

In my hometown of Washington, D.C., it’s too easy to hear some expert hold forth about the essential character of any stricken or strategic country. (Larry McMurtry, in his novel Cadillac Jack, has a lovely pastiche of Joseph Alsop doing this sort of thing.) I had lived here for years and suffered through many Georgetown post-dinner orations until someone supplied me with the unfailling antidote to such putridity. It comes from Stephen Potter, the author of Lifemanship, One-upmanship, and other classics. Wait until the old bore has finished his exposition, advised Potter, then pounce forward and say in a plonking register, “Yes, but not in the South!” You will seldom if ever be wrong, and you will make the expert perspire. Different as matters certainly are in the South of Iraq, the thing to stress is how different, how very different. They are in the North.

In Kurdistan, to take a few salient examples, there is a memorial of gratitude being built for fallen American soldiers. “We are planning,” said the region’s prime minister, Nechirvan Barzani, in his smart new office in the Kurdish capital of Erbil, “to invite their relatives to the unveiling.” Speaking of unveiling, you see women with headscarfs on the streets and in offices (and on the judicial bench and in Parliament, which reserves a quarter of the seats for women by law), but you never see a face or body enveloped in a burka. The majorities of Kurds are Sunni, and the minority are Shiite, with large groups belonging to other sects and confessions, but there is no intercommunal mayhem. Liquor stores and bars are easy to find, sometimes operated by members of the large and unmoled Christian community. On the university campuses, you may easily meet Arab Iraqis who have gladly fled Baghdad and Basra for this safe haven. I know of more than one intrepid Western reporter who has done the same. The approaches from the south are patrolled by very effective and battle-hardened Kurdish militiamen, who still carry the proud title of their guerrilla days: the peshmerga, or, translated from the Kurdish language, “those who face death.” These men have a very brusque way with al-Qaeda and its local supporters, and have not just kept them at a distance but subjected them to very hot pursuit. (It was Kurdish intelligence that first exposed the direct link between the psychopathic Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Osama bin Laden.) Of the few divisions of the Iraqi Army that are considered ever remotely reliable, the bulk are made up of tough Kurdish volunteers.

Pause over that latter point for a second. Within recent memory, the Kurdish population of Iraq was being subjected to genocidal cleansing. Given the chance to leave the failed state altogether, why would they not take it? Yet today, the president of Iraq, Jalal Talabani, is a Kurd: a former guerrilla leader so genial and humane that he personally opposed the execution of Sadam Hussein. Of the very few successful or effective ministries in Baghdad, such as the Foreign Ministry, it is usually true that a Kurd, such as Hoshyar Zebari, is at the head of it. The much-respected deputy prime minister (and moving spirit of the American University in Sulaimaniya) Dr. Barham Salih, is a Kurd. He put it to me very movingly when I flew down to Baghdad to talk to him: “We are willing to fight and sacrifice for a democratic Iraq. And we were the ones to suffer the most from the opposite case. If Iraq fails, it will not be our fault.”

THE KURDS are the largest nationality in the world without a state of their own.

President Talabani might only be the “president of the Green Zone,” as his friends sometimes teasingly say, but he disdains to live in that notorious enclave. He is now 73 years of age and has a rather Falstaffian appearance—everyone refers to him as “Mam Jalal” or “Uncle Jalal”—but this is nonetheless quite a presidential look, and he has spent much of his life on the run, or in exile, or in the mountains, and survived more dangerous times than these. You may choose to call today’s suicide murderers and video beheaders and power-drill torturers by the name “insurgents,” but he has the greater claim to have led an actual armed Resistance that did not bestow itself by making war on civilians. In Baghdad, he invited me to an impressively heavy lunch in the house once occupied by Saddam Hussein’s Detested, late half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti, where I shared the table with grizzled Kurdish tribal leaders, and as the car bombs thumped across the city I realized how he could afford to look so assured and confident, and to flourish a Churchillian

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KURDISTAN ISN’T a place from which the West can simply walk away.

size postprandial cigar. To be chosen by the Iraqi parliament as the country’s first-ever elected president might be one thing, and perhaps a dubious blessing. But to be the first Kurd to be the head of an Arab state was quite another. When he was elected, spontaneous celebrations by Kurds in Iran and Syria broke out at once, and often had to be forcibly repressed by their respective dictators. To put it pungently, the Kurds have now stepped onto the stage of Middle Eastern history, and it will not be easy to push them off it again. You may easily murder a child, as the parties of god prove every single day, but you cannot make a living child grow smaller.

I got a whiff of this intoxicating “birth of a nation” emotion when I flew back with Talabani from Baghdad to his Kurdish home base of Sulaimaniya. Here, as in the other Kurdish center, in Erbil, the airport gives the impression of belonging to an independent state. There are protocol officers, official limousines, and all the appurtenances of autonomy. Iraq’s constitution specifies that Kurdistan is entitled to its own regional administration, and the inhabitants never miss a chance to underline what they have achieved. (The Iraqi flag, for example, is not much flown in these latitudes. Instead, the golden Kurdish sunburst emblem sits at the center of a banner of red, white, and green.) Most inspiring of all, perhaps, is Kurdish Airlines, which can take a pilgrim to the hajj or fly home a returning refugee without landing at another Iraqi airport. Who would have believed, viewing the moonscape of Kurdistan in 1991, that these ground-down people would soon have their own airline?

The Kurds are the largest nationality in the world without a state of their own. The King of Bahrain has, in effect, his own seat at the United Nations, but the 25 million or so Kurds do not. This is partly because they are cursed by geography, with their ancestral lands located at the point where the frontiers of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syrian converge. It would be hard to imagine a less promising neighborhood for a political experiment. In Iraq, the more than four million Kurds make up just under a quarter of the population. The proportion in Turkey is more like 20 percent, in Iran, 10 percent, and in Turkey perhaps nine. For centuries, this people’s existence was folkloric and marginal, and confined to what one anthropologist called “the Lands of Insolence”: the inaccessible mountain ranges and high valleys that bred warriors and rebels. A fierce tribe named the Kurnisho (Kurban) emerged in Xerxes’ history of the events of 400 B.C. Then there is silence until a brilliant Kurdish commander named Salah ad-Din (Saladin to most) emerges in the 12th century to unite the Muslim world against the Crusaders. He was born in Tikrit, later the hometown of Saddam Hussein. This is apt, because Saddam actually was the real father of Kurdish nationhood. By subjecting the Kurds to genocide, he gave them a solidarity they had not known before, and compelled them to create a fierce and stubborn Resistance, with its own discipline and army. By laying waste to their ancient villages and farms, furthermore, he forced them into urban slums and refugee centers where they became more integrated, close-knit, and socialized: historically always the most revolutionary point in the emergence of any nationalism.

“The state of Iraq is not sacred,” remarked Dr. Mohammad Sadik as we drove through Erbil to his office at Salahaddin University, of which he is president. “It was not created by god. It was created by Winston Churchill.” Cobbled together out of the post-1918 wreckage of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq, as a state was always crippled by the fact that it contained a minority population that owed it little if any loyalty. And now this state has broken down, and is breaking up. The long, but unstable and unjust post-Ottoman compromise has been irretrievably smashed by the American-led invasion. Of the three contending parties in Iraq, only the Kurds now have a serious Plan B. They had a head start, by escaping 12 years early from Saddam’s festering prison state. They have done their utmost to be friendly brokers between the Sunni and Shiite Arabs, but if the country

STUDENTS OF DEMOCRACY
Left, students outside Sulaimaniya University, which reopened in 1992 after being shut down by Saddam Hussein in 1981. Below, women’s magazines on an Erbil newsstand, 2006.
these shoes have you written all over them, do your glasses?

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Caught in the Spin Cycle

When the selling of the war turned as sour as the war itself, Lewis “Scooter” Libby was in trouble. His perjury trial exposed the White House P.R. machine—and the first hint of a split between his boss, Dick Cheney, and President Bush.

Around the corner from the trial of Scooter Libby, during a late-afternoon break, Frank Luntz, the Republican pollster, was telling me that the Republican Party is kaput. “The brand isn’t just sick—it’s dead. The G.O.P. is cracking up.” (Luntz is a marketer marketing his new book, Words That Work: It’s Not What You Say, It’s What People Hear, about political marketing, and knows he needs a compelling message. We have a brief discussion about whether his thesis about the end of the Republicans might get him some publicity.)

The Bush administration, in other words, could well have brought one of the greatest marketing and P.R. success stories of the modern era—the rise of conservatism and the Republican Party—to an end.

It may be smart to analyze the Libby trial and the Republican Party in marketing rather than political terms. Effective marketing is the Republican lifeblood—developing and crafting and delivering the message. The Democrats surely would never have been organized enough or clear enough on their talking points to have convinced the media and nation of the rightness of war. ‘The Demo—
The one constant I've observed, in 27 years as an on-again, off-again political reporter, is that Republicans return reporters' calls and Democrats don't. To a greater extent, this is what got Scooter Libby into trouble, calling back The New York Times's Judy Miller and Time's Matt Cooper. Libby's is a superb example of the much-vaunted Republican Party message discipline—he's got tenacious follow-through. He's one of the people who helped give the Bush administration its reputation—intact as recently as 24 months ago—as the most masterful iteration of Republican media management, a leviathan of political marketing.

But good marketing depends on maintaining an illusion—we admire an efficient and top-notch communications operation but are shocked, shocked at the idea of cynical manipulation—and the Libby trial turned into a remarkable, practically voyeuristic peeling back of the layers of the Bush administration's public-relations tradecraft. The dubious byways of this White House were found not by that hoary Watergate-era investigative technique of following the money but by the more media-savvy method of following the talking points. In their composition and editing (and in the chicken-scratch notes in the margins) and ultimate distribution in press releases and distillation in speeches and the prepared responses of various administration spokespeople, we were able to see the particulars of the big lie, which got us into Iraq, as well as the much smaller ones.

That the trial was so fruitful and revelatory was quite a surprise. It rather looked like all the big enchiladas had gotten away with the outing of C.I.A. agent Valerie Plame, wife of former ambassador Joe Wilson, who, after being sent on a fact-finding mission to Niger, climbed on a soapbox and announced that a central element of the case for war was fraudulent. In the end, all the prosecutor had gotten—and only for the Martha Stewart breach of legal etiquette of trying not to get caught for a crime that seems not to have been committed—was the vice president's factotum. Only Scooter.

And yet—and this became the fulcrum of prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald's narrative—Libby's very scoootherness, his being the vice president's eager sidekick, gave him vast power and his behind-the-scenes machinations deep reach into the workings of the Bush administration. Libby was, after all, the chief of staff, as well as the closest confidant, to the most powerful vice president in history (in addition, he was also Cheney's national-security adviser and part of the necon group instigating the war in Iraq), which made him one of the most influential men in this government. (Worth noting: the veep goes into a clear eclipse and becomes the subject of increasing mockery after Libby is indicted and no longer at his side.)

Better the vice president than the president. Better Scooter than Karl.

What's more, Fitzgerald, aware, no doubt, of the weakness of the charges—mere perjury and obstruction, acts of omission rather than commission—and, perhaps, defensive about the tens of millions he'd spent to produce them, put on trial the "state of mind" that led the administration to sell the case for W.M.D., which, in turn, made it go a little batty when Joe Wilson started flapping about there being no deal between the Iraqis and the Nigeriens for uranium, and hence no rationale for war (the lawyers and judge kept reminding the jury that, while it wasn't supposed to judge the war, it could judge the "state of mind" that might have motivated the various players).

And, to boot, Fitzgerald, for all practical purposes, put the vice president on trial. It was his war and, scribbled on the talking points, his marginalia directing the counter-P.R. pursuit of Wilson. If that wasn't enough, from the opening bell, Ted Wells, the defense lawyer, drew the White House in: Libby, he argued, was in the dock precisely because Karl Rove, the greater message genius, had to be kept out of it. The entire Iraq-war marketing operation was on trial.

I was reading, as the trial unfolded, Thomas Evans's new book, The Education of Ronald Reagan. about Lemuell Boulware, the remarkable General Electric P.R. genius who shaped Reagan during the years when the future president was stumping for G.E. and who assembled—largely as a way to counter the growth of organized labor—the first great conservative message apparatus, the model for the Republican media machine and for the party's ascendance ("a managed-news program") that, according to Evans, "was the envy of corporate America" and "an inspiration for the Reagan White House"). Boulwareism is part of the DNA which makes Republicans return a reporter's calls—and not grudgingly but eagerly (in contrast, you should hear the impatient and dismissive tone of the Democrats when you call them up). In every one of Scooter's calls to reporters, dramatized throughout the trial, in loving detail, you sensed his eagerness: he wants to talk, to negotiate, to schmooze, to convince. Republicans are good at this.

Here's a perfectly revealing moment in the trial, when you paused and appreciated the different professional values of Democrats and Republicans. It came during the recitation of the résumé of Cathie Martin, the vice president's former communications director. Although Martin is a graduate of Harvard Law School, the greatest professional qualification in the political power structure, and should have, more conventionally, become a framer of policy and legislation or a jurist, in the Bush administration she becomes a P.R. girl—that's where the power is. In fact, she takes the job held by Mary Matalin, another P.R. girl and one of the icons of the Republican Party.

It is corporate and all so terribly top-down. Libby's involvement in the mess gets going because the vice president reacts in classic C.E.O. fashion to the message going awry: somehow—confoundingly, annoyingly—he's gotten linked to Wilson's African trip. It's a C.E.O. thing to focus both on himself and on a tangential (albeit irksome) detail—it's part and parcel of obsessiveness, of perfectionism, of having control issues—and to demand that the minions fix it (with his penknife, Cheney cuts out articles that annoy him and saves them).

The vice president is grumpy about the irony: it suddenly seems he's the one—him, the war's greatest sponsor—who clumsily sent Joe Wilson to Niger and got the W.M.D. thing turned on its head. Cheney doesn't want to be a joke, doesn't want to be made fun of—doesn't want to lose his dignity. Finding himself linked to Joe Wilson's trip seems similar, in a way, to his having a pregnant lesbian daughter (he responds to being linked to Wilson's trip the same way he later responds to CNN's Wolf Blitzer's bringing up the awkward pregnancy—he growsl and swats it).

This is what Libby is dealing with. This is why, in June of 2003, Libby is suddenly so intent on reaching out to high-level C.I.A. and State Department people, demanding reports, justifications, analyses: why he's mobilizing the vice president's communications staff to reach out to other intergovernmental communications-staff
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people; why he's taking calls from reporters.

What's more—and this is the superfrustrating part for Cheney and Libby—the vice president, and the vice president's office, really, truly, had nothing to do with this trip to Niger, which now turns out to be making a hash of the whole reason for war. So why does everybody keep saying they did? Grrrr. (Perhaps the V.P. suspects that there's stranger stuff going on. After all, someone must have suggested to Wilson that the V.P. had had a hand in this trip. This isn't something the former ambassador would have had reason on his own to ad-lib. This vicious slur saying Cheney had something to do with this nepotistic malcontent who badmouthes the entire war effort might suggest... anti-Cheneyism.)

The initial talking points—the numerous drafts of the talking points—hardly take notice of the actual issue of the deal for the uranium being, evidently, a fraud. If you follow Libby's talking points, the White House's effort to get C.I.A. director George Tenet to take responsibility for the intelligence cock-up (or calculated fabrication) is not nearly so vital as getting Tenet to also say that the veep had nothing to do with sending Joe Wilson on the ridiculous trip to Niger. Attention to detail and to your boss's reputation is what gets a flack far.

During a weekend off in the trial, National Review magazine hosted a conference nearby for conservatives worried about the coming wilderness years and confounded by how the Republican Party and the Bush "communicators" have gotten so off message. There was a lot of talk about the Republicans' branding and communications problems, with comparisons to New Coke and Classic Coke—the war is New Coke.

Republicans have hopelessly branded themselves with the Iraq war. It could—and the National Review conservatives seemed appropriately doleful—take a generation to escape it.

Both prosecution and defense charted this branding process: 9/11 and the White House's declaration of a sweeping war on terror, the imperative for which it handily sells to the press, become the sleight of hand which introduces Iraq and leads to the 16 unique selling-proposition words in the 2003 State of the Union address ("The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa") which form a fundamental pillar of the logic for war, which, infuriatingly, Joe Wilson, in leaks to reporters, and then in his own op-ed piece in the Times and appearances on Meet the Press, pulls down.

In the prosecution's case, there was a mad scramble within the administration to escape responsibility for the 16 words themselves and, at the same time, to somehow salvage the 16 words. Everybody, as the prosecution tells it, equates, dissembles, spins, and, as trouble mounts, panics. What we see is not only a corporate playbook on how to deal with a grievous P.R. problem, but everybody's guilty and self-serving reaction to the problem. Nobody looks good. This was the fundamental, if unstated, case against Libby: if everybody is as venal and self-interested as this and hasn't been charged, then Libby, who was charged, must really be a no-goodnik.

In the defense's case, this branding campaign that brought us to war, and to the helpless effort to justify it, is just a mad scramble—there's no design here, no greater or lesser responsibility. It's an overworked P.R. machine, trying but often failing to maintain message discipline—a very large part of the energy and the talent of this White House is clearly consumed by the mechanics of the fantasy of the war rather than the mechanics of war itself—as it attempts to defend an impossible-to-defend war (so have some sympathy), combined with the normal cutthroat, watch-your-back competition you find in any corporate-communications bureaucracy. It's not perjury; it's just business. Or, if it's a lie, it's the big lie, and this is just the administration of it— which is somehow the nature of a P.R. operation. So don't blame Scooter.

Sitting in Judge Reggie Walton's court—for a front-page trial, it was oddly underattended, as if the world has moved on from the Bush administration—trying to keep track of who spoke to whom (and wondering how the jury was keeping track of this), of who had his call returned when (returning calls was the leitmotif of the trial: when Robert Grenier, the cool C.I.A. operative, fails to promptly return Scooter's call, he's summarily pulled out of a meeting—Oh, dear, he recalls thinking), of the persistent telephone tag, of the game of telephone (the message morphs, degrades, gets forgotten), and of who might actually be more truthful than not (given that many of the witnesses are either P.R. people or C.I.A. agents, truth seems especially transient). I was stuck trying to figure out if anybody really knew what they were doing.

They were up against, of course, an intractable problem: a clear sense was starting to develop, in the fateful summer of 2003, that the message machine itself was, in fact, was sent by his own wife! Can you beat that?) that might buy you another day, another news cycle (if you can survive a little longer, who knows what might happen to create an alternative reality—perhaps another terrorist attack). There is an additional point here that helps explain why the Bush message people went into overdrive—why they thought they could undermine Joe Wilson. They were used to a malleable press. They were used to being good at manipulating it. (Not to put too fine a point on it, but the war existed, in part, because the press was malleable.) So they went back to the well. Libby was made the administration's press point person on Wilson and the 16 words. (It is not clear if he actually wanted this job. But we might be able to assume that Libby is a good enough bureaucratic player to avoid a job he doesn't want, and to take on one that helps consolidate power—every bureaucratic reflexive inclination.)

And, indeed, both Judy Miller and Matt Cooper, on the witness stand, seemed, well, malleable. Child-like even. Their trade craft—they don't take adequate notes, don't get quotes right, don't remember meetings; journalism is a poor science—palls next to the administration's.

On the other hand, there is only so much that can be done when the problem is truly intractable—only so far you can control the message when everybody knows the message is false. Reality, at some point, wins out. The sense of a widening war, and a
the White House, for instance, over Chris Matthews and his show Hardball—he keeps hammering on the 16 words, and the yellowcake, and, what’s more, that damnable linking of the vice president to Wilson’s trip. Matthews won’t give the administration a break.

Organizational breakdown begins.

On the stand, Cathie Martin, the Harvard Law School-educated P.R. person for the veep, put it clearly and sourly: Libby, her boss, usurped her authority. In his panic, he decided he’d better do her job—the reporters she should rightly be speaking to, he’ll call (again the Republican conceit: calling a reporter can fix or soothe any situation). The function of the functionaries, in classic cover-up style, is taken over by the higher-ups.

This leads, just as classically, to the functionaries’ turning on you. Cathie Martin offered some of the most damaging testimony against Libby; her communications counterpart at the C.I.A. tells her that Wilson’s wife works there; she tells Cheney with Libby in the room, well before Libby claims to have known.

Anyway, Libby calls Tim Russert about Matthews. Libby, as it happens, is seriously off his P.R. game here—this is either the result of panic or what happens when you try to do a job be-

him about Valerie Plame. Russert, perhaps showing his contempt for Libby’s awkward effort to involve him in NBC politics—implicating the witness stand on crutches with a broken ankle. Russert looked appropriately victimized—dismisses this: he tells the jury that, while a conversation with Libby took place, they never discussed Plame. Russert says that at that time he did not know anything about Plame. If the defense manages to make it seem un-Russert-like that he would not have taken a greater interest in the story—not, with Libby on the phone, have probed more—Russert, for his part, suggests he thought of Libby less as a senior administration official, during the call, than as, in an ultimate failure of media leverage, merely a viewer with a complaint.

The result of Karl Rove’s artful maneuvering out of the way of an indictment is that the trial narrative is missing the other half of the White House’s side: we could see the vice president’s people, but not so clearly the president’s.

It’s this weird absence that gave Wells, the defense attorney, perfectly reasonable room to speculate that there must be some diabolical explanation for Rove’s survival and Libby’s fall. After all, Rove has a much more direct connection to who told the columnist Robert Novak that Joe Wilson’s wife was in the C.I.A.—Rove was one of the sources—than Libby.

The prosecution maintained that Libby's motive for lying to investigators and, subsequently, to the grand jury as to when he knew and how he learned about Plame’s identity was mainly that the president had announced, through Press Secretary Scott McClellan, that he’d fire anybody found to be involved. Libby was just trying to protect his job. Reasonably, the defense suggested, such concerns should have equally motivated Rove.

And yet, Rove, who we know was involved, somehow still has his job. Hmm...

The defense leapt is to a setup and take-down—into which the vice president lends his scrawl. It’s the most compelling memo of the trial, cool fury (from a cold man) that the White House—he first says “Pres” but crosses this out—is hanging his good man Scooter out to dry: “Not going to protect one staffer + sacrifice the guy the Pres. that was asked to stick his neck in the meat grinder because of the incompetence of others.” In the six years and counting of the Bush administration, this is the first meaningful suggestion that there is a divide, and even a rift, between president and vice president. between—one might go as far as to say—the people who invented the war, the ideologues gathered around the vice president, and the people nearer the president who have to deal with the politics of it, the Rovians, as it were, pursuing a different, more plastic, more survivalist message.

Indeed, the vice president doesn’t seem all that rattled by there being no deal involving yellowcake and such. He’s got no doubts about the righteousness of the war—it’s his view that, since we caught the Iraqis buying uranium in the 1980s, we ought to continue to assume they’re trying to buy it—he just doesn’t want Joe Wilson to be suggesting he has doubts, to be muddying his stalwart persona and unyielding message. If need be, he’ll mess with Joe Wilson—anybody can play this game. The weep had Libby to play it with him and for him. It’s the Oval Office bunch who seem to realize, in more practical terms—or at least Karl Rove realizes—that if there was no actual reason for war, then someone is going to have to be blamed for it. Better the vice president than the president. Better Scooter than Karl.

In his recent, parting comments as head of the Republican National Committee, Ken Mehlman, one of the key brand managers of the Bush presidency, said that the party is cooked in ’08 unless it identifies itself with the nation’s domestic concerns (most of which are traditional Democratic issues). What he means is that the party has to find a branding alternative to the war. Likely, too, what he means, more personally—this is also what Frank Luntz means—is that it’s important for him as a Republican marketer to get as far as possible from having been involved in selling the war. That’s going to be the lasting crime: who sold us this mess? Who revealed the identity of Valerie Plame (everybody) is just a clever stand-in issue for who made up the casus belli.

Each happened—the Valerie Plame unveiling and the fabricated pretext for invasion—in no small way because it could, because it was easy. The Plame affair happened because the P.R. machine was ready to use all tactics, all resources, all channels, all innuendos, to counter her husband’s going off message—with various reporters ready to oblige the flakes (even go to jail for them). The invasion happened because that same machine was so proficient at doing what it does, because it could convince so many people—some of the same reporters it recruited to muddy Plame and Wilson—that the cause was good.

Anyway, Libby wasn’t really on trial for lying. He was called out for selling the war too well, as many others eventually will be.
An empty refrigerator turns into a great excuse.

Fine china and silver make a surprise appearance.

And voilà, Kung Pao chicken becomes Le Kung Pao chicken.
Iraq’s Mercenary King

As a former C.I.A. agent, the author knows how mercenaries work: in the shadows. But how did a notorious former British officer, Tim Spicer, come to coordinate the second-largest army in Iraq—the tens of thousands of private security contractors?

By Robert Baer

Last spring, in Los Angeles, I met with a producer and a screenwriter who were trolling for a good story to turn into a movie—specifically, a story about a pair of colorful adventurers, maybe mercenaries, who get into serious trouble seeking a fortune in Africa. I wasn’t much help. I had spent little time in Africa—only a couple of brief trips to Nigeria and Liberia during my time in the C.I.A. But I promised them I’d ask around when I got to London, a city with more colorful adventurers per block than anywhere else in the world.

I knew my share of them: rogue oil traders, art forgers, exiled presidents, disgraced journalists, arms dealers. There was also the Jordanian prince who had once offered to smuggle me into Ramadi, in Iraq’s anarchic Anbar Province, in exchange for 100 sheep. People like these are pretty much the currency of C.I.A. agents.

In London, the consensus was that if I wanted a good African yarn I needed to talk to Tim Spicer. He knew or could get to every mercenary, adventurer, or promoter who had ever cast a shadow on that continent.

I knew who Spicer was. He’d popped up on the C.I.A.’s radar after he retired from the British Army and went to work, in 1996, as the C.E.O. of Sandline International, a private military company offering “operational support” to “legitimate governments.” A year later Spicer was in Papua New Guinea, where he fielded a mercenary army for the government in order to protect a multi-national copper-mining company. After Spicer was expelled, he moved on to Sierra Leone, this time helping to ship arms to coup plotters. Spicer’s name resurfaced in 2004 in connection with a putsch aimed at Equatorial Guinea.
When do you tell it that it's not a sports car?

From conception it blurred the line between practical and thrilling. To that add a more muscular stance and a new, more powerful engine that heightens performance but uses less fuel. Perhaps some things are better left unsaid. Porsche Cayenne. There is no substitute.

The new Cayenne. Starting at $43,400.
allegedly led by Simon Mann, his friend, former army colleague, and onetime business associate. Though questioned by British officials, Spicer was not implicated in the incident.

But then, somehow, two months later, Spicer’s company, known as Aegis Defence Services, landed a $293 million Pentagon contract to coordinate security for reconstruction projects, as well as support for other private military companies, in Iraq. This effectively put him in command of the second-largest foreign armed force in the back of beyond, serving governments that preferred not to have to acknowledge us. We both left government service at a relatively young age and were tempted back into the same shadowy world we had come from, trying to sell a set of skills that weren’t especially useful anywhere else.

We talked a little about spy fiction, agreeing that other than le Carré the genre was thin. I happened to have with me a copy of John Banville’s *The Untouchable*, a fine novel loosely based on the Cambridge Five spy ring. Spicer copied down the title. He

Iraq what the American military couldn’t subdue the most xenophobic and violent people in the Middle East. But that was the problem. Iraq isn’t Africa. Iraqis shoot back.

Black Death

Frankly, I have always had my doubts about private military contractors. A few days after Baghdad fell, in 2003, I was in Iraq working as an adviser to ABC News. It was a time when Iraq was still wide open and you could pretty much go where you wanted to. I persuaded ABC to

I couldn’t help wondering how Tim Spicer had ascended so quickly from notorious mercenary to corporate titan.

country—behind America’s but ahead of Britain’s. These men aren’t officially part of the Coalition of the Willing, because they’re all paid contractors—the Coalition of the/ Bill- ing, you might call it—but they’re a crucial part of the coalition’s forces nonetheless.

The atrium of Spicer’s slick, modern building, near Victoria Station, drinks light. The polished floors, smoked glass, silent elevators, and polite, efficient receptionist put you in mind more of an A-list Hollywood production company than of the lair of a mercenary and arms dealer. I thought I knew what Spicer was after: to clean up his past, achieve respectability.

Still fit and agile at 54, Spicer stood up behind his desk and walked across the office to shake my hand. The lime cardigan sweater, a desk piled with files and books, the French bulldog asleep in the corner—it all proclaimed that Spicer hadn’t quite settled into his new role as a C.E.O. He’s a field man at heart. More comfortable on the front lines of some war—at the “sharp end,” as he puts it.

Spicer liked the idea of a movie about Africa. He mentioned the names of a couple of friends, old Africa hands, whose stories might contribute the spine of a plot. Most of them lived in South Africa. He proposed half a dozen locations where a pair of adventurers could get into particularly serious trouble, from the Congo to Mali. I suspected that talking about Hollywood was a welcome diversion for Spicer, given how badly things were going in Iraq.

Spicer and I had a lot in common. We had both spent much of our lives in the
Spicer has referred to critics as “the gutless, the boring and the useless who pontificate and cower.”

No one planned for a private army of this size. Like most things in the Iraq war, it just happened. After the Iraq National Museum was looted, in April of 2003, and even four months later, after the U.N. headquarters was destroyed by a car bomb, the Pentagon assumed it was dealing with garden-variety crime and terrorism—nothing a good whirl of grapeshot couldn’t quell. With U.S. forces stretched thin, why not let private military contractors deal with routine security? They could protect the coalition offices, the supply shipments, the embassies, and also the reconstruction teams, the journalists, the U.N. workers, and the aid organizations. After all, guns for hire in Afghanistan had been keeping Hamid Karzai alive.

As the security situation deteriorated and the insurgency became more sophisticated, the contractors were forced to adapt, operating as small military units, carrying automatic weapons and rocket launchers, and traveling in convoys of heavily armored S.U.V.’s. Their tactics included driving at 90 miles an hour or more and shooting at any vehicle that appeared to be a threat. In some cases, military contractors fought pitched battles. Today, when they get in trouble, contractors can call on help in the form of military air support or a quick-reaction force.

Who are these contractors? Watch the passengers in Dubai waiting for flights to Kabul and Baghdad and you’ll get an idea. Half of them are forty-somethings, a little paunchy, their hair thinning. They haven’t done a pull-up or run an obstacle course in 20 years. You have to suspect that many are divorced and paying alimony, child support, and mortgages on houses they don’t live in. The other half, in their late 20s and early 30s, have been enticed into leaving the military early, quadrupling their salaries by entering the private sector. They bulge out of their T-shirts, bang knuckles, shoulder-bump. They can’t wait to get into the action.

The mercenaries crowd the duty-free counters buying boxes of Cuban Cohiba cigars and bottles of Jack Daniel’s—nights on mortar watch can be very long. There’s no doubt they can afford it. Men with service in an elite military unit have been known to make up to $1,500 a day. More typically a Western military contractor will earn $180,000 a year. Depending on the contract, benefits can include a hundred days of leave, kidnapping insurance, health insurance, and life insurance.

Iraq is not exactly a place you’d want to call home, but after a tough day on Baghdad’s bloody streets there’s always the Green Zone, an air-conditioned trailer, a Whopper, and an ice latte. Other than the very real threat of getting killed, the only cloud on the horizon is having your job outsourced. As private security companies have learned how to do business in Iraq, they also have figured out how to reduce costs, often by hiring less expensive help. Chilenses, Filipinos, Nepalese, and Bosnians come a lot cheaper. Almost three dozen former Colombian soldiers are suing Blackwater USA, one of the largest private military companies in Iraq, for breach of contract. According to the Colombians, Blackwater at the last minute reduced their rate of pay to $34 a day. It’s virtually slave labor compared with what a Brit or an American gets.

Spicer has referred to critics as “the gutless, the boring and the useless who pontificate and cower.”
soon enough hanging out his shingle as a gun for hire, continuing a long tradition of British military officers who return to the colonies to make their fortune, or at least to compensate for a lean retirement. His friend Simon Mann introduced Spicer to Tony Buckingham, another former British military officer, with whom Mann had founded a security consultancy firm called Executive Outcomes in the early 1990s. According to Spicer’s autobiography, upon meeting Buckingham asked Spicer if he had any interest in setting up what would later become known as a private military company.

A year later, in 1996, with Buckingham’s backing, Spicer started Sandline International, advertising its services as “special forces rapid reaction.” The exact relationship between Sandline and Executive Outcomes has been unclear in press accounts, but Spicer has reportedly admitted that they were “closely linked.” Sandline’s first contract, in 1997, was with the government of Papua New Guinea, which wanted a mercenary force to protect a copper mine in Bougainville, in a rebellious part of the country. The deal fell apart when the P.N.G. Army found out that Sandline was being paid $36 million for a job the army thought it should have done.

The remains of four American security contractors, murdered by insurgents, were hung from this bridge in Fallujah in March of 2004.

Waiting for flights to Kabul and Baghdad, the security contractors bang knuckles and crowd the duty-free counters.

ing. The government was overthrown in a coup, and Spicer was arrested and brought before a military inquiry. He was eventually released and successfully sued Papua New Guinea for moneys owed.

With notoriety apparently not an impediment, in 1998 Spicer landed another contract involving Sierra Leone, this time helping ship 30 tons of Bulgarian arms to forces backing Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, the president in exile. At the time, Sierra Leone was under a U.N. embargo. When Spicer’s activities became public, the “Arms-to-Africa” scandal reverberated through British politics, implicating Tony Blair’s government. Spicer claimed to have told certain British officials all along the way about the arms shipment, allowing him to make the case later that there had been implicit British-government approval.

One thing you notice from his career is that Spicer has a flair for self-promotion, a skill he says he started to pick up by observing the press during the Vietnam War. After the Gulf War, Spicer served as military aide to the former British commander General Sir Peter de la Billière. Spicer reportedly persuaded British Airways to keep tickets on the Concorde for de la Billière, himself, and their wives to attend the postwar parade in New York. In Bosnia he served as the press attaché to General Sir Michael Rose, the commander of U.N. forces. Spicer is openly fascinated by Lawrence of Arabia, once pausing with an interpreter in front of Lawrence’s motorcycle, in the Imperial War Museum.

In an attempt to burnish his reputation, Spicer paid a publicist, Sara Pearson, to arrange for his autobiography to be ghostwritten. Though largely ignored, An Unorthodox Soldier (1999) gave Spicer a platform to make the case that in Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone he was working for legitimate governments. Companies like his, he argues, do have a place in the modern comity of nations. Spicer also made clear what he thinks of people who disparage men like himself but have never seen a shot fired in anger: “the gutless, the boring and the useless who pontificate and cower…. I feel sorry for them—they’ve never been to the edge and looked over They’d be better off if they did.”

Spicer doesn’t like the term “mercenary” or “gun for hire,” picturing himself rather as a 19th-century British adventurer, fighting on the side of civilization. There’s more than a little of Flashman in Spicer. He cultivates a playboy image, driving an Aston Martin, dating beautiful women, and living in a mansion in South London. His annual compensation at Aegis has been estimated to be as high as $20 million. At the inquiry in Papua New Guinea, he was seen carrying what appeared to be a biography of Ian Fleming, the creator of James Bond. But Spicer has said that in fact under the dust jacket was a biography of General Vo Nguyen Giap, the Vietnamese Communist who masterminded the siege of Dien Bien Phu. One of Aegis’s investors is Spicer’s friend the novelist Frederick Forsyth, who wrote the classic mercenary novel The Dogs of War. You pick it up, read a few pages, and know exactly where it’s going. The mercenaries are all intelligent and reserved, with square jaws and chiseled features. They’ve won the hard-earned respect of the natives and are prepared to give up their lives for African rebels who seek only to restore democracy and obtain a fair price for their countries’ mineral wealth.

By 2000, the military-security business was in the doldrums. An unsettling amount of peace had broken out around the world, and the demand for mercenaries fell off sharply. For the next few years, Spicer’s business activities seem to have been in some flux. A rough chronology can be ascertained from press ac-
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Two things happened which, together, led toSpicer’s big break. The first occurred in March of 2004, when four Blackwater contractors were ambushed and murdered in Fallujah. The Pentagon knew it couldn’t dispense with military contractors, but it now had leverage to make them play by the military’s rules. Henceforward, contractors would keep the military informed of their movements. They would also carry transponders, allowing the military to locate them in an emergency. What the Pentagon needed was a single military contractor to manage the new regime.

Spicer saw an opportunity after former colleague and British Army brigadier general Tony Hunter-Choat became the head of security for the Coalition Provisional Authority’s Program Management Office—the office that set the terms for what would become the Aegis contract. Hunter-Choat and Spicer had served together in Bosnia.

In May of 2004 the contract for coordinating private military companies in Iraq was awarded to Aegis, which managed to beat out five other corporate bidders. One of the competitors, DynCorp International, protested, arguing that Aegis’s bid had been more than $80 million higher than DynCorp’s. The protest went nowhere.

Tim Spicer was now a big fish in a big pond. Aside from running a new Reconstruction Operations Center—a war room that tracks and coordinates security contractors moving around Iraq—and six satellite offices, Aegis also set up 75 security teams, and it serves as an information clearinghouse for security contractors. Aegis decides who can go where in Iraq. If a security detail is ambushed, Aegis coordinates with the military to call in air attacks and ground support. Apparently to cement his new status as the primus inter.

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A video shows Aegis contractors shooting at Iraqi cars. Elvis Presley's "Mystery Train" provides the soundtrack.
THE GENTLEMEN’S FUND
BETTER MEN BETTER WORLD

JOHN LEGEND
PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID BAILEY
CAMERA EYE STUDIO, LONDON
DECEMBER 19, 2006

THE GENTLEMEN’S FUND is an initiative that raises support and awareness for five principles essential to men—Opportunity, Health, Education, Environment, and Justice. Established in 2007 to commemorate GQ’s 50th anniversary, The Gentlemen’s Fund furthers a modern man’s desire to be an agent of change by benefiting charities that champion these causes.

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City of Fear

Operating by cell phone, a highly organized prison gang launched an attack that shut down Brazil’s largest city last May, with the authorities powerless to stop it. For many in São Paulo, this vast, amorphous criminal network is the only government they have.

By William Langewiesche

For seven days last May the city of São Paulo, Brazil, teetered on the edge of a feral zone where governments barely reach and countries lose their meaning. That zone is a wilderness inhabited already by large populations worldwide, but officially denied and rarely described. It is not a throwback to the Dark Ages, but an evolution toward something new—a companion to globalization, and an element in a fundamental reordering that may gradually render national boundaries obsolete. It is most obvious in the narco-lands of Colombia and Mexico, in the fractured swaths of Africa, in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, in much of Iraq. But it also exists beneath the surface in places where governments are believed to govern and countries still seem to be strong.

Certainly Brazil qualifies. And São Paulo is not some flimsy town. Though it suffers from violent crime and shoddy streets, it is the largest metropolis in South America, home to 20 million people, a global business and banking center, and the capital of Brazil’s wealthiest and most powerful state. From its center of luxurious condominiums and office towers, it spreads across 3,000 square miles, sprouting tall apartment buildings for as far as the eye can see. It has a problem with shantytowns and slums, the favelas which ring the city with illegal constructions and millions upon millions of the ultra-poor. But most of the favelas lie on the periphery, so far beyond view that for the upper and middle classes they can almost be ignored. And look on the bright side: back toward the center, São Paulo has a great university, beautiful garden restaurants, continued on page 165.
Every journey needs a Journal.

- High School Valedictorian
- Marries College Sweetheart
- Earns First Million from Pro Football
- Breaks Giants All-Time Rushing Record
- Becomes TV Commentator
- Hosts Radio Talk Shows
- Writes Children’s Books
Cooking Up a Revolution

By JONATHAN HALPERN

Portland, Ore.

A meeting of a revolutionary cause was held here recently, about 20 members of whose ranks are Collaborative 312. A hard core gathering (did we say in their seventies?) got out of bed early in the morning to discuss how to bring about revolution. They said it was necessary.

They say the Collaborative has been around the bend before. Dick Brandt, the group's leader and proprietor of Panisse Restaurant in Chicago, said he was not surprised.

The chain has Narrative, a chain of small restaurants that use locally sourced ingredients. The group members have been meeting for years, he said, and they are not going to stop now.

Opens Chez Panisse Restaurant in Berk named Best Chef in America.

While in France discovers the power of seasonal local ingredients.

