

Cubby Missalette #16

deth★ten -(by Jeremy Clark)

The newest in
cosmetic reality
television...



CONFESSIOIAL
NAME: BRENDA LINA
CAREER: SUPERMODEL
AGE: 22
STATUS: FOUR BOYFRIENDS AND A CAT, MAYBE INFLUENZA
I am just 100 beautiful! It's so horrible, you can't imagine! People just stare & gawk at my perfect body... Like, no one takes me seriously, or something.

AFTER THREE LONG MONTHS OF LATE NIGHT FOOD BINGES, LOUNGING ON THE LAZ-E-BOY, AND SILLY-PUTY DEMOLITION SURGERY, BRENDA LINA IS FINALLY READY TO BE REVEALED!

WHEN THE CURTAINS ARE OPENED, LOOK INTO THE MIRROR...
I'm ready

HOLY *?!#! I'm HIDEOUS! this is the BEST day of my life! Magnifico, Bravo!

BEFORE

AFTER

TUNE IN NEXT WEEK TO SEE WHICH LUCKY CONTESTANT WILL GET THE CARBS, THE CALLOLITE™ & THE GRAND PRIZE! TO BE NAMED *The Duck*

From: Ashley2517 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:18 pm

Omg! What an idiot. She said "Karma a b**ch". Karma is: what comes around goes around. OH god. . . the world is coming to an end! Toodles!

From: thefog13 To: aLi_LiCiOuS3 unread7/22/2003 10:19 pm

People that don't know what karma is, are kids.. Kids today don't know shjt.. :P

From: ParadiseFa3 To: jcaulkins unread 7/22/2003 10:20 pm

I thought I heard Kermit.

From: maggie0321 To: jaimleigh21 7/22/2003 10:20 pm

I TOTALLY AGREE WITH YOU. LOL

From: MeatheadZack To: Dreambebe253 7/22/2003 10:21 pm

She said "Kyles moms a Bi*** shes a big fat Bi*** shes the biggest Bi*** in the whole wide world" lol

From: NEEWEE To: babykisses3 7/22/2003 10:21 pm

EXACTLY!!!

From: LilBigTeeth To: sassyNsauy 7/22/2003 10:25 pm

Yes, but when somebody is beaten over the head with the right answer, it's expected that they will eventually catch on, no?

From: simzy1 To: 23flavors 7/22/2003 10:25 pm

whats a carma/karma?

From: Crazy4Beau To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:26 pm

She said Kamha it's not a name!

From: LilBigTeeth To: simzy1 7/22/2003 10:26 pm

You can't be serious

From: ava_adore To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:28 pm

PEOPLE! She wouldn't say Tara is a bltch because she was ready to leave. I think this show should be rated NC-17 so there wouldn't be so many stupid questions on the board. "Who's Karma" "No, she said Tara." Erm, when did "Tara" start with a "K" or "C" sound?

From: LilBigTeeth To: simzy1 unread 7/22/2003 10:28 pm

why don't you read about fifty of the previous posts? you'll get the idea

From: DjBabyLove To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:29 pm

She said karma was a b**** meaning fate and destiny.

From: cheerball79 To: NEEWEE 7/22/2003 10:30 pm

If one mroe person asks who is Karma or what is a karma or who/what is carmen..she said tara..blah blah I'm gonan scream...you people are so dumb. Like that one person said...read the past 50 entries...hello people...

From: vanillakitty To: HottForBeau unread7/22/2003 10:41 pm

Thanks for clearing that up for some folks!! Finally, someone with a brain, hasnt anyone heard of KARMA? It isnt a person. For Gods sake, geeeez. I have closed caption tv and it was even written on the screen "KARMA IS A BI*CH" For those of you who dont have a clue what Karma is, please buy a dictionary!!

From: NaNcY_07 To: lilbigfoot17 unread 7/22/2003 10:42 pm

she actually said carmen. i was wonderin who that is.

From: LiLMamma10 To: Nikki unread 7/22/2003 10:45 pm

Amanda&Beau should have smacked the sh*t outta Tara for making her leave the show.....Tara ain't nothing but a chicken-head!!!

From: NEEWEE To: Angie0515 unread 7/22/2003 10:47 pm

SHE DIDN'T CALL CHARLA A BI*CH!!!! FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME SHE SAID KARMA ! KARMA KARMA KARMA "WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND"

From: zacknamy4eva To: NEEWEE 7/22/2003 10:52 pm

Yes she said Karma, because she was pissed about Toni and Amy and Kristin trying to get her off, so she said Karma is a B*tch, not Charla, Charla was nice to her!lol!Go rewatch the show and any one who doesn't believe me go back and listen carefully!

From: Bab3_Angel To: baby_k12 unread 7/22/2003 10:53 pm

WHO DA HELL IZ KARMA!!!!!!!!!!!!!! i thought she said tara or suxx.....lol...or carmen..but der wuz no carmen..so yeah...but who iz karma!!!!

From: NEEWEE To: zacknamy4eva 7/22/2003 10:54 pm

I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT CHARLA! I'VE BEEN SAYING KARMA FOR 4 MESSAGES NOW

From: cheerball79 To: clickRdie unread 7/22/2003 10:56 pm

yeah you're dumb for syaing that..how old are you? all i ahve to say is..IMMATURE!

From: iLuvBeau537 To: aLi_LiCiOuS3 7/22/2003 10:58 pm

K A R M A ~ thats what she said! it doesnt even sound like charla!

From: cheerball79 To: Bab3_Angel 7/22/2003 10:58 pm

KARMA IS NOT A PERSON....stupid people..stop asking...read the previous posts...