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Keeping Your Financial Footing at 22

As to you graduate and land a job, quickly to an emergency reserve, buy a house, open a 401(a) plan and open a retirement account. It can cause a neap of anxiety, New York Alliance Bernstein Investments recently surveyed college graduates between ages 21 and 24. Among those who graduated with debt, they were now living paycheck to paycheck, versus those who graduated debt-free. And the problem isn't just caused by student loans. Almost a quarter of undergraduates have credit-card balances of $3,000 or more, says a study by Nellie Mae, the college Mass. After graduation, fees can easily balk at home.
TO DO:
- OPEN MOTORCYCLE SHOP
- SHOOT EPISODE OF "AMERICAN CHOPPER"
- YELL AT SON
- ORDER GAS TANK
- YELL AT OTHER SON

- Happy Workers Are the Best Workers

- HAVE A FATHER/SON MOMENT

Every journey needs a Journal.
leaders were angry about a certain transfer of prisoners that had just taken place, but this was not something the government could survive undoing, and in any case the P.C.C. had made no such demand. Indeed, it was making no demands at all. The gang's top man was being held in solitary confinement at a maximum-security prison 350 miles west of the city. He was a career criminal named Marcos Cardoso, or Marcola, who was said to be intelligent and a careful student of Sun Tzu's classic text, *The Art of War*. Now 39, he had spent half of his life in prison and was serving a long sentence for armed robbery and kidnapping. On Sunday, May 14, with the attacks ongoing, a police airplane flew four envoys from São Paulo to see him and negotiate a peace. Typically, Marcola denied any knowledge of the attacks and refused to get involved. He would not even use a proffered cell phone to quash a rumor of his demise, though he finally did allow another prisoner to make the call. After several hours the envoys flew home.

The day after the attacks suddenly stopped, word spread through São Paulo that the state had agreed to provide the P.C.C. with 60 flat-screen televisions for enhanced viewing of the upcoming World Cup soccer matches. A prison official later told me that the televisions in question already belonged to the P.C.C., that they were part of a hijacked load, and that the P.C.C. had wanted—and now received—the right to bring them in as a jailhouse boast. And okay, in Brazil soccer really does matter. But no such petty purpose can explain an assault on an entire city, nor can superficial political theories, of which there are several. Clearly, something much larger was going on. What is certain is that the assault was a demonstration of strength, an act of self-affirmation, and a measured blow against the rule of law. Some of the attacks were so brazen as to be nearly suicidal. The point being made was not that they could be carried out, but that they could be sustained. The lack of serious demands added a vicious twist. It denied the government the power even to concede, and allowed the P.C.C. to script the drama from beginning to end. Moreover, because the P.C.C. leaders were already in prison, they had little to fear of punishment. They could taunt the state from within the very walls it had built to contain them. Ah, the art of war.

A lawyer I spoke to called the asymmetry outrageously unfair. She said, "They can send people to kill the police, but the police can’t do the same to them, because they are under state protection!" The police in particular felt the frustration. Able to identify only the occasional culprit, and ordered by their superiors nonetheless to get tough, they struck back with masked death squads and uniformed agents against the residents of the slums. Brazilian law officially precludes capital punishment. But by the end of the week, when the actions ceased, the police had killed at least 450 people, many with execution-style shots to the head. The state disputed the numbers and came up with 100 or so dead, most of them killed while resisting arrest. In a traumatized city where many people had condoned the police actions, only the most credulous could believe such unbelievable claims. The state was making a show of its fictions. It is a fact of history that the pretense of governing endures even as government disappears.

**Big Jelly and Little Cesar**

Brazil. The World Cup. The P.C.C. was a soccer team at the start. It was founded in a São Paulo state prison in the summer of 1993 by eight players, seven of whom have since died. The prison sits in the city of Taubaté, off the road to Rio de Janeiro. At the time it was a punishment unit, where troublemakers went for stints of solitary confinement before being returned to larger prisons elsewhere in the state. Conditions there were atrocious. The prisoners lived locked alone into 160 dark and putrid cells, surviving on filthy but word spread quickly, and traffic snarled as citizens tried to rush home. After they settled behind locked doors, they did not dare to venture out. Restaurants and shops were closed. The boulevards lay lit and abandoned. On television came news that the attacks were the work of a prison gang, half forgotten but widely known, called Primeiro Comando da Capital, or P.C.C., the First Command of the Capital. Across the state 73 prisons rose in synchronous rebellion. This caused less concern than one might expect, in part because prison riots are common in Brazil, and are routinely if sometimes brutally contained. But the attacks against the city were something else, and the government had no idea how to respond.

State authorities claimed that the situation was under control, but television showed that it was not. In fact, the authorities were barricaded inside their headquarters watching the same broadcast scenes. Some of the replays were set to music. The attacks continued in irregular waves, without discernible patterns. Through Friday night and across the weekend the police reeled forward, abandoning their posts, only to be ambushed in the open. The police in São Paulo are despised for corruption and brutality, but they do loosely stand for law and order, and it was shocking to see them in retreat. Over the first two days more than 40 police officers and prison guards were killed, and also one of the firemen responding to the flames. For every agent killed, several others were wounded. Passersby died, caught in the crossfire. The national government offered to send in the army, but for political reasons the state refused. It was Sunday now, and Mother's Day. I later heard the recording of a cell-phone call in which a woman who had just torched a bus complained that a service station had sold her adulterated gasoline that did not burn hot enough. Who can you trust? The city huddled through the third night. On Monday morning, after a period of calm, people summoned the courage to return to work, in the hope that the trouble was over. But at midday the attacks resumed, and people again fled for their homes, creating one of the greatest traffic jams in São Paulo’s great traffic-jam history.

Then, as abruptly as they had started, on Monday night the attacks suddenly stopped. It was widely assumed that the state had caved in and made concessions. And in fact the state had tried. Halfway through the weekend, having realized that they lacked the ability to restore order, the authorities bitterly concluded that they would have to negotiate—but with whom and about what? The P.C.C. is an immense and secretive network of semi-autonomous cells, and is shapeless by design. It includes 90 percent of São Paulo’s 140,000 inmates, and at least as many people in the slums. The authorities knew that its
slops, defecating into holes they could not flush, and subject to beatings by the guards. They were released into the yards only every few days, and in groups of merely five. Some committed suicide. Most, however, were tough, and managed not only to remain vital but also to communicate fully from cell to cell. In 1993, when they lobbied the warden for a soccer tournament, he decided to let them form teams. It is unclear how exactly they proceeded, given that they remained locked in their cells and could not assemble to practice. Through the jailhouse telegraph they gave their teams names in anticipation of battle. Several included the word “Command” for the swagger.

but the P.C.C. outdid all the others by calling itself “First,” and staking claim to the “Capital.” In light of subsequent events, the name may sound like a warning. The warden himself was eventually murdered by the monster he had created. But the Primeiro Comando da Capital was born wanting just to play soccer.

T he games were held in an enclosed yard, without spectators or guards. The P.C.C. won a few matches, became its cellblock champion, and prepared to play a rival team from another part of the prison. During the run-up to the game, the competition got out of hand when the boasts turned to taunts, and the taunts became threats. Each team vowed to drink the other team’s blood. The captain of the P.C.C. was a killer from the lowest of São Paulo’s slums, a physically powerful man named Geleião (Big Jelly), who had grown up in the gutter, and was now 35. His side-kick was a natural-born fighter named Césinha (Little Cesar), five years younger, who had a reputation for bravery and was to serve as the P.C.C.’s chief executioner over the decade to come. Césinha had been raised in a middle-class family, but even as a child had idealized crime, and at the age of 12 had killed for the first time.

On the day of the match, August 31, 1993, the two teams moved together down a hallway toward the prison yard. The details remain obscure, but it seems that the guards were nowhere to be seen, and that the last P.C.C. player closed a barred door behind them to ensure privacy. Just before they got to the yard, Geleião made the first move. He grabbed an opposing player, and with a single ferocious twist killed the man by snapping his neck. Césinha and the others sprang forward, and with bare hands and shivs took another four lives. There is no evidence that they enjoyed the killing. They inhabited a violent world and had responded necessarily to insults they believed it would have been dangerous to leave unanswered. In doing so they had also condemned themselves to lives of unending vigilance and strength, since every one of the dead men had family or friends who might try to take revenge. Afterward, they swore a public vow of mutual defense. Through the telegraph they declared, “We are united forever now. Whatever happens to one happens to all. We will never betray each other. We are brothers for life.” That simple vow proved impossible to follow, but it established a principle from which all else evolved, and among the prisoners of São Paulo it resonated loudly.

The Mark of the P.C.C.

T he prisons of São Paulo were falling apart under the loads they had to bear. The most notorious of them was a decrepit facility named Carandiru, which dated from 1956 and was the largest in Brazil. It stood inside the São Paulo city limits in an industrial neighborhood on the north side of town, surrounded by high gray
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walls and accessed through a single heavy gate. It contained nine cellblocks, each five stories tall, and by the early 1990s held more than 7,000 inmates, nearly twice the intended capacity. On October 2, 1992—11 months before the P.C.C.'s bloody birth in Taubaté—it was the scene of a massacre by the police, who while suppressing a rebellion in its Cellblock Nine had killed 111 prisoners and wounded 130 others. To carry this out the police had fired merely 515 rounds—a record of efficiency reflecting the fact that most of the shooting had been done at point-blank range on prisoners who had already surrendered and were cowering in their cells.

In the background was a crime rate in São Paulo that was among the highest in the world, and the fact that even as the city was remaking itself into a center of global business it was being transformed into an archipelago of innumerable little fortresses where a large population of the fortunate lived and worked in near-total isolation from the poor. The two transformations were related. It was not only that the poor were being abandoned by government but that the very need for government was being questioned by the elites. Armored cars, private guards, helicopters, and business jets. Walls and high-voltage fences. Cheap labor, filthy rivers, and private schools. Tax evasion. Yes, and the fullness of long-distance communication. Within the limits of comfort, global capital seemed to be seeking places where laws were almost a charade, and in São Paulo it was demonstrating that the connection that mattered was neither to the street nor to the state. For better or worse the pattern was driven by trends larger than Brazil. For better or worse national policies were helpless to stop it. No insight was required to understand that crime was a symptom of poverty and alienation. But these were problems that government programs could barely address. Let alone solve, and so, predictably, in the 1990s, authorities in São Paulo started cracking down and getting tough on crime. Fading states are not without power. Arrests and convictions soured, and sentences grew longer. It was a popular policy in São Paulo, where people assumed that their streets would grow safer, as if crime were a finite problem, and violence was a predilection of some certain percentage of the population. Recently I met an anthropologist with a different view, who told me that after a talk she gave in São Paulo she encountered a businessman who was very mad. He said, "Don't talk to me about projects in the slums. What we need now is an even harder line." The previous week in his new armored car he had been robbed and shot in the arm when he had pushed the wrong button and rolled down a window instead of sounding an alarm. Oh, and she knew of another driver who had kept his windows closed in a similar circumstance, but while yanking out a pistol just to be safe had shot himself in the leg. Was this the fate of São Paulo? All that is certain about the get-tough campaign is that in the 1990s the state's prisons could not handle the surge, and that Carandiru, for one, was overwhelmed.

Carandiru had at most 100 guards for its inmate population of 7,000, a ratio approximately one-tenth that of San Quentin. Though the guards circulated throughout the prison, for the most part the prisoners were left alone to sort things out for themselves. To some degree they did. A medical doctor named Drauzio Varella, who for 13 years volunteered his services every Monday there, told me that Carandiru offered proof that people are not rats. Varella is a man of extraordinary talents, a renowned oncologist and writer, who published a memoir of Carandiru and in recent years has produced a series of popular television documentaries on subjects of health. We walked together through an impoverished area near the city's center, stopping every few minutes for strangers who approached to say hello or complain of their ailments. In the intervals we talked. Varella said, "Rats who are overcrowded become violent. There have been experiments in the United States to show it. But Carandiru showed that people in those same conditions will organize, and establish rules for their survival. The rules in Carandiru evolved as the prison grew more crowded. They were not written down, but were passed on as understandings. For instance, you had to wash. Every day. And during meal delivery you could not stay in the hallways. For hygiene. Inside the cells, when people were eating, you could not use the toilet. You could not spit. You could not cough. You could not pick your teeth."

And these were mere manners. More serious restrictions applied to the regular weekend visits by family and friends, when concerns greater than health were at play. Since 1984 the right to such visits has included the right to have sex. Space for these "intimate visits" is not officially provided, but is arranged nonetheless by the inmates. Varella was struck by the system in Carandiru. He said, "Some of the cellblocks had more than a thousand prisoners. Five, six guys per cell. Can you imagine women coming to such a place to have sex with their men? But it was the most respectful thing. The couples went up the stairs. While they climbed on one side, on the other side men came down to receive their own visitors. When a woman passed as she climbed, these prisoners averted their gazes—aggressively. Usually they looked at the walls. And then there was the scene upstairs. Men without visitors were not allowed to descend, but had to leave their cells and stand in the halls. As the couples walked along the halls, all these men looked at the ground. You could track the progress of the couples by watching the heads go down. And so the couple entered a cell. If there were two or three guys getting intimate visits, they made a timetable between them. Each couple was allowed one hour alone. And after one hour, they had to go out. I was so impressed that it was possible in Carandiru for these men to organize in such a way. But, you know, anarchy does not endure in human affairs. And there is no empty space for power in prison."

I said, "There is no empty space for power in the world." He laughed. "Yes, in the world."

The first rule was the need to pay debts. The deal-making was pervasive. Prisoners decided between them who would sleep where. The best cells were considered owned, and were bought and sold and rented. The main business, however, was in drugs. The principal drug was cocaine, which people injected into their veins, or smoked in the form of crack. The price was twice that of the street. Varella said, "The law was very strict. If you didn't pay, you died. Because if I sold you crack and you didn't pay me back, if I did nothing, nobody else would pay me, either. And I had to pay my supplier, because he had to pay his own supplier. So I had to kill you. This usually happened on Mondays, because the sellers gave the weekends for families to bring money."

In each cellblock the acknowledged boss, according to Varella, was the chief of the inmate janitors, known as the Cleaner. Varella said, "If you wanted to kill me, you had to talk to him first. You had to go to the Cleaner and say, 'I have to kill Drauzio Varella.' " "Okay, why?"

"Because back in the neighborhood he rapped my sister-in-law."

"Do you have any evidence?"

"I have a police report of the rape."

"So bring it to me."

Varella went on with his story. He said, "The Cleaners were the judges of the cellblocks. Very smart guys. Silent. They knew how to

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listen. Very calmly. They would talk economically. They were interesting types. Usually they were not physically strong. Sometimes they were very small guys. But strength had no role at Carandiru, because people had to sleep. And if you gather 20 guys, even Mike Tyson wouldn’t stand a chance. So you would bring your evidence to the Cleaner, and he would read it and say, “Okay, you can kill Varella. But I’ll tell you which day.” Not just any day, because it might conflict with other plans, like a drug deal, another killing, or an attempted escape. The Cleaner would say, “Okay, you can do it on Friday morning.” And then you really had to follow through. If you went back to the Cleaner and said, “I thought a little bit more, and I decided after all that I don’t need to do this,” then you were not a serious guy. You would have to leave the cellblock, ask the guards to transfer you, because the Cleaner would never again allow you to share the space with him.”

Varella’s affection for Carandiru was unabashed and clear: he had been seduced by the humanity residing there. He was also an embellisher, an artist with a poetic South American mind, who had experienced Carandiru subjectively and now remembered it through the constructs of his writing. This was obvious, and he pretended nothing else. His descriptions of the prison were matters of the heart as well as the mind. But he was not, as some people claim dismissively, an apologist for the men who were being held there, or for the society they had built. After all, he was a doctor too and squarely confronted the horrors. Man-on-man rapes. Thoughtless wars over turf. Unprovoked murders. Sadistic cruelties of the worst kind. Suicide. Many of the inmates lived in desperation or denial. Crack was an epidemic, and intravenous cocaine nearly as bad. Seventeen percent of the prisoners had H.I.V. or full-blown AIDS. Sixty percent of them had hepatitis C.

Varella tested a group of 80 transvestites for H.I.V. and found that 78 percent were positive; among those who had been in prison six years or more, the rate was 100 percent. And they were doing this to themselves. Anarchy does not endure in human affairs, but Carandiru had rules that were clearly inadequate.

Varella saw the worst of it because one of his duties was to inspect the dead. He said, “That is a very disgusting experience, to see these guys stabbed and covered in blood. Full of holes from different-sized knives. And it was very common. Sometimes I’d have two or three or five bodies at a time. And then one day it got even worse. I think this was around 1995. A man was killed, and when I turned his body over, his head flopped to the side. He was nearly decapitated. It was clear that this had been done after his death. When people are killed, they fight and scream and try to escape. They all do. No one could have made such a full clean cut on someone struggling like that. And so I said, ‘What savagery is it to do this to anyone?’

‘A guard said, ‘This is the P.C.C.’s mark.’

‘And I said, ‘What is the P.C.C.?’

‘The guard said, ‘It’s a small group of guys who are very cruel and are trying to impose themselves by violence.’”

Cell-Phone Swarm

Glelêio and Césinha had arrived from Taubaté. Under their leadership at Carandiru the P.C.C. expanded into the narcotics trade. Though it was ruthless, it was also judicious and cool. It murdered spectacularly, but only in calculation of need. What it had that the competing factions lacked was discipline. The discipline was based on a moral code that enhanced the existing prison rules and included an insistence on better living conditions and prisoners’ rights. The P.C.C. was a criminal gang but also
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political force—albeit an absurdly self-righteous one. Prisoners were attracted to the group because it brought order to their lives and gave them purpose, protection, and power. There were obligations. P.C.C. followers lived by its laws under penalty of death. Those who formally joined became “Brothers” for life. They were initiated with a baptism involving water, and had to sign a 16-point manifesto that still serves as the P.C.C.’s constitution. The 16th point was a declaration of the group’s intent. It stated, “No one can stop our struggle, because the seed of the Command has spread throughout the prison system of the state, and we are also succeeding in establishing ourselves on the outside... We will revolutionize the country from inside the prisons, and our strong arm will be the Terror of the

Though the gang was funded by criminal ventures, including the narcotics trade, its motivation was never primarily greed. Even today the leaders show little sign of personal wealth, and though some must profit from their positions, they do not seem to use the group’s resources as their own. Marcola supports a girlfriend in middle-class style but himself lives a life that is famously austere. Still, there were perks from early on. Amid the general squalor of the prisons, full members were provided with immaculate quarters in special P.C.C. sections, where the cells were freshly painted white, hung with art and illustrations, and well stocked with food and drink, magazines, books, and

ALL FOR ONE The 2001 “Mega-Rebellion” involved Carandiru and 28 other prisons.
eventually TVs. The advantages of the group's discipline were felt elsewhere as well. Excluding the killings carried out by the P.C.C. itself, murders started declining if for no other reason than that rivals were being crushed. Rape was effectively outlawed. And pressure was being applied against the use of injected drugs and crack cocaine—both seen by the P.C.C. as corrosive to its power. H.I.V. rates began to drop. This happened even as the state continued to overcrowd the prisons, increasing the population by 800 inmates a month, and measurably aiding the P.C.C. in its rise to power.

Further aid was provided by globalization. Under pressure from international lenders, and burdened by state-owned industries it could no longer sustain, Brazil had opened itself to global capital and was pursuing a policy of economic liberalization. In 1997 it deregulated and privatized telecommunications. The result was an explosion of networks as multi-national companies rushed in to compete for the business. Until then cell-phone coverage in São Paulo had been spotty, but within two years the gaps had been filled, and prices had begun to come down. Particularly around the prisons, the usage was high, and the companies responded by building more capacity. According to one official I spoke to, the government was not aware of the pattern at the time, but, later, when it was requested that the companies shut down their services within reception range of the prison walls, the companies resisted, as they resist today, in the name of the greater good provided by a truly free market. Be that as it may, the P.C.C. stood at the forefront of telecommunications. The phones it used were smuggled into the prisons, along with a flood of cards containing hijacked numbers. The system was sophisticated and was built by corrupted technicians. It relied on several dozen “centrals,” which functioned as cell-phone forwarders through which conference calls could be made.

Starting around 1999, the conference calls were made twice a day. Typically they consisted of the most senior leadership concurring with the top men in each of the prisons—30 or 40 at a time—and because of the large numbers, the calls required discipline and practice. Each call began with a social round, reaffirming the P.C.C.’s integrity and goals. Good morning, Brother. How are you today? Now, tell us if you’ve run into problems, and what we can do to help. The first order of business pertained to the details of prison life—inedible food here, an abusive guard there, the rough treatment of visiting families everywhere. The second order of business pertained to business itself, to challenges or opportunities in the drug trade, to punishments that had to be meted out, and to budgets. On whatever subject, solutions were openly discussed (and opinions were sometimes polled) before the ranking member made a decision and moved the conversation on.

The P.C.C. was ignorant and cruel, but it was also proving itself to be extraordinarily adept. At a point when greed and overextension might have caused a more rigid organization to break apart, the P.C.C. gained the strength to take on the state. The cell phones lay at the heart of that process. They allowed the P.C.C. to transcend the pettiness of location, to rise even above prison walls, and to operate without restraint in an ethereal world of communication. The group began to reshape itself, away from its original pyramid design, and toward a structure of semi-autonomous cells which was so fluid and complex that it could not be pinned down. A young prosecutor near Taubaté showed me a map of the connections that his office had made. It was based on intercepted calls and was plotted with the same investigative-analysis software used by the U.S. military in Iraq. I mentioned to the prosecutor that his map looked like

those purporting to chart the insurgency in Anbar Province—a web of lines so chaotic that no useful pattern results. The prosecutor nodded glumly and said, “What in God’s name is happening in Iraq?”

I held up my hands in surrender. “This P.C.C. structure, do you think it was intended?”

“No, look at it—how could this be planned? It was built of nothing but relations that multiplied.”

It was built of conversation. It was financed by crime. It was too loose to be steered tightly, but it had the innate ability to swarm. It offered proof that people are not rats, because they organize in ways that change with the times. By 2001 even the government had to recognize the P.C.C.’s power. The recognition went public on the morning of February 18, when Carandiru and 28 other prisons rose in simultaneous revolt—an action of unexpected scale, now known as the “Mega-Rebellion,” whose immediate cause was the transfer of 10 P.C.C. leaders to Taubaté. All for 10 and 10 for all. More profoundly, the time had come for the P.C.C. to demonstrate its strength. For reference, the 9/11 attacks on the United States lay seven months ahead. Because 2/18 was a Sunday, the prisons were filled with visiting families and friends. Prison tradition precluded trouble on visitors’ days, but the P.C.C. saw the advantage to be gained, and it took 7,000 people hostage behind the barricades. To the state the message was Fuck you and checkmate. Some of the hostages felt betrayed, but most accepted the logic of the game: their presence could keep the police at bay and would prevent the massacre of their beloved men. The P.C.C. had an elegant touch. When given the chance to leave, most hostages chose to stay. The rebellious prisoners were hardly calm: 16 prisoners were murdered by fellow inmates who took this opportunity to settle accounts. But the state was indeed thrown into doubt, and it reacted with uncommon caution. When the police were sent in they killed only four men, and probably in genuine self-defense.

**P.C.C. “BROTHERS” ARE INITIATED WITH A BAPTISM INVOLVING WATER, AND THEY LIVE BY ITS LAWS UNDER PENALTY OF DEATH.**

They moved so slowly that after two days it was the P.C.C. and not the state that restored order in most of the prisons.

Afterward, the authorities took credit for themselves and publicly proclaimed that they would not tolerate this gang. But within the privacy of the prisons they had to cede ground. The P.C.C. did not expect the state to disappear; it accepted that the government controlled the police, the courts, and the prison perimeters, and it required that the government provide health care, food, and blankets. But beyond such basics, it pushed to create prisons where the state could barely function. The authorities pushed back, as authorities do. Carandiru was a symbol for much that had gone wrong, and in September 2002 it was emptied and slated for demolition. It was replaced with new, smaller prisons, in the hope that smaller populations could be controlled more easily. The prison administration transferred some leaders and swept the cellblocks, confiscating weapons and cell phones. None of this mattered. The P.C.C. continued to grow. And so, after a while, with an election coming, officials simply declared that victory had been won. Your taxes at work. Mission Accomplished. Thanks to good government, the citizens of São Paulo could again sleep soundly.

**Carandiru Rules**

But many citizens already did sleep soundly—and all the more so because they had invested in private guards and fortifications, using some of the money they saved by evading taxes. Out in the city’s favelas, the state’s claims provoked laughter. The favelas are among the wildest slums in the world—places where the police are vigorously despised, and where it is good government, and not the P.C.C., that seems to have been dismantled. In 1998,
there were no murders in the wealthy Jardins neighborhood, while in the shantytown of Jardim Angela, there were nearly 200. The P.C.C.’s growth in the favelas was typically unplanned. It proceeded sporadically as drug purchases were made to supply the prison market, members came home after serving their time, P.C.C. families sought assistance and protection, and independent criminals saw advantages that the affiliation might provide. Residents had never encountered such a group before. These Brothers who did not mess around, these sons who had become such serious men. Initially the P.C.C. treated its favela crews as subsidiaries whose function was to support its prison agenda, but later, as it reshaped itself around cell-phone communications, the distinction dissolved, and the leaders discovered that they could direct an outside empire from inside the prisons’ walls. Marcola in particular had the imagination and strength to do it. He led a coup in 2002, put a bounty on the heads of Geleiao and Césinha, and, having assumed the top position, aggressively expanded the P.C.C. not only to the 90 percent point in the inmate population but also to a position of such strength that it could dominate millions in the city’s unruly slums.

Elsewhere in São Paulo the domination is still poorly understood. After the attacks last May, newspapers worldwide reflected the confusion when they reported that the mysterious attackers were inmates who had been released on leave for the Mother’s Day weekend. They were not. They were city residents, low-level P.C.C. operatives, some with debts to repay. Following the destruction of New York’s World Trade Center, the P.C.C. started calling such people “bin Ladeens.” In May they were indeed terrorists for a few days, but so politically hollow that even social reformers in middle-class São Paulo insist that the rhetoric of the P.C.C. is a sham. The unanimity of opinion is striking. Apparently there are a few old-fashioned Marxists who proclaim that the P.C.C. is the vanguard—at last!—of the long-awaited revolution. But outside the favelas I myself have not met a single person in São Paulo who doesn’t dismiss the P.C.C. as merely criminal.

Across the city’s divide and inside the favelas, opinions are more ambivalent. People do not deny that the P.C.C. is a ruthless criminal enterprise occupied primarily with the narcotics trade. But they acknowledge its positive effects as well, not only in the prisons and for prisoners’ families, but in the communities at large, where the gang, however selfishly, has provided a crude new order one step up from the chaos that preceded its arrival. People understand the context too. Over beers in a favela I met a community leader and former armed robber who went by the name Marcos and was certainly no apologist for the P.C.C., but who tried to give me the view from the slums. He said, “We have all this information now—the TV, the Internet—so we’ve become more aware of what’s happening in the world, and in this city. Whether it’s soap opera or not, we see how the rich live. We also see how the TV lies. It shows a Brazil in which everything is perfect—the houses, the neighborhoods, the families. The poor look happy, like the Carnaval. But the reality in most of São Paulo is murder, violence, and drugs.”

I said, “It seems like there are two realities here, Marcos. Because the rich can hide from you, and as far as I can tell, in São Paulo they hide pretty well.”

He reminded me of the May attacks. “All their walls and armored cars won’t solve the problem for them. They should start paying attention to the entire city. If they dropped the walls, they’d have to.”

“But Brazil is moving in the opposite direction.”

“Yeah, it is. And the candidate for governor is. If I get elected I’m going to build five new prisons and add 30,000 people. Well, if he’s got the money to do that, why doesn’t he put it into the schools, or into programs that help the people—into avoiding having 30,000 new prisoners?”

I answered, “Because it would be more expensive. Because it would require more time. Because the taxpayers don’t pay taxes. Because they wouldn’t support the programs if they did. Because the programs might help a little, but wouldn’t help enough. Because it would be hard to measure results. Because the government is not trusted. Because Brazil has to pay back its international loans.”

He said, “Okay, so the P.C.C. has come along.”

I asked him for details. He said, “First, it looks after the prisoners’ families by making sure they have enough to eat, and running a weekend bus service to the prisons for free. But it also helps ordinary people who have nothing to do with crime. If they go to the P.C.C. and mention their needs, usually they will be provided with the basic things, like food baskets, or medications, or maybe some material for patching their roofs. A lot of the older people are afraid of the P.C.C. and stay away. But the young ones will turn to anyone who can help.”

I said, “I spoke to a prosecutor yesterday who denies absolutely that this happens. He says that the P.C.C. only looks after itself.”

“The guy you spoke to yesterday, he’s part of the government. He’ll never admit that the P.C.C. is playing a role. But we live here, and we know.” Others sitting with us chimed in to agree. Marcos said, “But the most important thing that the P.C.C. provides is not charity but rules. Like if you’re someplace where there’s about to be a fight with guns, and suddenly the P.C.C. arrives, people immediately calm down. Anyone who violates the rules they impose is going to have to answer for it.”

“What are these rules?”

“Basic rules that we all agree with. For instance, not to look at another man’s wife, not to rape, not to steal from the poor, not to steal from the little businesses here, not to inform on people. not to get in an argument and just take out your gun and kill someone. The rules aren’t written down, but we all know what they are. What’s wrong and what’s right. Even the top drug dealers don’t dare be arrogant the way they were. They have to be humble, because even if they’re not P.C.C., they have to answer to the P.C.C. That goes for all of us now. You can’t kill someone just because he did something you don’t like. You have to go to the P.C.C. and explain why he has to die, and they will talk to the guy and decide on the punishment.”

I said, “Carandiri rules.”

Marcos had been a prisoner there. He said, “Like that. And the murder rate has dropped way off. A few years ago we had lots of killings here, and now things are much safer. The government goes around claiming credit because of its security policies, and programs like bringing in water and closing the bars earlier at night, but the truth is that the killings have slowed because the P.C.C. has arrived. See, murder was mostly a favela crime. Look at the rest of São Paulo, where the P.C.C. doesn’t have much interest, in the better parts of town. There they have lots of police, but kidnapping, robbery, and theft keep going up—understand?”

He called the P.C.C. a “parallel government,” but “proto-government” might be a better term, since the P.C.C.’s rule is exceedingly crude. Either way, the credit given to it for improvements seems pretty universal in the favelas. In another such neighborhood I met a young woman who for years had “walked” with the P.C.C. without becoming a full member, and whose name
I cannot use, because she had turned against the group and was trying at some risk to disengage. Even she, who was otherwise skeptical, appreciated the gang’s effect on civic order. She said, “There used to be a dealer here who tried to dominate the area, and would not share the business at all. When the Brothers came, they threw him out. Actually, they caught him and were going to kill him, but he escaped and ran away. But they don’t use violence cheaply. Every Wednesday they get together and talk about all the events of the week, and they really try to find ways to avoid having to kill people for what they’ve done wrong. And things are much better now in the favela. It used to be that you didn’t dare go out on the streets late at night. You couldn’t enjoy yourself. You couldn’t go dancing. You had to stay home and stay inside. It used to be there was a lot of gunfire. Exchanges of gunfire. That doesn’t happen so much anymore.”

She was sitting on her bed in her little dark hole of a windowless two-room cinder-block home. She laughed when I asked her if the police at the district station could offer any protection. Only if you have money, she said, then just maybe they will protect you. But no no, if you go to the station or contact them in any way, they will make you wait for hours, make your life hard, treat you like a criminal. They care only about extorting money from drug dealers on the streets. So, no, not the police, not me, not ever. She had a friend who was pregnant and who phoned them after her husband beat her, and they said, Are you sure you really want to file a complaint, because if you do you’ll be waiting for hours just to fill out the report, and then it’ll be days before we’ll get around to calling your husband in.

I said, “Why didn’t she go to the P.C.C.?”

“If she had gone to the Brothers they would have been quick. But then her husband would have been in real trouble. They would either have expelled him from the neighborhood or warned him and given him another chance. But that would have been the last chance.” She laughed again. “And she was in love.”

Several nights later on the far side of the city I met with the leader of a P.C.C. cell, a “pilot” in the parlance of the gang, in reference to the responsibilities of command. He controlled five municipalities, where perhaps a half-million people live. The encounter was difficult to arrange. It took place in a slum where police death squads had been active in May, in a small house crammed with beds and used as a crash pad for P.C.C. soldiers. The neighbors had been warned to stay off the streets, and for several blocks P.C.C. sentries had been posted; they stood against walls and in the darkness of doorways, with no weapons in sight. My intermediary seemed nervous, but then he got stoned. We waited inside the house by a window without glass that overlooked a favela valley. The night was hot. P.C.C. soldiers milled about, drinking beer that we had brought. Some sat in chairs. They were mostly silent. One mentioned that he had just escaped from prison by buying the paperwork to order his release.

When the pilot walked in, everyone stood up. He was a tall, heavyset man in his late 20s, and completely unsmiling. Despite the heat, he wore a sweater and a heavy wool cap. He sat and we talked, but the conversation was sparse. He made claims about the P.C.C. that were transparently false. He said, “The Command has a vision of progress not only inside the prisons but outside in society. Not everyone who joins is a criminal. We
also have good lawyers, and lots of upper-class people and intellectuals."

"Why would upper-class people get so involved?"

"Because they have revolutionary minds."

"So the Command is a revolutionary movement?"

"Yes."

"Okay, so jump ahead and tell me what you are fighting toward. Let's say you win your revolution and take power. What kind of Brazil do you want to build then?"

A smile flickered across his lips. He said, "We do not think about winning. We rebel against the government more to give a response now than with a vision of the future in mind."

That part at least seemed honest. But then he said, "In all the attacks against the police last May, we didn't kill a single innocent man. Everyone who was killed deserved to die for what he had done. The action was carefully planned."

"And perfectly executed."

"We respect the police who do their job correctly. We can accept it if they come to us after we have committed a crime. But the police who come and just humiliate the people, mistreat them, beat them up—those police will be stopped."

"What about the police who came in here afterward and killed so many innocent people? Since the P.C.C. provoked those killings, wasn't it your duty to fight back at that time? To defend the people?"

"The fault is with the media. Since it shows the Command in such a negative light, we have to stay quiet and hidden. And that's why it's difficult for us to protect society."

And so it went for an hour or more. From his position of authority, the pilot expected his words to be accepted at face value. He was a politician practicing spin. He was proto-presidential. Certain topics remained off limits to me. When I followed general questions about P.C.C. dues—its primitive form of taxation—by asking where the money ends up, my intermediary fluttered in his marijuana haze and apologized on my behalf. The pilot said, "It's a sensitive subject." He let the moment pass. When he frowned he was the picture of magisterial calm. He was strangely pompous, it now seemed to me. He was positively governmental.

The Feral Zones

T he P.C.C. brought order to the prisons and slums, but showed itself to be lower than animalistic. It perfected a form of murder by which those whom it condemned to die were forced through threat of torture to commit suicide. In 2005, during a twoday riot that gutted a prison in a town called Venceslau, it invaded a protective-custody section, decapitated five of its enemies, mounted the heads on poles to wave before TV cameras, and, it is alleged, then placed one on the ground for a game of P.C.C. soccer. The P.C.C. was feral and twisted, but so what—it existed. The state secretary of prison administration at the time was a Japanese Brazilian named Nagashi Furukawa, who had arrived as a reformer and for five years had tried to apply the principles of good government, one of which is the need to be realistic. Furukawa despised the P.C.C., but he had formally recognized its power, and, having accepted a permanent withdrawal of guards from the cellblocks and yards in most prisons, he had tried to manage the inmate populations through the sole use of P.C.C. intermediaries. For a while the prisons had been calm, but now riots were again on the rise, and the P.C.C. was becoming insa-
SÃO PAULO IS NOT ALONE. IT IS A FACT OF HISTORY THAT THE PRETENSE OF GOVERNING ENDURES EVEN AS GOVERNMENT DISAPPEARS.
SPOTLIGHT

DOG DAYS WITH PICASSO

David Douglas Duncan relaxes in Castelloraz, France, at the home he shares with his wife, Sheila, and his trusty Norwich terrier, Yo-Yo.

LAST OF BREED

Though a Kansas City boy at heart, photojournalist David Douglas Duncan, 91, has been living near Cannes for 45 years, first drawn to the region by his pal Pablo Picasso. Duncan, renowned for taking classic photographs during World War II, then in Korea, then in Vietnam, first stopped by the artist’s home in 1956, en route to an assignment shooting the Berbers of northern Morocco. (A mutual friend, war photographer Robert Capa, had urged Duncan to “look up Picasso and tell him I sent you.”) Soon, these giants of the canvas and the lens became fast friends, and Picasso, taking a fancy to Duncan’s dachshund, Lump, adopted the dog as a miniature muse, incorporating his likeness into scores of paintings. The ubiquitous dachshund is still with us, thanks to Picasso’s art and to Duncan’s latest book, Picasso and Lump (Bulfinch), which celebrates the close, mischievous relationship between painter and pooch.

The indefatigable Duncan was once described as equal parts “frank, shy, and friendly” by the writer John Gunther, who was quick to counter assertions that the cultured, elegant ex-Marine was (in any way) effete. He had hands that looked as if he spent the morning . . . tossing bulldozers around for fun.” If Duncan has slowed with the decades, it barely shows. He recently went to Verona to monitor Picasso and Lump’s third printing. National Geographic is putting the finishing touches on a new edition of his picture-rich autobiography, Photo Nomad. He’s ventured to Barcelona, London, and Málaga (for Picasso exhibitions), Austin (where his archives reside in the esteemed Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas), and New York (for a 70th-anniversary party for Life, which first ran his work in 1938). Duncan, in fact, is among the last of a generation of globe-trotting camera masters: in the past 20 months, he has last eight close peers in succession—photographers John Bryson, 81, Loomis Dean, 88, Gordon Parks, 93, Slim Aarons, 89, Arnold Newman, 88, Joe Rosenthal, 94, Yale Joel, 87, and Martha Holmes, 83 (along with longtime Life editors Joe Thorsdike, 92, and Phil Kunhardt, 78). They are, he says, his “friends of another century.” In the vaulting, nautilus-shaped cocoon of his living room, up the road from Picasso’s old villa, Duncan relishes the years, the memories, the photos, the friends. And the last he misses most dearly.

—DAVID FRIEDMAN
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Brits Behaving Badly

A tour of such New York British hangouts as Soho House, the Red Lion, and Tea & Sympathy left the author, an Englishman, blushing: what makes his fellow expats such a thoroughly annoying lot?

By A. A. Gill

This is a true story. A friend of mine, an English girl, moved to New York and, soon after arriving, romantically acquired a local boyfriend. Shortly after that they were both invited to a party. It would be, she was told, fancy-dress. Fancy-dress parties, unlike emotional openness, child care, and pedicures, are one of those inconsequential and nebulous little things that the English take with an infinite, furrowed-browed, death-or-glory seriousness. After many sleepless hours, my friend decided on witty outfits for herself and the boyfriend. After days of construction, they turned up resplendent and a little sweaty as a pair of tomatoes. She had costumed a Gershwin lyric. She was a tomato, he a tomato. (This doesn’t really work in print.)

It was a tongue-in-taffeta pun. The English simply adore little puns. They were shown into the grand residence and waddled into a room full of Americans wearing black-tie, cocktail frocks, and diamonds. My friend had misunderstood. “Fancy-dress” had meant dress fancy. For any Englishman reading this, stiching a Robin Hood outfit, the American for “fancy-dress” is “costume party.” “What did you do?” I asked my friend. “I laughed and got drunk.” That was very British of you. What did the boyfriend do? “He had a bit of a sense-of-humor failure. But we’re still friends.”

The British have colonized Manhattan, acquiring minute rent-stabilized apartments in the West Village that they pass on to each other like hereditary titles. It’s hard to spot the women—unless they open their mouths. But the British men can be identified by their cropped hair, which they shave to obscure their genetically endemic premature hair loss. They imagine it gives them a street-hard look. Most Americans think they look like gay Marines with deformed ears. They wear their blue jeans like their school shorts—too high and too tight, leaving them with severe moose knuckle. They will occasionally wear items of indigenous clothing—a baseball cap, a plaid work shirt—just to show that they’re not tourists. But they wear them with irony. Indeed, Brits are rarely seen in New York without their magic cloaks of invisible irony—they think that, on a fundamental level, their calling here is as irony missionaries. They bless everything and everyone with the little flick quotation marks, that rabbit-ear genuflection of cool, ironic sterility. How often their mocking conversations about the natives return to the amusing truth that New Yorkers have an unbelievable, ridiculous irony deficiency, which ignores the fact that a city that produced Dorothy Parker, Robert Mapplethorpe, Abstract Expressionism, Woody Allen, and Woody Allen’s love life has quite enough irony to build the Brooklyn Bridge.

Why is it that the English continue to get it all so wrong in New York? There is something particularly, peculiarly irritating about the Brits over here. This is a city that’s wide open to strangers, lumpy with a homogeneity of schemers and immigrants, yet the Brits manage to remain aloof and apart, the grit in the Vaseline. Those with the voices like broken crockery, the book-at-bedtime accent, have a lot to answer for. The Brits believe that they have a birth-given sincerity and that it’s not what you say but how you say it that matters. And that all silly, gullible Yanks, from policemen to society hostesses, will wave us ahead on life’s road when we open
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our euphonious mouth. In fact, most Americans can’t tell the difference between Billy Connolly and Russell Crowe, and why on earth should they? If you really, really want to disjoint an Englishman—ruin his day—then just ask him which bit of Australia he’s from.

And then there is the air of patronage, combined with an odor of neediness and a thick-skinned, unembarrassable meanness. “Oh God, have you eaten with the Brits here?” a friend asked me. “They’ll book a table for six, and then nine of them turn up. Ask for the check and they’ll all go to the bathroom or smoke a cigarette or make a phone call, and there’ll be one guy left at the table. That’ll be the D.A.S.—the Designated American Sucker, who through sheer naked embarrassment will pick up the tab, and suddenly they’ll all be back at the table, thanking him with their impeccable manners. This will be the only time they’ve actually spoken to him, because for the rest of the meal they’ll be talking about people who they were at school with, who all have the names of small dogs. If there’s no D.A.S., they’ll hold an auction over who had the steak and two beers. I’m not kidding. You know what gets me? It’s not like they’re poor. Not really poor, like lots of immigrants. They just think we’re lucky to have them. They walk into a room and imagine it just got classier.”

The British in New York are not good mixers. We hunker together, forming bitchy old boys’ and girls’ clubs where we complain about and giggle over Americans like nannies talking about difficult, stupid children. An English girl, newly arrived, has been picked up by the expat coven and asked for tea. And rather nonplussed, she says, “It’s sad and sort of weird. This is the way our grandparents used to behave in Africa and India.”

New York’s grand British club, the social embassy, is Soho House. Go up to the bar on any Thursday night and see the serried, slouched, braying, bittennailed ranks of them, all in need of a toothbrush, a cotton bud, and a dermatologist. Nursing beers and a well-thumbed ragged project. They’re all here not making a film, not writing a book, not selling a sitcom. Don’t tell me about your latest script. You’re not a film writer. You’re a handyman. You’ve never made so much as a wedding video. You do a bit of decorating, some plumbing, and you house-sit plants. There’s no shame in it. It’s what immigrants do.

In the Red Lion, a bar on Bleecker Street, half a dozen televisions pump out the Rugby match between England and Scotland. It’s 9:30 in the morning and the place is packed with geezers and a few chubby-cheeked, ruddy rugger-bugger girls. They’re a particularly big-boned, docile, good-natured type, who look like members of some alternative royal-family-pedigree breeding farm. The blokes are necking pints of Guinness and projectile bellowing. It’s uncannily like being back in London. The only difference is that half of them are England fans, and half Scotland. If anyone walked into a Scottish bar back home wearing an English accent during this match, they’d leave wearing their nose as an earring. And it strikes me that there’s something unreal about this. It looks right and smells right. It even sounds right. But it’s not right. They’re all playing extras in their own me-in-New-York movie. They’re putting on the Britishness as a show. They’re going through the motions only because they’re here.

As we kick back into the street. I notice a man in a kilt. For Chrissake, who moves to America and brings a kilt? Did his mother say, “Farewell, son. Make something of yourself in the New World. Have you packed your native costume, just in case?” Just in case of what? Just in case we decide to re-invade Canada? Just in case he finds a girl with a thing for men in frocks with no knickers? Just in case there’s an England-versus-Scotland match on the satellite television in some fake pub? Other countries keep their quaint ethnic customs, their special days. But somehow Diwali, Panamanian Martyrs’ Day, or Jewish Family Friday Dinner seem quaint and diverse, while a drunk Scots banker in a skirt in the early morning is actually pathetically annoying.

There is a little parade of adjoining storefronts in the West Village. One sells fish-and-chips. Another is a little café called Tea & Sympathy. The third specializes in English comestibles, the sort of thing that Englishmen abroad are supposed to yearn for: Bird’s custard, Marmite, Bovril, Jammie Dodgers. The window looks like a pre-war Ealing Studios film set. Nowhere in Britain has looked remotely like this in living memory. Inside, four young Englishmen from the Midlands are reminiscing over lists of Edwardian boiled sweets, like a spoof of High Fidelity. With an intense reverie, they fold me into the conversation for a balming moment of confectionery nostalgia. “So, Victory V’s or aniseed balls? We were just dis-

Why is it that the English continue to get it all so wrong in New York?
When Galanos Spelled Glamour

James Galanos cut a delicate swath through 50 years of fashion, whether designing Rosalind Russell's Hollywood chic or Nancy Reagan's White House elegance.

At 82, the last great American couturier has broken industry records, survived style revolutions, and found a new path to beauty

By Amy Fine Collins
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reverse in gold. Next he fluffs the gossamer trouser legs, finished with his trademark eyelash-wide, hand-rolled, handstitched hems.

“Let’s see you walk,” he says to the woman.

Satisfied, Galanos announces. “Tonight we’ll go to L’Orangerie—the last restaurant in L.A. where you can dress up for dinner.” He leans against his baby grand, an instrument he plays by ear. “I see so many unattractive things today. But I can’t turn back the clock. Most people get 15 minutes; I had 50 years.”

James Galanos’s search for what he calls “a certain line” began in Philadelphia on September 20, 1924. The only son of Greek immigrants, Galanos once remarked that as a child he resembled “an asparagus with eyes.” Though he believes he “never had looks,” he was always certain that he “had style.” Starting when Galanos was eight months old, his father, an artist turned restaurateur, moved his family to a series of “minimal places” in southern New Jersey. “Of course, all I wanted was to be a sophisticated city boy. But I was a good guy. I did as I was told.” Nobody, however, needed to tell him that his destiny was to design dresses. “I understood that since I was seven.”

In 1942, he enrolled in Manhattan’s Traphagen School of Fashion, on Broadway. Too impetuous to attend the parties where women wore the kind of gown he fantasized about. Galanos would station himself “behind the barricades” on opening nights and watch the swells arrive. Impatient to “seize my dreams,” Galanos quit school after eight months. He accepted a position at the chic East 49th Street emporium of Hattie Carnegie, the incubator of such talents as Jean Louis, Pauline Trigère, Kenneth Battelle, and Norman Norell. But, demoralized by the menial tasks assigned to him, he left to peddle his fashion sketches to upscale dressmakers, “for $2, sometimes $3, apiece.”

One day his former Traphagen teacher Elisabeth Rorabach called his attention to a help-wanted ad she had spotted in The New York Times, placed by textile magnate Lawrence Lesavoy. “His beautiful wife, Joan, was hoping to launch a ready-to-wear dress business in California, and they were looking for a designer.” The Lesavoy’s employed him for the princely salary of $75 a week and dispatched him to Los Angeles. Their scheme, however, failed to materialize; the Lesavoy’s divorced.

and Galanos was constrained to find work elsewhere. “Out of pity,” Galanos insists, Jean Louis, head costume designer at Columbia Pictures, hired him as a part-time assistant sketch artist.

Seven months later, in 1948, Lawrence Lesavoy agreed to send the floundering 24-year-old to France. at the very moment Parisian couture houses were rebounding from the war. Couturier Robert Piguet absorbed the American into his hive of assistants, among whom were Pierre Balmain, Hubert de Givenchy, and Marc Bohan. But the young novice “got homesick,” Galanos says, and in 1951 he decided to take another shot at California.

Again Jean Louis came to the rescue. Recognizing that actual garments might make more of a case for his protégé’s gifts than mere illustrations of them would. Jean Louis sent Galanos to Madame Marguerite, a custom dressmaker on Robertson Boulevard, to whip up some of his ideas. To finance this modest undertaking, Jean Louis lent him the 27-year-old $200—the only outside investment Galanos ever accepted.

Doris Fields, the buyer for Saks’s Beverly Hills branch, ordered eight pieces from the fledgling collection. Next came the eponymous specialty shop Amelia Gray, on North Beverly Drive. The first piece for Gray was

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**FASHION**

 Nobody needed to tell Galanos that his destiny was to design dresses. “I understood that since I was seven.”
black wool with long sleeves, a white Peter Pan collar, and turnover back white cuffs,” she recounted. “It was the freshest, chicest dress seen in those parts for years.” Priced at around $100, Gray said, it was “the spark that exploded.”

The aftershocks reverberated all the way to New York. In the late summer of 1952, Galanos installed himself at Lawrence Lessov’s swank duplex in Hampshire House, on Central Park South, with an assortment of “15 simple, clean little Swiss-cotton dresses,” modeled by the popular Seventh Avenue mannequin Anne Rubin. Town & Country’s Bettina Ballard remembered, “Whispers began entering through the grapevine of fashion buyers and press that there was a fresh new breeze from California showing at the Hampshire House.”

Back in California, yet another bonanza awaited the newly flush designer. “Rosalind Rus-sell was about to make Never Wave at a WAC, under the aegis of her husband, the producer Freddie Brisson,” Galanos explains. “Roz expected Jean Louis to do the picture. He proposed that Roz look at my work instead. But she said no. So Jean said, ‘All right, why don’t I give my young friend James the script and a breakdown of what you need? James and I both will bring sketches to your house and throw them on the floor. Then you pick whichever ones you like best.’

“Ever since I was a young boy Rosalind Russell had been my favorite actress, so I was very nervous and excited,” continues Galanos, who at the time looked “about 12 years old,” Russell recalled. The group dined at the screen diva’s “unpretentious” house on North Beverly Drive and then repaired to the living room, where Jean Louis scattered sketches on the carpet. Russell made her selections, and when she flipped them over, 8 out of 12 were inscribed on the back with the signature “Galanos.” The pair’s collaboration turned out to be such a singular success that, from then on, Russell and Galanos started “going steady,” she told Women’s Wear Daily. “Roz just glowed,” he says. “She was tall, with a beautiful figure and great legs—ultimately the chic one in film. Her wit, her tongue—she was Auntie Mame.” After her husband went to bed, Russell and Galanos would stay up together until two or three in the morning, “drinking and talking about everything and nothing. She had a sunken bar in her house, and she loved getting behind it.” And when she died, in 1976, her esteemed dressmaker served as a pallbearer along with Frederick Brisson, Cary Grant, and Jimmy Stewart.

Jean Louis sent other movie sirens his way, too—Marlene Dietrich, for one, who ordered a beige chiffon polka-dot dress. In the sunset of her film career, Dorothy Lamour went to him for the strapless embroidered gowns that enlivened her singing act. On her debut television broadcast, for which Richard Avedon served as “production creator.” Judy Garland wore Galanos’s floaty, satinpiped black chiffon dress over his sleeveless wool-jersey bodysuit. Even Jean Louis’s wife-to-be, the celestial beauty Loretta Young, became a devotee. “Loretta bought up all my samples at the end of each season,” says Galanos, who discounted them through Amelia Gray’s boutique. The tiny sizes and reduced prices at these rarified sales attracted another modish actress, Nancy Davis, before her marriage to Ronald Reagan. “My first dress was $150, black with a white collar and cuffs,” Nancy Reagan remembers. “That set me on the Jimmy road.”


The gospel traveled quickly to Dallas, where, together with Millo Pucci, Galanos was presented with the Neiman Marcus Award, on September 6, 1954. An even more distinguished coup arrived in November, when he became the youngest designer ever to receive the Coty Award, the fashion Oscar of the period. Two years later, Galanos won a second Coty, and in 1959 he became the youngest inductee into its Hall of Fame. “It was an unusual career,” the designer muses. “I was either the youngest or the first with every honor. By the time I was in my 40s, I was called a ‘legend.’”

Galanos’s accountant finally persuaded him to move out of his jumble of storefronts on Robertson Boulevard and into a former RCA warehouse on Sepulveda Boulevard. “We were on the wrong side of the tracks, in an industrial area. But it didn’t matter. If you have something to offer, everyone will come.”

Rosalind Russell “just glowed,” says Galanos. “She was Auntie Mame.”

W hat Galanos had to offer, on a seasonal basis, Town & Country reported, was an “influence” that ran like a “fashion shiver through the wholesale market after each collection.” Twice a year, he took a staggering large collection to New York and showed it at the Ambassador Hotel, on 52nd Street and Park Avenue. “Diana Vreeland never missed a show; and she wore my clothes,” Galanos says. “None of the other fashion editors did—I never asked them to, and I didn’t care. Because I showed so many weeks after everyone else, she always saved a number of Vogue pages for me.” Says former Vogue editor in chief Grace Mirabella, “Jimmy had lovely, charming, pretty, beautiful dresses—these are words you don’t even hear anymore—glorious, delicious fabric, and he never veered from that. Galanos didn’t look around to see what he could pick up from other people. When you’ve got that kind of talent you follow your own path—he had style of his definite own.”

Mollie Parnis designer George Sayman remembers. “Nobody could equal James’s fabric sense—it was unbelievable, the combinations of tweed and lace, the camel hair, gray flannel, and tartan for evening—his colors, his beading, his prints! And nobody had a model who understood clothes like Pat Jones”—the chiseled brunette whom Gala-
Galanos discovered in L.A. around 1950, and on whom he fit every single dress. “She was built like a pencil,” Sayman adds. “If you turned her around she was the same on each side.”

Says illustrator Kenneth Paul Block, “Pat Jones was the oddest thing, thrilling to watch. She was made in a very fragile way, as if she might be lifted away. She used to walk through the path between the gilded chairs as if she was walking in someone’s garden, looking from side to side.

“In workmanship and in concept. Galanos had quality, quality, quality,” says John Fairchild. “In workmanship and in concept. Galanos had to work twice as hard as Paris to get equal or better results. because he did not have the ‘little hands’ that the French had. and because he didn’t get first pick of fabrics.” Says former New York Times fashion reporter Bernadine Morris. “Galanos was the best of breed.”

She would turn her head vaguely, then wait along. Pat Jones was the only one who could show the clothes up to the standard that Galanos was establishing.”

At the old Ambassador Hotel or—after it was torn down, in 1957, to make way for the Seagram Building—at the Plaza Hotel, each Galanos show proceeded according to the same strict protocol. No music distracted from the long afternoon défilé, which started promptly but could last for more than two hours. Each season coiffure Michel Kazan contrived slick, novel hairdos, which were awaited with nearly as much avidity as the clothes themselves.

For many in attendance, Galanos’s offerings surpassed those of his Continental confrères. Having witnessed a two-and-a-half-hour. 250-piece show in February 1965, Eugenia Sheppard wrote in the Herald Tribune, “After two weeks in Paris I can tell you there’s nothing like coming back to a Galanos opening.” To The Saturday Evening Post it was axiomatic that “a Galanos label has more snob appeal than a Paris creation.” For John Fairchild, of Women’s Wear Daily, “in this area of technique, he has no equal, even to the best in Paris.”

With the devoty loyal help of peerless embroiderers, sewers, fitters, and pattern-makers, some culled from the movie studios’ extinct wardrobe departments, Galanos was able, for example, to shape busts without the aid of darts. Hems were hand-rolled and hand-piped, edges picoted, cuffs cut on the bias, tucks hidden at hips or waists— all requiring surplus fabric and painstaking labor—so that garments flowed gracefully, weightlessly, and flattering with every step and gesture.

“Galanos’s glory”

International Best-Dressed List Hall of Famers wear

“He had quality, quality, quality,” says John Fairchild. “In workmanship and in concept. Galanos had to work twice as hard as Paris to get equal or better results. because he did not have the ‘little hands’ that the French had. and because he didn’t get first pick of fabrics.” Says former New York Times fashion reporter Bernadine Morris. “Galanos was the best of breed.”
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Story princess bought a clinging jersey dress in deep ruby red. “And then Steve ordered another for her in black,” Galanos says. “Those were the days when movie stars paid retail.” In May 1974, in the depths of the recession, The New Yorker labeled Galanos “the sole survivor of a whole group that flourished around the Hollywood lovelies of the 1950s.”

Galanos had only to stand his ground and wait—because a few years later the economy recovered, and he found himself dressing the First Lady of America. At five feet four inches, Mrs. Reagan may not have been Galanos’s physical ideal, but she was unquestionably “my most important client. I had eight years in the White House”—five more than Oleg Cassini was dealt with Jacqueline Kennedy.

“Nancy was very fair and charming and definite, and had a sense of humor,” he says. “She always looked neat. She wore Adolfo’s knitted suits for day, and my things for night or important occasions—the inaugurations, visits to Berlin and Versailles, Prince Charles’s wedding.” For the 1981 inaugural ball, Galanos crafted a white satin and beaded-lace one-shouldered sheath, now at the Smithsonian, for a cost of $22,500. And for her 1985 inaugural gown, now at the Reagan library, his technicians spent more than 300 hours embedding silver and white vermicelli beads and stones into a tracery of shimmering palm fronds. Galanos joined the First Couple’s entourage not only as dressmaker but also as “a good friend,” Reagan says. “He’s a great, great guest. You could put him at any table next to anybody, and he could carry any conversation.”

In 1982, the media stirred up a tempest in a thimble when Mrs. Reagan confessed to the White House staff that she had not paid for most of the costly apparel in her wardrobe, the Galanos inaugural gown included. Contraite that “her acceptance of such fancy items posed a political problem for the White House,” she promised to stop the practice, Time magazine reported. The “political problem” in question was the fact that all gifts to the president and his wife had by law to be reported on financial-disclosure forms. The White House, however, contended that Mrs. Reagan’s free outfits were loans rather than gifts, and maintained that similar transactions would henceforth be reported annually under the Ethics in Government Act. But in 1988 Time revealed that Mrs. Reagan was still borrowing clothes and apparently not returning them. William Safire lambasted the First Lady in The New York Times for being “on the take,” and for employing “a flock of taxpayer-paid press agents to explain her ethical lapse away.”

And Garry Trudeau lampooned the shenanigans in a series of “Doonesbury” comic strips. Feigning horror that the Smithsonian was experiencing conservation problems with the ’81 inaugural dress, which was sagging under the weight of its own beads, Trudeau proposed a “Save the Gown” movement. Taking the satirical plea at face value, “Doonesbury” readers showered the Smithsonian with donations. “The furor died away quickly,” Galanos says, “because everybody likes fashion—including men and little kids.”

In her memoirs, My Turn, Reagan justified her actions by citing the precedent of French First Ladies, for whom borrowing clothes was a routine “way of helping one of the country’s most important industries.”

Reagan, in fact, was right about the trickle-down effect of her sumptuous attire and opulent entertaining. In a rave review of Galanos’s fall-1982 collection, Bernadine Morris remarked, “Ever since Nancy Reagan [arrived at] the White House, his shows have been packed.” The designer says, “The ’80s Reagan period was the glamour time, the golden age. It was terrific for designers, and wonderful for the public in general.”

When he swept into New York for one of his highly anticipated Plaza shows or personal appearances at Martha, on Park and 58th, Manhattan’s mother lode for Galanos, every boldfaced name from nouvelle société and the Old Guard alike was on hand to watch and buy: Gloria Vanderbilt, Brooke Astor (“She bought controversial, quiet things”), Casey Ribicoff, Gayfryd Steinberg, Chevy Rayner, Deeda Blair, Iris Cantor, Arianna Huffington, Ivana Trump.

In the fall of 1985, Galanos set an industry record by selling $1 million worth of dresses in one week at Martha. “It was a landmark,” he says. “I was in the fitting rooms, doing measurements with the store’s staff, designing, selling, promoting, basically doing the store’s work for them.” Recalls a trunk-show regular, “He’d come into the dressing room and fit you while you were in your bra and panty hose. I made sure that before I went for my fittings that I was allbuffed, powdered, and waxed.” Notes photojournalist Bill Cunningham, “Galanos knew what the client wanted. You can’t get away from that.”

Says Harold Koda, curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute, “There was an Establishment quality to Galanos, a sense of privilege around his clothes. A Galanos projected knockout glamour, absolute luxury, but the lightness of his handwriting prevented the clothes from ever looking like costume. And he was a designer equally for the West Coast and for the East Coast—which never happens.”

Perhaps even more, he was a magnet for the deep-pocketed spenders of Texas. “Our customers put him on a pedestal,” says Todd Okerstrom, former director of fine apparel at the Glass House boutique, in Neiman Marcus’s flagship Dallas store. “New Yorkers, by contrast, were tough.” Galanos says. “They always asked for a discount. Beverly Hills women could be surprisingly cautious with money, too. But Texans—never ever.” One prominent Park Avenue matron simply never paid her bills, and often, the richer the lady, the tighter her fist. Doris Duke tried through an intermediary to negotiate a cut rate for a dress she craved at Martha, to no avail. “I never minded giving away dresses to people who loved them for artistic reasons and couldn’t afford them,” Galanos says. “And I once made a gift to Gloria Guinness of three gowns, because I fell completely in love with her.”

On his migratory circuits—to Houston, Dallas, Palm Beach, Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco, New York—Galanos now brought along his new secret selling weapon, the cerebral blonde Natalie Tirrell (measurements 34-24-33), who succeeded Pat Jones as house model. Tirrell recalls, “In two months he’d produce 140 to 160 samples, each requiring five, six, or seven fittings. We’d start by tacking the ends of fabric into the shoulder straps of a nude bodysuit. I’d watch him in the mirror on the far end of the room and try to read him as he played with the fabric against my body. He was so soft-spoken and shy. And suddenly there’d be a switch that was magic. The fabric frequently told him where to go.”

“I was 5 feet 11 inches, 122 pounds, and he could see lunch on me. People criticized him for making his models so thin, but he needed it for his artistry. How could you ask Giacometti to change? I’m
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sure he'd rather have been penniless than sell his name. His name could have been famous as any, but he was not after that. What he was after was the Right Line, to make beautiful women more beautiful.”

And, in pursuit of that chivalrous goal, the elusive Galanos imparted to retailers an almost mystical cachet. “Bergdorf’s, compared to Saks and Bloomingdale’s, was dead in the water from 1975 to 1985,” says Ira Neimark, the department store’s former president. “In order to rebuild our image, [fashion executive] Dawt Mello decided we needed to convince Galanos to come to us. Once we had Galanos, we had it all.” Mello agreed: “Galanos was responsible for the renaissance of Bergdorf Goodman. Galanos was the best in the market for workmanship and detail—it was consummate, faultless. His energy was inexhaustible. He was very excited about personal appearances—the unpacking, the showing, working directly on customers. And at the same time there was always a remoteness, a mystique to both him and his business. Jimmy Galanos delivered a perfect product.”

In spite of the 90s recession, the grunge rebellion, and the domino-effect closing of specialty and department stores around the country, Galanos continued to produce enormous collections. Yet at the very moment when New York shows were burgeoning into multi-media spectacles centralized for the first time under the Bryant Park big tops, Galanos discontinued his runway presentations. Instead, Natalie Tirrell began modeling the line by appointment in an upper-floor suite at the Plaza Hotel, much as Anne Rubin had done in the Hampshire House 40 years before. “The shows trickled away,” says Bernadine Morris. “I had heard young editors complaining, ‘How can anyone stand to sit here without music?’” As for the retailers, Galanos says, “We boiled them down to the big accounts.”

Yet even these reliable vendors no longer wanted to risk money up front for Galanos’s sui generis brand of big-bucks ready-to-wear. Says Todd Okerstrom, “Eventually, almost everything was special-ordered through trunk shows.” And then the customers would deluge Galanos with demands that an evening gown be recut as culottes, or an airy chiffon wisp be re-scaled to a size 20. He’d imperiously refuse their requests (Galanos was not above commanding a shopper to go home and lose weight), but then he’d yield. “By the end of the day,” Okerstrom says, “he was ready for his Manhattan.”

Inevitably, the time arrived when “it started costing me money to maintain my business,” Galanos discloses. An insider says, “The problem was that everyone owed him—Martha stiffed him for $370,000. And still he sent them clothes.” An industry friend confirms that “when Martha shut down they owed [Bill] Bliss and everybody money, but Galanos took the biggest licking of them all. Jimmy of course did nothing about it. He said he couldn’t possibly, because Lynn Manulis [the co-owner of Martha] was an old friend.”

Even as Galanos was being shafted by his former retail champions, cultural institutions were lionizing him. In 1996, Cleveland’s Western Reserve Historical Society organized a retrospective, which traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The opening fund-raiser, on April 5, 1997, the Los Angeles Times gushed, was “a notable night in Los Angeles social/fashion history.” Nancy Reagan presided on the receiving line, regally shaking hands with such die-hard Galanos loyalists as philanthropist Iris Cantor, in a 23-year-old brown silk gown; Betsy Kaiser, in white hammered silk; and one of his original muses, his sister Sue.

A year later Galanos made an abrupt decision, which at first he shared with no one. “I understood the position I was in,” he says. “My time was up. I wanted to get out while I was on top. At first I did not make a formal announcement. Then I realized I owed it to my clients to let them know.”

Says Iris Cantor, “When we found out, we all went crazy.” Betsy Kaiser recalls, “I begged him—‘Now, would you please consider licensing your name so we have something to wear.’ And he, of course, said ‘No!’”

For those lucky Cinderellas slender enough to slip into his samples, however, a chance still remained to amass more of his fairy-wrought wonders, because for two years Galanos Originals had a strange afterlife. From his factory—where he had once employed a hundred people, then 75, and,
finally, just himself and his assistant. Pat Roth—the “Grand Old Man,” as Fairchild sometimes tauntingly called him, stayed on, “selling everything.” Galanos says: hundreds of original samples, millions of dollars’ worth of textiles from European mills, and a fantasia of Galanos-confected millinery. Even when marked down drastically, a Galanos original hardly came cheap. A navy wool dinner suit with sable sleeves from his 1984 collection, reduced 50 percent, still bore a $6,000 price tag. The $4 million fabric overstock that remained at the end of two years he off-loaded to one job-lotter for $200,000. He donated his archives and many of his favorite samples to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The building itself was scooped up by a real-estate developer. “I sold my factory, but I wouldn’t sell my name,” he says. “It would be a falsehood. I am Mr. Galanos.” Entertainer Dixie Carter took her husband, the actor Hal Holbrook, with her to the factory on its final day. “These exquisitely produced acts of imagination, these flights of fancy—well, that was the end.” Carter says. “I’m not saying that we have lost elegance in this world. But we sure have dismissed it.” Says Ralph Rucci, who has absorbed some of Galanos’s displaced clients and become a friend and protégé, “James Galanos is the last embodiment of integrity. He is a national treasure.”

The California restaurateur Paul Bruggemans (Galanos’s former waiter at Frascati, whose first business, Le St. Germain, Galanos helped finance in 1971) reflects. “Jimmy doesn’t show sentiments easily, but somehow there is a very big heart within Galanos. I’ve never seen him pass a beggar anywhere in the world without giving him money. Jimmy did very, very well during his career. The man was a workaholic, running up and down stairs in his factory at 73 like a young boy. His constitution is incredible, his energy never stops. Come night, you never can get him to go home. So as soon as he closed, he was very, very down. Suddenly everything stopped.”

About a year later, photographer Michael Kaiser remembers, he and Galanos were wandering through an art exhibition, and the designer turned to him and said, “I don’t know how to paint, but I think I can take photographs.” And it was in a Nikon that he found redemption. He began by setting up still lifes, often in his disused kitchen. humble countertop arrangements of crystal glasses and colored squares placed in a shaft of sunlight. And he’d shoot these simple compositions in such an optically

distorting way that the objects dematerialized into streams of radiant color. “They’re my take on abstraction,” he says. “I improvise. Improvisation is always what I’ve been good at.”

On a summer day, Galanos is lunching at his favorite New York restaurant, La Grenouille. The maître d’ has shown him to the most coveted banquette, one that confronts the long room, abloom with weeping bouquets and the eager, rosy faces of women in romantic tête-à-têtes. The couturier, as always, orders a dry martini with a twist and a dish of tomatoes for a starter, to be followed by grilled fish. He paces himself as he drinks and eats, each bite as measured and deliberate as his words. “It’s a sad situation,” he says, surveying the distance. “The behavior, the dress, the manners we see nowadays are an insult to anybody who wants to respect beauty, place, and time. I like strange things, but they have to make sense. Even

the models are mostly unattractive in the way they move their bodies, the stance of their legs. The first thing I notice is the ankle. I don’t mind a large foot, but the ankle must be beautiful, delicate.

“When I was in my early 30s, I used to go to Le Pavillon for lunch. The women really dressed up then, with gloves and hats. Babe Paley would come into Le Pavillon. I couldn’t take my eyes off her. Her composure, her gestures—when you’ve seen real elegance, you don’t ever forget. Times have changed; I accept that. But sometimes I want to scream! It is a beautiful world, but you have to make it beautiful.”

Back in the Hollywood Hills, inside his discreet jewel box of a house, Galanos is beaming with enthusiasm, because he has just received from his printer a package of 20-by-30-inch blowups of his photographs, on thick, clothlike watercolor paper. He unwraps them from the tissue, as tenderly as he would unveil a dress, and props them between the pair of dignified bronze Art Deco lions that bracket his black granite fireplace. “Not bad, if I say so myself,” he says proudly. The slashing, liquid streaks of emerald green, primal red, and electric blue are shockingly brilliant against the dark hearth. The debut exhibition of his photographs, recently held at the Serge Sorokko Gallery, in San Francisco, he reports, sold out, and a follow-up show is planned for New York. “If people like my photographs, that’s fine, and if they don’t, it doesn’t matter, either. I’m doing it for my own pleasure, for my eye. I do things my way, take it or leave it.”

And he vanishes into his kitchen-studio, a conjurer on the verge of yet another transformation. □
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Kristen Stewart

Age: 17. Provenance: North Hollywood, California. You first glimpsed her as... Jodie Foster's doppelgänger daughter in Panic Room (2002). "[Director] David Fincher does a lot of takes," Stewart says. "There was this one scene we must have done, like, 80 times. I didn't know that it wasn't the norm. Now I wouldn't be as chill with it... Because now she's a prolific industry veteran, with four films due out this year. Namely, In the Land of Women, The Messengers, The Cake Eaters (the directorial debut of Mary Stuart Masterson, with Stewart in the lead role), and Sean Penn's Into the Wild, based on the Jan Kroukauer book. But is this the life for her? Not necessarily: "I want to go to college for literature. I want to be a writer. I mean, I love what I do, but it's not all I want to do—be a professional liar for the rest of my life." Still, Krissten's no brooder: "I love big-band music, and I'm taking swing classes now. I can't wait till I'm going to be able to be tossed up in the air." —Krista Smith
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A League of His Own

Will Arnett on His Canadian Upbringing, Fighting Hair Loss, and Will Ferrell’s Ego

On Arrested Development, the now canceled show that had critics fawning, Will Arnett played the irascible George Oscar Bluth II. Now with sitcoms in his rearview mirror, he focuses on a number of projects for the big screen—most notably as a figure skater alongside Will Ferrell in this month’s Blades of Glory. Our correspondent takes his measure.

**George Wayne:** You are Canadian by birth, from affluent “Snore-Ronto.”

**Will Arnett:** I prefer the term T-Zero.

**G.W.** Well, I prefer “Snore-Ronto.” It’s so boring. Did you go to the same high school as Mike Myers?

**W.A.** I wouldn’t know. He is a lot older than me.

**G.W.** What did your parents—your big-shot daddy and your high-society mama—think when you told them you were moving to New York to be an actor?

**W.A.** It was very tough to get in touch with them. I told one of their minions that I wanted to leave.

**G.W.** What was your oddest odd job in those bagel-and-cream-cheese days? Or did you just dip into the trust fund until you were discovered?

**W.A.** I wish I had had a trust fund. You know what I did for many years? Voice-overs.

**G.W.** Before the voice-overs, did you have to dance at the Gaiety? Work at a coffee shop?

**W.A.** Well, once I did put on my best Speedo and I tried to go get a job at Studio 54, but it was already closed.

**G.W.** Yeah, and I’m sure you outfit that Speedo very well, too.

Of those early days, you are on the record for declaring, “I’ve always been about experimenting, and I wanted a taste of everything.” Care to elaborate?

**W.A.** I was probably referring to sex.

**G.W.** Well, I gotta tell ya. I really had a major crush on Jason Bateman.

**W.A.** So did I.

**G.W.** I remember a few years ago spending a July Fourth with Jason, his sister, Justine, and our buddy Kelly Cutrone. We had dinner at the Water Club, and I will never forget missing all the fireworks because I was so mesmerized by his cornucopia.

**W.A.** Are you talking about his hair?

**G.W.** No. I’m talking about that firecrotch, which was simply astounding.

**W.A.** I think I could be able to deliver Jason Bateman in a pair of way-too-tight Levi jeans.

**G.W.** And I am going to hold you to your promise. Speaking of tight, you just finished doing a film about ice-skating, of all things. *All That Spangled Lycra.*

**W.A.** We hit new heights in tightness. Every day getting into wardrobe I just had to start laughing at how absurd it was. I never wore a dance belt before, and just the closeness of it was mesmerizing, and the strap that comes up your ass.

**G.W.** What’s Will Ferrell’s ego like these days?

**W.A.** He’s really got to be the most down-to-earth guy I have ever met. He operates in a stratosphere that is insane, and yet this guy is so levelheaded.

**G.W.** Tell me the name of the surgeon who plugged your dome?

**W.A.** The name of what?

**G.W.** Your hair surgeon, darling.

**W.A.** I have discovered other methods than having to do that.

**G.W.** So it bothers you. You are in the vanity business, so I’m sure losing your hair must have been like the bane of your existence. Even though you are rather sexy with that receding hairline.

**W.A.** No, not at all. But when you get judged on how you look, it is annoying as shit.

**G.W.** I can’t help but look at your scalp.

**W.A.** I take great pleasure in you looking at my scalp.

**G.W.** Darling, what can I tell you? I’m a writer and a biter, but not the hand that feeds me. Willy Wonka, pass me the paprika!

“Funny, [Willy Wonka] use to be my nickname.”
What?

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“YES, MR. B

Wielding new and wide-ranging executive-branch powers, George W. Bush has underlined the role of an exclusive club: the Cabinet members, West Wing staffers, and other official and unofficial advisers who help the president write the history of their day. From the Truman White House to the Clinton team, and from Kennedy defense secretary Robert S. McNamara to Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan, Vanity Fair reunites the inner circles of six decades past, while TODD BREWSTER assesses their legacies.

Portraits by Jonathan Becker, Harry Benson, James Nachtwey, David Hume Kennerly, Zadig Parry, Mark Seliger, Art Streiber, and Christian Wilkow
REPORTING FOR DUTY

Alexander Haig, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, served Presidents Nixon (as a military adviser, deputy assistant for national-security affairs, and chief of staff), Ford (chief of staff), and Reagan (secretary of state). “I’m in control here in the White House, pending the return of the vice president,” he famously insisted in the hectic aftermath of the assassination attempt against Reagan.

Photographed by Harry Benson in West Palm Beach, Florida.
The Truman Administration
(1945–53)

There's a poetry to the Harry Truman years that is distinctly American: a man of obscure rural origins, with limited schooling, is handed more power more suddenly than any executive in American history. Elevated to the presidency in 1945 upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt, he generates little confidence at his first press conference when describing his sense of shock—like when "a load of hay" falls on you. That "hay" included the A-bomb, which he would use against Japan to end World War II; a devastated Europe, and a hefty bureaucracy assembled by his predecessor to fight the war and the Great Depression. While Truman's team nobly championed NATO and fortified Europe by creating the Marshall Plan—proposed by Secretary of State (and later Defense) George Marshall—they got sidelined by the Korean War and by charges that Communists were infiltrating the government. When Truman ordered his commerce secretary to nationalize the strike-threatened steel industry, the Supreme Court smacked him down for overreaching. "Give 'Em Hell" Harry's approval rating would dip to an abysmal 23 percent. Legacies, however, aren't beholden to polls, and biographers have been justifiably kinder to the Missourian, whose mantra, "The buck stops here," continues to inspire leaders 60 years on.

White House Special Assistant Milton P. Kayle, Administrative Assistant to the President George Elsey, and White House Special Assistant to the President Ken Hechler.

Photographed by Jonathan Becker at the Hay-Adams hotel, in Washington, D.C.
Robert S. McNamara sits forward in his chair and wags a finger at me. “I will tell you what leadership is,” he says, his crisp dictation reminiscent of the press conferences he held during the Vietnam War. “It’s Jack Kennedy refusing to risk nuclear war when nearly everyone in the room is telling him to.” McNamara, now 90, is referring to an episode during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. “I don’t remember the exact time of the meeting,” says the defense secretary for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. “[But] my recollection is that at least some of the Russian missiles were already in Cuba and... more were on the way. We knew they would be there by Monday. And everyone, it seemed—the Joint Chiefs, [Truman-administration eminence] Dean Acheson, [key military adviser] Maxwell Taylor—was telling Kennedy to order a strike now, to take out the missiles... even if it did have the potential to trigger an all-out nuclear conflict. Kennedy listened to the overwhelming advice of his so-called experts”—McNamara pauses, leaning back to add a touch of drama—“and then he ordered the blockade instead.”

Like many of the men in Kennedy’s Cabinet, McNamara—named head of the Ford Motor Company just five weeks before the president-elect persuaded him to run the Pentagon—agreed to put his life on hold, sacrifice his personal wealth, and forgo corporate perks to serve his president and his nation, and all for a humbling $25,000 a year. In McNamara’s case, loyalty came at an even steeper price. In time, he would be reviled as a warmonger, watch his effigy burned on college campuses, and withstand a level of stress that he now acknowledges may have led to his first wife’s...
The Kennedy Administration
(1961–63)

A young candidate with a famous ambassador father overcomes charges that he is too inexperienced for the presidency and, with the aid of his brother, wins by a whisker, only to find himself quickly entangled in a foreign-policy fiasco. George W. Bush you say? No, the name's John F. Kennedy, a telegenic former P.T.-boat commander—at 43 the youngest president ever elected to the office (and the first and only Catholic, at that). The legend that grew from his charmed life and tragic assassination obscures the fact that Kennedy was no fool that his presidency reeled from calamity to predicament (the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban missile crisis), and that his leadership on civil rights was compromised by his need to court voters in the South. Shoring up the southern Democratic base was one of the reasons Kennedy was in Dallas on November 22, 1963. And while the nation had not yet gotten bogged down in Vietnam, it was Kennedy's
“best and brightest” (the phrase, adopted by historian and V.P. contributing editor David Halberstam, can be uttered only with irony)—a team inherited by Kennedy’s successor, Lyndon Johnson—that set the American ship of state on a course toward wreckage in Southeast Asia. History, alas, doesn’t reveal its alternatives. So we have been left ever since with a nagging sense of promise unfulfilled, believing that had their King Arthur survived, these men and women of Camelot would not—could not—have let their “one brief shining moment” expire.

Opposite: Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, Assistant Special Counsel to the President Richard N. Goodwin, speechwriter and Special Assistant for Latin-American Affairs Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Special Counsel and Adviser Ted Sorensen, and Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, in Schlesinger’s apartment in New York City. This page: Founding Peace Corps director (and brother-in-law of the president) Sargent Shriver, Social Secretary to the White House and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy’s chief of staff Letitia Baldridge, and Special Assistant to the President for Civil Rights Harris Wofford, in the Shriver home in Potomac, Maryland.

Photographed by Mark Seliger.
The Johnson Administration (1963–69)

If Lyndon Johnson was our most Shakespearean president, as some have asserted, his reign embodied the Shakespeare of the tragedies. A hulking colossus, all cheek and jowl, he was likely the most deft politician to inhabit the Oval Office—that is, if you define politics as the kind practiced in back rooms, punctuated by browbeating, the slap on the back, and the insincere compliment. Indeed, it was the L.B.J. crowd’s knack for butting heads and counting votes that helped push through some of the most transformative legislation in American history, including Medicare, the War on Poverty, immigration reform, and—perhaps most significant, given the political price it extracted in the once solidly Democratic South—the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Johnson’s dream was to finish what F.D.R. had started and to plant the phrase Great Society next to the New Deal as a testament to what government can do for its citizens. “He was a great man,” says domestic-affairs adviser Ben Wattenberg, “with balls as big as a bison’s. And thanks to what he did, five to seven million people were taken out of poverty.” For all his success on the home front, though, L.B.J. became mired in a distant war of dubious purpose, leading to his decision not to run for re-election in 1968.

Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Special Assistant to the President Jack Valenti, Staff Assistants to the President Ben Wattenberg and Ervin S. Duggan, and Special Assistant to the President Thomas Johnson.

Photographed by Nigel Parry in New York City.


When they write the history of the current administration, the focus will naturally be on George W. Bush himself, on his reaction to 9/11, and on his decision to invade Iraq. But as with every presidency, and particularly those in the post–World War II era, there will be nearly as much ink spilled on the peculiar and fascinating relationships between the president and his advisers, that special community of men, and more recently women, who arrive with stellar résumés—often with experience in their own right—and who preside over large chunks of the federal budget, while competing ceaselessly for one man’s ear.

Going back to the days of Franklin Roosevelt, when the presidency started on its path to becoming the outsize sector of government it is today, there have been some 240 Cabinet members, countless official and informal advisers (the latter forming what is sometime called a president’s “kitchen cabinet”), White House aides, assistants, and staffers of all kinds with direct access to executive authority. They form an exclusive club, carrying as they do a kind of intimate awareness of their times that the rest of us can only guess at.