From: NEEWEE To: MrNiceGuy20 7/22/2003 11:11 pm

are you for real? ☐

33 Cops

Commando-style arrests on the East Coast.

From: SexySarah89 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:06 pm

Amanda called Charla a b****.

From: Nikki (chiara122789) To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:06 pm

who carmin anyways,?

From: JoyJoy222 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:06 pm

You guys are stupid it's Karma there is no Carmen!

From: mollygirl6 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:06 pm

she said KARMA'S a b*tch. . . you know. . . karma and dogma. what goes around comes around. . .

From: luvstateach To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:07 pm

She said carma is a b**ch. . . like what goes around comes around. . . so Toni, Kristen, and Amy would get theirs.

From: tara_is_hot To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:07 pm

Carma= what goes around comes around so she said carma is a bltch

From: sweetT26 To: lilbigfoot17 7/22/2003 10:08 pm

Who cares

From: chiara122789 To: HottForBeau 7/22/2003 10:08 pm

i think it is a good thing she gone.I was crying when i saw beau cry,and the commercial for next epidsode,u saw TARA?!she was all on him.someI should smack the livin hell outta her

From: Belle336 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:08 pm

she said that karma, like guilt, was a bi****.

From: deezee4577 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:09 pm

Amanda said "Karma" is a b*tch!

From: jaimeleigh21 To: BAH4E 7/22/2003 10:09 pm

haha. . . some people are just so funny

From: monkeii To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:09 pm

she sed Carmen. . .

From: sweetT26 To: Nikki unread 7/22/2003 10:10 pm

Most definetly!! She is a hoochie

From: Allysafaith To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:11 pm

When Amanda left she was saying that she knows that Toni, kristin, and Ami wanted her to go and she said its okay because KARAMA is a Bi****! She didnt say any of the girls were. Just KARMA

From: aLi_LiCiOuS3 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:11 pm

she said KARMA!! sheesh.. itwas no one its like the way u act or whateva i dunno.. lol

From: KEITH_LOVER To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:11 pm

The show has been over for 10min and your trippin already

From: angelaB143 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:11 pm

i thought she said tara but whos karma

From: me00070 To: lilbigfoot17 7/22/2003 10:11 pm

I just started watching the show tonight - and I believe she said Karma is a b--ch- I think she would be refering to her destiny unless there was someone on the show named Karma - dah!

From: cheerball79 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:12 pm

Yeah some people are funny. . . but these people who think she said 'carmen' are just dumb. . . hello? Is there a carmen on the show? NO!! Think people. . . think.

From: aLi_LiCiOuS3 To: me00070 7/22/2003 10:13 pm

wow some ppl r soo stupid lol

From: LilBigTeeth To: chiara122789 7/22/2003 10:13 pm

"WHO'S carma"? lol. . . you're dumb

From: bethangel70 To: BAH4E 7/22/2003 10:13 pm

karma not a who it what goes around comes around type of thing -- hugs, beth

From: Starla1969 To: lilbigfoot17 unread 7/22/2003 10:13 pm

Karma is not a who it is a what. It is a theory that for every action you make you get an effect.Good or bad.

From: Brazil_Gal To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:14 pm

I think she said: Karma is a biatch

From: LilBigTeeth To: Brazil_Gal 7/22/2003 10:14 pm

wow, aren't you perceptive

From: clickRdie To: lilbigfoot17 7/22/2003 10:15 pm

Have you never heard of Karma? It's not a person you idiot!

From: pooh1100 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:15 pm

amanda called tara a b because the original plan was to keep amanda on the show but tara turned her back on her because she want's baue

From: Hotts4Beau To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:15 pm

no she said that karma was a bi****. . . like the spiritual element, not anyone in particular

From: sassyNsaucy To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:17 pm

Yep she did Say Carmen! She said there was no hard feelins she was ready to go home yet she is acting all cold and harsh calling people B*tches. . . .um ok! love yas, SassyNSaucy

From: LilBigTeeth To: Hotts4Beau 7/22/2003 10:17 pm

SHE SAID KARMA KARMA KARMA KARMA DAMMIT KARMA KARMA KARMA!!!! GOOD GRIEF! THERE MUST BE A PLETHORA OF FREE LABOTOMY CLINICS AROUND THE COUNTRY!!!!

WELCOME TO THE TELEVISION ISSUE OF THE Missallette, which will prove almost as pleasurable and rewarding as watching TV itself. In it you'll find pathetic pros and ignorant cons about thatmagic box of light and love, a *Paradise Hotel* forum thread gone linguistically awry, formative crushes on TV's pixilated images, and much more.

At first I thought of trying to explain why people lie so often about what they truly like to watch, or how television might exist as a common connection between race, class, gender, and attractive and ugly viewers; but only people who prefer to read blather on about that kind of aimless bullshit, so I won't.

But I just *love* TV. (And what I currently cherish more than food and shelter these days is NBC's *Starting Over*, a show focusing on the lives of seven women attempting to take control of their inoperably fucked up lives by way of hyper-encouraging life coaches. Created by the makers of the landmark *Real World* series, the show takes the viewer through the exotic briar patch of the female psyche in ways that soap operas, talk shows, and douche commercials never could. Plus, they house the lunatic ladies inside one gorgeous mansion, so they end up looking like gloomy princesses. It's the future of television and storytelling, folks. Get used to it.) So, like a useless trust-fund adult pining away for their surrogate-mother nanny, I wistfully tip my wide-brimmed hat to my third parent, TV, for doing such a bang up job in raising me. Thanks.

Enjoy.

—Brock ☐



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Dallas and Grandma

from *Jol's New York Minutes*,
Cubby.net, published November 2003

I've been watching *Dallas* on Soapnet. They're showing back-to-back episodes all week leading up to Friday's airing of the episode in which J.R. gets shot. I am being reminded of my childhood obsession with *Dallas* and considering its effect on my impressionable young brain.

Disturbingly, I wanted to be J.R. back then. It's hard to imagine wanting to be anyone else on the show. J.R. is the one who makes things happen. Everyone else just reacts to or schemes against him. He is the center of the *Dallas* universe, and as an only child, I was learning to be the center of my little universe, so J.R. and I clicked.

Watching it yesterday, I found my sympathies switching over to Sue Ellen. This no doubt has to do with my gayification. As a child, I would never have allowed myself to identify with a female character, but now, with my gender programming thoroughly deconstructed and its matrix disabled, I am free to do so.

Sue Ellen was the focal point of last night's episode, as J.R. schemed to have her put away in a sanatorium, where she's apparently been before on account of her drinking. The scheme: make it look like Sue Ellen is drinking again. The scheme works; over and over again, the other characters ask each other the episode's favorite refrain, "Do you think Sue Ellen's been drinkin'?" One perfect shot included the whole family—except for Sue Ellen—all standing around in the living room with cocktails in hand, fretting over Sue Ellen's suspected tumble from the wagon.

Sometimes they confront her: "Sue Ellen, you been drinkin' again?"

There's a gay word that fits Sue Ellen perfectly: Fierce. Sue Ellen is fierce. From her classic-film-goddess looks to her lioness-like maternal protectiveness and occasional hysterical rampages, she's a

delight. And she's the quintessential survivor, battling her psychologically abusive husband and the bottle, never failing, at least in the early episodes, to look great. These traits, I think, mark her as the gay-icon character, the Paul Lynde tragically trapped in the center square, slowly drowning the self in liquor and sex quips.

When I first watched *Dallas*, it was at my grandma's house. My grandfather had died, and my grandma was lonely and frightened in her big house. She had panic alarms in every room and even kept a .38 in her nightstand. So at some point it was determined in my family that I would spend the night with her on Fridays to keep her company.

I loved my Friday nights with grandma. I would go to grandma's work on Friday after school and watch her wheel and deal, chain-smoking as she balled out a never-ending succession of sweaty, greasy-looking girls, the drivers of grandma's fleet of mobile catering trucks—those aluminum-sided ice-loaded lunch pails with wheels, transporting packaged snacks, and sandwiches all around Fresno to its various construction sites.

I remember grandma sitting in that smoky little wood-paneled office, writing in ledgers, punching a calculator, counting stacks of cash and bundles of change, and smoking, always smoking, those Carlton cigarettes, whose motto, "Carlton is lowest," referring to the cigarettes' tar content, seemed like a guarantee on grandma's immortality.

The truck-driver girls used to shake with fear during their audiences with her; if she was mad she would swear them up and down. and wandering



She was J.R., the center of her universe both at home and at work, and yet at the same time she was Miss Ellie, the soft matriarch.

suffering and a protest against real suffering. Television is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

The abolition of TV as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions. The criticism of television is, therefore, in embryo, the criticism of that vale of tears of which TV is the halo.

Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation, but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the

living flower. The criticism of TV disillusioned man, so that he will thin, act, and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true Sun. Television is only the illusory Sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself.

It is, therefore, the task of history, once the other-world of truth has vanished, to establish the truth of this world. It is the immediate task of philosophy, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its unholy forms once the holy form of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus, the criticism of Reality.



Who is Karma?

And why is she such a bitch?
An excerpt from the geniuses posting
over at the *Paradise Hotel* Forums

From: homeboy1773 To: ALL 7/22/2003 9:59 pm

Who did Amanda call a bi*tch when she was kicked off?? It sounded like she said Carmin?!!!

From: baby_k12 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:00 pm

she said karma's a b_tch

From: lilbigfoot17 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:01 pm

I'm not sure I couldn't hear myself who she said. . . .I thought she said charla though. . . .

From: RoxyHottie87 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:02 pm

she said Karma's a b*tch, not carmin!

From: nancym72 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:02 pm

I agree. She did say Carmen. Who is that?

From: younglef To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:02 pm

dude she said Karma is a bi*tch

From: lilbigfoot17 To: younglef 7/22/2003 10:03 pm

Who is carma?

From: greeneyes528 To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:03 pm

she said karma

From: HottForBeau To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:04 pm

I just gotta say i am so happy she is gone, and she didn't call any of the girl a bltch, she said karma's a bltch.

From: gorgeous_kat To: jaimeligh21 7/22/2003 10:04 pm

yah!! lol. . . SHE SAID KARMA!!! duh. . . she didn't say anybodys name!

From: cecilysmith To: lilbigfoot17 7/22/2003 10:04 pm

people, clean out your ears. . . she said KARMA!!! you know, what comes around & bites you in the butt for your own crappy behavior!

From: annieshell To: lilbigfoot17 7/22/2003 10:04 pm

Karma is "what comes back to you in the future". It's what you make of your own future.

From: shelestat To: homeboy1773 7/22/2003 10:05 pm

she said it would happen to each of them to (other women getting kicked off) then said karma's a b*****(u know what goes around comes around)

From: leojewels To: BAH4E 7/22/2003 10:05 pm

karma means your fate or destiny!!!!!!!!!!!! look it up in the dictionary

An insect bugs a picnicker; a woman scales the heights of fashion with her reptile earrings.

Television is the Opiate of the Masses

Selections from Contribution of the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right by Karl Marx, Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, February, 1844

REVISED BY FLY MOLO RAMIREZ IN APRIL 2004

For America, the criticism of television has been largely completed, and the criticism of television is the prerequisite of all criticism.