Perhaps it is the intoxicating lure of power. Or the desire to have a small part in writing the history of one’s era. Or an older, fashioned, courtly wish to honor a president’s request. Whatever
The Nixon Administration
(1969–74)

Richard Nixon and many of his closest confidants loathed the press and the academic community. So it would probably have made him proud to know that journalists and biographers still fail miserably at conjuring the "real" Nixon from a career distinguished by duck and weave, spectacular defeat, and resurrection. Liberals hated him, but more liberal legislative achievements occurred on his watch than under any other post–World War II president save L.B.J. (For starters: the expansion of food stamps, the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the first meaningful federal affirmative-action program.) Even conservatives hated him for blindsiding them with policies such as wage-and-price controls and—horrors!—the Realpolitik of his national-security adviser and later secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, which led to the first arms agreement with the Soviet Union and to the stunning 1972 Nixon visit to Communist China. Nixon was Contradiction Incarnate: a man who was capable of uttering anti-Semitic slurs but who boldly stood by Israel's side in wartime, a broad strategist who was upended by petty schemes, who trusted no one, and whose administration came asunder over the Watergate scandal, which Press Secretary Ron Ziegler at first dismissed as a "third-rate burglary.

Special Assistant to the President and senior speechwriter William Safire, Deputy Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Cabinet Alexander Butterfield, Solicitor General and Acting Attorney General Robert Bork, and Special Counsel to the President Charles Colson. Photographed by Christian Witkin in Washington, D.C.
Amid all the deservedly warm remembrances after Gerald Ford’s death, in December, at 93, one sentiment stood out: the overriding triumph of his short, two-and-a-half-year term was his ability to help settle the country into a kind of equilibrium after the “long national nightmare” of Watergate. The folksy former House minority leader inherited an unenviable burden when Nixon resigned, in 1974. After all, Ford, unelected, had to govern in the worst of times with no voter mandate, even as inflation ran rampant, the government of South Vietnam collapsed, and a despair (“malaise” is what Jimmy Carter would soon call it) engulfed a nation that had come to doubt itself. To face these obstacles, Ford drew on his skills as a Capitol Hill insider and a former football and boxing coach, gathering a tight group of power players—including Dick Cheney (at 34 the youngest-ever chief of staff) and Donald Rumsfeld (at 43 the youngest-ever defense secretary)—a squad eagerly raiding by subsequent presidents. In hindsight, Ford’s ability to persuade the Soviets to sign a historic human-rights accord improved the lot of countless East bloc citizens and may have helped lay the groundwork for the Kremlin’s eventual collapse. His decision to pardon Nixon, which would cost Ford the 1976 election, was one of those acts in which leadership earns its keep: so seemingly wrong in the moment, ever so sensible in retrospect.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Carla A. Hills, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers Alan Greenspan, Chief of Staff Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, Chief of Staff, Assistant to the President, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman Jr.

Photographed by David Hume Kennerly at Vice President Cheney’s residence, in Washington, D.C.
the reasons, few have been able to turn down this lofty call to public service. And judging by the number of people who serve one president only to return to serve another, many cannot resist the return engagement.

We have a phrase for this community, albeit an archaic one. They are “the president’s men,” as in “all the president’s men,” a phrase summoning at once the broken-egg nursery rhyme and Robert Penn Warren’s *roman à clef* about the 1930s proto-Fascist Louisiana governor Huey Long, *All the King’s Men*. But the most direct reference is to Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein’s chronicle of Watergate, an all-too-real political saga in which Richard Nixon’s two “German shepherds”—domestic-affairs adviser John Ehrlichman and his old college pal Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman (known as “the Brush” because his hair had that distinctive quality we associate with Marine sergeants and Astroturf)—acted as protectors of the dark secrets that Nixon was hiding. That is, until the president forced them to fall on their swords, in April 1973. “Every president needs an S.O.B.” Haldeman once remarked, “and I’m Nixon’s.” In contrast, Ehrlichman was “the nice one, who might give you two sniffs and a lick,” wrote journalist Nicholas von Hoffman. “He . . . sat and panted at Richard Nixon’s feet [and] was seen to smile . . .”

The smiling presumably stopped when loyalty earned both men 18-month prison stints while a pardoned Nixon repaired to sunny Southern California. Their defense, in part, was that they were following executive orders, a convenient point of view if you are trying to avoid culpability. Ehrlichman’s 1982 memoir was called *Witness to Power*, as if he were barely in the room—the proverbial eyes in the painting on the wall. But the title also suggests something about the conflicts experienced by a “president’s man” in any era: Is he witness or participant, loyal servant or truth teller, hero or fall guy?

Out of those questions emerge some of the more tantalizing debates of modern presidential history. What would Truman have been without George Marshall and his plan? Would Nixon be remembered for the detente he achieved with the Soviet Union had he not picked Henry Kissinger as his chief foreign-policy adviser? Would Reagan be recalled for his stirring rhetoric if he had not employed a speechwriter named Peggy Noonan, who sifted poetry from otherwise bland statements about public policy?

McNamara is modest in his account of the Cuban missile crisis, for he and the president’s brother Attorney General Robert Kennedy continued on page 272. Photos continued on page 228.
The Carter Administration
(1977–81)

Notwithstanding his recent controversial best-seller equating official Israeli behavior on the West Bank with apartheid, James Earl Carter Jr., a devout Baptist and former peanut farmer, has been a model ex-president—building houses for the homeless, spearheading international campaigns for human rights and disease eradication, and writing more than two dozen books.

That's good, because despite the president's role in brokering the historic Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel, along with the second SALT agreement with the Soviets, even a quarter-century of perspective has not altered the prevailing view: the tenure of Carter and "the Georgia Mafia" he brought into the corridors of power (Griffin Bell, Hamilton Jordan, Bert Lance, Jody Powell, Andrew Young) was underwhelming, their achievements ultimately eclipsed by the worst economy since the Depression and the botched mission to rescue U.S. hostages in newly fundamentalist Iran. "Carter got dealt a bad deck," says Joseph Califano, his secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, "but he did more in the interest of peace in the Middle East than any president before him or since."

From top: Chief speechwriter Hendrik Hertzberg, Assistant to the President for Congressional Affairs Frank Moore, Press Secretary Jody Powell, Budget Director Bert Lance, and White House Communications Director Gerald Rafshoon, in Athens, Georgia. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew J. Young and Attorney General Griffin B. Bell, in Atlanta. U.S. Trade Representative and personal representative to Middle East peace negotiations Robert S. Strauss, National-Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Joseph A. Califano Jr., Vice President Walter Mondale, and Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs and Policy Stuart E. Eizenstat, in Washington, D.C.

Photographed by Art Streiber.
The Reagan Administration
(1981–89)

Ronald Reagan was the anti-Carter. Where Carter spoke of malaise, Reagan floated on cadences of hope. Where Carter imposed limits, Reagan accented the inviting scenery of an open frontier. Where Carter worked endless days and micro-managed his staff, Reagan gladly delegated. His inner circle may have been the most significant in modern presidential history, if only because the president struck the philosophical tone while leaving many of the responsibilities of the office to those who worked for him—a production crew, really, for a man who spent much of his life in front of a camera. The Gipper never lost that sense of theater which in politics can make the drab policy statement a thing of populist beauty. Intellectuals cringed at the clichés (a new morning in America) and at the Reagan cadre’s grotesquely inflated defense budgets, but Americans are not an intellectual people, and after the bitter taste of a 1982 recession had passed, they saw the retooled economy and the dramatic reforms sweeping the Soviet Union as sure signs that the presidency could still make a difference. When scandal arrived in Reagan’s second term (the creative, if immoral, Iran-contra episode) and the stock market crashed, it appeared that the country’s confidence might have been misplaced, but both events proved to be momentary crises for a president who departed office with approval ratings still hovering around 60 percent and a place in history to rival that of his ideological opposite, F.D.R.

Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, Deputy Chief of Staff Michael K. Deaver, National-Security Adviser Robert McFarlane, speechwriter and Special Assistant to the President Peggy Noonan, and Chairman of the President’s Economic Policy Advisory Board and Secretary of State George Shultz.

Photographed by Jonas Karlsson in the Strom Thurmond Room of the U.S. Senate.
The Bush I Administration
(1989–93)

If ex-presidents can be said to have coattails, then it was George Herbert Walker Bush’s
good fortune to have ridden into office on Reagan’s sartorial train. For Bush the gifts just kept on coming: the U.S.S.R.,
having been weakened in part under the pressure of Reagan’s rhetorical scolding and arms buildup,
disintegrated, and America stood astride the world as the victor of the 20th century’s epic struggles with totalitarianism and
Communism, an 80-year war, really, if you chart the East-West clash back to the opening shots of World War I. Bush assembled
an administration that borrowed as much from the Ford years as from Reagan’s. Well versed in spycraft and foreign
policy from his days as ambassador to the U.N., C.I.A. chief, and vice president, Bush was in his element when overseeing the
1989 invasion of Panama, which deposed Manuel Noriega, and the 1991 push into Kuwait and Iraq, to counter
Saddam Hussein—the latter a masterstroke of international diplomacy and efficient military prowess that brought Colin Powell
(chairman of the Joint Chiefs) and Dick Cheney (secretary of defense) to the fore. Even so, Bush squandered his nearly 90 percent
approval rating, in large part by failing to find a quick enough solution to the post-Reagan-years’ recession. “It’s the economy,
stupid,” chimed James Carville, a campaign adviser to Bush’s successor, Bill Clinton. But the economy, former Treasury
secretary Nicholas Brady says with a sigh, “doesn’t dance to just any piper’s tune . . . and for Bush it didn’t cooperate with
the election cycles.” Indeed, on a campaign trip, when “Poppy” was reported, perhaps erroneously, to have been
flummoxed by an encounter with an ordinary electronic supermarket scanner, his public favor dimmed even further;
he’d been branded as out of touch with the pocketbook concerns of mainstream America.

Standing: Senior Counselor, Chief of Staff, and Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Secretary
of the Treasury Nicholas F. Brady, Secretary of Commerce Robert A. Mosbacher Sr., and National-Security
Adviser Brent Scowcroft. Seated: Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Special
Assistant to the President Mary Matalin, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin L. Powell.

Photographed by Nigel Parry at the Willard hotel, in Washington, D.C.
The Clinton Administration
(1993–2001)

It was William Jefferson Clinton's particular political genius that he refused to toe the liberals' line, an arguably defeatist posture that, with the exception of Carter's single term, had shut the Democratic Party out of the White House for a generation. Once elected, Clinton struggled to execute his mandate, first going "left" (on a failed universal-health-care plan), then, after a crushing loss in the 1994 midterms, retooling his team and going "right" to attack welfare. One of Clinton's domestic victories, the welfare-reform act, which he signed in 1996 against the advice of some of his closest Democratic allies, was a benchmark of a pragmatic centrist. As kind fate would have it, Clinton presided over an era marked by high-tech prosperity and innovation. Thanks to his doggedness and diplomatic savvy, he would pull off a remarkable foreign-policy trifecta: helping to cool conflicts in the Balkans and Northern Ireland and, as a capstone to the sadly doomed Oslo accords, persuading Israel's Yitzhak Rabin and the P.L.O.'s Yasser Arafat to shake hands on the South Lawn. A political survivor long hounded over sexual missteps, he outlasted a scandal-spurred...
impeachment trial in the Senate (only the second in U.S. history), an ordeal that helped usher in the moralist George W. Bush. Like Nixon and George H. W. Bush before him, Clinton has grown in stature since his departure, firmly establishing himself as a globe-trotting humanitarian.

Opposite: Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence H. Summers, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala, Attorney General Janet Reno, Director of the National Economic Council and Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin, and adviser Vernon E. Jordan Jr., in New York City. Below: Senior Adviser Rahm Emanuel, Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers, National-Security Adviser Samuel R. Berger, National-Security Adviser Anthony Lake, Director of the Office of Management and Budget and Chief of Staff Leon E. Panetta, Assistant to the President for Trans-National Threats Richard A. Clarke, Deputy Chief of Staff Harold Ickes, Counselor to the President Paul Begala, Senior Adviser James Carville, Chief of Staff John Podesta, and Senior Adviser and Assistant to the President Sidney Blumenthal, in Washington, D.C.

Photographed by Christian Witkin.
In 1983, Leo Lerman was named editor of Vanity Fair, a job he’d wanted for 55 years. As the features editor of Vogue for 11 of those years, he’d exercised his innate taste, wit, curiosity, and talent for instant intimacy and become a cultural landmark. He was famous for throwing fabulous parties—“Sunday nights of mass affection,” he called them—in his dark, antique-stuffed town house, whose rickety stairs were the red carpet of his time, risked by everyone from Truman Capote to Marlene Dietrich, Rudolf Nureyev, Maria Callas, and W. H. Auden. He knew everyone, saw and heard everything.

Greedy? He was voracious, pouncing on the delicious whether it was a new restaurant or a new writer. To work for him, as I did when I was starting out, was to be caught up in his glamorous orbit. “Get me Cary Grant” was the sort of order a young assistant didn’t mind obeying. And always he was scribbling in his journals, with purple ink in his spiky handwriting. He’d describe a conversation with Princess Margaret at Cecil Beaton’s party for Audrey Hepburn. He’d comment on his friends: “Tennessee was all the women he ever wrote.”

Now, 13 years after his death, Stephen Pascal, his longtime amanuensis (Leo loved those $10 words), has deciphered the handwriting and edited The Grand Surprise: The Journals of Leo Lerman (Knopf). Its pages are sequined with his dazzling friends, but Leo himself is the best company, startlingly self-aware, ecstatic in the presence of beauty, abidingly tender about the love of his life, the artist Gray Foy, and gallant in the face of pain. Anyone at all familiar with what Buddhists call the vicissitudes of living—gain and loss, fame and disrepute, praise and blame, pleasure and sorrow—will hear in his sensible talking to himself the voice of the wise uncle he was to so many of us.

—AMY GROSS
The sensational death of Russian dissident Alexander Litvinenko, poisoned by polonium 210 in London last November, is still being investigated by Scotland Yard. Many suspect the Kremlin. But interviewing the victim's widow, fellow émigrés, and toxicologists, among others, BRYAN BURROUGH explores Litvinenko's history with two powerful antagonists—one his bête noire, President Vladimir Putin, and the other his benefactor, exiled billionaire Boris Berezovsky—in a world where friends may be as dangerous as enemies.
On November 1, 2006, after leaving their modest beige brick town house in the North London neighborhood of Muswell Hill, a petite 44-year-old Russian émigrée named Marina Litvinenko took her husband, Alexander, nicknamed Sasha, and dropped him at the subway station. He had a pair of appointments in central London but promised to be home in time for dinner. It was a special night, the sixth anniversary of their escape from Russia, and to celebrate, Marina was making Sasha’s favorite dinner: chicken and pancakes in herb sauce.

Marina spent the day attending a birthday party for a friend’s 3-year-old, then retrieved her 12-year-old son, Anatoly, from school before starting to cook. Sasha, a handsome, strapping six-footer with feathery blond hair, returned home at seven as promised, changed clothes, checked his computer, and sat down for dinner. Around 11 he rose to go to bed, saying he had an early meeting. When Marina went up later, she found him in the bathroom. He said he didn’t feel well. Then he vomited. He remained sick through the night, throwing up almost every half-hour or so.

The next morning, leaving Sasha in bed, Marina dropped Anatoly at school and swung by a drugstore to purchase anti-nausea tablets. She returned home to find her husband hunched over the toilet again. He told her this was no normal sickness. The vomiting was too strong. Everything that came out looked gray. “It looks like someone has poisoned me,” Sasha said.

There was no need to say more: this was the moment they had feared for six years. Back in Moscow, Sasha was known as the infamous K.G.B.-trained lieutenant colonel Alexander Litvinenko, who had publicly denounced Vladimir Putin’s government for all manner of murders and corruption. Friends viewed Litvinenko as an American-style whistle-blower: enemies, and he had many, considered him a thug turned traitor. Now, Marina believed, Putin was having his revenge.

An ambulance was called, and Litvinenko was taken to a nearby hospital; 21 days later he was dead. On the day he died, what might have been written off as another obscure Russian dissident’s strange death exploded into an international espionage scandal that threatened Russia’s relations with the West, especially Britain, and sent hundreds of reporters scrambling to solve a mystery that many have characterized as too bizarre for a John Le Carré novel. Alexander Litvinenko, his doctors announced, had been poisoned with a radioactive element called polonium 210. He had, in all likelihood, been murdered.

In his last years Litvinenko had grown obsessed with Putin, a man for whom he had worked in the Russian secret services, and whose hand he seemed to see in the world’s every evil, from Middle Eastern terrorism to Afghan drug trafficking. From his deathbed Litvinenko issued a statement blaming his illness squarely on Putin’s government. The British press erupted in an orgy of articles excoriating the Kremlin stories that gained even more traction when it turned out Litvinenko had visited with two former K.G.B. men on the day he was probably poisoned. All through December, as Europe watched, rapt, as Scotland Yard detectives tracked telltale traces of polonium everywhere the two K.G.B. men had been: a London hotel suites and bars, in an ex-wife’s home in Germany, and even on the jetliner on which the two had flown to London.

To this day, no one knows who poisoned Litvinenko; any examination of his death leads to one giant tangle of loose ends. The

**THE SPY WHO LOVED ME**

Opposite, Litvinenko’s wife, Marina, after his funeral. Below, from left: Litvinenko in his post-F.S.B. days; celebrating the day he got his British citizenship; his F.S.B. identification card; as a Russian soldier.
HOT ON THE TRAIL

(1) Boris Berezovsky. (2) An official police label seals the door to a Hamburg home visited by Dmitri Kovtun. (3) Police and media outside Litvinenko’s home. (4) Andrei Lugovoi and Dmitri Kovtun. (5) Alex Goldfarb. (6) Polonium contamination in Haselau, Germ
ory, like most good spy yarns, is nowhere as black-and-white as the tabloids would have you believe. Among the few things known for sure is that Litvinenko was neither the saint nor the famous dissident the press wanted him to be. He was a minor Russian celebrity years back, and while it's possible—even likely—that his old enemies in the spy services had him killed, at his death he was little more than a gadfly. "The tragedy of Litvinenko is that, throughout his life, people wouldn't listen to him," says Andrei Nikrasov, a Russian filmmaker and friend. To the end, he was frustrated. So frustrated. No one was listening. No one. Now they're listening."

His death, in fact, has made Litvinenko that he always wanted to be, an international celebrity, while drawing unprecedented publicity to the thousands of virulently anti-Putin Russian émigrés centered in London. A cynic might even say Litvinenko's friends had more to gain from his death than his enemies.

The New Russia

ince 9/11, Americans have lost sight of any number of international stories, few more important than the ominous goings-on in Vladimir Putin's new Russia. Every week brings another worrisome headline from Moscow. One day it's the threat of an al Qaeda bomb, the next the most recent of dozens of Russian banks' being robbed on the orders of the K.G.B. The list goes on and on. Putin, like its F.B.I.; Litvinenko was the equivalent of an F.B.I. agent, and an obscure one at that. His specialty was organized crime, and his job involved investigations, stakeouts, and interrogations of Moscow mobsters. Gary Busch, a London-based transportation consultant who has worked with Russian security services, recalls encountering Litvinenko at an F.S.B. office during the 1990s. "He was a thug," Busch remembers.

Litvinenko turned out to be much more than that. To understand his strange odyssey, I spoke at length with the half-dozen people closest to him, including his best friend and neighbor in London, Akhmed Zakayev, a onetime deputy prime minister of Chechnya. Litvinenko's widow, Marina, a charming woman with wide-set Slavic eyes, met me at a London Internet café, though at her new publisher's insistence—she is writing a book, due out in May—she was obliged to speak on background. So was her co-author, Alex Goldfarb, the man who brought the Litvinenkos to London, a wry émigré with a salt-and-pepper beard, who met me for breakfast at Claridge's. Other friends, fearing for their safety, asked to remain anonymous.

Little in Litvinenko's past suggested his future as a dissident. He was born in the provincial city of Voronezh in 1962, of a long line of military officers. He entered the army at 18, then, after graduating from an officers' school in 1985, became a platoon commander. There, he has said, he became an informer for the K.G.B., a relationship that culminated in his joining the spy agency in 1988. Job titles aside, Litvinenko was a cop, investigating criminal gangs, mostly in Moscow, for the next several years, as the K.G.B. went through a series of name changes, its domestic branch eventually becoming the powerful F.S.B. He was an up-and-comer, energetic and curious, and Marina is certain he could have made general. Still, until he met Boris Bere-
Berezovsky, however, was special. A mathematician, he had become one of Russia's first successful entrepreneurs after the collapse of the Communist regime, much of his original fortune earned in software development and by selling Mercedes sedans to the country's new rich. He prospered as an early and vocal backer of Boris Yeltsin, branching into new businesses, acquiring old government factories, and transforming himself into the most visible of the "New Russian" oligarchs.

During Berezovsky's rise, in the early 1990s, the auctioning of government assets, known as privatization, turned violent, with murders and contract killings becoming commonplace. Still, an attempt on Berezovsky's life one rainy morning in April 1994 was eye-opening. Riding in the back of his chauffeured black Mercedes, he had just left the garage of his downtown-Moscow headquarters when a Volkswagen Golf, packed with dynamite, exploded. Dozens of bystanders were wounded. Berezovsky's bodyguard was maimed. His driver's head was blown off. But Berezovsky escaped unharmed. When he heard the news, Litvinenko realized he knew Berezovsky's name. He had overheard a Moscow thug talking about an attempt to extort him.

In the wake of the bombing, Litvinenko, in his role as a security agent, interviewed Berezovsky several times. A kind of friendship ensued. Berezovsky was looking for allies in the security services. Litvinenko, one suspect, was simply awed to grow so close to one of Russia's wealthiest men; their relationship would be akin to an F.B.I. agent befriending Bill Gates. In his Russian-language memoir, *The Lubyanka Criminal Group*, published in 2002, Litvinenko indicates he didn't see much of Berezovsky after the fruitless investigation ran its course. Not until 1998, he wrote, did their paths cross again. By that point, Berezovsky had emerged as the kingmaker behind Yeltsin's re-election, and had led the negotiations that ended the first Chechen war, a truce that was said to have enraged Russian hard-liners.

At that point, in 1998, Litvinenko claimed, one of his F.S.B. superiors asked whether he could get close enough to Berezovsky to murder him. In his memoir, Litvinenko portrayed this as a turning point in his life, a moment when he began seriously to imagine the pervasive official corruption in Russia. Litvinenko, who believed the attempt to kill Berezovsky emanated from a Russian general named Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, quoted him as saying it was time for him to "serve his country."

Litvinenko, however, was nothing special. There were hundreds in the F.S.B. just like him.

Berezovsky, in 1994, Litvinenko was nothing special. There were hundreds in the F.S.B. just like him.

The sensational reign of "Poiret le Magnifique" barely outlived his marriage, which dissolved in 1928. By that time such avant-garde clients as Josephine Baker, Helena Rubinstein, Colette, and Peggy Guggenheim had already migrated to newer créateurs, Chanel among them. In 1929 the house of Poiret closed its imposing doors, and the spendthrift master declared bankruptcy. "Perhaps," suggests art historian Kenneth E. Silver, "it was all too precious to last."

—AMY FINE COLLINS

Illustration by Michael Roberts
Ten years ago, HBO bought a pilot script for a show that no one—not creator David Chase, lead actor James Gandolfini, or any of the original cast—thought would ever get made. Today, *The Sopranos* is perhaps the greatest pop-culture masterpiece of its day, a fearless series that has transformed television. With the story of Tony Soprano, mobster in midlife crisis, just nine episodes from a finale, PETER BISKIND hears how it all went down, from the players behind the phenomenon
PEOPLE GO, 'WHAT’S NEXT? WHERE’S THE NEXT
Ten years ago, HBO bought a pilot script for a show that no one—not creator David Chase, lead actor James Gandolfini, or any of the original cast—thought would ever get made. Today, *The Sopranos* is perhaps the greatest pop-culture masterpiece of its day, a fearless series that has transformed television. With the story of Tony Soprano, mobster in midlife crisis, just nine episodes from a finale, PETER BISKIND hears how it all went down, from the players behind the phenomenon.
SO THIS GANGSTER WALKS INTO A SHRINK'S OFFICE...

Sopranos actors and their roles, from left: Michael Imperioli (Christopher Moltisanti), Edie Falco (Carmela Soprano), James Gandolfini (Tony Soprano), Lorraine Bracco (Dr. Jennifer Melfi), Robert Iler (Anthony "A.J." Soprano Jr.), Jamie-Lynn Sigler (Meadow Soprano), Steven Schirripa (Bobby "Bacala" Baccalieri), Dominic Chianese (Corrado "Uncle Junior" Soprano Jr.), Aida Turturro (Janice Soprano), Steve Van Zandt (Silvio Dante), Tony Sirico (Peter Paul "Paulie Walnuts" Gualtieri), plus series creator and executive producer David Chase. Photographed in New York City.
To paraphrase the timeless words of Edward G. Robinson's Rico in A Little Caesar, "Is this the end of Tony?" Well, that wouldn't be for me to say, and in any case, I don't know, what with plot points guarded as fiercely as the crown jewels. What does appear to be certain, however, is that the upcoming nine episodes, technically the second half of the show's sixth season, will finally spell the end of The Sopranos, 10 years after HBO bought the script for the pilot. This is a fact of life, the 600-pound gorilla that nobody on the show, the interiors of which are shot at Silvercup studios, a former bread bakery in Long Island City, wants to acknowledge. Though it feels like just another day on the set as cast and crew work on a domestic scene in Janette Soprano's kitchen, the actors might as well be wearing sandwich boards reading, HE END IS NIGH.

For most of them, it's been an unprecedented, nearly decade-long marriage to the show, which has meant a ready-made, closest surrogate family of artistic collaborators, not to mention a steady paycheck. And most of them aren't quite ready to hit the pavement. Says Tony Sirico, who plays Soprano apologetic Paulie, "For the last three months now we've been doing a lot of reminiscing. We bring up the show ending, and then we stop right away, because we want to make believe that it's not happening. I want to block it out of my head. I'm heartbroken." According to Edie Falco, who plays Tony Soprano's wife, Carmela, "There are actors here who will never get an opportunity like this again. Having gotten scripts while we've been working on this, there's just nothing out there that's interesting. It scares the hell out of me." Little Steven Van Zandt, longtime guitarist of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band and maestro of his own radio show Little Steven's Underground Garage, had never acted before he landed the part of Tony's consigliere, Silvio Dante. Sighing, he says, "There's a fair chance I'll never act again."

The one exception to the pervasive melancholy is James Gandolfini himself, the actor who turned Tony Soprano into the Homer Simpson of live-action television, transformed the Jerky Mob boss into one of the great screen characters by investing him with an unprecedented physicality—his bulk, his 12 o'clock shadow, his labored breathing, even, which makes him sound just short of tubercular. No one will ever forget Tony's graceless shuffle down his driveway every morning to pick up the Newark Star-Ledger, or the slovenly way he bellies up to the kitchen counter to guzzle O.J. out of the container. At the same time, alongside Tony's signature menace, the actor gives him a winning sobriety, and is able to effortlessly slide from one to the other and back again, so that these traits don't seem like contradictions, but rather the fluid flow of personality. Gandolfini has started his own production company and has a deal to develop material for HBO. He's had enough of Tony. "It's been a great opportunity, but I don't have much trepidation about it ending. I think it's more than time. Part of the fun of acting is the research, finding out about other people. As much as I've explored this guy, I don't know what else to really do with him. I've been in one place for 10 years. That's enough. It's time for me to do other things."

Gandolfini might be the only person in America who feels that way. His performance helped transform HBO from a fights-and-features TV footnote into the Rolls-Royce of pay cable, a critical and commercial behemoth whose impact has reestablished American television—almost, or at least occasionally—into a medium for adults. In our culture of hype, the currency of praise has been so de-valued that no one credits it, even when deserved. The truth is, The Sopranos, whether in one-hour shots, 13-hour seasonal chunks, or the 86-hour long-form marathon—however you want to take it—is one of the masterpieces of American popular culture, on a par with the first two Godfathers, Mean Streets, and GoodFellas—the classics of Mob cinema—or even European epics such as Luchino Visconti's The Leopard, Bernardo Bertolucci's Novecento, or, as the late New York Times critic Vincent Canby first claimed, Rainer Werner Fassbinder's monumental 15½-hour Berlin Alexanderplatz, all of which The Sopranos dwarfs in terms of length, if not scope. New York's Museum of Modern Art honored The Sopranos in February 2001, when the senior film curator, Laurence Kardish, showed the first two seasons, along with a couple of films that influenced the show—including a Laurel and Hardy picture, Saps At Sea. This was the first time an American dramatic series for television had been shown at the museum. Kardish calls the show "an extraordinary blend of great psychological insight and social cartography, zany as well as poignant and resonant." No less an authority than Norman Mailer recently gave The Sopranos high praise indeed when he favoredly compared the depth of its characterizations to that achieved in novels.

But, despite its length, the series has never been epic television, never a Band of Brothers or even a Rome, if "epic" is synonymous with grand historical sweep. In fact, it is something much more unique: "personal" television writ large, television drawn from the experiences and sensibility of a small crew of writers, and, in particular, the man who created it and is now shutting it down despite keening and teeth gnashing from HBO, which would undoubtedly prefer that the show go on forever. That man, one of the few authentic auteurs television has produced, is David Chase.
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“PEOPLE GO, ‘WHAT’S NEXT? WHERE’S THE NEXT
There is no new *Sopranos*. Some former cast members: David Proval (Richie Aprile), Vincent Pastore (Salvation), "Big Pussy" Bonpensiero, Annabella Sciorra (Gloria Trillo model and prop girl, substituting for an absent Hydroid Pantoliano (Ralph Cifaretto). Odette de Matteo (Adriana La Cerva), Steve Buscemi (Tony Blundetto).
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The one exception to the pervasive melodrama is James Gandolfini himself, the actor who turned Tony Soprano into the Homer Simpson of live-action television, transformed the Jersey Mob boss into one of the great screen characters by investing him with an unprecedented physicality—his bulk, his 12 o'clock shadow, his labored breathing, even, which makes him sound just short of tubercular. No one will ever forget Tony's graceless shuffle down his driveway every morning to pick up the Newark Star-Ledger, or the slovenly way he bellies up to the kitchen counter to guzzle O.J. out of the container. At the same time, alongside Tony's signature menace, the actor gives him a winning sweetness, and is able to effortlessly slide from one to the other and back again, so that these traits don't seem like contradictions, but rather the fluid flow of personality. Gandolfini has started his own production company and has a deal to develop material for HBO. He's had enough of Tony. "It's been a great opportunity, but I don't have much trepidation about it ending. I think it's more than time. Part of the fun of acting is the research, finding out about other people. As much as I've explored this guy, I don't know what else to really do with him. I've been in one place for 10 years. That's enough. It's time for me to do other things."

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Chase, 61, is about six feet tall, slender, with thinning hair and a saturnine expression that matches a dark, savage sense of humor. He's Italian (the family name was DeCesare), but he's not given to the emotional flamboyance that we associate with Italians—and which is very much on display in the show—perhaps because he was raised as a Protestant. He's a watchful man, plays his cards close to the vest, lives very much in his head, listens as much as he speaks, except for abrupt and frequent explosions of laughter. Though he commands an enterprise that employs upwards of 300 people, he is not a cheerleader in the conventional sense. He is prone, during writers' meetings, to say things such as, "God, I'm so fucking depressed. I hate this. I can't do another one." As executive producer Ilene S. Landress puts it, "If you're looking for a glass-half-full person, he's not it. The scary part is sometimes you think you're giving him good news and he turns it into bad news." Van Zandt describes Chase as a tortured soul. "Look at the show," the actor says, smiling. "He's not moody—he's always in a bad mood. He's very consistent." There are bits and pieces of Chase in many of the show's characters, but if he resembles any of them, it's probably Johnny Sack, the boss of the New York family who conducts himself with the aplomb of a dyspeptic chess master.

We're sitting together in the back of a car on a tour of New Jersey, where Chase grew up and where his show unfolds, having headed out of New York through the Lincoln Tunnel. The signs and lights flash by as they do in the show's opening-credits sequence, and I can almost hear the music that accompanies it as Chase points out the window to an area in Newark where his
mother grew up, since obliterated by development. “That was the original Little Italy,” he says. “The buildings were torn down, and large projects were built. And then those were torn down, and these smaller ones were built.” Most of the places he remembers aren’t there anymore, victims of relentless change. You can’t go home again.

New Jersey is more than just the show’s backdrop. The Sopranos is about guys who make their living on the wrong side of the Hudson River in Jersey’s gray flatlands, skimming city contracts, hijacking semis full of booze or cigarettes, betting on sports, or feigning nine-to-five regularity in “waste management.” Its Broadway is Bloomfield Avenue, a thoroughfare that runs from downtown Newark out to the nouveau suburbs, lined, for much of its length, with strip malls, single-story working-class bars, nail parlors, and Italian restaurants with names like Roma or DaVinci’s, whose walls are hung with black velvet paintings. Which is to say, Jersey is not New York, and, despite Tony’s robust cash flow and the big house on the cul-de-sac in North Caldwell, The Sopranos is more GoodFellas than Godfather; it’s the Mob in the era of diminished expectations, when, as Tony points out, the big money goes to Enron. Good-bye, cashmere overcoats; hello, grungy bathrobes. North Jersey is the place that colors the fears and hopes of Chase’s characters; it’s the place from which he fled, but which—to everyone’s surprise, including his own—proved fertile ground for his powers of invention.

A severely truncated version of Chase’s career goes like this: When the idea for The Sopranos finally floated to the surface, he had been laboring in the vineyards of network television for some 20 years. He had come of age in the late 1960s and 1970s, and had grown up with the great films of that era, particularly those of Federico Fellini. He desperately wanted to write features. Television was a byway he fell into when, after graduating from film school, at Stanford, in 1971, he was cast onto the mean streets of Hollywood. He made his way through several unmemorable TV shows while laboring over feature scripts on the side, none of which sold. “I was learning writing,” he says. “I didn’t really know about story. To me, 8½ was a great story.”

Chase finally clambered out of the river of sewage that made
David Chase, photographed in New York City. "Every shot, every word, of The Sopranos is David in some way or another," says his friend Lawrence Konner, who has written three episodes.
OH, MANDY

In the Pompadour ballroom of Paris’s Le Meurice hotel, Mandy Moore reclines upon a golden Louis XV sofa, while French actors Paul Perier, Cyril Mourali, Axel Kiener, and Simon Frltacher observe. Moore is wearing an ivory guipure-and-silk-chiffon Gaultier Paris gown, encircled with a pastel flower garland, and Manolo Blahnik for Gaultier Paris shoes: “As long as it looks O.K. lying down, then that’s what matters,” she says.
With an upcoming album that shows off her grown-up new sound, Mandy Moore gets a Paris-couture makeover from JESSICA DIEHL and photographer MICHAEL ROBERTS, who turns the 23-year-old star of American Dreamz and Because I Said So from girl next door to ooh-la-la.
MOORE THE MERRIER
Cyril Mourali and Axel Kiener admire Mandy Moore, resplendent in an embroidered Valentino Haute Couture evening gown with a floor-length organza cape, at the Pompadour ballroom. Opposite, in the Executive Suite of the Hôtel Ritz, Moore, in a Versace Haute Couture tulle ball gown embroidered with crystal teardrop beads, observes, "I am not in Kansas anymore!"
"If the military had said, ‘We won’t be a part of this then it wouldn’t have been,’ says retired lieutenant general Greg Newbold.
THE NIGHT OF THE GENERALS

The six retired generals who stepped forward last spring to publicly attack Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's handling of the Iraq war had to overcome a culture of reticence based on civilian control of the military. But while each man acted separately, all shared one experience: a growing outrage over the administration's incompetence. DAVID MARGOLICK learns what led some of the nation's finest soldiers to risk their reputations and cross a time-honored line.

By late 2001, briefing Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was familiar territory for Lieutenant General Greg Newbold. As director of operations on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Newbold, a three-star in the Marines, had done it many times since Rumsfeld had arrived at the Pentagon earlier in the year, and had come to know the routine: the constant interruptions, the theatrics, the condescension. But, according to Newbold, there was something different, and alarming, about one particular briefing around that time: the topic. It was about going to war with Iraq.

Only a few months had passed since the attacks of September 11. The war in Afghanistan was just under way; officially, the enemies were al-Qaeda and the Taliban. But what interested Rumsfeld now was Baghdad, Basra, and beyond. To Newbold and many others, Iraq seemed irrelevant to the problems America faced, and besides, things there appeared largely under control; Saddam Hussein had been more or less handcuffed through sanctions and other diplomatic measures. Yet here was a sign, one of several, that Saddam, and not Osama bin Laden or Mullah Omar, was most on the Bush administration's mind.

Around a conference table in the Pentagon's E-ring, the brass gathered. Newbold sat next to Rumsfeld, with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Richard Myers, to Newbold's right, and Myers's deputy, General Peter Pace, next to him. Nearby were Rumsfeld's number two, Paul Wolfowitz, and his personal military assistant, Admiral Edmund Giambastiani Jr. Newbold began reviewing the plan to invade Iraq, several years old by that point, which called for 500,000 troops—a figure Rumsfeld summarily dismissed. Surely 125,000 would suffice, he said, and with a little imagination, you could probably get away with far fewer than that.

Newbold, who had spent his career commanding infantry and led the Marines into Somalia, believed that Rumsfeld's figure was absurdly, dangerously low; the only question was whether he should say so. True, he'd risk Rumsfeld's famously withering wrath. True, ultimate authority lay with the civilians. True, such objections should ideally come first from the su-
perior officers sitting mutely nearby. And, true, war with Iraq still seemed far-fetched, even preposterous. So he said nothing. And now, billions of dollars and immeasurable heartache and more than 3,000 buried American soldiers later, he has not forgiven himself. "I should have had the gumption to confront him," he says. "The right thing to do was to confront, and I didn't. It's something I'll have to live with for a long time."

Ultimately, Newbold did make his views known to superiors and colleagues, to no avail, and he left the Marines in the fall of 2002. For the next three and a half years, as the United States entered Iraq, then found its force too small for the job and utterly unprepared for the chaos and enmity it would encounter, he kept his opinions largely to himself. That's what military men, even retired military men, invariably do. But one Saturday morning last April, he wrote a piece for Time magazine saying that Rumsfeld had to go. Around the same time, in Fox Island, Washington, Paul Eaton, a retired army two-star general who'd spent a year trying to build a new Iraqi Army, was also at his computer, writing the same thing. So, too, essentially, was another retired two-star, John Batiste, as he prepared a talk for some Rotarians in Rochester, New York, about his experiences in Iraq leading one of the army's most storied divisions.

Three other retired generals—John Riggs and Charles Swannack Jr., of the army, and Paul Van Riper, of the Marines—weren't writing anything at that moment, but when reporters reached them, they were all ready to spill. They agreed that Rumsfeld should be replaced, and for the same reasons: his disastrous management of an ill-conceived and, some felt, entirely unnecessary war, one in which an overly compliant military—the generals on the Joint Chiefs—had been complicit, or at least supine.

Onondal Rumsfeld is now gone, and history's first draft on him has been written. Not long ago, one of the most famous former military men in America, Senator John McCain, said Rumsfeld was, along with Robert S. McNamara, of Vietnam fame, one of the worst secretaries of defense ever, evidently thinking he'd get votes in his run for the presidency by saying so. But in a nation founded on civilian control of the military, in which generals fight wars but rarely take on their politically elected bosses, the spectacle of six retired generals, some intimately associated with an ongoing war, attacking a sitting secretary of defense was extraordinary, and, for some, extraordinarily unsettling. "Seven Days in April," someone called it. On April 14, 2006, headshots of five of the generals dominated the front page of The New York Times.

Rumsfeld, characteristically, depicted it simply as the grousing of a few military mossbacks uncomfortable with change. With colleagues, he wondered who these six men were, and how they purported to know him and his models of war so damned well. But recognizing their peculiar political potency at the Pentagon and the White House mobilized quickly to stave off attacking out other generals, retired and active, to defend Rumsfeld, thus playing their trump card: the president of the United States, the self-described "decider." George W. Bush backed his defense secretary, and for the time being. Rumsfeld stayed. And all those other disgruntled retired generals presumably waiting in the wings stayed quiet. They had lots of reasons. Speaking out, many of them believed, was improper, or disrespectful, or futile. Or risky, possibly antagonizing friends, colleagues, clients, and employers. Or inconvenient: who needed the notoriety, the phone calls from CNN and Al Jazeera, which quickly and predictably engulfed, and continue to beset, all six men? Or embarrassing, for it invited Rumsfeld loyalist to rummage through the generals' pasts, looking for sour grapes.