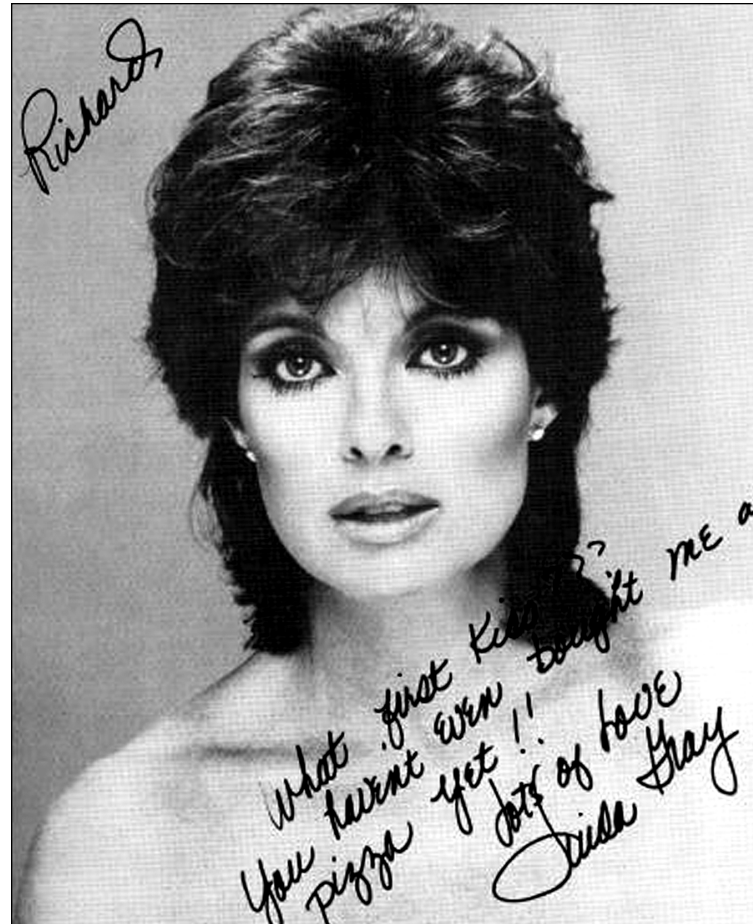
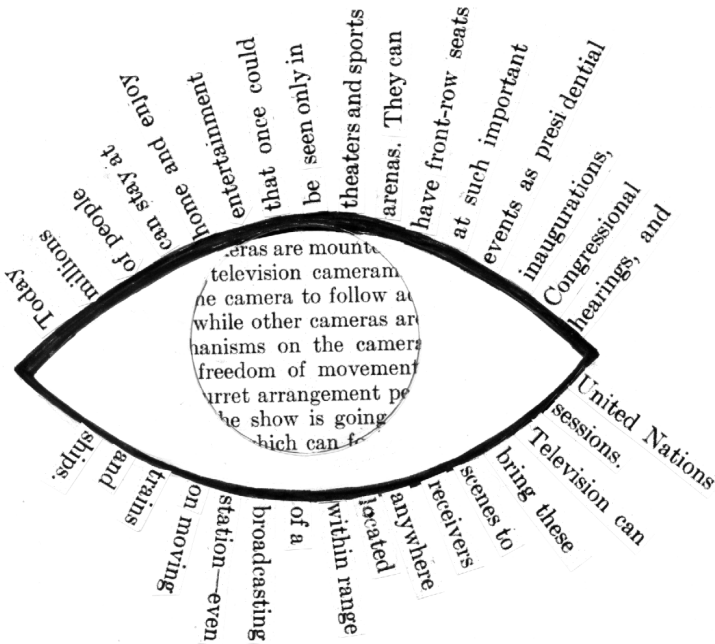
The profane existence of error is compromised as soon as its heavenly oratio pro aris et focis, ("speech of the altars and hearths") has been refuted. Man, who has found only the reflection of himself in the fantastic reality of the tube, where he sought a supernatural being, will no longer be

tempted to find the mere appearance of himself, a non-human being ("Unmensch"), where he seeks and must seek his true reality.

The foundation of Kill Your Television™ criticism is this: Man makes television, television does not make man. Television is indeed man's self-consciousness and self-awareness so long as he has not found himself or has already lost himself again. But man is no abstract being squatting outside the

world. Man is the world of man – state, society. This state and this society produce television, which is an inverted consciousness of the world, because they are an inverted world. Television is the general theory of this world, it's encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual point d'honneur, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, and its universal basis of consolation and justification. It is the fantastic realization of the human essence since the human essence has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against television is therefore, indirectly the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is television.

Televised suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real



the car with the Carltons. I remember not even asking for a drink of water when I was thirsty. I always waited, praying to myself that she would offer me food or drink.

Somehow, the experience of seeing grandma at work and watching *Dallas* with her were perfectly complementary. She was J.R., the center of her universe both at home and at work, and yet at the same time she was Miss Ellie, the soft matriarch.

That's a side I think only I got to witness, the softness and sensitivity. I don't think even her children saw that side of her. With them she was more like Sue Ellen, the fierce lionness.

But she was very gentle with me, and I loved those Friday nights, spending quiet time with her in front of the television and then going to sleep with her.

I worried sometimes that she would die then and there and that I would be in bed with a dead person.

On Saturday morning, she would always sleep very late, and I would-

wake up early as I was conditioned by school to do, and I would sit in the kitchen, so hungry, and watch her little black-and-white TV, and there would never be anything on. And when she'd finally wake up I'd be starving, and I'd have to wait for her to hack violently for an hour as she calmed herself with her first coffee and cigarettes, gradually easing her body into its steady flow of toxins. And then she would get her bearings and cook me poached eggs on toast, which I loved, or, if she were feeling less well, Corn Flakes with sugar, which I loved equally well. ["Fuck yeah."—bk]

Watching *Dallas* and watching grandma, I formed my first impressions of the world. My understanding of people has evolved a lot since then, and my favorite part of *Dallas* now is how gay-friendly it is ... and how it reminds me of Grandma. ☐

amongst the trucks outside, I would listen to them as they would curse her out in the sticky hot parking lot, gathered around their trucks, icing them, hosing them down. But it wasn't all yelling and anger in grandma's office; grandma had her friends. She seemed to give everyone a fair shake and become extraordinarily attached to the new girls and the consistent top performers and the veterans. And with them there were bawdy jokes and loud laughs and terrifying oaths uttered for comic effect. She never cursed when she was alone with me, though, and her explosiveness was never aimed at me. But I understood her explosive potentiality and my personality never so much as flickered in her presence. I remember many a silent car ride, grandma listening to classic country and hot-boxing

wake up early as I was conditioned by school to do, and I would sit in the kitchen, so hungry, and watch her little black-and-white TV, and there would never be anything on. And when she'd finally wake up I'd be starving, and I'd have to wait for her to hack violently for an hour as she calmed herself with her first coffee and cigarettes, gradually easing her body into its steady flow of toxins. And then she would get her bearings and cook me poached eggs on toast, which I loved, or, if she were feeling less well, Corn Flakes with sugar, which I loved equally well. ["Fuck yeah."—bk]

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A Few Facts About Reality Television

Having worked on a number of reality shows, I thought I'd enlighten you with some interesting facts that I've gathered over the years.

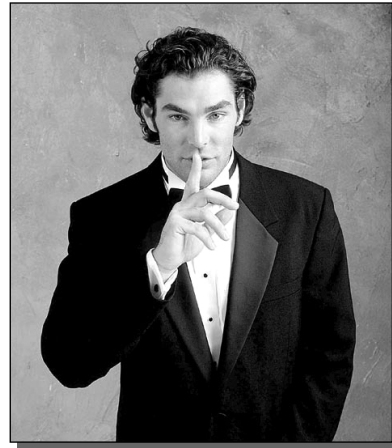
BY RHACHEL SHAW

1 Everything looks better on television Think your apartment would look a million times better if you could get on one of those home makeover shows? Think again. Being in the art department I can tell you right now that not being professional remodelers we use any means necessary to make things "camera ready." Spray glue, staples and duct tape are some of our best friends. Recovering your pool table with gold lame contact paper may sound like a good idea, until the glue gets old and that shit starts to bubble up like the insides of a

homeless junky's crack spoon. And speaking of crack spoons, some people are really photogenic. Somehow the camera hides their puffy eyes, their lack of hair, or their facial pock marks. I have seen proof of this people: Sally Jessie Raphael in person is not a pretty sight.

2 It's really boring Thank God they don't show reality shows in real time. Without TVs or radios to entertain, things start to get a bit slow. There is a lot of down time between events and games. Pretty much all there is to do is talk to the other people on the show with you. People just run out of shit to say. Although, on the other hand, boredom leads to drinking, which usually leads to trouble, which leads to good TV. I guess you can't have one without the other.

3 Repetition This is one I truly don't understand. You would think that if you were trying to make a hit TV show, that you would want to see what others were doing so you could copy/ avoid copying.



This is an actual conversation I had with a producer before the start of a show:

Producer: Can you get us one of those coin-operated genies? We want to give them their instructions for the day from it.

Me: Yeah I could but we just did that on _____.

Producer: You did?

Me: Yup.

Producer: OK, never mind then. Well, we've got some other fun stuffed planned.

Me: Like what?

Producer: We're thinking about setting a rat loose in the house!!

Me: Uh, yeah. That happened on _____ already.

Producer: You guys set a rat loose in the house?

Me: No, it was just there, but it took up twenty minutes of the entire episode.

Producer: Oh, never mind then.

Me: Right

4 Being on a reality show is like being in prison

The obvious simile is that you're always being

just got back from a Pabst Blue Ribbon binge with the boys. As he stares into the mirror he can't believe his eyes. There is flab on the ab! He knows his contract with his record label specifically states, "No flab on the ab, Kid, or you're history." What will Pamela think? Kid's not a kid no more. He's in his 30s and his metabolism is slowing down. So Kid disappears and a week later turns up in a hidden room in a mansion, the victim of a Pabst Blue Ribbon overdose – the first case in history!

And finally our cameras find a teetering figure on the edge of the Golden Gate Bridge ready to jump. "Don't do it, Hoot! Your new CD isn't that bad—I even heard a new chord change!" Hoot turns and yells, "It sucks, and I know it sucks!" Then Hoot turns back and leaps: Hoot, Hoot, Hoot! "Farewell

ole mediocre world." As Hootie spirals downward, a hungry shark moves in for an early dinner. Chomp, chomp, chomp! No more golf videos.

So, in closing, my intention is not to mock the tragedy of suicide, but to mock the horrible music industry and its sell-out to the quickest buck and to society's most primal instincts, and the way the music industry is able to so easily press the sex-violence-ego, cliché, easy-to-grasp, and non-controversial buttons that keep the masses sleeping and conforming. I leave you with a nice little ditty you can hum on your way to work, chasing that ever elusive dollar (remember the *Nevermind* CD cover?), sung to Disney's "It's a Small World."

It's a fascist world after all...