Some scholars of military-civilian affairs said that the six had imperiled civilian control, undermined military mores and moral jeopardized the military meritocracy and the trust between senior and junior officers. The time for these men to have spoken out, these critics said, was while they were still in uniform, through the chain of command; past retired generals with bones to pick had had the decency to wait for administrations to change before writing books, rather than popping off against incumbents in real time, practically before the ink on the retirement papers had dried.

People still debate whether the "revolting generals," as Newbold facetiously calls the group, hastened Rumsfeld's departure or, by getting Bush's back up, actually delayed it. They can debate, too, whether the generals represented a threat to American democracy or an expression of its vitality, an ominous precedent or a one-off, stemming from a military fiasco and a single abrasive personality. Lots of people—activists and generals unwilling to criticize old friends, politicians ducking the cross fire, and some of the dissenters themselves—want to forget the whole thing ever happened. Few would deny, though, that it was a cultural milestone, a new level of coming out for senior officers at a time when every network already has its own battalion of uniformed talking heads, as well as a political watershed. "It became an important component of last year's political season," says Lawrence Di Rita, Rumsfeld's former spokesman at the Pentagon, and the most public and durable—of his defenders. "It became a snapshot that gave some credibility to anti-war Democrats and even anti-war Republicans."

From the outside, the six insurgent generals looked suspiciously like a cabal, but there was nothing conspiratorial about them. While a few knew one another, their protests were not coordinated: to this day several have never met. For the most part they were connected only insofar as one of them emboldened the next, and the next, and the next.

It is hard to conceive of a more improbable group of dissenters. Several are military brats who married military brats and began military brats. With one exception—who, on principle, never voted at all—all had cast ballots for George W. Bush in 2000. That wasn't unusual: to this day, none has ever voted for a Democrat; presidential candidate, though this now may well change. All applauded when Rumsfeld was named to his post; some even initially favored his plans to streamline—or "transform," as he termed it— the military. But most had soured on him before the public did, after, they believed, he had humiliated and marginalized four-star general Eric Shinseki, the much-respected army chief of...
GENERAL PAUL EATON
West Point graduate; oversaw the creation of the new Iraqi Army until 2004. Retired with two stars in 2006.

GENERAL JOHN RIGGS
Vietnam veteran; headed army’s Objective Force Task Force. Retired in April 2004 after losing one of his three stars.

GENERAL CHARLES SWANNACK JR.
West Point graduate; commanded the 82nd Airborne in Iraq until 2004, making 153 jumps himself. Retired with two stars in 2004.

GENERAL PAUL VAN RIPER
Vietnam veteran; retired as a Marine three-star in 1997. Served as a consultant to Rumsfeld’s Pentagon.
GENERAL JOHN T. RAPA

Former commander of the First Infantry Division; retired with two stars in November 2005.
Staff, who in February 2003 publicly disputed Rumsfeld’s lowball estimates of the troops required for any Iraq war.

Though some of the generals had complained while on active duty about Rumsfeld’s handling of the war—and, they believe, were penalized for their candor—each had to overcome a lifetime of reticence before falling for him to be replaced. In doing so, each surprised his peers and even, it seems, himself. Several say they could never have spoken up had anyone else—the Congress, the media, the four-star generals—done so first. All seem a little out of their element in the media glare, ingenuously candid, unaccustomed to the refuge of “off the record.”

With one exception, all are between 50 and 60 and, if they didn’t actually serve in Vietnam, were shaped—and haunted—by its legacy. They are generally thoughtful, soft-spoken, articulate, defying the stereotypes of belligerent warriors. Some initially supported the war in Iraq; others had doubts from the outset. Some say they’ve only been praised for speaking up; two claim to have lost job prospects because of it. Most are glad they talked, but two have regrets; one said he would never do it again. All oppose a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq but view the “surge” as too little, too late, at least without lots of money and diplomacy thrown in. All recognize the limits of military power, the only military men can.

To a retired four-star Marine general Anthony Zinni, the former head of United States Central Command (CentCom) who spoke out against the war from the beginning, thereby becoming a role model to the six, their performance was “a tremendous act of patriotism.” But Di Rita believes they both maligned Rumsfeld and hurt their country, rending the delicate fabric of civilian-military relations. “He was treated in some warts a shabbily by these guys, who had ample opportunity to do it differently,” she says. “There can only be one president and only one secretary of defense at a time, and military officers get a vote, but only the way the rest of us do, and that’s through a secret ballot. It’s not through the front page of The New York Times.”

The Shot Heard Round the World

Among the six, Paul Eaton has one clear distinction. He was dealt the worst hand: to create a new Iraqi Army from scratch. That much was evident from the moment he landed in Kuwait early one morning in June 2003 to undertake the job. First, no one was there to meet him. Then no one had arranged to take him to Baghdad; he had to thumb a helicopter ride there. Then he couldn’t get into the Green Zone. Then, to build a new military force for 26 million people, he’d been given a munificent staff of five.

Eaton, a 53-year-old West Point graduate who’d commanded the infantry center at Fort Benning, Georgia, had gotten his orders barely a month earlier. The new force was a low priority to Rumsfeld, he says; it was called “the New Iraqi Corps,” or NIC, until a linguist on Eaton’s staff noted that NIC meant “fucked” in Arabic. “It was stunning how cavalierly this whole thing was approached,” says Eaton, whose father, an air-force fighter pilot, had been shot down over Laos in 1969 and never found. But at first he was gun-shy. He scoured the Internet for information about Iraq, reread T. E. Lawrence, reviewed the histories of other occupations. Once in Baghdad, he set up an office in one of Saddam Hussein’s old palaces and augmented his skeletal team. But with the pre-existing Iraqi Army first disintegrating, then summarily dissolved by edict of the American provisional-authority administrator L. Paul Bremer III, the obstacles were daunting.

The Pentagon contrived much of the project to the Vinnet Corporation, a private company poorly equipped to train drill sergeants and foot soldiers. It was mandated that each of the new Platoons mirror Iraqi society, with appropriate percentages of Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds, who hated one another and, in some instances, didn’t speak the same language. Veterans of Saddam’s old army wanted their former ranks and salaries back, and didn’t like the girlie-man pink of their new Iraqi-made camouflage. Eaton’s entire budget was a pittance $73 million. That September, Rumsfeld came by to assess Eaton’s progress. Amid the crystal chandeliers and broken toilets in Saddam’s old domain, he balked at Eaton’s enhanced, far more expensive plans for the Iraqi soldiers—“My God, it’s gold-plated!” he exclaimed—but soon promised Eaton everything he wanted, with an exponentially increased budget to match. There were hopeful signs: in October, the first battle of 600 Iraqi soldiers graduated, and in January 2004, so did another 600. Eaton agreed to a second six-month hitch.

But then the problems caught up with and overwhelmed him. The funding Rumsfeld had authorized got enmeshed in the Pentagon bureaucracy. A contractor’s alleged links to the discredited Iraqi-exile leader Ahmad Chalabi led the Pentagon to cancel a mega-deal to supply weapons, trucks, body armor, uniforms—just about everything a light motorized infantry battalion would need—setting everything back months. The Americans who were to train the Iraqis arrived late, badly prepared, and in smaller numbers than promised. Then there was the growing insurgency, to which, Eaton says, Rumsfeld paid little attention: “Nation building, peace building, counter-insurgency—anything soldier-intensive was not his bag.”

At the time, Eaton was candid with reporters. It would take three to five years or more to field a competent Iraqi Army, he told them. The Americans training them were “on the ragged edge of our competence.” He conceded he’d feel “a whole lot safer” in Baghdad walking around in civilian clothes. U.S. GENERAL IRAQ POLICE TRAINING A MISTAKE was the headline of one Eaton interview. Then, in April 2004, a battalion of Eaton’s newly minted Iraqi soldiers refused to fight. It helped doom Eaton’s military career. “I didn’t deliver a miracle,” he says. “And neither has anyone else.” The episode feed perceptions that Eaton’s replacement, cont inued on page 274
Make Mine
Ibiza’s devotees—who include Kate Moss, Sean Combs, and the King of Spain—worship its crystalline beaches, 300 days of sunshine, and “anything goes” (we mean anything) attitude toward sex, drugs, and all-night revelry. But many fear the tiny Spanish island is being ruined by weekend-trippers, development, and the construction of a multi-lane motorway through its interior.

Plunging into the hedonists’ parade that spawned the rave movement, GEORGE GURLEY wonders if Ibiza’s lack of inhibitions could ultimately destroy it.
On Monday afternoon, a plane flies over a nightclub called DC 10, which opens at eight A.M., and on the ground people look up, wave, and yell, “Welcome to Ibiza!”

On Wednesday morning at five o’clock, 8,000 revelers are dancing and shouting “We are one!” at Privilege, the biggest nightclub in the world. At noon it’s time for a nap on the beach or maybe a magic-mushroom-omelet breakfast. And when the sun sets over the sparkling-clean turquoise water, everyone applauds. Some cry, it’s so breathtaking.

On another afternoon, a boat anchors a hundred yards from a popular beach, in full view of the sunbathing families. On deck an attractive woman strips, which is nothing new, but then she pulls the swimming trunks off her boyfriend and starts performing fellatio. Next she gets on top of him, and after the couple finish they dive into the sea.

More applause.

It’s the same attitude everywhere you go on this tiny, outrageously beautiful island 57 miles off the southeastern coast of Spain. A mantra here is “No pasa nada” (No problem), and the all-purpose adjective is “amazing.” The weather is amazing (300 days of sunshine a year), as are the scores of beaches, the coves, bays, mountains, lush green countryside, and invigorating pine-scented air.

The food, the music, and the drugs are amazing, too, not to mention the mix of great-looking people.

Here you will find a millionaire having a drink next to an Arab oil sheikh, the King of Spain, a Formula One racecar driver, Sean Combs, Kate Moss, an 18-year-old girl from Manchester, or a hippie who lives in a cave. Here you can do what you want, and no one will judge you, especially not the smiling, tolerant Ibicencos.

The spirit of freedom, laziness, and decadence has reigned on Ibiza since long before the first hippies, rock stars, models, and ravers arrived. And while there’s something for everybody, it’s the perfect place for a groovy jet-setter, with its 150-foot yachts, rentable villas and mini-islands, excellent restaurants, and happening superclubs. All this three hours from London, two hours from Paris, and 45 minutes from Barcelona.

Amazing.

At the same time, many long-time residents, rich and poor, complain that their island is in danger of losing its charm, thanks to mass tourism, over-development, petty crime, and condoms on the beach. The alarm has been sounding for decades (“Ibiza’s turning into Saint-Tropez!”), but it’s gotten louder by the time I arrive, in August 2005. More and more people have been escaping by ferry to the smaller sister isle of Formentera, which has no airport, no traffic lights, and no crazy nightlife. It’s where you go to find out what Ibiza was like 40 years ago.

But, for every person who thinks the island is “over,” there’s someone else who insists that it’s still like nowhere else. Back in the 1500s, Nostradamus supposedly showed his confidence in its staying power when he predicted that only Ibiza would survive the apocalypse.

Jade Jagger, 35, the daughter of Mick and Bianca Jagger, throws a party every summer for 500 on her estate up north. She’s a local royalty figure, but the island’s changing character has caught even her by surprise: she has been photographed frolicking naked with a boyfriend by the sea.

Fashion photographer Peter Lindbergh escapes the rampant development by retreating to his Edenic mountaintop property, with its amazing pool and stunning view of the sea. His ideal scenario? Turn the phones off, crack open a case of Austrian rosé, then feast on cabrito with his pretty young wife, Petra, and their angelic little boy. Totally blissed out, Lindbergh won’t come down his mountain for a month. “The first five days I think about what happened before, and the last five days I think about what’s going to happen after,” he says. “And the 20 days in between I don’t think about anything. You feel like a monk.”

Indeed, Ibiza can be a spiritual place. Despite the many Catholic churches and one grand cathedral, there’s a pagan feel...
Whoever looks the best, has the best body, and dances the best wins.

1. Bathers in the surf at Las Salinas beach.
2. Fritz, Lady Northampton (right), and her daughter Louisa.
3. Dancers at Amnesia, around six A.M.
5. The mystical formation Es Vedra.
6. A view of Ibiza Town from the harbor.
8. The home of designer Philippe Starck on nearby Formentera.
“Magnetic energy creates the hedonism of Ibiza. You can feel it.”
to the island. After the Phoenicians discovered Ibiza by accident, in the seventh century B.C., they named it after Bes, their god of dance. But it's Tanit, their goddess of sex, fertility, and war, whose image appears on all the souvenir T-shirts.

Two hundred yards off the southwest of the island, in the open sea, is Tanit's holy island, a mysterious limestone formation called Es Vedrà. Tag-team photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott, who reside in a sprawling villa overlooking Es Vedrà, like to tell visitors that it is where Ulysses was shipwrecked and tormented by the Sirens. Others believe that the lost city of Atlantis is underneath it, or that its magnetic energy can cause extremes of joy or sadness. A few years ago a French tourist caught up in the occult set himself on fire on Es Vedrà, and people still take LSD trips in a nearby quarry and wait for U.F.O.'s to touch down.

Another plane arrives at Ibiza Airport, and the passengers clap and cheer, not in thanks for a safe landing but because they're so excited to be back in paradise. Who could fail to appreciate this Utopia, this heaven on earth?

Me, that's who! More like a hedonistic hellhole. I've just arrived from the States and the vibe has not rubbed off on me yet. In Ibiza Town, the supposedly classy "old city," mind-numbing thumpa-thumpa "music" is pumping out of car windows, pricey boutiques, apartments, restaurants. People pass by wearing T-shirts that read, I LUV TO PARTY!, WANNA BE MY BABE?, and DC 10: LET'S FLY AWAY. Would love to, but I'm stuck here for two weeks.

A speedwalk through the Rodeo Drive of Ibiza, wondering about the god-awful smell. Apparently the sewers aren't working today. I pass Gucci, Prada, a boutique called LSD, a tattoo parlor, and the famous all-night café Croissant Show, where Jean Paul Gaultier and Madonna have been spotted. Then I head up to the gates of the medieval fortress Dalt Vila, and lock myself in my room at the Hotel Navila.

But the next day, on the roof, I marvel at the view of the harbor. In the swimming pool, a toplevel pixie tells me I need to relax and just start exploring, "The nice thing about coming here," says Jo Good, a 27-year-old who co-hosted Total Request Live on MTV UK, "is you can be whoever you want to be and do whatever you want." She's reminded of the time she went to a club and saw a man named Fernando sitting on a stool onstage, with his back to the audience. "I was like, What's he doing?," Good recalls. "And he turned around and he was sucking himself. Yes he was! That was his job. I was about 22 at the time and I just went, Wow! Respect to you. If you've been coming here a few years, there's nothing that you look at and think, Hmm.

One thing that does make her go "hmm" is the sheer number of people here this summer. And the expense. Go to a club and it's 55 euros to get in, 20 euros for a drink, and 25 euros for a cab home. "It's sort of ruining the spirit of Ibiza," she says. "Ibiza's going to implode,"

She rattles off a list of local legends I must meet and suggests I avoid the bar scene in San Antonio, the second-biggest town on Ibiza. "When a large proportion of English people go on holiday, all they want is a cheap week in sunshine and to drink themselves into oblivion every night," she explains. "They're the lowest common denominator of society."

In the past 2,500 years, Ibiza has been invaded by Romans, Arabs, Byzantines, Vandals, pirates, and other barbarians. In the mid-20th century, artists, jazz musicians, British actors, aristocratic rogues, Beat poets, dropouts, and postwar refugees began showing up on its shores. Errol Flynn came to flee sex scandals, Elizabeth Taylor to elude photographers.

By the late 1960s, Ibiza was a pit stop on the hippie trail, along with Amsterdam, Goa, Bali, and Marrakech. For some, instantly hooked on the cheap and permissive lifestyle, it was the last stop. There was no electricity, running water, newspapers, or sense of time.

Americans came to dodge the draft. Roman Polanski, Diana Rigg, and Ursula Andress bought houses and hung out at Sandy's bar with Laurence Olivier and Peter Sellers. Terence Stamp got caught up briefly in the Rajneesh cult. In Quest for Love, her 1994 biography of her husband, the actor and bon vivant Denholm Elliott, Susan Elliott confessed that "there was something about Ibiza that encouraged excess while somehow making us feel we were immune to the consequences." After reveling in that excess for decades, Denholm died of Aids on Ibiza in 1992.

In Barbet Schroeder's directorial debut, More (1969), a German student is lured to Ibiza by a beautiful American hippie girl at the end of the summer, and by winter they have destroyed themselves after too much sun, sex, hash, LSD, heroin, paranoia, and jealousy. Pink Floyd composed the film's score at a fancy studio the band built on Formentera, where Bob Dylan joined a commune in the 60s and lived in a windmill.

The westernmost island in Spain's Balearic archipelago, Ibiza is 26 miles long and 16 miles wide. Some residents speak the local dialect of Catalan, but Castilian Spanish is the dominant language in the busier towns and villages. English, Italian, German, and French are spoken anywhere tourists might be tempted to spend their euros. E.U. residents can visit for up to 90 days with nothing but a national ID card. British citizens and visitors from the U.S., Canada, and Australia need a passport but not a visa.

The island got its nickname, "La Isla Blanca," not for its whitewashed architecture or the mountains of cocaine consumed here, but for its rich salt deposits. "White gold" was the island's main source of income until the 18th century. As recently as the early 1960s, some of the island's 10,000 Ibicencos sold rabbits and olive oil to survive, and in the north it's
still possible to spot a farmer working his field with a horse-drawn plow. But now that 75 percent of the economy is funded by tourism, more than a few of the locals (who now number upwards of 115,000) are wealthy, such as the owner of a bait shop who drives a BMW M5.

Carlos Martorell opens the door to his town house in Dalt Vila. Wearing white linen and Moroccan pajamas, he's a small, dignified man with patrician features and dramatic blue eyes that obviously have seen a lot.

A nightlife P.R. consultant, Martorell has partied at the nightclubs Space and Pacha with countless counts, duchesses, kings, princesses, and hell-raisers, as well as such luminaries as Valentino, Jean Paul Gaultier, Naomi Campbell, Mick Jagger, and onetime fugitive financier Marc Rich (whose ex-wife Gisela Rossi Rich still lives on Ibiza with her two sons). “I get to know the most important people in the world!” Martorell declares. “But they’re here on vacation, they’re relaxed.”

Martorell came here from Barcelona in 1968. “It was great fun. Of course there was free sex and drugs but completely different than now,” he says. “At one o’clock everyone was on the beach, and at four A.M. in bed. Now at four A.M. they arrive at the discotheques.”

In 1970 he witnessed something that epitomized the beginning of the hippie movement’s decadence and, with it, the loss of Ibiza’s innocence. A promiscuous woman from the States was on the island and having sex with “everybody” while taking lots of acid. She got pregnant and asked Martorell to help her arrange an abortion. He did, but the doctor told her it was too late: she was four months pregnant. “Those days, nobody had a watch,” he continues. “We didn’t know if it was Monday, Tuesday, May, June. It was freedom total.”

The woman used to joke with her many lovers about which one was the father, and she said the baby was going to be called Alice for Alice in Wonderland or Peter for Peter Pan. For the birth, a big party was organized on the highest house in the Old Town. Hippies played tambourines, flutes, and guitars, and in a Moroccan tent the mother was decked out like an odalisque with a turban.

“Everyone was all fucked up, and they told me the baby was born microcephalic,” he says. “I mean, the head was like a Ping-Pong ball and the body was transparent, like a columnar, be-
and drugs but completely different than now."
cause she was taking all the LSD. It was like from another world, like an alien! They took the baby to the doctor and he said, ‘Give it back to the mother because this baby monster Peter is going to die in a few hours.’”

Peter stopped breathing after three days. They dressed him in a white pareu and laid him out on a piece of wood with a candle and pushed him out to sea. His traumatized mother was now persona non grata, and her ex-friends kicked her off the island. “Then I realized that we were living like idiots on a cloud,” he says.

This wasn’t Martorell’s child?
“No, no. I hope not.”

Years later he turned the whole affair into a novel, Regentien for Peter Pan.

Martorell leads me upstairs, where on a wall is a fake Matisse, a gift from another friend, Elmyr de Hory. Perhaps the greatest art forger of the 20th century, de Hory was the subject of Orson Welles’s last film, the documentary For FAKE, which he shot here in 1975. (De Hory’s biographer, Clifford Irving, went on to write a bogus biography of Howard Hughes. That story is the subject of a new movie, The Hoax, due out this April.)


“All the people came to me like you came to me,” he says when it’s over. “They used to call me the King of Ibiza. I think it’s ridiculous.”

The real “king” is Abel Matutes, who began his 30-year career in politics as mayor of Ibiza under Franco and whose family is said to run the island. Plans are under way for golf courses, new marinas, and more than 60 urbanization projects. Most controversial is a series of three-to-six lane motorways with tunnels and overpasses that will cut through Ibiza’s virgin interior and cost hundreds of millions of euros. It’s rumored that Matutes owns the concrete plants and the construction company that’s building them. His 14-year-old daughter, Stella, manages the family’s farm on the island. The Matutes plan to use the farm to reduce traffic jams and late-night drinking and to bring some normality back to the island.

Socialite Fritz Northampton has also had enough of the traffic and noise. Wearing a lacy turquoise summer skirt and fancy flip-flops, she sits in the outdoor living room of her sprawling 250-year-old villa, where she lives with her three dogs and an impressive collection of Virgin Mary statues.

As it happens, the people renting the house next door are blasting Madonna out of huge speakers by their pool. Lady Northampton (she prefers Fritz) called the police, but nothing happened. When she first came here, in the mid-70s, Ibiza was a different island.

“It was actually a paradise, and it lasted a long time,” she says, recalling those phone-less days when she’d drive up to unlocked houses and, if no one was there, leave a note about her dinner party under a stone. “And that was part of the charm of this place. That’s all gone now.”

Later I will hear this sentiment echoed by Jacqueline de Ribes, the socialite and fashion icon, who first visited Ibiza in 1968. Back, then, she says, “You used to see wonderful old ladies
“My advice to anyone is don't stay here too long. I feel dumb.”
in their costumes with their flocks of sheep under almond trees. No one would ever think of locking the door to their house. Now all that ambience has disappeared completely. The Ibizencos sold all those farms, they live in apartments now, and the children of those people probably take drugs today. So it's one generation and the whole thing is changed completely, which is a pity.

The daughter of a banker, Fritzzi (née Ellen Erhardt) grew up in Munich, went to school in England, worked as a model, and married two English aristocrats, Lord Cowdray and then Lord Northampton (who went by the name Spenny), before settling down with her current husband, a nice German man who does human-resources consulting. These days she runs a real-estate company, Bluestone Properties, which rents out high-end houses in the summer. For two summers she rented a house to Kate Moss.

And yet she's been thinking lately about going back to London. "This is the big question," she says, pausing. "No, I love it here very much. I have my roots here, this is my home, my children love it here. No, I can't imagine living somewhere else."

Later that afternoon her 21-year-old daughter, Louisa, shows up. Born in London, she spent her childhood on Ibiza. "It's actually had a really positive effect on me," she says, "in the sense that you haven't done what everyone else in England has done. Gone to the same prep schools, gone to Eton and then to Newcastle." After two months here this summer, however, she's ready to return to civilization. "My advice to anyone is don't stay here too long," she says. "I feel dumb. If I have to sit at a dinner party, I don't know what to talk about. I'm like, 'Well, Pacha's good lately. Amnesia's good, too.'"

Her mother has changed into a black shirt and blue jeans. Cocktail hour! Louisa's shirtless friends, Harry and Tom, get on their cell phones and make reservations at Pacha for a table that costs $1,500 euros. They, too, warn me about the "lager loots" in San Antonio.

The trouble with San Antonio, on the island's west coast, began when English travel companies in Manchester and Birmingham started offering cheap package holidays to "weekend zombies," who, in some cases, get flown in for $100, go wild at the clubs, then return home the next day and crash. (Every year, an estimated 500,000 Brits visit Ibiza.)

In 1989, a pack of young British thugs beat an Andalusian waiter to death here, and the ugliness peaked in the late 1990s, when documentaries such as Ibiza Uncovered seriously damaged the island's reputation as a peaceful getaway.

Minutes after arriving in San Antonio's West End on a Saturday night I meet Lee, a 21-year-old student from southern Wales, who has been here for 10 days. So what's Ibiza all about? "Drugs," Lee wails. "I love drugs! Give me a drug!" We are in the middle of a four-block strip of bars that resembles a Disney theme park with everything a lad would need to have fun in his homeland: chips, kebabs, Guinness, fit girls—and a beach down the street.

Outside the Bulldog Inn, a young man is weaving around, then comes to an abrupt halt. Something has caught his eye: a garbage can. He charges, arcs up into the air, and dives headfirst into it. Bull's-eye!

"That is the most revolting thing I've seen in my life," says a witness.

"I see that all the time," says a barmaid. 22-year-old Robin Taylor, from North London. "People go rolling down the hill and do somersaults. and there's ambulances daily, police cars, fights all the time."

So Ibiza's not exactly a mystical, spiritual place?

"Oh, God no!" says Taylor. "You go to Ibiza to get wrecked on drugs and see all the best D.J.'s. That's about it."

Despite so much debauchery, the last thing you'd expect is to get shot, but that's what happened in August 2006 to two teenagers from Northern Ireland. It was one A.M. and they had just left the Garden of Eden nightclub in San Antonio for a snack at a nearby eatery when they found themselves in the middle of a gun battle between two rival drug dealers. Of the roughly 30 rounds fired, one hit Gareth Richardson, 18, in the chest and another lodged in the jaw of his friend Niall Hamilton, 19.

While they recovered back home in Ulster, the Spanish police commenced a serious crackdown, arresting 13 Britons after a raid on a villa yielded weapons, black ski masks, Ecstasy pills, and heroin. CRIMEWAVE MAY MEAN THE PARTY IS OVER FOR IBIZA, read a headline in The Guardian.

This was the first time anything like that happened to tourists on the island, but the nightlife crowd took it in stride. I'm told it's an isolated incident that has been blown out of proportion. Apparently, some British drug barons based in the Costa del Sol region of southern Spain were trying to break in to the Ibiza market, a development that didn't sit well with rival dealers. The police have arrested most of the suspects, I'm assured, and the important thing is that nobody got killed.

"Where you've got drugs and partying, anywhere in the world, there are corpses," says Stephen Armstrong of BBC Radio 4 and London's Sunday Times, whose 2004 gated book, The White Island, offers a fascinating perspective on Ibiza's history. "What's astonishing about Ibiza is how few bodies ever turn up. Now, I don't think that because they are well hidden. I just thin people don't get killed."

According to Armstrong, a group of powerful Ibicenco families have been able to control the island without having to resort to bloodshed: "What they do, very subtly and very discreetly, is that they make it imposible for people to get anything done if the step out of line... You can't even get your mail delivered."

"Now this may be different," he continues, "but I think what will happen is if people involved will just end up leaving the island. There won't be any reason, but it just won't work out for them. They'll go, and the island won't be arrested necessarily."

Armstrong thinks it will take more than shooting to ruin Ibiza. "Ibiza is like the S. Poseidon in a way. In the old Poseidon Adventure, they're all partying on New Year's Eve. They're all drunk, getting off with each other, all having affairs, and there are these stories waiting to develop—and the tidal wave hits. Ibiza is like the Poseidon on New Year's Eve forever, and the tidal wave is always just about to hit, but it never quite hits. Somehow the ship manages to keep ahead of the tidal wave. But some people never get off."

On a Sunday afternoon there's a long line outside Space, which has been one of the stops on Ibiza. Most of the people waiting to pay 60 euros to enter are white Europeans, but it's a more cosmopolitan crowd than in San Antonio.

Inside, on the dance floor, hundreds of ravers are jumping around to the infectious sounds, making shaky hand movements touching one another, nodding and smiling knowingly. It's safe to estimate that more than half of them are on Ecstasy. Many of these hard-core partyers will stay at the club until six A.M.

Ibiza D.J.'s such as Alfredo Fiorito help kick-start the rave movement 20 years ago by influencing fledgling D.J.'s such as Dan Rampling, who came here from the U.K. on holiday. Clubs like Space are still laboratories for the best new beats, although the resurgence of guitar bands across Europe and especially in the U.K., makes some D.J.'s nervous.

Over by the bar a chic blonde in Chic sunglasses and a green-and-turquoise dress drinking white wine. "It's about being free. Larah Davis, a 29-year-old "life designer" from Britain, says of the scene. "The most beautiful people in Europe come together to celebrate life."

I tell her where I live.

"I have to be honest," she replies. "New York nightlife is mainstream, commercial. It's about who you know, what your apar..."
ment is worth that week, and what you will say for your table. You see people working their asses off in Manhattan, then going out to the Hamptons on the weekend, and they're just disgusting ... I wonder if they would understand the magical subtlety of what this is all about.

There is no velvet rope at Space, but there is a status hierarchy: whoever looks the best, has the best body, and dances the best wins. That person beats Sean Combs showing up with a posse (which he did in 2004) or some pretender pulling up in a Bentley and spraying champagne in the V.I.P. room, especially because there is no V.I.P. room at Space. We are all V.I.P.'s and we feel like V.I.P.'s when we are here," Davis explains. "So you have your Kate Mosses and your Jade Jagger... They are style icons within the U.K., and we are all style icons in Space."

Downstairs in the bathroom, one rhythmic sniff after another can be heard from inside the stalls. Later, I'm told that drug taking by oneself is not done in Ibiza. "When people take drugs here they share," says my source. "Part of the whole experience is the idea of going to the bathrooms together."

Back upstairs, I meet Gail, from St. Louis, who says I'm the first American she's met in Ibiza. "I feel like a minority," she says. We watch as the harmaid lean over and kisses a girl hard for 10 seconds, then pulls back and pushes her away.

"Ibiza," Gail decides, "allows you to be free and behave in a way... I can't say the word. Unhibited. Uninhibited, that's the word!" She mentions how going topless on the beach made her feel vulnerable. What would make her more comfortable?

"All the men here to go home and take a shower. They smell bad, their hair looks greasy. It's not the same standards I'm used to. Not to be negative."

"I wish all the women here would come and take a shower with me," says her boyfriend, Matt.

Around midnight I meet Nick, an upper-crust Brit who is on a sabbatical year after having sold his Internet start-up for a lot of money. Now he's writing a "thought paper" on the failure of established religion to connect with modern European youth.

"I see people on the dance floor looking for connection to spirituality, and I go to church here in Ibiza and they're empty," he tells me at an all-night café across the street from the club. "I see the demand, but the supply is not meeting the demand. Why?"

When Nick goes to a nightclub and witnesses 8,000 people chanting, "We are one!", he takes it to mean "We are all one God."

I wonder if the crowd at Space is more interested in self-indulgence than connecting with others. "There I would respectfully say you're wrong!" Nick insists. "When they take those drugs, what are they trying to achieve?"

"Peerless."

"No, they want the state of Nirvana. That's what everyone's chasing. Of course it's the wrong way. The drugs can get you to a Nirvana-like state for a brief period of time. It's a reflection of the modern age that you can get there with a pill."

After three hours of sleep, I somehow make it to the hills behind San Antonio, where I'm to meet the owner of the rustic yet luxurious Pike's Hotel. Outside Tony Pike's office are pictures of Sade, Jon Bon Jovi, Anthony Quinn, Naomi Campbell, and Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Sitting by the pool, Pike could easily pass for a hard-ass Cockney gangster in a heist movie. Tanned, handsome, and fit at 72, he looks 20 years younger. So, how did he create this paradise?

"I love people who love life, and nothing disgusts me and nothing offends me," he says. "That's not true. I wouldn't want someone to crap on the floor or something. I always had two rules: No children, and the other was you could do anything you wanted as long as you didn't upset other guests. If you wanted to screw on that lounge chair right there, you could do it, but if guests complained about it I'd ask you to stop."

He was raised working-class in East London. His father was killed fighting in World War II, his house was bombed, and young Tony grew up dreaming about killing Germans. He joined the navy, got a college scholarship, married, lived in Sydney, struck it rich, divorced, bought a yacht, sailed to New Guinea, made more money, and in 1978 landed on Ibiza, where he found a 15th-century finca that needed some fixing up. Pike's Hotel opened in 1980 with eight rooms. (Now there are 27.) One of the first guests, a musical director for Stevie Wonder, was blown away by the ambience and the owner, and soon more luminaries showed up, including George Michael of Wham!

The video for the band's 1983 single "Club Tropicana" was shot here. According to The White Island, Michael's sidekick, Andrew Ridgeley, was the only person ever to have run off without paying the bill. At the time, Pike was in desperate financial circumstances and didn't appreciate it. A few years later, while accompanying his then girlfriend, Grace Jones, when she opened for Wham! in Madrid, Pike had his chance to confront Ridgeley backstage but let it go. "If he doesn't want to pay, then I don't want the money," he reasoned. Jones called him a chicken.

Over time, Pike's gained a reputation as a nonstop party zone for the rich and famous. Robert Plant checked in for a month. Julio Iglesias got a room named after him. Frederick Mercury had his 41st-birthday party at the hotel. There were stories of orgies and of cocaine being served on mirrors by the pool.

In a 2002 profile of Pike in the London Independent, Boy George called him "the Hugh Hefner of Ibiza" and Pike said he'd had sex with more than 3,000 women—sometimes seven in one day. Pike, who was proud to be known for his "donkey dick," attributed his stamina to being born with two aortas, "so I was pumping seven liters of blood a minute instead of four, and I could keep an erection indefinitely."

Pike's prowess attracted to the hotel numerous unsatisfied young ladies and divorcées with money. He calls the arrangement "woomb service."

"It was fine when I was just coping with one," he says, "but as time passed they were booking in too frequently."

"So he'd go room to room?"

"Yes. Three or four at the same time. Plus a wife."

Did she ever find out?"

"Well, now, not then. Divorced."

Pike introduces me to his fifth wife, Dounia, whom he met in Casablanca, and their four-year-old boy. Just 31, she is a stunning beauty but a strict Muslim who keeps her husband in line.

"I needed her. And I still do. In fact, I worship her. She's come and sort of saved me."

"So he doesn't drink anymore?"

"A little."

"No more coke?"

"A little."

"What about women?"

"A little."

In the north of the island is a secluded jet-set beach, Benirràs, also home to New Age hippies who bang their drums at sunset and live in the surrounding woods for the summer. Up there you can catch glimpses of unspoiled, centurios-old Ibiza, but development projects are under way. Jade Jagger likes to hide out in the 18th-century finca she owns in the area.

On a Friday night, Jagger has come down to Ibiza Town to have dinner with friends and family at Macao, her favorite restaurant, at the far end of the port. At the adjacent table sits Federico Chiara, 25, who tells me he's from Milan, runs a telecommunications company in Madrid, and has a 79-foot boat in the harbor. Every time he flies here, he says, he can feel the magnetic energy from Es Vedra as soon as the plane door opens.

He says that, according to legend, fishermen avoided the mystical rock, partly because their compasses didn't work there, same as at the North Pole and in the Bermuda Triangle. "It's very bad luck to cross with a boat in between Es Vedra and Ibiza," Chiara says. "What would happen is the
Ibiza

compass would get screwed up and the boat would crash on the rocks somewhere. This same magnetic energy creates the hedonism of Ibiza. You can feel it."

Later, I ask Jagger, who looks amazing in a leather dress and jewelry of her own design, about Es Vedrà. "There's great mythological stories about how previously, before we were fully in the knowledge that the earth wasn't flat," she says, "they would hear the wind going around Es Vedrà and it was kind of a howling sound and that generated, like, a kind of sense that there was, like, this woman there, kind of howling."

She goes on to say that, over in the north of the island, there's a beautiful old medieval well on her property, and there are a few people, including herself, who feel there is something quite special about that area.

The hot topic at Macao tonight is the new highway, which most people seem to view as an unmitigated disaster, but Jagger says she's tired from packing her suitcases and boxes for her move back to London in 10 days and doesn't really want to talk about the motorway right now. It's a shame, but she's not firmly against it, and, no, Matutes isn't a villain. Actually, come to think of it—"I don't give a shit about the fucking highway, O.K.?," she says. "I've got bigger fish to fry than the highway."

Of all a sudden, Kate Moss sits down across from me. In her gold dress, she looks like a 16-year-old vestal virgin about to be sacrificed on Es Vedrà. "I don't give interviews," she tells me.

Jagger suggests I meet her tattoo-artist friend, Neil Ahern, then follows Moss to the loo.

"It's a little fantasy island, isn't it?" Ahern says two days later. "But this island can kick you up the ass and push you in the ground. Freedom is dangerous."

Ahern has a calm, gracious manner, despite his wild eyes, endless chain of Marlboros, and the fact that 75 percent of his body is covered with tattoos. Dangling down his bare chest is a gold necklace he designed with Jade Jagger, whom he describes as "very beautiful, honest, sincere, and giving." (She called Neil her "male muse" in Travel & Leisure magazine.)

His tattoo shop, Inkadelic, is located in the heart of Ibiza Town, by the open-air market and high-end boutiques.

"For me, everyone who wants to sit down here and get something is a celebrity," he says, leaning back in his tattooing chair. "I do everyone from billionaires to artists to musicians to whores."

Ahern, 37, grew up in England. He traveled throughout the Far East in the 80s. He learned the tattoo trade in Germany, then tried New York, Philadelphia, and London. When he first came here, in 1993, he hated it and left after 10 days, but he was lured back by the freedom, the "luxury of time," and the island's "raw, rustic feel." He's still got a long list of complaints, though, among them the service ("ridiculous"), the sewage system ("smells like the back of a toilet"), and the lack of culture. Then there's the "eight-lane L.A. fricking highway" under construction and the druggy nightclub scene, which he calls "an illusion, a big lie."

Ahern has a message for everyone who comes here to escape reality. "Come on, wake up!" he hollers, clapping his hands twice. "Sitting around here doing fucking drugs all fucking summer thinking you're liberated and free and wild and crazy—wake up!" Clap clap! "Because there's a fucking price you're going to pay. Man. It's the same if you think you're going to keep on building roads and have people coming back for the beauty. Wake up!" Clap clap!

The next day I find myself at the Matutes family headquarters, in an office tower in Ibiza Town, sitting with Abel Matutes, who's often called "the godfather of Ibiza." Those who blame him for ruining the island often call him much worse. "He's always been at the forefront of development on the island," says Stephen Armstrong. "I wouldn't say he's Don Corleone, but he's the richest man on the island and he still wants to build stuff that will damage what is ultimately a very fragile ecosystem."

Dressed in a blue blazer, a polo shirt, khakis, and Top-Siders, the stocky 65-year-old seems more like a giant preppy turtle than "an old goat" or "a shark," as his critics would have it. On his desk are photographs (with Francisco Franco, Bill Clinton, the King of Spain, and Madeleine Albright) that cover his career as mayor of Ibiza, senator for Ibiza and Formentera, member of the Spanish parliament, and Spanish foreign minister from 1996 to 2000.

Matutes was born on Ibiza and has Ibizan ancestors dating back to the Spanish Inquisition. His grandfather Don Pedro Matutes, the island's first modern capitalist, made a fortune in shipping in the early 1900s before opening the first bank on Ibiza, Banca Matutes, and introducing electricity with a power generator.

"For us, Ibiza is not a way to make money," says Matutes, who owns numerous hotels in the Caribbean and has invested in everything from aviation to biotechnology (it's rumored that he was once the largest shareholder in Space and Privilege). "Our main aim is to try to preserve and to protect the island as the paradise that it is."

Matutes argues that Ibiza is less developed than any other Mediterranean island or Spanish tourist center, and he says the local government's plans to improve infrastructure and quality of life will require only another 2 percent of the island to be urbanized over the long term.

The bottom line is that something has to be done to make the roads safer, especially the one from Ibiza Town to San Antonio which Matutes says is meant for 3,000 automobiles a day but during the summer is jammed with as many as 17,000. Many of these drivers are British and Tony Blair government has called for action. There are 50 fatal accidents annually in Ibiza, which Matutes claims is the highest rate in "the whole world."

The anti-highway people believe that wider roads will just encourage the chemically impaired to drive faster. Last summer, the construction led to major traffic jams and numerous accidents, and dozens of Spanish civil guardsmen were sent to the island from the mainland to quell huge demonstrations against the superhighway.

Matutes dismisses his critics, describing them as left-wing environmental extremists and former Communists who are "against everything." But like a good Ibizenco, he tolerates. "I have been always very respectful with the voters," he says. He assures me that the motorways will be "fantastic."

And if the voters think they're no good? "They should punish the government for what they did," he says. "Of course."

We shake hands. He signs a copy of his authorized biography ("To George, from his friend Abel"), and he barns his teeth. A perfectly charming bull shark.