It's a fascist world after all... □



The Mediocre Rule

BY CRAIG KESTER

OF TORN MEMORY/GO GO GALAXION (HIS BANDS, FOLKS)

Still shocked and upset by Elliott Smith's suicide (or was it?), I wondered why. Ian Curtis, Kurt Cobain, and now Elliott Smith – the best from each generation – CIA conspiracy? Perhaps. I'm also being selfish in that I will miss Elliott Smith. Instead we're left with one less voice of authenticity (and one who actually had record label support) and with the giant mediocre glut of shitty, cliché, sex-violence-driven, mass audio hypnotism.

Author John Trevanian wrote over 20 years ago, "The mediocre rule," and "the masses are the final tyrants." Mediocre music for mediocre people for a mediocre president, etc. Or as I like to say these days, the Clear Channelization and Wal-Martification of America. Bye-bye living wage and unions. Bye-bye to the true spirit of rock 'n' roll and art, and hello to car commercials and to your 48-hour, caffeinated work week.

So I decided to take my frustration out with my own reality TV program. Our cameras would spend a few hours with three mediocre rock stars. And in this show, "The Mediocre Die!" Enough of this frail genius clocking out. In this show the creative voids clock out. The successful formula: F-A-I-L.

In our first scene, Aerosmith (who did record a couple of good records 2,500 years ago!) are at their new CD's private listening party with the sonic clichés blast-



ing out of a \$3 million stereo system. But Joe is upset. Something is missing (perhaps originality?). He recalls the spine tingling sensation of hearing "Sweet Emotion" for the first time. That sensation is now gone. He suddenly breaks his 12-step promise and rings up his old coke dealer on his cell, "Bring a pound! Like the old times!" He shares his theory with Steve. If they party down like old times maybe good songs will emerge again. Hours later, Aerosmith's manager arrives with "Dream On" blasting and poor old Aerosmith sprawled out, dead on the floor! Poor Joe didn't realize that a 55-year-old heart is not as strong as a 25-year-old heart. The headline reads: "Band Comes Off Rehab and ODs."

Next we zoom in on a perspiring Kid Rock. Kid



watched. But you also have to consider other problems. Your time is not your own. Producers decide where you go, when you eat, who you see. Casts are moved around like cattle. Your guardians do have favorites, and god help you if you're not one of them. And when the cast is out of the house and the cameras are gone, the crew that's still there is eating those cookies they made last night while going through luggage to retrieve the bottle of vodka from the house bar someone thought would look better in their luggage.

5 The Crew is Way More Interesting than the Cast The immoral/insane behavior of the cast is only 1/10th to that of its crew. I have worked on shows that have increased the liquor/drug sales of small towns to rival that of Indian reservations. Crew members are like horny bridesmaids at their 3rd spring wedding, while fights are a daily occurrence, and alliances are a must. We're basically a band of pirates with surveillance equipment. ☑



Rhachel is currently looking for work on a show that is 100% fictional. If that doesn't work out, she'll be working on Amish in the City, Fox's newest reality show. Besides securing her a place in hell, working on reality shows has brought her many paychecks and the coolest picture on Friendster one could ask for.

Gas Pumps, Lake Tahoe, and Local Programming

BY JOHN VLAHIDES

It's Monday morning, and I'm driving through the Carson Valley en route from Reno to South Lake Tahoe. I'm on my way to tape a five-minute segment on "Tahoe Tonight," a television program that will air twice a day for a week on RSN, the Resort Sports Network, Tahoe-cable channel 15. I don't like to watch TV, but I'm excited to be appearing on the small screen in a special piece devoted entirely to my work on *Fodor's California Gold Guide*, the guidebook whose chapters about the Sierra Nevada I write and edit.

As I hurtle southward along U.S. 395, I listen to a report on NPR's "Morning Edition" about a study performed on young children who watch television for more than two hours a day. Apparently they have a 20%-increased risk of developing attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder upon reaching pre-adolescence and become unable to concentrate on any single thing for more than a few moments at a time. I wonder, who in their right mind lets a two-year-old watch TV for three hours every day? [My parents are two I can think of off the top of my head.]—bk]

I pull off the highway in Carson City to buy gasoline. I swipe my Visa card through the magnetic-stripe reader at the pump, and as soon as my credit is approved, CNN appears on the pump's small video screen, even before the fuel begins to flow from the nozzle. Three women are discussing the latest trends in wall paper at a decibel-level so high that the sound distorts in the tinny, blown speaker and echoes off the overhead metal canopy. Not wanting to be assaulted by ear-splitting home-decorating tips as I wash the dead bugs from my windshield, I instead walk into the mini-mart to voice my displeasure, give 'em a piece of my mind. I affix a polite smile upon my face and quietly approach the register. A thin, sexy Latino with solidly gelled hair looks across the counter and says hi. Next to him, a heavy-set young blond girl with acne stares at me like a cow at a pass-



ing car.

“Good morning,” I begin. “Would you kindly tell the owner of the station that, as long as he blares television programming at the gasoline pumps, I will buy my fuel elsewhere?” Silence. “Okay? Will you please?” Head cocked and eyebrows raised, a tight-lipped smile stretched across my face, I wait for affirmation.

The sexy Latino laughs and winks. “Okay, man,” he says, and raises his hand in a simple wave that says he digs my vibe, fuck the man and all that.

“Thanks,” I say, then look over at the bovine girl, still silent, though now there’s a displeased look on her face, like she’s smelling bad cheese or her own sour milk. I want to shout, Moo! but hold my tongue. I thank the man and tell the girl to have a nice day.

I object to television in public spaces. It’s an assault on civil society. Wasn’t it bad enough when CNN began broadcasting in airport departure lounges across America? When infomercials appeared on the bulkhead movie screens of transcontinental flights? Enough is enough. I won’t accept it at the pumps, too.