Hours after midnight, it's absolute bedlam inside Amnesia, the 31-year-old nightclub where, in the summer of 1987, D.J. Alfredo created "the Balearic Beat" which, along with Ecstasy, helped shape the rave movement. In the main room, thousands of mostly gay disco kids are grinding, grooving, and sucking face as steam billows around them. Onstage, a dozen dancers are performing a mock orgy. A muscular Roman guar with a Mohawk beaks a pretty girl in Capri pants out of the crowd, then flaps her over, grabs her by the ankles, and simulates wheelbarrow sex.

At five A.M., "Surfin' U.S.A." is blasting in the next room as a cannon shoots foam onto a mass of bare-chested revelers, trans forming them into a giant caterpillar with thousands of hands flailing and grabbing in the air.

Felicia, a 24-year-old model type from Berlin, is watching the spectacle from the second level. She tells me sex is a lower priority in Ibiza than it is in England or America. Has she ever had sex in Ibiza?

Pause. "Uh, not really, no." She says that there's a "dirty" kind of person who wants
Litvinenko's motivation, Berezovsky took the allegation to Yeltsin himself, who used it as a reason to fire General Khokholkov and launch a housecleaning at the F.S.B.

The agency's new director turned out to be a little-known St. Petersburg bureaucrat named Vladimir Putin. By that point Litvinenko had compiled an extensive dossier on F.S.B. corruption, which included a list of generals he believed had ordered illegal assassinations. On Berezovsky's urging, he presented the dossier to Putin. The two men, however, did not hit it off. Putin, icy and controlled, seemed to regard Litvinenko at the very least as a loose cannon.

When Putin failed to act, Litvinenko went public. In November 1998 he and several F.S.B. agents staged an unprecedented press conference in which they alleged that F.S.B. generals had taken bribes and ordered killings. The other agents wore ski masks or sunglasses: only Litvinenko identified himself. Afterward, many believed Berezovsky paid Litvinenko to hold the press conference, or at least put him up to it. Litvinenko always denied taking money. When I ask Berezovsky's London public-relations man, Lord Bell, whether Berezovsky arranged the press conference, he smiles and says, "Probably. It's quite possible."

The F.S.B.'s revenge was swift. In 1999, Litvinenko was arrested on unspecified charges and thrown into Moscow's Lefortovo Prison. Eight months later a judge ordered him released; he was placed on suspension and put under surveillance. Litvinenko blamed everything on Putin.

Berezovsky, at least initially, had the opposite reaction. In fact, he was one of the prime movers behind Putin's elevation to the Russian presidency the following year. Once in office, however, Putin summoned the country's most powerful oligarchs and warned them to stay out of politics. If they didn't, he suggested, it might be necessary for the Kremlin
to investigate exactly how they had amassed their riches. It was the beginning of the end of the oligarch era. By mid-2000, Berezovsky and Putin were enemies, and it was clear to Berezovsky that he couldn't win a prolonged fight with the Kremlin. Instead, he sold off most of his Russian holdings to a mogul more to Putin's tastes, Roman Abramovich, and fled to London. (Abramovich lives in London now, too.)

There Berezovsky set about establishing himself as the exile leader of the Russian opposition. At a time when other oligarchs were making peace with the Kremlin, he hired Lord Bell, a onetime adviser to Margaret Thatcher, to help him warn the world about Putin. He began funneling vast amounts of money to pro-democracy groups inside Russia and its neighbors. For the Kremlin, Berezovsky became Public Enemy Number One.

Berezovsky's exile left Litvinenko—now unemployed and anticipating his re-arrest—with no powerful allies. He himself began to think of fleeing. But Marina wavered. The two had met when a friend brought Litvinenko to her 31st-birthday party. Marina, a dance teacher, joked that Litvinenko was her birthday present. The attraction was immediate. Marina even overlooked Litvinenko's horrible teeth, many of which had been removed without anesthesia when he was in the army. Unfortunately, Litvinenko was married, and though the marriage was troubled, he swore he wouldn't leave his wife and child. Just weeks later, however, his wife left him. Soon after, he and Marina married, and about a year later, Marina gave birth to Anatoly.

Marina didn't want to leave Russia. She had been outside the country exactly once, for a week's vacation in Paris, and spoke no English. One day in October 2000, Litvinenko told her he needed to visit their dacha, outside Moscow. Instead, eluding his F.S.B. tail, he made his way across the border into Ukraine. From there he telephoned Marina and told her they were taking an impromptu vacation to Spain. He bought her a ticket and said he would meet her there. When Marina and six-year-old Anatoly arrived in Madrid, however, Litvinenko telephoned again. He said they could never go back. Marina, a friend says, continued to resist. Husband and wife argued for two full days. In fact, before Marina reluctantly agreed to meet Litvinenko in Turkey, Litvinenko, having secured a false passport, then boarded a freighter across the Black Sea. He eventually met Marina at a hotel in the southern resort town of Antalya.

From Turkey, Litvinenko telephoned Berezovsky in London, and Berezovsky reached out to Alex Goldfarb, whom he had hired to run his foundation, the New York–based International Foundation for Civil Liberties. "You remember Sasha Litvinenko?" Berezovsky asked.

"He's your basic K.G.B. guy," said Goldfarb, who had met Litvinenko while researching conditions in Russian prisons for his previous employer, the billionaire George Soros.

Goldfarb flew from New York to Turkey, then accompanied Litvinenko inland to the capital city of Ankara, where they visited the American Embassy. Litvinenko asked...
for political asylum. A bureaucrat told him ambassadors don’t grant asylum. If he wanted a refugee visa to enter America, he could fill out a form. Litvinenko left crestfallen. The Americans obviously had no idea who he was. Afterward he decided to try for London. Goldfarb arranged the tickets, and after weaving through an immigration check in Istanbul, they made it to Heathrow, where British officials harangued Goldfarb for bringing in unauthorized asylum seekers. Litvinenko didn't care. He was safe, for now.

**Notes from the Underground**

Litvinenko’s “defection” was news for a few days in Russia; he made a headline or two in London with an assertion then making the rounds that the F.S.B. was secretly behind the 1999 bombings of suburban-Moscow apartment blocks that killed hundreds of innocent people. Putin, angrily blaming the incident on Chechen terrorists, had used the attack as a rationale to start the second Chechen war, which ended with Russia’s retaking control of the breakaway Muslim republic.

The Kremlin filed papers to extradite Litvinenko to Moscow, and the family, installed in an apartment by Berezovsky, lived in fear for six months, until Litvinenko’s application for asylum in Britain was accepted; he later became a British citizen. Anatoly entered school, and he and Marina became fluent in English; Litvinenko never mastered the language. It took time, but as the months went by, “Sasha began to say he felt safe here,” a friend says. “He really didn’t think the Russians would do anything to him as long as he remained in Britain.”

In London, Litvinenko remained very much the willing tool of Berezovsky; without that relationship, he was just another unemployed immigrant. Through the International Foundation for Civil Liberties, Berezovsky gave him the money to buy the town house in Muswell Hill and a monthly stipend to live on. Litvinenko kept an office on the third floor, where he would disappear for hours surfing Russian Web sites; when Anatoly sneaked in to play games on his father’s computer, Sasha playfully chided him. Through Berezovsky, Litvinenko met the smooth Chechen politician Akhmed Zakayev, 50, who was also living on a Berezovsky stipend. Though they had once been on opposite sides in Russia, they became unlikely friends, and in time Zakayev accepted Litvinenko’s entreaties to move into a town house across the street. There Litvinenko became a regular presence, playing with Zakayev’s three grandchildren and taking them to the park and on errands. “He would come by anytime and say, ‘I’m not here to see you. I’m here to see them,’” Zakayev says with a smile.

When Litvinenko told Goldfarb he wished to write a book, maybe about the apartment bombings, Goldfarb found a Russian émigré in Boston, Yuri Felshtinsky, who was finishing a similar manuscript and persuaded him to take Litvinenko as his co-author. “Alexander came in at a late stage. The truth is, he actually didn’t know much about the bombings,” says a person involved in the process.

Financed by Berezovsky, the book, *Blowing Up Russia: Terror from Within*, was a windy mishmash of conspiracy theories that charged the F.S.B. with blowing up the buildings to start the second Chechen war; while provocative, the text offered little in the way
Litvinenko Poisoning

of evidence. It was first published in New York in 2002, and then in Latvia, where it was trucked across the border into Russia. Most of the copies, however, were seized by police. “It never got to Russian stores, but it probably got to the black market and a kid or two,” says a Berezovsky aide. “The seizure of the books was a fairly big deal. That was great publicity.” Blowing Up Russia was translated into English, Bulgarian, and Polish.

E ven before the book was published, Litvinenko had forged a friendship with an émigré filmmaker and playwright named Andrei Nekrasov. “Alexander had been relatively well known in Russia because of the press conference, but after that, people started to forget about him,” says Nekrasov, 48, a wild-haired man I found finishing a BBC documentary on Litvinenko in a West London studio. When Litvinenko resurfaced in London talking about the apartment bombings, Nekrasov was intrigued. He contacted Berezovsky, who put the two men in touch. “He was the kind of guy, after five minutes, you felt you’d grown up with him,” Nekrasov recalls. “There were no formalities. He was very friendly, very open, very passionate about Russia.”

The two began taking walks. Nekrasov listening as Litvinenko launched into soliloquies about Putin, with whom he remained obsessed. “They had been contemporaries, and he saw himself as Putin’s alter ego,” Nekrasov recalls. Nekrasov was fascinated with the idea of the two men as opposite sides of the Russian coin: Litvinenko the symbol of light, progress, and the rule of law. Putin of chaos and darkness and violence. He began to write a play called Koenigsberg, the story of a K.G.B. veteran who escaped to Western Europe and attempted to tell the world about the dangers of post-communist Russia. It was eventually staged in a Berlin theater, in 2002, and ran for nearly a year.

As their friendship deepened, Nekrasov began filming a new documentary, based on Litvinenko’s book. Litvinenko functioned as the director’s factotum, introducing him to many of the people who appeared in the film—former F.S.B. agents, women whose relatives had been killed in the bombings—though Litvinenko himself did not appear. The film, Disbelief, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2004 and attracted favorable reviews.

Its success, however, stood in stark contrast to the project closest to Litvinenko’s heart, his memoir. It was the book he had dreamed of writing for years. Alex Goldfarb hired a person to interview him for two months. Once the interviews were transcribed, Goldfarb took Litvinenko on an extended tour of Spain and Italy, where he edited the manuscript with Litvinenko looking over his shoulder. It was the first time Litvinenko had left the safety of Britain, and Goldfarb noticed how nervous he was, constantly glancing around.

Once again Berezovsky paid to have the book published. In 2002. Like the first book, The Litvinenko Criminal Group was published in Latvia, trucked into Russia, and seized wholesale by Russian police. Unlike the first book, however, the second was never translated into English and today is almost impossible to find. “He was very frustrated by how the books did,” says Nekrasov. “They weren’t really read. They had no impact.”

Failure did nothing to muzzle Litvinenko, however. He had become the consummate dissident exile, a passionate speaker who would expound for hours about Putin the “criminal.” the F.S.B., the Chechens, the war against the oligarchs. He saw the Kremlin’s hand in worrisome developments everywhere: al-Qaeda, Afghan drug trafficking, Iraq. “He was fanatical,” a Berezovsky aide says with a sigh. “He exaggerated like mad. He saw conspiracies everywhere, in the simplest things. He was a Russian. You know?”

“He was a great source, but also a terrible, terrible bore,” says James Heartfield, a London graduate student who, with his associate, Julia Svetlichnaja, interviewed Litvinenko at length for a paper they were researching about Chechens in Moscow. “He was lonely. He wanted to talk to Russians. He talked to us ad infinitum. I mean, it was clear he had nothing else to do. He had a singular viewpoint, a Cold War assessment, that all evil emanated from the Kremlin. It might be true, but lots of it was slightly barking. And it made every conversation a bit boring. I remember when we approached Berezovsky, who told us to talk to Sasha, he said, ‘Take what he says with a pinch of salt.’ The sense was: he’s a bit extreme, a bit of a nutter.”

Litvinenko wanted to be a writer, but his work consisted mostly of an endless stream of long-winded e-mails to friends. “There was a very prolific writer,” one notes. “He wrote an article a day, on average. Unfortunately, over 90 percent of it was never published. I still have 300 e-mails from him that, frankly, I’ve never read. He was like a blogger without a blog.” What articles Litvinenko did manage to publish were almost all carried on a pro-Chechen Web site called Chechen Press. These were mostly anti-F.S.B. screeds, including one in which Litvinenko boldly alleged that the Russian president was a pedophile. “I told him he should stop writing so much for Chechen Press,” says a friend. “He was becoming too much associated with that one issue. He did nothing for his credibility.”

In his spare time, and he had too much Litvinenko ran. Actually he sprinted. 10 kilometers at a time, through the streets of Muswell Hill, returning to his town house sweaty and exhausted. Marina told him to slow down and try jogging; she worried he might have a heart attack. Litvinenko said he couldn’t. He knew only one speed: full out.

Brave New World

By 2005, Litvinenko had reached a crossroads. Berezovsky’s foundation cut him a monthly stipend from about $6,000 to $1,500—barely enough to live on. The Berezovskys’ advice explains this as a routine matter brought on by the oligarch’s erratic cash flow—his Swiss accounts are forever being frozen and freed up by Swiss authorities under pressure from Putin’s government. But another friend says the reduction was made after Litvinenko’s wife found work teaching dance, which brought in some meager income. Little is known about the fact that Litvinenko had left little to offer Berezovsky beyond his loyalty.

“Look. Litvinenko was small beer,” the Berezovsky adviser says, “but he was useful for certain things, mainly interpreting what the F.S.B. was doing. Boris would call him to check on F.S.B. stories he heard.”

Another man might have found work as a bodyguard. But Litvinenko wanted more.

He saw other ex-K.G.B. émigrés consulting with or even starting their own private security firms, taking home big paychecks. He worked Litvinenko felt he could do just as well. “He wanted a real job, you know, to do something more official,” a friend James Heartfield adds. “He wanted to find work in the security industry. He didn’t want to be a thug. To me, he seemed lost. He was tossing about like a cork on the sea of life.”

In late 2005, Litvinenko contacted a one-time K.G.B. major named Yuri Shvet, an attorney who operates a security consulting company in the Washington, D.C., area. Shvet’s main business is investigating Russian companies on behalf of Western corporations who want to work with them. His clients are typically considering major investments and want to know whether the people they will be dealing with are involved in any nefarious—always a concern in Russian business. (This kind of review, routine in the corporate world, is known as due diligence.) Litvinenko offered to find Shvet’s new client, a London firm, for which Shvet agreed to pay him 20 percent commission.

Not long after, Shvet says, Litvinenko brought him a client, believed to be Titon International, a London security firm. Or at least of its own, unnamed client, the firm agreed to pay Shvet $100,000 to produce due-diligence reports on five Russian businessmen. For brokering the deal, Litvinenko
as to be paid $20,000. A friend emphasizes at Litvinenko did no digging himself; he is simply paid for arranging the contract.

he deal that probably appeared most promising to Litvinenko—that could assure his financial future, in fact—involved an old acquaintance. A 41-year-old former G.B. agent named Andrei Lugovoi, who ad reinvented himself as a millionaire Moscow businessman. Lean and blond, with wide, owlsh eyes, Lugovoi had served on Bezovsky's security detail. When Berezovsky purchased the ORT television station, Lugovoi had become its head of security. A Bezovsky aide says Lugovoi left the K.G.B. to work directly for Bezovsky. When Berezovsky fled Russia, Lugovoi remained behind. In time he established himself in business, running a company that sells soft drinks. Though wealthy, he moonlighted at the security business and remained close to Bezovsky, traveling often to London. The Bezovsky aide says the oligarch employed Lugovoi off and on as a bodyguard, usually for his onetime business partner Adi Patarkatsishvili. The aide emphasizes that Lugovoi was hardly a member of Bezovsky's inner circle. "Lugovoi was a guy who could go to Bezovsky's office and see anyone, get soccer tickets, whatever—but see the Great Man himself... well, that would've been more difficult," says the aide. "He was a friend, but not entirely trusted. Because you never know if someone is a sleeper or a spy or whatever."

In the émigré community, in fact, the rap on Lugovoi was that he had done suspiciously well for himself while remaining behind in Moscow. Marina had the same concerns when Litvinenko introduced her to Lugovoi, at Berezovsky's birthday party in London in early 2006. "Sasha, I just don't understand," he told her husband afterward. "Lugovoi nows Berezovsky, but how is he so successful in Russia?" Russians use the word for psj, krisla, to imply protection. "Everyone us krisla in Russia," Marina says. "Who is Lugovoi's krisla?" She suspected it was the F.S.B.

If Litvinenko had doubts about Lugovoi, they appeared to be overcome by his need or money. After Litvinenko's death, Lugovoi told a Moscow radio station that their relationship was limited to the kind of deal Litvinenko had struck with Yuri Shvets, that is, a 20 percent commission on any contracts Litvinenko brought in. But two of Litvinenko's friends say that there was more to it, that Litvinenko claimed the two men spoke of establishing a London-based security company together. Whether this was real or a pipe dream, Litvinenko certainly hoped it would happen. Lugovoi told the Moscow radio station that he had met Litvinenko 12 or 13 times last year in London, a frequency that would indicate a deeper involvement than he has suggested elsewhere.

Litvinenko's work with Lugovoi may also have been the reason for a rare foreign trip Litvinenko made last summer, when he flew to Tel Aviv to deliver an unsolicited presentation to Leonid Nevzlin, the former number two at the now defunct Russian oil colossus Yukos and the man who ranks second on the Kremlin's unofficial most-wanted list, after Berezovsky. Nevzlin fled to Israel in 2003, one step ahead of Russian prosecutors, who took control of Yukos and, following a show trial, sent its C.E.O., Nevzlin's partner Mikhail Khodorkovsky, to a Siberian prison. Nevzlin agreed to see Litvinenko; at their meeting, Nevzlin said in a statement following Litvinenko's death. Litvinenko presented him with a 17-page dossier that "contained important information that shed light on matters involving the Kremlin and the effort to destroy Yukos." An Israeli spokesman for Nevzlin, journalist Uri Dan, declines to say more about the dossier, except that it had been given to Scotland Yard.

But according to people who knew Litvinenko, the dossier contained information aimed at exonerating a former Yukos security chief, Alexei Pichugin, who has been convicted of murdering a banker and his wife in Russia; the dossier argued that an F.S.B. hit team committed the murders.

The meeting with Nevzlin appears to have been a kind of test run for the business Litvinenko hoped to start with Lugovoi. "My understanding is Lugovoi and his partner funded that work—they were funding Litvinenko to go down to Israel and use this as a business pitch, you know, to get the account," says Gary Busch. "I'm not sure it worked out."

It didn't. But Litvinenko didn't give up. According to Lugovoi, Litvinenko had been attempting to broker a deal for him with a British security concern named Erinyis. Founded in 2001 by a former British Army Guards officer, Erinyis is known in security circles for a reportedly $100 million contract to provide security for oil installations in Iraq. Its executives have declined comment on the case, but Lugovoi has said that Litvinenko took him at least once to Erinyis's offices at 25 Grosvenor Street, the building, which also houses Titon International, happens to be owned by Berezovsky. Erinyis declines to say what the meeting involved.

"Erinyis is in the body-shop business, providing security personnel for difficult operations, like Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria—the tough places," says a London security consultant. "The kind of money a British ex-S.A.S. [Special Air Service, the special-forces unit of the British Army] person wants is shrinking in places like Iraq, [so] one of the things you look for is other [cheaper] sources. Rather than chaps from the S.A.S. you get 'Gur-

khas.' Russian Spetsnaz commandos are well trained, available, and cheap. I'd guess that was what was going on there."

Litvinenko grew so chummy with Lugovoi that, to Marina's consternation, he invited him to their town house. "It was incredibly naive," says Akhmed Zakayev, who lives across the street. "But I understood it. He was so proud. He was proud of being a British citizen, of his home. He wanted to show Lugovoi how well he lives, that he has a garden. Only later did I realize that, by bringing him there, Sasha had brought Lugovoi close to me."

With that, Zakayev shudders. Last July, in a vote little noticed outside the émigré community, the Russian legislature, called the Duma, passed a law making it legal for the Kremlin to murder enemies of the state outside the country.

"They will try to kill me," Litvinenko told Marina.

"Sasha, how can you tell me that?" Marina exclaimed. "I won't sleep!"

"Marusya," he said, using her pet name. "It's true."

Litvinenko took no special precautions, other than a home-security system he and Marina knew would never stop a determined assassin. But he began warning any number of friends to be careful. "Sasha was sure the F.S.B. was preparing to kill me," Zakayev says. "He would always talk about that, [saying], 'They will bring people close to you. They will use people who are old friends, people you knew in a different world, in a different life.'"

On October 7 a friend of Litvinenko's, a crusading journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, who'd spent years investigating the apartment bombings and other Chechen-related issues, was shot in the head and killed in the elevator of her Moscow building. A surveillance camera caught a chilling image of her unidentified assassin, a lone figure in a dark baseball cap. Litvinenko pledged to find the killer. A week later he joined a crowd of dissidents and human-rights activists in a memorial service for her at Westminster Abbey. Afterward he spoke with Andrei Nekrasov. As Nekrasov recalls it, Litvinenko said, "This is part of a clear pattern, an accelerating dynamic. They are eliminating people on a list. The state has become a serial murderer." Litvinenko predicted another killing at any time, for a moment, the two debated who it might be.

"Promise me you will not go back to Russia," Litvinenko said as they parted. "Otherwise you will be next."

**Russian Roulette**

Two weeks after the memorial service Marina dropped off Litvinenko at their subway station. It's impossible to reconstruct accurately his movements that day, although before his death he detailed them for British detectives. Specialists at Scotland Yard have
Litvinenko Poisoning

since spent hundreds of hours scanning video from every surveillance camera in the areas of Piccadilly and Mayfair through which he passed, looking for anything untoward.

Litvinenko had at least two appointments that day—of that police are sure. One was with an Italian named Mario Scaramella, a consultant to Italy’s Mitrokhin commission, a parliamentary group that investigated K.G.B. infiltration of Italian politics. After Litvinenko’s death Scaramella would come in for intense media scrutiny; for the longest time no one seemed able to figure out who he actually was. Not till January, in a long report carried in the International Herald Tribune, was it demonstrated that Scaramella was essentially a fraud, a self-created spy-industry gadfly who had once been arrested for impersonating a police inspector.

Litvinenko didn’t know Scaramella well and thought he was a bit of a kook; he later told detectives he saw him that day, only after the Italian insisted. They met at a fast-food sushi restaurant named Iitsu in Piccadilly. There Scaramella passed Litvinenko a copy of an e-mail he had received. It was in English, which Litvinenko had trouble reading. He started to push it into his bag, but Scaramella pressed him to read it. There was a warning—that both Litvinenko and Scaramella were on a hit list compiled by a shadowy Russian nationalist group, an organization of “retired” K.G.B. agents called Dignity and Honour. The memo asserted that Dignity and Honour had murdered Anna Politkovskaya and now planned to murder them, using a one-time Russian commando it named.

The memo was written by yet another mysterious Russian émigré, this one named Evgeni Limarev, who lives in the alpine village of Cluses, in the Haute-Savoie region of France. No one involved in the Litvinenko case seems certain of who Limarev was in Russia—some say a K.G.B. or F.S.B. agent, others the son of one—but at some point he emigrated to France, where he received a grant from Berezovsky’s foundation to start an anti-Kremlin Web site. It achieved minor notoriety in Russia when a Moscow reporter went “undercover” there and came out claiming he had been told to “think up whatever you want” about Putin, “the most important thing is to make it as scary as possible.” The Web site, Rslugobus, is currently off-line, and Limarev, after several days in hiding, told reporters he knows nothing about Litvinenko’s death.

Litvinenko shrugged off the e-mail, saying he didn’t take Limarev seriously. Afterward he made his way to Mayfair, where he had a 4:30 appointment with Lugovoi and his business partner, another onetime K.G.B. man named Dmitri Kovtun, at the Millennium Hotel on Grosvenor Square, just across from the American Embassy. They took seats in the Pine Bar, off the lobby, a clubby room where people around them were taking tea. Kovtun was smoking a cigar and drinking gin. Litvinenko, who didn’t smoke or drink alcohol, sipped green tea. They discussed the Eriny’s situation for about 25 minutes. As Litvinenko rose to leave, a third Russian, later identified as Vyacheslav Sokolonenko, appeared and shook his hand. Then Litvinenko took the subway home to Marina, where they celebrated the sixth anniversary of their exile before he began vomiting.

Radioactive Fallout

A day later an ambulance rushed Litvinenko to Barnet General Hospital. Doctors there hadn’t a clue what was wrong with him. They checked for viruses, allergies, food poisoning, AIDS, and, on Litvinenko’s insistence, evidence of chemical poisoning, but came up with nothing. He remained sick, unable to keep down food and complaining of muscle pain. Doctors noted with alarm that his white-blood-cell count had plummeted. After several days his hair began to fall out. His skin turned yellow. Doctors checked for evidence of radiation poisoning, but only of the gamma variety, a limited test. There was no sense that whatever ailed Litvinenko might be fatal.

For several days Litvinenko was convinced he had been poisoned by Scaramella. Only gradually did it dawn on him that Andrei Lugovoi made a better suspect. In Litvinenko’s mind, Lugovoi was an ideal double agent, a man the Kremlin could have persuaded years before to remain close to both Litvinenko and Berezovsky. One night, sitting by his hospital bed, Ahmed Zakayev reminded him of the lectures he had given him about letting old friends too close. “I said, ‘Sasha, how could you?’” Zakayev recalls. “‘How could you let him approach you?’ He didn’t really answer. But I knew he had been nostalgic. Every generation of émigrés goes through this. They want to talk to others like themselves. That feeling, it’s a dangerous, dangerous feeling.”

Litvinenko had been lying quietly at Barnet for nearly two weeks when Alex Goldfarb arrived from New York. News of Litvinenko’s illness had been carried on Chechen Press, then picked up by the “free” Russian media. British reporters, however, were ignoring the story. Goldfarb believed Litvinenko had been poisoned and had no doubt who was responsible. This was not only an international scandal, Goldfarb sensed, but a massive public-relations bonanza for Berezovsky. Working with Lord Bell, Goldfarb began throwing out calls to British reporters, at The Sunday Times, at Channel 4, and elsewhere.

To a man, they passed on the story. Without concrete evidence of poisoning, however, the whole thing sounded like some kind of bizarre propaganda ploy.

On Thursday, November 16, Goldfarb spoke with a garrulous London toxicologist named John Henry, who had been brought into the developing story by a Russian film crew. Based on the symptoms, Henry speculated that Litvinenko had been poisoned with radioactive thallium. Goldfarb relayed the tip to doctors, and the next day, Goldfarb says they agreed. By Friday night both Goldfarb and Henry had given interviews to the British press. The Saturday papers made it official: Litvinenko had been poisoned with thallium.

“That was my fault,” Henry says, sighing. “I spent all day Saturday on-camera giving interviews. Thallium, thallium, thallium. Saturday evening I got in to see the man told Goldfarb he should be transferred to private hospital. Goldfarb said there was no need. The doctors were saying he’d have muscular pain for months, but that he’d live.” Later the doctors backtracked and transferred Litvinenko to University College Hospital, a facility better suited to treat him.

On Monday the story exploded onto newspaper front pages around the world, dominating coverage in Britain for days. At the white-hot center of it all was Goldfarb, who emerged from the hospital every few hours to deliver updates to a growing throng of reporters. It was Goldfarb, working with Lord Bell, who snapped the photograph of the waif, hairless Litvinenko that ran around the world. “Oh, that Goldfarb!” exclaims a man who was allowed to see Litvinenko that day. “What a wheeler-dealer! He just engineered everything, the whole scenario, releasing that photograph, all that publicity. It was unbelievable. I have just massive admiration for the guy’s skills.”

On Tuesday, as if his newfound celebrity had bolstered his health, Litvinenko seemed to rally. “He was talking, smiling, he seemed very upbeat,” says John Henry, who saw him that day. “I said, ‘Have you got any muscle weakness at all?’ He said no. I tested his feet. He could stand on his toes like a ballet dancer. The things he complained of on Saturday were gone. Then I spoke to the doctors, these hematologists, who said his white-cell count was simply gone. Something was wrong. I knew it. I wasn’t impressed by his chances.”

Henry knew what reporters didn’t: radioactive poison hits the gut first, then the hair follicles, then the liver. Litvinenko’s liver had all but shut down. If Henry was right, the poison would next strike the heart.

On Wednesday, Litvinenko’s condition worsened. “He was deteriorating, over the course of a day,” says Nekrasov, who visited. “You could see it. He was falling apart before...
Spy vs. Spy

The Russian spy services have a long and vivid history of designing creative ways to kill the Kremlin's political opponents. Whether it meant plunging a ice pick into Leon Trotsky's skull (Mexico, 1940), poking the Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov with a poison-tipped umbrella (London, 1978), or using a missile to home on a rebel warlord's cell phone (Chechnya, 2006), the K.G.B. and its successors always seem to get their man.

In the days following Litvinenko's death, it was widely assumed they had done so again. Tony Blair promised to bring up the matter with Putin. In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel said she found the matter troubling. From Moscow, Putin issued statements denying that the Kremlin had had anything to do with the case.

Litvinenko's was a unique death; he is the first person in history—that we know of—to die from polonium poisoning. A number of Russian businessmen have died under mysterious circumstances in recent years, some seemingly poisoned. Russian medicine being what it is, it's entirely possible polonium has been employed before. It is a little-used isotope, the Rodney Dangerfield of radioactivity, used sparingly over the years in spark plugs, nuclear-warhead triggers, and rocket engines. Locked in a baggie, it is perfectly safe; taken orally, as seems likely in Litvinenko's case, it kills. Polonium is available in minute amounts for as little as $49 over the Internet. Litvinenko, however, died from a dose perhaps 100 times larger than those publicly available. Only one nuclear laboratory in Russia produces polonium. Its officials have denied misplacing any.

The early news coverage was dominated by speculation that Litvinenko had been poisoned by Mario Scaramella. However, that theory quickly fell away as information emerged about Lugovoi and Kovtun. Both had retreated to Moscow, and in those first days both, clearly caught unawares by the mushrooming scandal, gave interviews about Litvinenko. They even appeared at the British Embassy in Moscow to give sworn statements. Lugovoi was eventually forced to hold a televised press conference, where he said he had gone to London merely to attend a soccer match between Arsenal and CSKA Moscow. Lugovoi, who had brought his family on the trip, insisted he was being framed. "Someone is trying to set me up," he complained, "but I can't understand who. Or why."

Lugovoi's denials, however, grew increasingly hollow once Scotland Yard detectives and national-health inspectors hauled out Geiger counters. Traces of polonium were quickly found at the Pine Bar, where Litvinenko and the Russians had met; at Isu, where he saw Scaramella; at the Litvinenko town house: at the offices of both security companies Litvinenko had approached, Eriny and Titon International; and at Berezovsky's headquarters, tucked down a Mayfair alley. Worse, at least for Lugovoi and Kovtun, polonium traces were found in place after place where the two had been but Litvinenko hadn't—in an eighth-floor room at a Sheraton hotel where the two had stayed in mid-October, in a car and a home outside Hamburg, where Kovtun had visited his ex-wife before coming to London; even on the two British Airways Boeing 767s on which they had traveled to and from Britain. By Christmas, polonium had been found at 30 sites.

Two weeks after Litvinenko's death, a reporter for the German magazine Der Spiegel was allowed to visit Lugovoi and Kovtun at a dacha outside Moscow. The interview was held, bizarrely, in an adjacent sauna; the reporter spied blue tape on the dacha's door handles, suggesting the building had been cordoned off. Lugovoi appeared healthy, though he said doctors had found traces of polonium in his system. He insisted someone else must have poisoned Litvinenko, who had then exposed him to the polonium already in his body.

Dmitri Kovtun, however, was another story. As he sat beside Lugovoi in the sauna, it was clear that Kovtun had lost his hair. In what surely seemed one of the lamest explanations in espionage history, he said he had burned his head in a tanning bed. Asked about the November 1 meeting, Kovtun said, "I can't remember that clearly today. He came into the bar 10 minutes after us, we'd already had some alcohol, and I paid more attention to my cigar." Kovtun said he had spoken about Eriny and the soccer game, then agreed to meet again the next morning, a meeting Litvinenko ended up canceling when he got sick. Five days after the interview Kovtun was admitted to a Moscow hospital.

Scotland Yard has kept its investigation under tight wraps. A promised "background briefing" produces a very pleasant woman who offers little more than a smile and a fistful of press releases. What is known is that in mid-December a group of nine British detectives visited Moscow, where they submitted lists of written questions to Russian detectives and listened as their counterparts used them to interview Lugovoi and Kovtun. According to one version, Kovtun's head was swathed in bandages. What was said remains confidential.

One possibility Scotland Yard is thought to be investigating is that Litvinenko was actually poisoned twice. Most accounts assume he was poisoned, perhaps by grains of polonium slipped into his tea, during his 4:30 meeting at the Millennium Hotel, where seven workers later tested positive for polonium. This theory gained credence in February when British in-

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Litvinenko Poisoning

vestigators discovered off-the-charts levels of polonium in the teapot Litvinenko had used. But it fails to explain how traces made their way to Itu, the sushi place where Litvinenko had lunched a full hour before meeting Lugovoi and Kovtun. It’s possible Litvinenko had met the two Russians earlier that same day. It’s also possible he had been poisoned during the visit they made to London two weeks earlier, on October 16. Maybe the first attempt didn’t take. Maybe his murderer returned to finish the job.

Whatever the case, the press has all but convicted Lugovoi, and by association Kovtun, despite their denials. Perhaps surprisingly, a number of those in Berezovsky’s circle aren’t so sure Lugovoi was consciously involved. “I still believe that Andrei—and I’ve met him 10 times in my life—I still believe he did not know what they were doing,” says one. “He may have made the introduction, but I doubt Lugovoi killed him. A killer is a specific thing in the K.G.B. Andrei Lugovoi is not a killer. He is a bodyguard. I would guess that Lugovoi was part of an operation, may be without even knowing it, but maybe he thought it was an arrangement to entrap Sasha, to surveil Sasha. Who knows? I’m sure Lugovoi was a part of it. I do not think he was the hit man.”

Who would have wanted Litvinenko dead? Just about everyone in London believes it was the Russian government, or perhaps onetime K.G.B. agents emboldened by the Kremlin’s new aggressive ways. One of the few people mentioned by name has been the head of Dignity and Honour, Valentin Velitchko. Velitchko has denied any involvement and has kept a low profile, although, in a single interview he gave the German newspaper Die Welt, he referred to the Litvinenko murder as a “dispute among criminals.” “Professionals,” Velitchko sniffed, “don’t use polonium.”

Another theory involves both of Litvinenko’s known business associates, Lugovoi and Yuri Shvets. In mid-December, Shvets came forward and gave an interview to Tom Mangold of BBC Radio in which he said he believed Litvinenko’s death was linked to the due-diligence work they had done on the five Russian “businessmen.” For instance, Shvets, has compiled an eight-page dossier on one of the men, a senior Kremlin official: the dossier portrayed the man as a criminal mastermind involved in murder and official corruption. Shvets says he delivered the dossier to Litvinenko on September 20, on the understanding that Litvinenko would hand it to their client. At some point, Shvets says, Litvinenko showed the dossier to Lugovoi, apparently to demonstrate how a professional due-diligence report should appear. Shvets’s theory is that Lugovoi alerted the subject of the report, and that this man ordered Litvinenko’s death.

Yet another theory was advanced by Julia Svetlichnaja, the graduate student who spent hours interviewing Litvinenko before his poisoning. In a column she wrote for London’s Observer in December 2006, Svetlichnaja said Litvinenko had spoken of compiling a dossier he might use to blackmail unnamed exiled oligarchs. Svetlichnaja, who didn’t return e-mails seeking comment for this article, repeated the accusation in January on 60 Minutes, referring to a single oligarch. In that interview, she would not identify the man in question but said he had a “connection with the Kremlin, a connection with Putin.”

Some in London, however, believe big anti-Kremlin oligarchs like Berezovsky have reaped gains from the publicity surrounding Litvinenko’s death. “This would have been a non-event if not for Berezovsky,” says a senior private-security consultant in London, a man who knows Berezovsky well. “It would have been a curiosity that would have been talked about by people like me. But Berezovsky, aided by his mouthpiece Lord Bell, turned it into a media sensation. They did a terrific job. Frankly, I’m embarrassed by the British press, because their coverage of it was so incredibly uncrilcal. It was one of those stories that was too good to check. I mean, if you look at who gained most, it was Berezovsky.” Berezovsky dismisses such tales as Kremlin propaganda.

In the absence of hard, new information, however, propaganda clogs the vacuum. Today, four months after Litvinenko’s death, Scotland Yard’s investigation seems likely to lead to charges against Lugovoi. If so, there is little likelihood the Kremlin would allow Lugovoi and Kovtun to be extradited, unless the British agree to hand over Berezovsky in return, which is unlikely. Mario Scaramella, meanwhile, has been arrested in Italy charged with a byzantine plot involving an illegal arms shipment designed to somehow establish his bona fides.

Marina and Anatoly have moved into an apartment in a different section of London. For the moment, Berezovsky is supporting them. Marina has no idea what she will do next. Back in Muswell Hill, their old town house is locked and roped off, a neon-blue tarpaulin across the door. Across the street, Ahkmel Zakayev has yet to explain Litvinenko’s death to his grandchildren. “They are still waiting for him to come over,” he says. “Every time the doorbell rings, they run to it, [yelling], ‘Sasha! Sasha! Sasha!’ My grandson is two and a half years old. I don’t know how to explain to him that he is never coming back.”

All the Presidents’ Men

Continued from page 26: They were also in the room during that fateful meeting, and both men firmly argued against a sudden air strike. Bobby called it “Pearl Harbor in reverse.” He insisted that a sneak attack was not in our tradition, and that we should not lose sight of “our heritage and our ideals.” Their most vocal opponent was the stiff-collared and mustachioed Acheson, who didn’t even have an official role in the Kennedy White House but whose wisdom and years of service to Truman made him a trusted adviser on issues of foreign affairs—a presidency man, perhaps. loyal as much to the office as to its occupant. Acheson derided Bobby’s comments as overly emotional pleas lacking “the trained lawyer’s analysis.” But if F.E.K. had listened to Acheson, it would still have fallen to McNamara to give the order that in his eyes would have been potentially catalytic—that or resign. The way Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan did. Rather than join in Woodrow Wilson’s decision to send American forces to fight in World War I.

Similarly, Nixon’s attorney general Elloit Richardson and his deputy, William Ruckelshaus, quit rather than go through with Nixon’s order to fire Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox. And Jimmy Carter’s secretary of state Cyrus Vance did the same over the ill-fated 1980 attempt to rescue American hostages in Iran. Yet, more commonly, there comes a point when the presumed truth simply swelling his pride and becomes a loyal staffer. One can only wonder how many of these exist in the present-day White House.

If there was not as much squabbling among the nation’s first Cabinet secretaries, it would only be because there were not as many of them. Thomas Jefferson’s Cabinet was composed of just six officers—an attorney general, a postmaster general, and secretaries of state, war, navy, and Treasury. But...
was when few Americans, especially Jefferson himself, were willing to think of the federal government as being more than a necessary evil. The notion of the government as agent of Good, an activist in both foreign and domestic affairs, rose with liberalism of the 20th century, with it came hordes of bureaucrats, engineers, presidential "brain trust," and, more than occasionally, of men—all of them people liked to exercise authority or, at very least, be around. It was first rationalism and then the exigencies of national security that made executive branch expand, disturb the balance of power. Many have used, that the Constitution's framers insisted was necessary to frustrate government's tendency toward the secret and corrupt.

Today, there are 15 Cabinet secretaries, plus manage departments that are, for the most part, post-World War II creations employing almost one million (not including the men who work for the Department Defense and the millions more working federal contracts). Along with a federal copulence has come the static growth of the White House. At last count, no fewer than 100 employees were on the president's payroll, packed into the West Wing, the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, and other offices situated near 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Moreover, the senior staff within the White House has evolved into something of a power center in competition with the Cabinet, generating the kind of intrigue that put Henry Kissinger, when he was Nixon's national-security adviser, in a position to circumvent the State Department, and that alighted political strategists such as Michael Deaver (Reagan), Paul Begala (Clinton), and Karl Rove (George W. Bush) to command plum White House offices, where they could hold significant sway over policy, if only to control the administrative "perception" of it.

Some 30 years ago, responding to the reign of Richard Nixon, historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. noted the rise of an Imperial Presidency, brought about by the increasingly complex demands of having to manage foreign affairs. In response to the September 11 attacks, George W. Bush has asserted just such a need for expanded authority, much of it to be wielded in secret, to fight "the war on terrorism." To justify these unprecedented powers, he has relied upon the some-
times strained logic of aides such as John Yoo, who, while working in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, recast the definitions of "torture" and "enemy combatants" to give the president the constitutional footing he was seeking.

"This administration," legal expert Stuart Taylor Jr. has written, "has claimed ... powers that are arguably more sweeping than any since Lincoln's." Taylor's reference is to Lincoln's highly controversial suspension of habeas corpus protections at the outset of the Civil War. Yoo contends that the changing nature of war has demanded the expansion of executive power. "We face an enemy not just potentially armed with WMD," he insists, referring to weapons of mass destruction, "but one that does not fight on behalf of a nation ... infiltrates into the civilian population by disguise, and launches surprise attacks on purely civilian targets. ... The Bush administration's claims of executive authority echo those of Lincoln and FDR [who interned Japanese Americans during World War II], but [Bush] has used [his authority] more narrowly."

In due course, the best of presidents' advisers advance to the status of "wise men (and women)." Another wonderful image of statecraft, this one conjuring quasi-religious visionaries or even the story of the three Magi arriving with gifts for the Christ child. One day last December, in Room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, such faithful servants convened to lay out their plan for bringing about an endgame in Iraq, hoping to offer a new framework for an embattled president. As the Iraq Study Group (average age, 74) revealed its findings to the press, James Baker, a confidant of Reagan and both Bushes, along with co-chairman Lee Hamilton, a respected former Democratic congressman who hails from an era that genuinely valued bipartisanship, was front and center.

The remaining members of the committee—four Democrats and four Republicans—sat to each side. It was a truly impressive array that included two former secretaries of state (Baker and Lawrence Eagleburger), a former secretary of defense (William Perry), two former White House chiefs of staff (Baker again and Leon Panetta), a former attorney general (Edwin Meese), a former secretary of the Treasury (Baker one more time), and two former White House advis-
help noticing the irony. At the same time that they painted a hapless picture of the situation in Iraq, down the hall a Senate committee was conducting hearings with the newly nominated candidate for secretary of defense, Robert Gates, who, having served as C.I.A. director and a deputy national-security adviser to George H. W. Bush, was, despite the odds against his success, returning once again like so many before him.

Gates was frank with the committee. When asked, “Do you believe that we are currently winning in Iraq?,” he responded by saying, “No, sir.” When asked if he thought he would have the president’s ear, he offered that he was not assuming the position “to be a bump on a log and not to say exactly what I think.” But he then added, “There is still only one president. The United States. He will make the final decision.” And that he did. President Bush, within a few weeks, rejected most of what the graybeards had counseled, and followed his own path instead.

**Dissenting Generals**

Continued from Page 251 General David Petraeus (now the overall commander in Iraq), essentially started from scratch, a claim that Rumsfeld and Petraeus have stressed is not true.

That same month, Eaton got his next assignment, a training position Stateside which was, for someone of his background and experience, a “clear indicator that my usefulness to the army was about at an end.” An alternative position at the Pentagon was no more appealing: “I thought I was looking at four more years of Rumsfeld, and that he would never allow me to be promoted to a three-star.” On New Year’s Day 2006, Eaton officially retired.

All along, his unhappiness with the Iraq war had “festered and festered and festered.” When, in February 2006, Thom Shanker of The New York Times called him, he was ready to unload. But only after reading Rumsfeld’s long-term projection for the military in the Quadrennial Defense Review—“an appallingly dated,” Eaton says, focusing on high tech in an era of counter-insurgencies—did he call for Rumsfeld’s resignation in a Times op-ed. It ran on March 19, the third anniversary of the Iraq invasion. The revolt of the retired generals was under way.

In a glass bookcase by the window in his living room, Eaton keeps his collection of books on the Iraq war. His wife, P.J., says he can read them only a few pages at a time because he gets too upset. Like most generals of his generation, he has read then major H. R. McMaster’s Dereliction of Duty; a 1997 study of the Joint Chiefs during the Vietnam War, whose thesis is that, by failing to stand up to Lyndon Johnson, the generals unforgivably shirked their responsibilities. “If [McMaster] is not outlining Take Two, someone else is for sure,” says Eaton. “We’re going to find out some really unpleasant things in the next few years.” He’s resumed writing his own memoir, which he’d shelved after speaking out, for fear people would see dollar signs in his dissent. He has no regrets about coming forward. One of his West Point classmates, he notes, was Dick Cody, now the army’s second-in-command. “If I were hurting my army, he’d pick up the phone and tell me to shut up,” Eaton says.

Eaton not only lives on the water but is a bit of a sea. His new business cards say “consultant,” primarily because he doesn’t know what else he now is. Since he spoke out, several possible defense-related jobs have mysteriously dried up. “Maybe it’s the way I part my hair,” he says. In late January, his elder son, a 29-year-old Arabic linguist who is an army specialist, went to Afghanistan. His younger son, 27, an army captain who has already spent 14 months in Iraq, will probably go back before long. Eaton expects that, whatever the Americans do, Iraq will eventually split in three; the only question is how much more blood will be shed along the way. He fears there will be lots, much of it American.

Amid the gloom, though, he’s had some good news: shortly before Christmas, searchers in Laos found a fragment of his father’s remains. At last there will be a funeral.

**Change of Heart**

John Batiste, 54, may bear the greatest burden of the group. In the middle of Iraq, in the midst of the war. Batiste actually met with Donald Rumsfeld, who asked him point-blank whether there was anything that he, the commander of the First Infantry Division, had asked for that he had not in fact received. Batiste did not answer his question. It happened on Christmas Eve 2004 in Tikrit. A few minutes earlier, Batiste had introduced Rumsfeld to a hundred or so troops, first reviewing his career for them, then describing him as “a man with the courage and conviction to win the war against terrorism.” The defense secretary thanked Batiste for his kind words and the extensive review of his bio. “Kind of makes me sound like I can’t hold a job,” Rumsfeld joked. Then Batiste, Rumsfeld, and a gaggle of reporters went to Batiste’s office, overlooking the Tigris River, in a marble-lined room another of Saddam’s palaces. There seemed to be one for every American general.

It was then that Rumsfeld asked his question, and Batiste had his chance to do what the generals’ critics say they should have done: speak up while still in uniform. But Batiste says he was taken aback; the honest answer was, of course, “My God! Absolutely!” but he felt he couldn’t say that we, all those reporters around. Rumsfeld, he believed, knew that, which was why he asked it when he did. “I felt, I’m being used politic ally,” Batiste says. “So I didn’t answer.” Instead, he paused for 30 seconds, then talked about how the Iraqi units he was training would soon take control of his area. “We’re on the verge of something great here,” he predicted then.

The can-do attitude was entirely in character: no general was a more reliable chief of staff, leader for the American mission. But it was not all an act. Batiste now says. Throughout Rumsfeld’s pit stop in Tikrit, Batiste was actually fuming about Abu Ghraib, about the decision to disband the Iraqi Army, about Rumsfeld’s “shitty war plan.” But no one was watching—including the reporters—whoever have known, nor did Di Rita, who had accompanied the secretary and who says that the whole visit bordered on a “lovefest.” “Do wish I’d said something in front of all that press there?” asks Batiste, who had served as Wolfowitz’s senior military assistant at the beginning of the Bush administration. “Maybe, but we don’t air our differences in public.” Di Rita says that if Batiste had wanted a private moment with Rumsfeld he could easily have had one. But even that, Batiste says, would not have helped. “I didn’t trust Rumsfeld bit,” he tells me. “I had seen the way he treated other officers and discounted their advice. He wasn’t going to listen anyway.”
From March 2001 to June 2002, Batiste worked alongside Wolfowitz. (Unflappable, Wolfowitz later called him.) In that position, he saw the Iraq war take shape even before September 11, then saw the plan solidify. He was there that Saturday morning in early 2002, for instance, when Rumsfeld, unhappy with the proposed troop numbers, sent General Tommy Franks, the CentCom commander, packing back to Tampa with orders to come up with a way to do the war on the cheap. Batiste says he had doubts from the outset, but though he had Wolfowitz’s ear daily, he didn’t bend it; someone else, he thought, surely would. “I didn’t always agree with his thinking,” he says, “but you have a certain amount of trust that your government and its apparatus will look at all sides of something before they go to war.”

In the spring of 2002, Shinseki selected Batiste to lead the famed First Infantry Division—the Big Red One, which had been first ashore at Normandy—and Batiste spent much of the next year and a half in either Kosovo or Turkey (from which an invasion of Iraq from the north was once planned) or at its base in Würzburg, Germany. When, in December 2003, the 22,000-member force deployed to Tikrit, Wolfowitz flew over to Würzburg to bid everyone good-bye. A former brigade commander who’d learned to get along with the restive population in Bosnia, Batiste went to work to placate Iraqis, riled up by the American commander he had replaced, logging 800 hours in his helicopter visiting mayors, governors, soldiers, and sheikhs. Rejecting Rumsfeld’s revised rules for detention and interrogation helped. “I remember asking the question ‘Who’s read the Geneva Conventions?’” he recalls. “And why aren’t we using them as our foundation? Let’s get rid of all [Rumsfeld’s weakened alternatives]—burn it.”

Whenever he could, he says, he complained to superiors about the problems he faced, particularly troop shortages. During one of Wolfowitz’s visits, he gripped to him about the “shell game” they’d been forced to play with scarce American soldiers, moving them from one hot spot to another, allowing the insurgents to pop back up in their wake. “He certainly listened, but, clearly, nothing changed,” Batiste says. (Martha Raddatz, of ABC News, remembers seeing Batiste’s outspoken wife, Michelle, confront a startled Wolfowitz during one visit to Germany over the extended tours G.I.’s were being asked to serve in Iraq, apparently addressing the deputy secretary of defense with an impertinence her husband had never shown.) The two men have not spoken since at least the spring of 2005, when Wolfowitz left the Pentagon to head the World Bank. Through a spokesman, Wolfowitz says that, while some generals in the field asked for more troops, their superiors did not. He adds that he still has “enormous respect and appreciation” for Batiste.

On the outside, Batiste remained one of the war’s most reliable and enthusiastic champions until the end of his stay. “I could not be prouder of our collective accomplishments in Iraq,” he declared on June 6, 2005, at a dedication of a memorial at the army base in Würzburg to the fallen of the First Division. But Batiste says he was an anguished man that day, torn up over whether those soldiers he’d just eulogized had really died for nothing besides a bronze statue halfway around the world, and torn up, too, over his own future.

Two months earlier, Batiste had been offered the post of deputy commander of the army’s V Corps, which would have brought him back to Iraq as the second-in-command of the entire American force there. The job would have earned him his third star and maybe fourth. Leading a corps is the most coveted of positions: no one ever turns it down. But to Batiste there was a hitch: General Ricardo Sanchez would remain nominally in charge. To move or promote Sanchez, on whose watch Abu Ghraib occurred, would require Senate confirmation, something Bush-administration officials obviously didn’t relish. Better to leave him be, they reasoned, at least until things cooled down.

To the Pentagon brass, and even to some of Batiste’s friends, the situation, while novel and delicate, was eminently manageable. Everyone knew that Sanchez would have been only a “figurehead,” says Raymond DuBois, the former undersecretary of the army and Rumsfeld aide who handled the matter. Much as he wanted the job, Batiste says, the arrangement undermined the sacred military principle of unity of command—the notion that the buck must stop in only one place. The maneuver also epitomized what to him was another of Rumsfeld’s cardinal sins: politicizing the military. He says he shared his concerns with the army chief of staff, Peter Schoomaker. “The answer was ‘John, I’m sorry, there’s nothing I can do about it,’” he says. Schoomaker’s hands were tied.

Over several months and many sleepless nights, Batiste equivocated. He accepted, then backed off. His doubts about American military strategy, and the Iraqi commitment to democracy, had grown. Haunting him,
Dissenting Generals

too was the example of General Harold K. Johnson, about whom he had studied at the Army War College. As army chief of staff during Vietnam, the general felt Lyndon Johnson had handed him an unwinnable war and a plan violating every principle of warfare, and resolved to resign in protest. But he never did, and he never forgave himself afterward. “I am now going to my grave with that lapse in moral courage on my back,” he declared late in life. In June 2005, Batiste turned down the job, quit the army, and came back home. (DuBois disputes this account, claiming that Batiste was willing to take a different three-star post, but that Schoomaker rejected the idea. Batiste says this is not so.) The decision stunned and saddened his colleagues. “You can’t lose Batistes,” says one prominent general, still active. “There aren’t many of them.”

In November, Batiste began a job as president of Klein Steel, a small, family-owned concern in Rochester. (Wolfovitz says he was a reference for the position.) But only last April, after his friend Paul Eaton, whom he knew from the Balkans, had published his article, did he talk. And talk he has continued to do, ever since. He says the army is now run by technocrats and bureaucrats rather than experienced warriors. “There’s a bunch of those guys I’d want my sons going to fight with,” he says. He’s attacked the Iraqis: he’s never met one who understands democracy. The commander in chief, too, is no longer off limits: “It just seems like he doesn’t have a grip on what’s going on.” Batiste says.

Batiste’s frequent media appearances have rankled some retired generals. “Most of these other guys were captured a bit,” says an extremely prominent one. “Reporters were dialing and asking them questions, and they’d say, ‘Yeah, yeah, I agree with that.’ But Batiste has an agenda, and he’s not letting go.” Some feel he’s being used by anti-war activists, or Democrats. Others think that he’s atoning for his failure to speak up sooner, or that he’s succumbed to the siren song of the sound bite. But even most of Batiste’s critics consider him exemplary; the worst they can say about him is that he’s overly idealistic or overwrought or confused. Even some of his friends fear he’s in a bit over his head. More than one mentioned another inherently sympathetic character who got sullied through overexposure: anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan. Not to worry, replies Batiste, who says he turns down 9 out of 10 interview requests. And slowly he’s leaving the military behind. “My uniforms are all down in a closet in the house, and until this instant I’d forgotten that they were there,” he tells me. “They’ll sit there until I give them to the Goodwill or something.”

Courage Under Fire

Three-star general John Riggs, 60, should have been Donald Rumsfeld’s kind of guy. He was the head of the army’s Objective Force Task Force, the group charged with developing a lighter, lighter army, built around “Future Combat Systems” of high-tech armored vehicles, drones, and sensors. The problem may have been that he was General Shinseki’s guy as well—it was he who’d named Riggs to the job—not to mention one of Shinseki’s closest friends.

The tension was apparent at a meeting in early 2004, when army generals from all over the world, Shinseki among them, assembled in Virginia to discuss transformation. Rumsfeld arrived midway and promptly expressed his doubts. “He said, ‘I venture to say that there’s not a person in this room—I know I don’t—who understands this Future Combat Systems program,’” recalls Riggs, whom Scientific American had listed among the country’s top 50 technology leaders a year earlier. “I told him, ‘Respectfully, Mr. Secretary, you’re wrong. I understand. And I’d venture to say the majority of this room understands.’ His comeback was ‘Well, you need to come educate me.’ I said, ‘I’d love to.’ And it never happened.” Rumsfeld and his associates, Riggs says, “were almost psychopathic in their quest to be right.”

In January 2004, Riggs, an enlisted man who had been awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross in Vietnam, had another, far more fateful, run-in with Rumsfeld: defying the Rumsfeld party line, Riggs felt the army should be bigger, and said so, in print, to Tom Bowman of The Baltimore Sun. In his 39 years in the service, he complained, he’d never seen it stretched so thin. Bowman, now at National Public Radio, subsequently reported that when Wolfowitz saw the story he angrily summoned General George W. Casey, then the army’s vice chief of staff, to his office to explain such effrontery. When Casey didn’t come quickly enough, Wolfowitz went to him and chided him out loudly enough for staffers outside the office to hear.

Not surprisingly, Casey then called Riggs. “He was searching for my ass,” Riggs says. Casey skedued him for contradicting the administration’s position, told him to “stay in your lane,” then demanded to know when Riggs planned to retire. He’d already put in his papers, Riggs replied. (Wolfowitz says he recalls neither Riggs’s comments about the size of the military nor talking to Casey about them, and says he did not go down to Casey’s office to yell at him about them. “If [Riggs] was punished for speaking out, that is very wrong,” he says.)

If the administration wanted to punish Riggs for heresy, it had a club with which to beat him—early 2003, an anonymous tipster charged that Riggs had delegated too much authority to private contractors and had had an affair with one. The army’s inspector general found no such affair but upheld the charge about the contractors. The prompted General John M. Keane, then the army’s second-in-command, to write a “memorandum of concern” to Riggs. By most counts, it was a slap on the wrist for a petty infraction. Even Keane now says it was a “minor, minor” offense. But in 2004 it led the acting secretary of the army, Les Brownlee, to strip Riggs of a star—a drastic, humiliating step, normally meted out only in cases of extreme moral turpitude, costing Riggs as much as $15,000 a year in pension benefits. “He got a raw deal,” says Keane, who along with more than 40 other generals—Shinseki and Tommy Franks among them—wrote letters on Riggs’s behalf. Other pleas to Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were in vain; in April 2004, Casey gave Riggs 24 hours to get out of the army. When, the next day, some subordinate went in a basement at Fort Myer, Virginia, handed him a flag and a letter from George W. Bush, Riggs’s nearly four-decade-long military career came to an abrupt end.

Riggs believes that as a noted micro-manager Rumsfeld would have been aware what was happening—“I’d be quite surprised if he didn’t know that one of his three-stars was leaving town on a rail!”—and that, even if he didn’t do him in, the climate of intolerance he had created did. And Riggs believes that Brownlee, seeking to curry favor with the defense secretary, was happy to do his dirty work. (Brownlee insists that his decision was based on the inspector general’s report and not on political considerations; Di Rita maintains that Rumsfeld would not even have known who Riggs was.) Riggs did not join the calls for Rumsfeld’s head until Nations Public Radio contacted him, but he’s very pleased he did. “It created the groundswe’d caused Rumsfeld to be gone, period,” he says. “It made him the lightning rod he always should have been.”

Of the six, he may be the most explicitly vindicated: everyone, including the president of the United States, now says the army is too small. But Riggs, who is advising Senator Christopher Dodd, the Connecticut Democrat, in his presidential bid, isn’t gloating. He’s thinking, instead, of all the soldiers “involved in this morass.” I ask him how many more of them will die before it’s over. “I can’t do that,” he says quietly. “It’s too painful to think about.”

Second Thoughts

The military motif in two-star general Chuck Swannick’s house in North Carolina begins with the wooden wreath at the front door. HOME IS WHERE THE ARMY SENDS US—THE SWANNICK FAMILY, it declares. Hanging from it are pendants, each representing a stop in Swannick’s long career: Along with West Point and the Pentagon
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Travel through the decades and see an arresting array of more than 150 garments and accessories by this provocative British fashion designer.
there are all those Forts—Polk, McNair, Ord, Rugg, Leavenworth, Benning—representing places from which he went off to Haiti, Bosnia, and, finally, Iraq.

But there's one catch: the Swannacks are a longer reach of a family. His twins are grown, and he's separated from his wife. "A heartless robot," he says, she's called him, and he relates it incredulously, mournfully, yet he's still trying to patch things up. He says alone, in a rented place he's turned into a shrine to the 82nd Airborne, the legendary paratrooper corps he commanded from October 2002 to May 2004, and a gallery of Saddam Hussein—abilla. His fractured family helps explain why the tought of the six dissenting generals is also the most fragile and regretful.

In photographs, striding purposefully before his troops, his maroon paratrooper's beret and desert camouflage, Swannack, who made it jumps himself, a frightening guy. Chuck Swannack loved to sound of the gun," the commander of Fort Bragg said when "Swan Ogg" retired. That's how he came across—"General Swank"—a Combat Zone True Tales of GIs in Iraq, published by Marvel Comics in 2005. (The writer, Karl Zinsmeister, is now President Bush's chief domestic policy adviser.) Confederate general Stonewall Jackson is his hero, and in his living room is a print of Stonewall, graying. At West Point, he was captain of the rifle team, and he can still drive a ball forever. He bade Iraq good-bye by hitting six stratas into the Euphrates.

But even men of steel can have feet of clay. Swannack went to Iraq twice, first in early 2003, when 7,500 paratroopers of the 82nd marched into Baghdad rather than jumped in, as had originally been planned. Then, from August 2003 to March 2004, he commanded the force occupying and attempting to pacify the notorious al-Anbar Province. It was classic counter-insurgency: meeting with the locals, buying them off, giving them jobs, respecting them, mollifying them, intimidating them, and, when necessary, fighting and killing them. Rumsfeld never reached Ramadi, where Swannack was based, in still another of Saddam's palaces—it was just too dangerous. (A piece of wood with Saddam's initials carved into it, taken from a doorframe, is among Swannack's prized mementos.)

Swannack had all of the usual gripes, about troop shortages, de-Ba'thification, understimating the insurgency, problems equipping Iraqi soldiers. Sometimes, at press conferences, he aired his complaints. Once, ignoring the administration's party line, he said that Saddam Hussein had planned the insurgency. General John Abizaid, the head of Central Command, quickly rejected that idea, publicly. (Both Abizaid and Wolfowitz later told Swannack he'd been right.) "I felt that Big Brother was watching, and if he saw something he didn't like, I'd be slammed for it," he says.

During and after Swannack's second tour in Iraq, everything unraveled. His marriage, work he had done in Iraq. Early last April, as teams of reporters fanned out to find additional anti-Rumsfeld generals, Eric Schmitt of The New York Times caught up with Swannack, who added his name to the list. Then he changed his mind. Then, with Schmitt pleading the importance of making his views known, he jumped back in. "Emotionally, I had a lot of rocks in my rucksack," he now says. "They all got heavier and heavier, and I needed to unburden myself or it would take me down." But, for a variety of reasons, he says, he wouldn't do it again.

There was one angry e-mail: a West Point classmate called him a traitor. And Booz Allen Hamilton, the global-strategy firm which he says was posed to offer him a lucrative consulting job, got cold feet once he made the papers. (The company acknowledges the discussion but says Swannack had not been formally interviewed.) But most upsetting was the reaction from his own soldiers, who were flabbergasted—and, depending on how well they knew him, either disappointed or enraged—by what he had done. As one of Swannack's men puts it, paratroopers simply don't complain—unless, that is, there's not enough fighting going on—and even some of Swannack's friends felt that his comments brought dishonor to the corps. When I tell one of Swannack's devoted men that he's since had second thoughts, he says he is relieved.

The American death toll in Iraq has passed 3,000 when Swannack and I get together, and as we drive down Interstate 77 for some barbecue, I ask him what, in a year's time, the figure will be. "Thirty-six hundred," he replies matter-of-factly. And by the time it is all over? "Seven thousand, seventy-five hundred." Still, he supports the surge. "I'm an optimist, because I think the cause is just," he says. But, he concludes, the Iraqis could "go south on us." He hopes there's a Plan B.

Of Fathers and Sons

A signed photograph of former president George H. W. Bush hangs in the home of Lieutenant General and Mrs. Paul Van Riper, in Williamsburg, Virginia, near his enormous library on the art and science of
Dissenting Generals

war, not far from the bullet-scarred helmet and belt he wore in Southeast Asia. “To Rip and L.C. with so many thanks for your hospitality, with great pride in your service to the U.S.A.” Bush the elder wrote, after staying with them once a decade ago. But Van Riper isn’t so high on Bush’s son. “Unless something in the next few years happens, I think historians will nail him,” he says.

At 68, Van Riper is the oldest of the six generals, old enough to have had two tours in Vietnam, where he left behind his spleen and a piece of his intestines. He is also the most famous, highlighted in Malcolm Gladwell’s Blink, and, on martial matters, the most erudite. (Gladwell depicts him as shrewd, iconoclastic, and fearless—a sophisticated gunfighter.) Whenever he and his pal former CentCom commander Tony Zinni, who lives just down the road, talk war on their regular bass-fishing trips, it’s so technical that only a few people in the world can decipher what they’re saying. He retired as a Marine three-star four years before Bush the younger put Rumsfeld in the Pentagon. “Rumsfeld,” Van Riper calls him.

But Van Riper kept bumping up against him. Like some of the other generals, he was skeptical of “transformation,” believing that technology offered no substitute for “boots on the ground.” He’d seen the grim results of such thinking in Vietnam, when leaders trained for nuclear war and in love with systems analysis flailed away fighting guerrillas. Then came “Millennium Challenge ‘02,” the $250 million war game Gladwell examined. As a paid consultant, Van Riper led the forces of a generic Islamic terrorist that sank 16 American ships in what one writer called the “worst naval defeat since Pearl Harbor.” But the highly critical report Van Riper wrote afterward was never declassified—an example, he believed, of the groupthink that permeated Rumsfeld’s Defense Department and the generals he promoted.

Then the real war came. Van Riper watched aghast as the Americans went in with far fewer soldiers than had been called for in a war plan he’d been shown a few months earlier. “I was thinking, Where is everybody?” he recalls. Friends in the Pentagon told him that time-honored methods of deploying men and matériel had been jettisoned. Then his son, Steve, 36, a Marine major, returned from Iraq with fresh horror stories. Van Riper had devoted his career to fixing a military broken by Vietnam, and here it was all unraveling.

In 2004, Van Riper spoke to the PBS program Frontline and called Rumsfeld arrogant, disdainful of others, lawless, and ignorant. Whenever Rumsfeld appeared on television, he told the interviewer, he had to shut off his set. But those comments never made it on the air, just on the program’s Web site. Van Riper joined the other generals only when The Washington Post called in April 2006. The day after Rumsfeld was canned, Van Riper saved the front pages of the Post, The Wall Street Journal, and USA Today as keepsakes. Only once before had he done something like that: when men first landed on the moon.

Half a million troops would be needed in Iraq to pacify things, he says; with that hardly in the cards, “we are likely to end this war as we began, with too few forces on the ground.” In the meantime, Steve Van Riper has just returned from his second tour in Iraq. The blue star his father hung in the window of Steve’s bedroom, signifying a son or daughter in the military, is still there, though Van Riper doubts that, even in his own neighborhood, filled with military personnel, many people know what it means.

The Pen Is Mightier

Until his article in Time. Greg Newbold was best known outside the insular world of the Marines and the rarefied offices of the Pentagon for a single word: “eviscerated.”

“Eviscerated” was how, in a Pentagon press briefing in October 2001, Newbold had described the state of Taliban fighters after American air strikes early in the war in Afghanistan. Quickly, mockingly, Rumsfeld made it clear he wasn’t pleased with Newbold’s terminology: better to upend the public’s understanding and overdeliver, he believed, than the other way around. “Sometimes they might use a word that I might not, or sometimes they might use a word that they won’t again,” Rumsfeld said, as an adoring press laughed.

Back then Rumsfeld briefings were still must-see TV, even internationally, and one top general who’d tuned in that day recalls how sorry for Newbold he felt. “I remember thinking, Oh, man, that’s got to hurt,” he recalls. “It was a little of the way Shiseki was dismissed.”

Around the Pentagon, “eviscerated”—a word apparently considered too highbrow for any Marine to use properly—became a running gag. Myers joked about it with Tim Russert. Soon, it was the basis of a stock line in Wolfowitz’s speeches. Pentagon briefers knew better than to employ the word. There was little danger Newbold ever would again. Rumsfeld essentially banned him from further public appearances. That was fine by Newbold: putting himself on public display had never been something he relished, and, besides, it kept him from his real work.

In fact, Newbold’s choice of words that day was quite characteristic: succinct, articulate, accurate, unvarnished. Others may have fared for him over Rumsfeld’s put-down, but he let the whole thing go. “I had bigger issues with him,” he says. “It was not a secret that Rumsfeld and I were not on our respective Christmas-card lists.”

Among the six generals, Newbold is the most reticent. You have to chase him down, though he is unfailingly courteous once caught. Amid the rambards, he stands straight and tall. He never swears—as a young officer, he concluded that it diminished his authority and until the midterm elections of 2006 he had never voted: like his father, an air-force pilot, he never wanted to serve someone he hadn’t supported.

Newbold waived that rule last year to back his old friend James Webb, another retired Marine, who is now the Democratic senator from Virginia, even though he warned Webb beforehand that a radioactive general might do him more harm than good. When, as the newest member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Webb praised those military men “of moral conscience” whom the Bush administration had “de-meaned” and “destroyed” for their opposition to the war, Newbold was among those he had in mind. Then, in the Democratic response to Bush’s 2007 State of the Union address, Webb listed Newbold on the honor roll of military officials who’d counseled against the war.

Newbold, 58, who met his wife while both were Marine captains training newly commissioned lieutenants at Quantico, speaks in a deep baritone that belies his slight stature. He has a dry wit. He is— it’s a strange word to use for a Marine, let alone the one who led the first boatload into Mogadishu in 1992—sensitive, almost tender, though there is clearly leather beneath the velvet. He is self-effacing, even self-lacerating. The other generals talk about how much they took on Rumsfeld; Newbold talks about how little and how much more he should have.

In the summer of 2000, the Marine Corps commandant, James Jones, picked Newbold to be the director of operations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or J3, supervising 300 employees at the Pentagon. It’s probably the most important three-star job in the military, a well-worn stepping-stone to four stars, and, maybe, commandant. Still, Newbold says he really didn’t want the job; he enjoyed commanding troops more. And, because he came along in the wrong administration, it proved his undoing.

Rumsfeld—newly arrived, eager to assert his authority over what he considered a flabby and recalcitrant military and a Pentagon filled with Clinton holdovers—looked for targets, and Newbold, who actually didn’t much respect Clinton (he thought him a “weather vane”), devoid of core beliefs, was in plain sight. “Greg was kind of the first one to catch that full in the face,” says a retired
admired who watched it happen. "Rumsfeld wanted to come in and kick a few butts, and Greg's was the butt that was kicked."

Newbold witnessed many Pentagon briefings in which an always exasperated Rumsfeld forever harped on the incompentence all around him—"Can't anyone count numbers?" he might say—and says others got it far worse than he did. Still, he says, the secretary of de- fense once abused him so badly that he was moved to complain to Rumsfeld's senior military assistant, Admiral Edmund Giambastiani. If Rumsfeld ever so disrespected him again, Newbold said, he would "put his stars in the table"—that is, resign. "And Admiral Giambastiani said, 'Oh, Greg, you know, it's too bad, but that's the way he deals with people, and he doesn't mean anything by it. It's just his style.' And I said, 'It isn't with me. You make sure he knows it.'"

"When I hung up, I realized I had done something fairly consequential, so I informed the commandant, and I informed General Myers, he continues. Myers, too, defended Rumsfeld's poor manners to him, also saying he treated everyone like that. "I said, You should never put up with it," he recalls. General Myers worked a different way than I did. That means he's probably more mature and wiser and has much greater judgment on these things." Underlings sensed Newbold's frustration, though he never voiced it to them; returning from meetings, he would simply point to the framed sampler that hung, and still hangs, on his wall: PEOPLE ARE NO DARNED GOOD, IT SAYS.

Of far greater concern to him was the headlong rush to war in Iraq. It was apparent early on—from two or three days after 9/11, when, with the smoke from the smoldering Pentagon still in the air, Newbold told Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense for policy, of plans to go into Afghanistan. "Why are you going into Afghanistan?" he says Feith replied. "We ought to be going after Iraq." (Feith has previously denied saying this; Newbold says he'd take a polygraph on the point. Feith declined to talk to Vanity Fair.) It simply isn't possible now, says Newbold, to fathom how "extraor-dinarily inappropriate" Feith's comments sounded at the time. Then, at a meeting a few months later, as the Americans chased the leadership of al-Qaeda, he says, he heard Wolfowitz say essentially the same thing. In each instance, Newbold's reaction was the same: "Who cares about Iraq? We have this three-penny dictator, this bantam rooster of no consequence. Besides, they're quiet now anyway—who cares?" (Wolfowitz says he never disputed the need to go after al-Qaeda; the issue for him was whether a war against Saddam Hussein could proceed simulta-neously.)

Then came what was, to Newbold, that fateful meeting in late 2001 when Rumsfeld requested the war plan for Iraq. Newbold had just begun his slide show, describing the size of the force and means of deployment, when the belittement began. "As was his style," Newbold says, "he had already declared the answer, and had already cat- egorized anyone who might think differently as—these are my words—antideluvian, Cro-Magnon, backward-thinking, hopeless. It was so pointed, so derogatory, so negative about the number [of troops required under the existing plan] that General Myers then said, 'If not this number, then what num- ber do you think [the plan] ought to have?'

It was, Newbold says, a "horrible ques- tion." I ask why. "Because that question ought to be answered by those who know most about how to put together a plan that can accomplish the mission," he tells me. "It was no more appropriate than for me to suggest play-calling to [Coach] Joe Gibbs of the Washington Redskins." Rumsfeld's alternative estimate of troops needed was "imbecil- ic, preposterous," but Newbold failed to object. According to Newbold, so did Myers, and so did Pace, who, when Myers retired as chairman, would be elevated to his spot. "Fun- ny how that works," Newbold observes.

Afg anistan fell in late 2001, and as it be- came increasingly apparent that a war with Iraq, based on what he considered to be manipulated and cherry-picked evidence, was in the offering, Newbold took the step General Harold Johnson never had: he offered his resignation, to General Jones, the commandant. And it came with a message: Jones should feel free to tell everyone he was resigning in protest. Jones was noncommitt- al, and Newbold stayed: the president, at least, was still saying war was not inevitable.

But by June 2002, Newbold had given up. He again offered his resignation, even though, by leaving ahead of schedule, he could have lost two stars. This time, Jones accepted. Before departing, Newbold says, he reiterated his objections to the impending war to the chairman, vice-chairman, and key generals and admirals in the Pentagon hierar- chy. Such a war was justified, he argued, only if Iraq threatened as neighbors, harbored ter- rorists, or had weapons of mass destruction. None of those, he believed, was true.

In late September, Rumsfeld and Pace said good-bye to him before the Pentagon press corps. Rumsfeld's press office had put together a joke video for the occasion, built around the "evisceration" clip. Some of Newbold's friends were indignant anew to see a 30-year military career boiled down to a barbed joke. But Newbold, who'd ac- cepted a job at a Washington think tank, took it all good-naturedly. He rejected the usual lavish retirement ceremony at the Ma- rine Barracks—"As I told the commandant, 'I don't want my last act as a Marine to be to make Marines work for me'"—and opted instead for a small gathering at the Army Navy Country Club, in Alexandria. Just about the only man in uniform to come was his old friend John Abizaid. It was poignant, says someone who was there; everyone knew that Newbold was retiring prematurely, and that it was the country's loss. But Newbold himself kept it from becoming too funereal.

Newbold didn't let on anything with the press. "I am a square peg in a round hole" was how he explained his decision to Tom Ricks of The Washington Post. He became a consultant to ABC News. He took Peter Jen- nings around Kuwait and Qatar, introduc- ing him to military brass, explaining how the war-to-be would work. Once the fight- ing started he did some on-air analysis, but television work smacked of ego to him, and he soon stopped. He made an exception for a PrimeTime documentary on Rumsfeld in March 2004, when ABC Pentagon corre- spondent John McWethy asked him wheth- er Rumsfeld was "abusive and brash." "Oh, absolutely," he replied, adding that people clamored up when they were intimidated or debased. It was a terse response to a lead- ing question. But from someone so upright and discreet, McWethy says, it carried enor- mous weight, especially among the other generals: Newbold was saying what they all thought.

Over the next two years Newbold main- tained his silence, speaking only to Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor for Cobra II, their book on the lead-up to the Iraq war. (It was to them that he first described the meet- ing in late 2001 with Rumsfeld.) Speaking out, he feared, could undermine the troops in the field—another legacy of Vietnam. Then there was the Marine ethic, which frowned on anything resembling ambition or self-aggrandization. More than deterior- rating conditions in Iraq, more than Condo- leezza Rice's claim that "thousands" of tacti- cal—read "military"—errors had been made in Iraq, what ultimately persuaded him to talk were his weekly visits to the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, in Washington, made on behalf of the Injured Marine Se- per Fi Fund, of which he became a director in 2003.

Newbold walks over to his computer, fiddles around with the mouse, and calls up a photograph for me. "Here's one of the Marines we helped out," he explains quietly. "He was unconscious when I saw him." On the screen is a bewildered-looking young man being lifted out of a chair. He has lost his legs, and his head looks lopsided, like a clay pot on a wheel before it has been centered: part of his brain has also been blown away. Seeing these horribly maimed men and women, who for all their injuries want noth- ing more than to go and rejoin their buddies
Dissenting Generals

in Iraq, was very inspiring, says Newbold. But it was also infuriating, and as he speaks, even across a table, one can feel something welling up in him. It is indignation; the war to which they were all sent, the war that has marked them for life, is, to him, foolish and dishonest and unnecessary, and, worst of all, predictably so. “Any military leader dispatching young soldiers and Marines to something less noble than those soldiers and Marines themselves is committing a blasphemy;” he then says.

Newbold is bitter about the ideologues who, he feels, hijacked American military policy, but they are not his department. What angers him more are his former superiors and colleagues, the men with all those stars on their shoulders. “When you look around at how many people were in positions to raise their voices, senior military leaders who had a duty to object, and how many did—I'm having trouble counting how many did,” he says, his voice intensifying. “I'm having trouble getting above one. But I know, personally, how many thought this whole thing was crazy. And if the military had said, ‘We won't be a part of this,’ then it wouldn't have been. They couldn't have done it publicly, but they could have given their best military advice. And it was their duty.”

Reflecting on all this as time passed, his bile mounted. Finally, he agreed to write the article—for Time; he says, because he believed it would be read beyond the Beltway, in Iowa and Oregon and Mississippi. He'd planned something forward-looking, he says, but what poured out instead was an assault on the politicians who'd led the country into Iraq and the generals who'd gone along. American forces had been sent to Iraq, he wrote, “with a casualness and swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions—or bury the results.” He mentioned no generals by name, nor, for that matter, the secretary of defense; only when the editors learned on him did he put Rumsfeld in, and call for him to be replaced. It was a mistake, he now believes; what was intended as a serious critique morphed into the debut of the latest revolting general.

Asked about the article at a Pentagon press conference, Rumsfeld said he had not read it, then claimed that Newbold had never objected, publicly or privately, before. Pace, who was at Rumsfeld's side that day, quickly corrected him, but noted that Newbold had in fact left the Pentagon before the war plan was finalized. Di Rita makes the same point, to say that troop strength in Iraq was fixed by diktat so early on is an “urban legend.” Newbold, he suggests, is both flattering and flagellating himself unnecessarily. Doesn’t matter, Newbold insists: he still should have said something.

Richard Kohn, of the University of North Carolina, who criticized the retired generals for violating traditions of civilian control, is particularly harsh on Newbold, claiming that, by suggesting that the military should resist legitimate civilian directives, he was calling for insurrection. “Highly improper is an understatement,” he tells me. To Newbold, Kohn and other civilian critics are “dilettantes” or defensive and discredited neocons or Monday-morning quarterbacks, the kind who’ve never worn pads.

“Every military officer must have a limit to what he’s willing to subordinate to pure obedience, and I can’t think of a limit that is more important than the sacrifice of the young patriots to what the nation called them to do,” he says. “And if you see it so flagrantly abused, then I think I personally set a limit, and that limit was crossed. To the man who has no limit I have only sympathy.”

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The Sopranos

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up the nightly network lineup in those days and jumped into the big time when, ironically, he became a writer on the heavily plotted series The Rockford Files, where he worked happily for more than four years, until 1980. He wrote a movie of the week about teenage runaways from Minnesota who become hookers in Manhattan, which earned him an Emmy. Still, he had, as he puts it, a “reputation for being ‘too dark.’” That’s the term people out there like—I don’t know what it means. It probably means ‘too complicated.’ Or it could mean ‘too dark.’” Chase laughs. Says Lawrence Konner, an old friend who wrote three episodes of The Sopranos during the show’s first four seasons, “David’s reputation in the industry was ‘Good writer, good show, but what’s going on in his brain we don’t want to be part of.’” Chase remembers it was out of step with everything. “I remember seeing David at a dinner one time. Everybody was laughing their heads off. ‘Ho-ho-ho!’ It wasn’t funny to me, it wasn’t dramatic—it wasn’t anything. I thought, Why don’t I just open the door and jump out?”

Chase bounced from development deal to development deal until, in 1993, he ended up, almost in spite of himself, in charge of a high-profile hit, Northern Exposure. There’s a lot of money to be made in television, and by every standard but his own, he was successful. He and his family had a home in Santa Monica Canyon. Chase would come back from work, plop down on the floor, and play Barbies with his daughter Michele. But, according to Konner, “he turned it into Perp-Walk Barbie—District Attorney Barbie, Parole Officer Barbie…. I think he is a little obsessed with law and order. I think he gets angrier than most of us at the miscarriage of justice, at the injustice of the world.”

"I Hate Television"

Chase was still miserable. “I could not cross that line, from TV to features, to save my ass,” he says. Meanwhile, his years on the ground in network production had given him plenty of time to brood about the deficiencies of television. “Television is really an outgrowth of radio. And radio is just all yak-yak-yak-yak. And that’s what television is: yak-yak-yak-yak. It’s a prisoner of dialogue, film of people talking. Flashy words.”