The problem with TV is, you can’t ignore it when its images flicker in front of you. Like cell phones in automobiles, TV demands your attention and removes you from the present moment. You can’t help but neglect what’s actually in front of you. Worst of all—and here’s the

problem for toddlers—television sucks you into its one-dimensional universe, gets you hooked on non-people and their non-problems. Then it ignores you. Babies play along with the Teletubbies, but the Teletubbies don’t play back. I’d have a tantrum too, if I were three.

I put the nozzle back in its cradle, and the talking heads shut up mid-sentence. Making my way southward along the highway toward Spooner Summit, I tense behind the wheel, reviewing in my mind the ever-increasing evidence that America is worse off



The interviewer mispronounces my last name three times, but I say nothing, just smile for the camera.

than I ever had thought—it takes a trip out of San Francisco to be reminded of just how bad things really are. While ascending the wall of mountains toward the Tahoe Basin, I lose reception of NPR on my rental car’s radio, and for several miles, I can only receive a Christian-fundamentalist talk-show, whose host is bashing gays for wanting to get married. A caller on the programs asks, “Will our church lose its tax-exempt status if I circulate a

political petition to support the president’s constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage?”

I arrive in South Lake Tahoe just in time to film my five-minute segment. The interviewer mispronounces my last name three times, but I say nothing, just smile for the camera. When it’s my turn to talk, he asks me a question I know nothing about: “So I understand that this year marks Fodor’s 70th anniversary, right?”

As I hear him say the words, I wonder how he knew this detail and what I could possibly say in response that would be interest-

ing. This was not what I had imagined we would discuss, not what I had rehearsed. I had wanted to be ready, and now it seemed I wasn’t. What the hell do I know about Fodor’s anyway? I’m a freelancer, not a full-time employee, let alone a corporate spokesman for Random House.

“Uh, I guess so. That sounds about right. Fodor’s has been around a long time. I don’t know. Hmm. . . . Well, what I really want to talk about is Lake Tahoe.

TV History

I mean, it would be the next Lindbergh baby. People would go crazy gluing themselves to their television. Baby Emma—snatched from the café, maybe by Arabs. I mean, they should really

just go for a huge dramatic story arc. What a ripping way to conclude everybody’s favorite show.”—Jol’s New York Minutes, December 6, 2002

“Yesterday morning Nico and I were watching CNN, and they showed Laura and George Bush reading *’Twas the Night Before Christmas* to a group of children. And it was so funny because George left out one or

two lines from the first stanza, and then he handed the book over to Laura, who took over. And it was just like one of those movies where



they give a book to someone and ask them to read and they can’t and you find out they’re illiterate. When Laura finished, the Bushes’ little black dog came

running out and all the children encircled it to pet it, and it was like they’d never seen a dog before.”

—Jol’s New York Minutes, December 18, 2002



round of back-and-forth, and that the series should end just as it was when it was at its best, as a love story with an unresolvable narrative question mark.

On the day that Dean heard the news (it was from his mother, who had read about it in the morning's paper) that Shelley had indeed been signed to reprise her role as Diane in the series' final episode, he tore down the hallway, screaming, to Darth Vader's door. He pounded on the door until she answered.

"Good morning," she said, groggy and disheveled, still in her black nightgown and uncharacteristically lacking makeup, hiding as much of herself as she could behind the door.

"I just had to tell you the greatest news I've ever heard. Shelley Long is signed on for the last episode."

Before Dean had even finished the sentence Darth was in his arms and the two of them were doing a little jig, which continued for several minutes, both of them screaming all the while. ☐

Examining the death of Vince Foster.
15 (CNB) Rivera Live—Discussion 1:00 10108
18 (DSC) Non-Lethal Weapons
—Documentary 1:00 516653
20 (MTV) NBA Slam-N-Jam Wrap-up 1:00
highlights of the 1997-98 NBA season. 581092
21 (Mystery) (CC) 1:00 18740
24 (E) (M) Stranger by Night—Crime
Drama 2:00 463943
1994) The clues to a murder case implicat
one of the investigating detectives (Steve
Bauer) as the prime suspect. Jennifer Rubin.
28 (HBO) (M) A Bright Shining Lie
—Drama 2:00 966634
See Editors' Choice on this page.
(Matt Roush reviews "A Bright Shining Lie
on p. 11.)
38 (CSP) To Be Announced 1:00

Moments of



≠ "I was reading my favorite magazine, TV Guide, yesterday. There was a bit about

how the alleged comedies are becoming dramatic, and how that means they might be in trouble. They pointed out Miles's heart problems on *Frasier* and Will's anger over Grace's wedding on that queer show. That was the nice thing about *Cheers*. That show has a spotless record of never once doing that. I remember reading back in the early '90s that they had been planning to do a sort of social awareness episode where Sam worries that he's got AIDS. I guess they were under some sort of pressure to address that since they had this sexually promiscuous character and to not equate sex and death was irresponsible at the time. But in the end the episode was scrapped, which is kind of sad, because it would probably be extra funny to come across it in syndication. "Oh, this is the one where same gets HIV! Woo-hoo!"

What could be really great, though, and a big ratings grabber, would be the Friends Kidnapping.

God! it's soooo beautiful here!" Nice save, I think to myself as I continue to talk. And with a quick segue into downhill skiing and the fabulous vistas from atop the Sierra, I lead into a quotation by John Muir that I had rehearsed just for the occasion: "You will top arise and behold creation, and you will need the tongues of angels to tell what you see." Cut to commercial. After a pat on the back by the producer and a handshake from the host, I depart the studio to ski the afternoon at Heavenly Mountain.