Still, by 1995, as he was turning 50, he was in a position to pick and choose. He chose the management company turned producers Brillstein-Grey, where he signed a development deal. The company had produced The Larry Sanders Show for HBO, which Chase admired. Brad Grey said to him at the time, “You know, we believe you have a great television series in you.” Chase recalls, “It wasn’t something I was really dying to hear, because my response in my head was: I don’t give afuck—I hate television. But I wasn’t used to being talked to that way”—Grey had also said, “We don’t want the kind of stuff they do on the networks”—and it had an impact on me.” Driving home that night, Chase remembered a feature idea that his agents had shot down a couple of years earlier. It was a comedy about a mobster with emotional problems rooted in his difficult relationship with his mother. He sees a therapist. It was way before Analyze This. Now Chase thought to himself, I wonder if that would make a good TV series? They like these things to have female appeal—and this would have his mother and his family.

The pilot script would be a highly personal story stitched together with bits and pieces of fabric from Chase’s own life. “Network dramas have not been personal,” he reflects. “I don’t know very many writers who have been cops, doctors, judges, presidents, or any of
t—and, yet, that’s what everybody writes: institutions. The courthouse, the poolhouse, the precinct house, the White House. Even though it’s a Mob show. The Sopranos is based on members of my family. It’s out as personal as you can get.

An only child, Chase had a lot of “issues,” they say, with his parents. He grew up very tech under their thumb, emotionally, in a three-bedroom apartment in Clifton, a working-class town. The complex, called Richfield Village, was a U-shaped brick unit overlooking a tennis court. “This was after the war.”

case recalls, “and it was filled with veterans and their children. I had a lot of fun there, felt very free.” At the same time he could barely and be in the same room with his mother or father; their very proximity made him physically ill, put his stomach in knots. His, who owned a hardware store, “was a very angry guy. If he had a problem with me, not the silent treatment. He wouldn’t speak to me for a week, two weeks. He’d go around the house with this sort of Mussolini pout.”

Tony Chase did his best to crush his son’s spirit. He belittled him at every opportunity, even made fun of his physical appearance.

That said, it was Chase’s mother, Maria, a telephone-book proofreader, who real- left a mark. “His mother was a lunatic,” says Chase’s wife, Denise. The inspiration for Tony’s mother, Livia, the North Jersey edea, so indelibly rendered by the late Nancy Marchand, Maria Chase was a passion- progressive drama queen, given to every sort of eccentricity. She wouldn’t answer the phone after dark, wouldn’t drive in the rain. When David was about 12, she threatened to put his eye out with a fork because he said he wanted a Hammond organ. Chase describes her as “a nervous woman who dominated any situation she was in by being so needy and al- ways on the verge of hysteria. You walked on eggshells.” (As Joe Pantoliano—a.k.a. “Joey Adonis”—who in the show’s third and fourth seasons inscribed the crew chief Ralphie Citro- etto in the Sopranos Hall of Fame, puts it. All of us Italian-Americans had those domi- nant mothers. My mother hit me in the head with a high-heeled shoe. When I saw The Godfather, I went. They’re always worried about him, but in my house everybody was worried about Mommy. Then somebody told him, ‘Joey, Mario Puzo used the Godfather as a metaphor for his mother—he was actually riting about her.’"

Chase’s mother had some virtues. "She could really make you laugh," Denise Chase recalls. "David picked up his sense of humor from her. She had a different take on every- thing, and he comes at things from a different angle, too. He also picked up her lack of inhibitions about saying things.”

As a teenager, Chase was on speaking terms with depression. He graduated from high school in 1963, then spent two years at Wake Forest University, in Winston- Salem, North Carolina, which he detested. "I slept 18 hours a day," he says. He was suffer- ing from “what’s come to be known as normal, nagging, clinical depression. It was awful.” Did he contemplate suicide? "Well, doesn’t everybody?"

He finally switched to N.Y.U. and then an- nounced that he wanted to go to film school, which didn’t go over well at home. He recalls, "My father said. "You can be a clown in the circus if you want—I don’t care—but you gotta finish college first." My mother used to say, "My worst nightmare is that you’re going to marry an Irish Catholic girl, move to California, and I’ll never see you again." which turned out to be the case. After graduating from N.Y.U., he dis- appointed both parents in 1968 by marry- ing Denise Kelly, his high-school sweetheart, and moving to California—to get away from them,” she says.

Denise has been credited by friends with keeping Chase’s head above water. Says Kon- ner, "She is his emotional rock, let’s say. She is the one he turns to in times of trouble." Chase started therapy in his early 30s at her urging, after her younger sister died at the age of 25 of a brain aneurysm. "We went back to New Jersey for the funeral," Chase recalls. "My father opened the front door of the house, and he went, ‘I like everything you have on but your shoes.’ Those were his first words: boom—let me find the negative. My parents were not speaking to me, because I was spending too much time with her family. When we came back on the plane, instead of focusing on my wife’s loss, I was focused on my problems with my parents. They were in my head all the time. My wife said, 'This is absurd. You really need to be in therapy.‘"

Not only would seeing a shrink change Chase’s life, the experience would eventually provide the spine for The Sopranos.

When it came to writing the show’s pilot, Chase took Brad Grey at his word. He didn’t want that stuff they did on the networks? Chase would give him something different. "I didn’t really watch much television until the first season of Twin Peaks, in 1990," he explains. "That was an eye-opener for me. There’s mystery in everything David Lynch does. I don’t mean, Who killed Laura Palm- er? There’s a whole other level of stuff going on, this sense of the mysterious, of the poetic, that you see in great painting, that you see in foreign films, that’s way more than the sum of its parts. I didn’t see that on television. I didn’t see anybody even trying it.

Chase sat down to write a script that was not only highly personal but also one in which the material wasn’t pre-chewed for viewers. "On network, everybody says exactly what they’re thinking at all times," he says. "By and large, my characters would be tell- ing lies.” Above all, he wanted the pilot to be cinematic: "I wanted to do the kind of stuff I’ve always loved to see. I didn’t want it to be a TV show. I wanted to make a little movie every week.” Indeed. Chase nervously inserted his David Lynch moment early in the pilot script; Standing behind his home, Tony is be- guiled by some ducks that have landed in his swimming pool. It’s not a scene that advances the plot; but what is clear is that, among other things, Chase was sending a message: We’re not in Studio City anymore!

Indeed, Chase wastes no time announc- ing his intentions. The first scene has Tony in Dr. Melfi’s office, and subsequently he is felled by repeated panic attacks. A close friend of Chase’s was dying of cancer while he was writing the pilot. and this too makes its way into the script, with Tony, fearing he might have a brain tumor, undergoing an MRI. In fact, the entire first season would be devoted to cancer, death, and depression. "I was raised with this dread of cancer," says. "My mother talked about cancer, cancer, cancer all the time. That’s where she lived. When I was a kid, probably eight or nine, she described some friend of hers that was in so much pain they couldn’t stand to have the sheet on them. It was: Oh my god!" It seemed like everyone on the show was on medication. Hospital scenes turned up so regularly that viewers might have been ex- cused for thinking they were watching ER. But despite the spiked blood and swallowed pills, the show was always funny.

Not Violent Enough?

When Chase was done with the pilot, in 1995, Grey steered the script to the networks. “Because of The Larry Sanders Show; which, despite enormous critical ac- claim, made no money, I really didn’t want to do the show at HBO.” Grey confesses. "No- body went to cable, certainly not to pay cable. At that time ER was selling for an extraordin- ary amount of money in syndication, and I wanted to make a lot of money.” But each of the networks turned it down, worried that the show was "too dark." and, at least in the case of Fox, that it wasn’t violent enough, or so Chase thought. (He’d declined to write any murders into the original script because he’d read that mobsters were no longer whacking one another with the vigor of the old days.) Explains Grey, "I believed that the nets would be open to taking some risks at that time. I was foolish. And greedy. It was basically a waste of time, really bad judgment on my part, because even if they had taken it, it wouldn’t have been The Sopranos. It would have been something else.” As a last resort, he turned to HBO.

HBO has a different business model, one that depends on subscribers, not advertisers. And at the time it was just beginning to dip its toes into original programming, with shows such as Oz, Arliss, and Sex and the City, which would premiere seven months before
The Sopranos

The Sopranos (but wouldn’t break out until its second season). Grey had known Chris Albrecht, HBO’s then president of original programming, for years, ever since Albrecht had been a stand-up comic. Grey picked up the phone and called him. Albrecht was interested. The things about Chase’s pilot that turned off the networks didn’t bother him. He looked right into the heart of the show and understood that the Mob was a red herring. “I said to myself, This show is about a guy who’s turning 40.” Albrecht recalls. “He’s inherited a business from his dad. He’s trying to bring it into the modern age. He’s got all the responsibilities that go along with that. He’s got an overbearing mom that he’s still trying to get out from under. Although he loves his wife, he’s had an affair. He’s got two teenage kids, and he’s dealing with the realities of what that is. He’s anxious: he’s depressed; he starts to see a therapist because he’s searching for the meaning of his own life. I thought: The only difference between him and everybody I know is he’s the don of New Jersey. So, to me, the Mafia part was sort of the tickle for why you watched. The reason you stayed was because of the resonance and the relatability of all that other stuff.” A deal was struck: in those days, HBO didn’t have much money, and Chase got its standard contract, probably something less than $100,000 for writing and shooting the pilot and then $50,000 or $60,000 per episode if the show was picked up.

As Francis Ford Coppola had when he was casting The Godfather, Chase rounded up the best un- and semi-known Italian actors in New York City. He knew that the pilot, and the subsequent series, if there was one, would stand or fall on the actor who played Tony Soprano. Susan Fitzgerald, who worked for Grey, sent Chase a tape of the scene from the spectacular Quentin Tarantino-Tony Scott picture, True Romance, in which Gandolfini throws an already bloodied Patricia Arquette through a glass shower door. Fitzgerald said: “This is the guy.”

For his part, Gandolfini loved the script. “I laughed my ass off,” he recalls. “I was like, This is really different and good. and odd. I thought, I’ve never been the lead before. They’re gonna hire somebody else. But I knew I could do it. I have small amounts of Mr. Soprano in me. I was 35, a lunatic, a madman.”

Chase recalls, “Jim stopped in the middle of the first audition and said he was soft going, there was an illness in his family. Then he didn’t even show up for the second audition. The third audition was at my house. What happens every time [when you’re casting something] is that people come in and read, and they read and they read, and you start to think. This is really badly written, the thing sucks. And then the right person comes in, and it all works. It was pretty obvious that Jim had too much going on for this role to go with anyone else.”

Chase can be inscrutable, and actors who met with him often had no idea whether he liked them or not. “I thought he was really bored,” recalls Michael Imperioli, who plays “Christofu” Moltisanti, of his audition for Chase. “He’s got a poker face, so I thought he wasn’t into me, and he kept giving me notes and having me try it again, which often is a sign that you’re not doing it right. I thought, I’m not getting this. So he said, ‘Thank you,’ and I left. I didn’t expect to hear back. And then they called.”

No one involved with the pilot, not Chase (who directed it), not Gandolfini, thought it would get picked up. It just violated too many shalls and shall-nots, even for pay cable. Indeed, once the pilot was shot. HBO couldn’t make up its corporate mind. Recalls Time Warner president and C.O.O. Jeff Bewkes, then chairman and C.E.O. of HBO. “For us, it was a real stretch just to pay for The Sopranos, because even in its first year it was going to be the most expensive drama that I think anybody had ever made, $2.5 to $2.7 million per hour.” (The dollars were chewed up by the location shooting in New Jersey.) “If you were us,” Bewkes continues, “you were going to have to say, O.K., so let’s go spend $30 million for a series that on the surface looks like a gangster who’s going to a shrink. And later, when we were casting Jimmy Gandolfini, we knew no network would put a guy with his bulk into the key leading-man role of a week-after-week series they were trying to make commercial. If it didn’t work, we were completely wiped out.”

Chase was so sure that the pilot would never get made he had been having conversations with the producers of The X-Files about coming on as a producer-writer. At the last minute, right before the Sopranos actors’ contracts were set to expire, after which they would be free to take other projects. HBO ordered 13 episodes. But the wrangling wasn’t over. Chase wanted to call the series The Sopranos, after some kids in his high school. “But HBO had a problem with that,” he explains. “They thought people would say, ‘It’s about opera,’” which proved true. “They had people generating lists of alternate titles, page after page after page: New Jersey Blood, this terrible shit. They wanted to call it Family Man. Steven Van Zandt said, ‘This is insane! Are they outta their fuckin’ minds?!” Then a series went on the air called Family Guy, and that was the end of that. So they said, ‘All right, use The Sopranos.’”

Despite his contempt for network television, Chase had picked up work habits that serve him in good stead. Says Carolyn Strauss, president of HBO Entertainment. “He’s a veteran TV producer, had worked very hard in the network system for many years, and he knew which rules to observe, which he might be able to break.”

Given the demands of the dense and complex scripts, the first season was shot on an extremely tight schedule, eight days an episode, although they were long, 16-hour days. This put the actors under tremendous stress, especially Gandolfini, who was in almost every scene. The production hit a speed bump on the fifth episode, “College,” co-written by Chase and James Manos Jr., in which Tony takes his high-school-age daughter, Meadow, on a college tour. The story was based on a trip Chase had taken with his own daughter. Gandolfini was having trouble learning his lines. “I had never done anything like that amount of memorization in my life,” he recalls. “I’m talking five, six, seven pages a night. David might have regretted giving me his home phone number, because I’d wake him up at 3:30 in the morning and say, ‘What the fuck, man?’ You’re fuckin’ killing me! I can’t do this. I’m gonna go crazy!” Like I had to do almost a one-page monologue in a phone booth. And being the calm person that I am—especially then—I couldn’t get it. I’d forget my lines. I took the phone, and I smashed it a couple times. After that, I broke the windows in the phone booth. CRACK! SMASH! BANG! And all I could hear was David laughing hysterically. And then I started laughing. And I said, ‘You know, I can’t memorize this shit.’ But you learn, you learn how to do it.”

Says Chase when I bring up the phone-booth story, “Some of that turmoil that’s inside of Jim, that pain and sadness, is what he uses to bring that guy to the screen. He’d complain, ‘These things I have to do [as Tony], I behave in such a terrible way.’ I’d say to him, ‘It says in the script, ‘He slammed the refrigerator door.’” It didn’t say, “He destroys the entire refrigerator!” You did that. This is what you decide to bring to it.”

Chase laughs, then continues. “The reason I was amused [when he destroyed the phone booth] is because I have these same tendencies as he does, which is I’m very infantile about temper tantrums with inanimate objects. Telephones and voice-mail menus, that sort of stuff drives me crazy.”

The real problem with “College” was HBO’s objection to the story line. In the course of the tour, Tony stumbles across a snitch who’s now in the witness-protection program and realizes he has to kill him. “That was a truly big flack,” Chase recalls. “We’d gone four episodes, and I thought, If this guy really is a mobster, on he’s gonna kill somebody.” Worried about Tony’s “relatability,” Albrecht told Chase, “You know, you’ve created one of the best characters in the past 20 years, and you’re gonna destroy him in one fell swoop.” Chase stuck to his guns, and when the first cut of the episode arrived at HBO, Albrecht was certain
at he was right, that the murder didn’t work. “The audience’ll hate this guy,” he told Chase. “You can’t do it.” Chase fought back: gotta tell you, in the universe he lives in, if doesn’t do this, the audience will hate him worse. He’s gotta uphold the code. If we’re really gonna believe this guy is a credible mobster, he’s gotta kill people. In real life, that’s all these people do.”

In the end, Chase and Albrecht compromised. Chase shot a couple of extra scenes in which the snitch deals drugs and, worse, hires someone to kill Tony, all of which put Tony’s actions in a better light. Nevertheless, Chase insisted not only that Tony kill the snitch but that he do it with his bare hands, garroting him, and that’s the way it was shot. Chase could be vindicated a year later when he and fans won Emmys for writing the episode.

Tonee! Tonee! HBO screened two episodes for the press before the start of the first season. The response was overwhelming. “When I saw the way people reacted at the screening, I was stunned,” Chase recalls. “They were clapping, cheering, laughing in all the right places. It was everything you could possibly dream of. When the reviews came out, all across the country, there was only one negative review. I thought, Wow, I’ve never seen that happen.”

The Sopranos premiered on January 10, 1999. Recalls Albrecht, “Nobody had ever paid attention to us before. Now Saturday Night Live was doing parodies of a first-season show on HBO! We were the focus of media attention, whether it was the five-o’clock news or The Tonight Show or The New York Times. Certainly, I’d never been involved with anything like that before.” The Gary Shandling show had been an object of cult adoration: The Sopranos was a phenomenon. Three million people had caught the remiree; soon each episode (shown several times a week) was drawing an aggregate 10-million-plus viewers—huge numbers for HBO. The most recent new episodes averaged 13.1 million viewers, after a peak of more than 18 million during season four.

Gandolfini and company became instant celebrities. The actor remembers going to a bar at Madison Square Garden with some of the cast. It was as if they were the Beatles. I walked in, there was a stampede,” he says. “The whole crowd started chanting Tonee! Tonee! My manager was in from L.A., and he was like, ‘Holy fuck!’ I said to him, ‘You better be nice to me or I’ll ask these guys to call you.’”

Van Zandt—who had originally auditioned for the part of Tony after his face popped out at Chase from the cover of an old Springsteen album—had gone out of his way to make himself unrecognizable on the show by gaining weight and replacing his signature bandanna with its opposite, a sleek pompadour. “After 25 years in the music business, I’d achieved a fairly notable level of celebrity,” he says. “But by the second show on this sort of you-have-to-find-it cable station, which only a couple of fight fans knew where it was. 7 out of 10 people who stopped me on the street were talking about The Sopranos: ‘Great new show.’ I’d be, ‘My mother didn’t recognize me—how the fuck did you?’ So I knew then, David’s hit a vein.”

Some fans were hard-pressed to distinguish the actors from their roles. “I was living in the meat-market district on the far West Side, below 14th Street,” Gandolfini remembers. “I heard this banging on the outside door and screaming. It was late, like after midnight. So I opened the door, and the guy turns white. All of a sudden I realize, Oh, fuck, he thinks I’m Tony. So that’s when I started to realize…”

Real wiseguys had circled around The Godfather, but the Sopranos team was careful to keep them at arm’s length, knowing that one thing could lead to another. Chase had some familiarity with the history of the Mob in New Jersey, but for research he preferred law-enforcement sources, inviting Mob experts to come in and talk to the writers. Robin Green and Mitch Burgess, whom Chase hired at the beginning of the first season, recall listening to a guy in the witness-protection program who had lectured at Quantico. “We used a lot of that shit,” says Green. “For instance, we learned how they would break an arm, laying the guy’s arm over the curb and then stomping.” Another thing the writers picked up from the experts was “the attitude of Mob guys toward cunnilingus”—negative—which Tony would use against his Uncle Junior (Dominic Chianese), with whom he was struggling for control of the family, when it emerged that the latter had a predilection for muff-diving.

Still, despite keeping a distance from the real thing, the Sopranos cast and crew couldn’t help knowing their real-life counterparts were out there, watching the show, and every once in a while the production’s seismographs would detect some rumbling. Once, Chase recounts, “a guy came into a bar where one of our actors was, and he just

SKETCHBOOK: INTELLIGENT DESIGN BY ANITA KUNZ
The Sopranos

sat there looking at him all night long. As the bar emptied out, the guy said to him. You know, I'm from Jersey. I want you to know you're making a lot of people unhappy out there. These people don't like your show and you should watch what the fuck you're doing.' And he left. Nothing ever happened. We never knew if he was connected or not.

Although there is now plenty of competition--The Wire, Deadwood, House, even--it's no exaggeration to say that The Sopranos is the best-written dramatic series in the history of television. "Every shot, every word, of The Sopranos is David in some way or another," says Konner. "Everything is farmed out, but everything comes back to him and then is shaped by him." Says another writer, Terence Winter, "I've been on the set. David calls in, 9:30 at night, he's out to dinner, and he knows exactly what scene we're about to shoot. And he'll say, 'Is the guy who's playing the cop there?' 'Yeah,' he's still got the beard he had at the audition? 'Yeah.' "Ask him to shave it. 'It's, like, amazing.' There's no improvising on the show--for one thing, there's no time for it. Chase and his writers insist that the actors speak their dialogue exactly as it's written, though, according to Winter, Gandolfini will occasionally query a line. "What's the difference," the actor might say, 'if I call him a 'fuckin' cocksucker' or a 'cock-suckin' fucker'? Is that really gonna change anything?" In mid-sentence, he'll add, "Well, yeah, it sounds better the first way. You just have to trust me," the writer would reply. There's a famous story about an actor who said to Chase what actors often say, "My character wouldn't say this." Chase responded, "Who says it's your character?"

Imperioli has written several episodes. "The thing that I take away as a writer, the whole key to David and the show's success, is detail. Nothing is left generic. When Paulie and Christopher were lost in the woods"--the famous "Pine Barrens" episode, in which Paulie flips out, thinking he's killed a Russian mobster, and ends up trying to bury him in a wintry forest--"we were already stuck in the snow. We were stranded, we were freezing, so what a great idea that Paulie lost his shoe. That one detail opened up this whole other world of comedy, desperation, trying to make a shoe, him wanting to steal my shoe--whatever." Studies of Sapiens.

Not everyone, apparently, appreciated Chase's level of control. "People were intimidated by David's brain," says Landress. On the set, he was known as "Master Cylinder," the arch-nemesis of Felix the Cat in the 1950s cartoon series for television. Master Cylinder is described on Wikipedia as "a disembodied brain contained within an electromechanical body." Draw your own conclusions.

Chase makes himself available to the actors if they have questions, although he doesn't always answer them. Once, recalls Lorraine Bracco, who plays Tony's therapist, Dr. Melfi, she asked Chase about a scene in which Melfi discusses a dream she's had with her own therapist. "I said, 'David, you gave me this huge dream--what does it mean?'" He said, 'Absolutely nothing.' But, David, you want me to play this scene, how can I?" 'Well, sometimes you dream and it means absolutely nothing,' 'I know, but I'm a psychiatrist--dreams mean things.' "Nope, this dream means absolutely nothing."'Okayaw!' So you climb out on the limb, and you end up hanging with one hand. It's not the normal way writers and actors work. It's the way he doesn't tie everything up in a bow after the 60 minutes. And no actor likes to be spoon-fed.

Unlike features, where writers are the butts of Polish jokes (you remember the one about the Polish actress who fucks the writer), television is a writer-driven medium, which, paradoxically, may be why Chase, during the first season, fired almost every writer on the show when his or her first draft came in. He explains, "We had writers from Iowa, California, you name it, and they just didn't seem to get this East Coast, schoolyard-bully thing, this level of verbal abuse. And savagery. It's called 'breaking balls,' and it's what guys in Jersey and New York do." Only Robin Green, Mitch Burgess, and Frank Renzulli were left standing. In the second year, they were joined by Winter. By the time his agent sent him a videotape of the pilot, Winter had already done a good deal of TV writing, for shows such as Xena: Warrior Princess. When he finally got into the writers' room, at Silvercup, he was impressed. "This wasn't handcuffed network TV, where you can never be yourself. It was very freeing, when you didn't have to edit yourself. This was absolutely right out of our brains onto the page. I couldn't believe this stuff was coming out of characters' mouths--and this is a television show."

Chase had little patience for learning on the job. Either you got it or you didn't. It took him two years to warm up to Winter. "It's almost like a war situation," the writer continues. "David doesn't want to get to know you that well, because you might be out of there very quickly. He used to say, 'I'm not running a writing school.' You better understand why Tony would or would not do something, and if he would, this is how he'd do it. You have to deliver. I'm exaggerating slightly, but you are only as good as your last script. If it doesn't come in right, you're gone." As Tim Van Patten, who has directed numerous Sopranos episodes, might say, "If David finds your Achilles' heel, he will exploit it, at war or play." Sirico, who had done serious jail time, took a step backward when he ran into Chase.

The writer's meetings were grueling, from 10 in the morning to 7 or 8 in the evening without much in the way of breaks as they "beat out the story." Says Winter, "David wanted to hear everything--every stupid dream you ever had, any dumb thing that ever happened to you as a kid, your ridiculous opinions about politics, life, women, friendship. There was nothing too horrible, too trivial, too stupid to make it into the show, because it's real life." Gandolfini calls the writers "vampires." He says, "You tell them shit about your life and then it shows up three episodes later." Continues Winter, "At one point, in the third year, we needed something really horrific to happen to Meadow and her roommate. And I said, 'Once I was on the subway and I saw a homeless woman who had a skirt made out of a garbage bag. As she got up, the skirt fell off, and she had the Daily News stuffed up the crack of her ass.' I thought, Of course, we'll never use that. David said, 'That's perfect.' I was like, Wow. There's no limits!"

Two Stupid Guineas Yelling at Each Other

Much of the material continued to come from Chase's own life, and not all of it from his childhood. He also drew on his experiences in Los Angeles. "It's amusing to me that there are two businesses which seem to be run by criminals: the Mob and Hollywood," he observes. "My heart goes out to mobsters before it goes out to those other guys, because at least mobsters confront you." Sometimes the Hollywood material was explicit--Christopher tries his hand at writing a movie script--and other times metaphoric. On one level. Tony and the other bosses are surrogates for Chase himself, the show-runner. For example, these words from Johnny Sack (Vincent Curatola), after he's taken over the New York family, sound like one from the heart: "All due respect, you got no fucking idea what it's like to be number one. Every decision you make affects every facet of every other fucking thing. It's too much to deal with almost. And in the end you're completely alone with it." Chase is so paranoid about leaking plot points, it's as if he's forced everyone connected with the show to take an oath of omena. Says Van Patten, "When I'm done reading a script, I will take the first 10 pages and rip them up into small bits, drop half into the bathroom garbage, and half into the kitchen garbage. Then I'll take the next 10 pages and rip them into small bits, drop half into the other bathroom garbage, and half into the incinerator in the hallway. I've been doing that for 10 years. My fingers would be killing me by the end of these things. But I'm terrified that someone would find it, and there'd be a leak traced back to me. My mother-in-law just gave me a paper shredder, but now it's too late."

Like many of his characters, Chase has
emper. In the grand tradition of Scorsese, Coppola, he can throw things in meetings, break phones. "God knows, my father was shit—we're not allowed to have a temper anymore!" exclaims Gandolfini, sounding very much like Tony hectoring Dr. Melfi. We're not allowed to get angry about things? There's something wrong with you 'cause you said your voice? When did that happen? me, David's truthful, he's clear. He tells you when something's wrong. When actors talk to me, ask, 'Am I doing O.K.? I'll say, believe me. If you weren't doing O.K., you'd know. I appreciate that. Occasionally we've had a start:ing conversation loudly. But after a second or two, we both laugh. Cause you know it just gotta be two stupid guinea pigs at each other.

Anger is a great motivator. "What's driving a show, and driving David, is that he doesn't like the world as he finds it," says Konner. He's taking out a lot of his frustrations by letting these characters act out without a superstructure, without a sense of responsibility, because he wants to—and to some extent we all do.

But, of course, the other side of the coin here, too. You can't sustain a marriage your teenage sweetheart for 40 years and raise a child without achieving a modicum of maturity. Acting out is not without cost, and on the show's most impulsive characters, save perhaps Paulie, struggle against it. It may screw around, but, as Gandolfini minds us, "If you look at every relationship he has had, he hasn't gotten away scot free in fuckin' anything. There's that Russian girl tried to kill herself. There's Gloria Trillo—the sexy Mercedes-Benz saleswoman played by Annabella Sciorra—"another cucking lunatic who wanted me to kill her. He Russian with the one leg? She tells me, "You're like a little baby." As interesting as is man's life is, he has paid a price." The Sopranos is precisely a battlefield between vilification and its discontents.

Year by year, defying the laws of television gravity, the show just got better. Very time it seemed as if there was no place to go, Chase and the other writers somehow powered themselves. They killed off major characters, first Big Pussy (Vincent Pastore) and later Adriana (Drea de Matteo), both of whom had been flipped by the F.B.I. (When Pg Pussy turned rat, his photograph reportedly came down in social clubs all over New Jersey and New York!) It sent the show's jeopardy index through the roof, signaling that no one was safe. And Chase kept adding weird and wonderful characters—John Heed's bent op in the first season; David Proval's Richie Aprile, a psycho who jumps out in a show with psychos; Svetlana (Alla Kliouka chaffer), the one-legged, chain-smoking, cussing Russian "caregiver"—and kept jutting the regulars in eye-popping scenes that left you blinking, wondering if you just saw what you thought you saw. Johnny Sack pulping one of Ralphie's crew, snarling. "Let me buy you a drink," and then pissing on him.

Christopher, seated on H, sitting on Adriana's dog and crushing it, or crossing himself before dropping Ralphie's severed head into a hole in the earth; Dr. Melfi raped in a parking garage; Gloria Trillo hitting Tony in the back of the head with a steak; Janice (Ailda Turturro) stealing Svetlana's prosthetic leg; Paulie pawing through Adriana's underwear drawer, sniffing the crotch of her panties; and on and on. Chase was having a ball, or as much of a ball as he allows himself to have. As Konner puts it, "It's tremendous power. I mean, my God, hundreds of people working in the service of something you thought up in your little brain."

As the story lines grew more complicated and the cast grew bigger (and some actors renegotiated their retirement), the show became more expensive to produce. The 8-day shooting schedule for each episode became 12 days, with some episodes reportedly taking nearly a month, putting the show somewhere between television and features. The cost per episode went up to an estimated $10 million plus.

The Sopranos became to HBO what Quentin Tarantino had been to Miramax, a magnet for talent, says Jeff Bewkes, who, on a shelf in his office, proudly displays the bowling-ball bag that once contained Ralphie's head. "It was so respected by the creative community that all kinds of people—writers, directors, and actors—wanted to work at HBO who previously had said, 'I only want to work in feature films.' We now had David Milch making Deadwood, Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg making Band of Brothers, and Hanks coming back to make John Adams," a seven-part mini-series set to appear in the first half of 2008. Adds Albrecht, "The Sopranos was the hammer that broke the glass ceiling for us."

The only problems were good problems, problems caused by success. In the middle of the third season, Ralphie beats his pregnant goomara (Ariel Kiley) to death behind the Bada Bing, where she works as a stripper. "Afterwards. I got stopped on Fifth Avenue by little old ladies who were like, "Oh my God, you were so bad to that woman," feeling my arms," recalls Pantoliano. "They were flirting with me, turned on that I was the guy who beat up this hooker. It was sick." (In a subsequent episode, when Tony kills Ralphie in the belief that he set a fire that incinerated a racehorse that Tony has come to love, Chase wouldn't tell Pantoliano if Ralphie had set the fire or not. Pantoliano decided to play the scene as if he hadn't, as if he were innocent.)

Someone who wasn't turned on was NBC's then president. Bob Wright, who sent out tapes of the beating to industry insiders at the end of April 2001, with a letter that read, in part, "I want you to help think about an issue that I believe is having a major impact on our business—the nature of the content in HBO's The Sopranos... It is a show which we could not air on NBC because of the violence, language and nudity."

It was unclear what precisely Wright was getting at, but to Chase, the general intent seemed evident. "It was an attack," he says. "There was a lot of envy that we had freedom, while they were crippl ed by standards and practices. But it's not like the whole reason the show was a success is that people could say 'fuck' and shoot somebody in the head. Everything has to be appropriate to some version of reality. If I was doing a series about the family, or any of these faith-based church groups, I wouldn't have people saying 'fuck', 'shit', shooting each other in the head, or dancing around with their titties hanging out. But the fact is, for whatever reason, most people in America today use profanity in their daily discourse. So when I watch TV and it isn't there, it doesn't seem expressive of the way people really speak." Chase felt that Wright was virtually inviting the F.C.C. to censor the show. But Chase also understood that, in its own way, it was a compliment. He says, "It made me happy."

Recalls Bewkes, "I thought about calling [Wright], and then I thought, No, what am I going to say? He hung himself. Isn't there an old saying, Don't shoot a guy who's killing himself?"

H as success changed Chase? The director William Friedkin once said to me, apropos of losing touch with one's audience, "The day you take your first tennis lesson, your career is over." I mention this to Chase.

"I don't play tennis," Chase responds. "There's a lot of golf in the show."

"I don't play golf," says Konner. "He doesn't play anything. He's not a happy-go-lucky guy. He wasn't a happy-go-lucky guy before, and he's not a happy-go-lucky guy now. He's a troubled guy. He hasn't changed that much, because he still feels that The Sopranos is not the movies, it's not the top of the game. And like good artists, he tends to de-value what he does." Adds Van Zandt, "If enjoying success is fucking a bunch of beautiful starlets, developing a cocaine habit, opening a couple of restaurants, buying a golf course—in that sense, he's not handling success very well." Chase did buy a chateau in France, but Van Zandt isn't impressed. "Is buying a house in the middle of the fucking woods, in the middle of nowhere, enjoying success? You tell me."

HBO, on the other hand, has had little difficulty enjoying the show's success. The rain of Emmys and the river of money it has generated mean that HBO has always been anxious for Chase to renew. (HBO will not reveal any financial figures regarding The Sopranos, save for saying the show is worth}
the characters—they are fairly provincial and limited. There's nothing they're really trying to accomplish, except to stay alive and keep earning. There's a lot of socializing and collection of envelopes. But they don't travel that much, they don't read that much, and they stay, basically, in their neighborhood. We don't solve a crime every week; perform an operation. And so it's hard to take them new places without just repeating yourself. It was over, as far as I was concerned. The impulse to leave and try something new had gotten stronger than the impulse to harvest the next crop of tomatoes."

Chase discussed continuing the show with some of the key players, including Gandolfi. "He asked me if I wanted to do another year," recalls the actor. "I said, 'If you think you have something to say. You know, I don't want it to be about: this week Tony buys a couch.' But HBO wasn't ready to give up. The network had been there before. Says Bewkes. "I always said to him, Are you sure that you're thinking straight about this? Because you've already got a beautiful canvas for yourself in terms of the story, the setup, the characters, the actors. In effect, you're already making six Sopranos films a year. You'd be lucky to make a theatrical film once a year, getting all the bullshit that goes into that."

Finally, in January of 2005, Chase called an emergency meeting of his writers—Winter, Green, and Burgess—as well as his wife, Denise, on a Sunday at Silvercup, to sound them out. "There was a lot of inner conflict in all of us," says Green. "And David was the one that voiced it: 'Is this a good idea to go on?' He loved the show and didn't want to sell it out, but there was the huge payday. It's very hard to resist. And then, what are you gonna do that's better than this? But, also, wanting to get out so you could do the movies you'd always wanted to do."

Brad Grey was now chairman and C.E.O. of Paramount Pictures, while retaining a significant interest in The Sopranos; he stood to benefit no matter what Chase decided. "He and I have had long discussions about the right time for him to get into the film business." Grey says. "He knows that he has an open invitation to make pictures here with me, and I think that's what will happen in time. I really believe that he'll be in the movie business."

Chase eventually decided to do one more season, a sixth, but once he got into the writing, there was so much material that one more season effectively turned into two. Chase is nothing if not a contrarian, and the season opened with a radical idea: Uncle Junior, on the brink of senility, shoots Tony, who slips into a coma and over a three-episode arc imagines himself in a different life, as a solar-heating-systems salesperson from Arizona. It grew out of an idea of Terence Winter's, namely, what would have happened to Tony if he had not followed his father into the family business, but it merely seemed to prove Albrecht's point: Tony is an Everyman, and the Mafia is "the tickle for why you watched."

Without it, Sopranos fans, or at least some of them, crumbled that the show was losing steam. But whatever your opinion of the parallel-universe gambit, the rest of the season—including the outing of gay mobster Vito Spatafore (Joseph Gannascoli), the simmering trouble between Tony and Phil Leotardo (Frank Vincent) of the New York family, and Christopher's adventures trying to attack Ben Kingsley to a script and his assault on Lauren Bacall (who, playing herself, was thrilled to say "fuck" on camera)—was priceless.

Wherever the final nine episodes leave Tony, it seems that in true Sopranos fashion Chase won't have tied up all loose ends. "I tried to talk him into doing more [episodes] just a couple of months ago," says Albrecht. "I looked at the story, and I thought I saw where I could extend it. I said, What about we do this? What about we do that? He thought about it for a minute. Maybe if I'd gone to him earlier [I could have convinced him], but he said, 'No—this is it.'" Albrecht sighs. "Now people go, 'What's next? Where's the next Sopranos? There is no next Sopranos.'"

So, finally, after some 35 years of trying, Chase will get his shot at directing a feature—thanks to The Sopranos, the greatest calling-card film in the history of motion pictures. He has plenty of unproduced scripts in his drawer; if he knows whether his first film will be based on one of those or something new, he's not saying. But be careful what you wish for. The irony is that, in the course of those 35 years, features, both studio and "independent," have become more and more problematic. Even this past year's mainstream attempts at serious filmmaking (The Good Shepherd, Blood Diamond, Letters from Iwo Jima) are distended to the point of exhaustion, as if length itself has become the measure of quality, as if the filmmakers have lost confidence in their gifts and are falling back on relentless accretion of screen time to achieve what they have failed to do by other means. Critic Manci Farber once famously championed "termite art" against "white-elephant art." In today's Hollywood, we have "tapeworm art." Television, on the other hand, has gotten progressively better—in large measure thanks to Chase himself. He will be entering an industry in crisis, aesthetic, if not commercial, which may be a good thing—fewer hard acts for him to follow—and if we're lucky, he will be able to do for features what he did for television. But that's a crushing burden to shoulder, too much by far to wish on anyone. Better to hope he makes a feature as good as any of the 86 episodes of The Sopranos. ☛
FAIRGROUND

Around the World, One Party at a Time

APRIL 2007

COUTURE CHIC PAGE 288
Fashion's international inner circle gathers for an intimate dinner.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY Astrid Muñoz.

DINING ARMANI PAGE 289
Roberta Armani and friends celebrate Fashion Week with a private dinner.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY James King.

BAFTA BASH PAGE 290
London society toasts a year in film
PHOTOGRAPHED BY Astrid Muñoz and Dafydd Jones.
Friends toast Diane von Furstenberg and Michael Roberts with a swanky dinner party at Caviar Kaspia.

**What**

*PARIS* FASHION FAVORITES

**When**


**Who**

François-Marie Banier, Bob Colacello, Didier Grumbach, Katie Holmes, Cathy Horyn, Candy Pratts Price, Charlotte Rampling, L’Wren Scott, and others.
ELEMEENTS OF STYLE

What
Roberta Armani and guests enjoy a private dinner at the Emporio Armani Caffé during Paris couture week.

When

Who
Maria Buccellati, Brooke de Ocampo, Zani Gugelmann, Karen Groos, Princess Mafalda von Hessen, the Countess of Mornington, and others.

POSH PARTYING

What
Charles Finch and Chanel co-host the pre-BAFTA-awards soirée at Annabel’s.

When

Who
Naomi Watts, Dylan Jones, Cassian Elwes, Eric Fellner, Dan Macmillan, Alan Yentob, and more.
HELEN THOMAS
With acuity and unmistakable gumption, Helen Thomas has covered the White House since John F. Kennedy, a tour de force in the world of political reporting. Here, the journalist, who has stepped up to challenge President Bush on more than one occasion, reflects on silence, the piano, and Sir Thomas More.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue? Silence—when words were needed.

On what occasion do you lie? I prefer “No comment.” It’s not necessary to lie.

Which living person do you most despise? Dislike, not despise. Those with a lack of compassion for their fellow man and the downtrodden.

What is your greatest regret? Not studying enough, not reading enough.

What or who is the greatest love of your life? All the great and inspired people who crossed my path.

When and where were you happiest? When I started covering history every day at the White House.

Which talent would you most like to have? I’d like to play piano, and find great happiness in listening to music.

What is your current state of mind? Unhappy with the invasion of Iraq.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? I’d be a better reporter.

What do you consider your greatest achievement? Staying alive and alert.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be? A deeper, more interesting, thinking person.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be? U.S. president.

What is your most treasured possession? Good memories, long friendships, and beloved music.

Where would you like to live? Washington, D.C.

What is your most marked characteristic? Directness. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

What do you most value in your friends? Compassion and good conversation.

Who are your favorite writers? Dickens, Tolstoy, and Hemingway.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction? A Man for All Seasons’ Sir Thomas More and Andrei Bolkonsky of War and Peace.

Who are your heroes in real life? Ramsey Clark, Michael Ratner, Bill Moyers, Walter Cronkite, and Sam Donaldson.

What is it that you most dislike? A president lying the people into war.

How would you like to die? With my boots on.

What is your motto? “Know when you are happy. Know yourself. Know your enemy. Ask not for whom the bell tolls.”
As I See It, #1 in a photographic series by Erwin Olaf.

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