During my first run on the mountain, while crossing from California into Nevada on the Skyline Trail, I get cut off by a vitriolic post-adolescent snowboarder dude who no doubt watched too much television as a toddler. Rather than bite my tongue and ski away, I catch up with him and, skating along side of him, I half-jokingly ask him if the behavior exhibited by the average snowboarder is learned or if it's in the DNA. He calls me a "gay asshole." I tell him, "Fuck off, you little shit."

The episode consumes my imagination for much of the afternoon on the slopes. How did he know I'm gay? Is it that obvious? Why does it still upset me to get called a faggot? Two little words and I'm back on the playground, getting picked on for getting picked on. Christ almighty. I can't stop thinking about it. I hardly notice the beautiful vistas or the luxurious spring snow. I need no tongues of angels to tell what I

see, because I can't see anything but my own mind spinning out of control. By the end of the day, I'm exhausted.

Following an early-evening nap in my hotel room at the bottom of the gondola, I lie in bed, watching my image flicker across the screen during the broadcast of "Tahoe Tonight." Earlier in the day, after we had finished taping the program, the producer and host both told me I was a natural for televi-

sion—they even asked me back on the show later this summer—and I was proud of my compartment. But now, watching my head bob, my arms flail, and my eyes dart, I shudder in that way you do when you first hear your voice on an answering machine. That can't possibly be me. I sound so. . . well, gay. Shit. For the first time since my late adolescence, I feel embarrassed about how I might appear to strangers. What a horrifying, demoralizing realization that, at 37 years old, I should still



carry around internalized homophobia, embarrassment about being gay. I pull the covers up around my chin and suffer through the rest of the interview, then turn off the TV and take a shower.

Standing in front of the bathroom mirror with my gaze fixed, I stare at my reflection until everything but my irises loses its shape, gets fuzzy, and I try to see into myself, beyond personality and the lay-

ers of self-identity, into someplace beyond space and time. I draw a deep breath, tell myself to expand, become porous. Be present. Let go. I exhale and break the trance, take a few deep breaths and feel grounded and centered again. I rub pomade into my palms and run it through my hair, pausing between strokes to practice smiling for the camera in preparation for my next appearance on RSN's "Tahoe Tonight." Next time I want to be ready. ☐

An Unemployment Want Ad

BY TODD P.

Recently unemployed Angelino seeks sponsors to support television addiction. Without cable unemployment will be unbearable. Any amount appreciated.

Please mail donations to:

Todd P.

1930 Argyle Ave., #11
LA, CA 90068

He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not

Television, will you go with me?

BY TAWDRY LOWLIFE

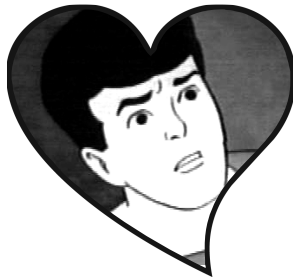
I've known I was gay since the age of four. In addition to early exploration of male-on-male sexuality, another indicator of my attraction to men was my interest in certain characters on television.

One of my first crushes was a character from *Lost In Space*. I envied, and wanted to be, Will Robinson—because he got to travel in outer space, had a robot for a best friend, and had strong nurturing parents and loving siblings. However, the primary reason I wanted to be Will, was so that I could hang out with Don, the brash young co-pilot of the Jupiter II.

I could not understand why in any world Will would choose to hang-out with the sniveling, creepy Dr. Smith. What an idiot . . . both Will, and Dr. Smith! Don was so much hotter. Julie knew it. She was dating Don . . . and how I hated her for it! I would fantasize about some giant alien plant anemone devouring Julie and Dr. Smith. Then Don could take me away in that six-wheeled space camper and teach me everything he knew.

Anyone remember *Julia*!? Diahann Carole (long before *Dynasty*, you queen!) and her television son, Corey? I WANTED HIM!

I also had a crush on Eddie Munster. Something about that hairstyle. So cute. "Eddie." That makes me think of Bill Bixby. Not from *The Incredible Hulk*, but from *The Courtship of Eddie's Father*. I hated that Eddie. He was cute, had a



cool dad who spoke to him as a human being, had his own bedroom and lived in a way cool apartment with an elevator and a balcony! And his dad's girlfriend was really nice to him. I hear the actor who played Eddie now fronts a punk rock band. I don't hate him anymore.

My Three Sons. *My Wet Dreams*. *Brothers*. Three of them. Robbie, Chip, Ernie. And the one before Robbie . . . sexiest of them all. Loved it when he was on the show. All of those boys were cute in their own way. Even Ernie matured into a hot little number after puberty.

I could go on forever about cartoons. *Aquaman* was one of my favorites, but it was Aqua Lad who caused me to fill-out my shorts. All he wore was that little red pair of trunks. He went around completely bare-chested. I didn't much care for the black boots (why did he need boots under water?), but I imagined they'd come off easy enough.

I once heard a story about a guy who had a crush on Bugs Bunny. That seemed really weird to me. If I had to consider bestiality, Kimba, The White Lion was more my type. Rowrr.

'70s television was full of crushes. Potsie from *Happy Days*, Tommy from *Eight Is Enough*, Frankie "Boom Boom" Washington and Juan Epstein from *Welcome Back, Kotter*, Bo & Luke Duke—I wanted to tumble in the hay with both of those boys. Together. Yeee haaa!

that was the day that caused the first conversation between Darth and Dean to take place. What happened was that Dean showed up at 8:30, in time to catch the syndicated episode of *Cheers* that preceded, on a local station, the NBC broadcast. To his horror, he'd found the Trekkie boys, replete with beers and even costumes, sprawled about his lounge in a drunken orgy of geekiness, quoting lines, acting out scenes, waiting for their show.

Dean stared in through the glass window of the door for several minutes, recoiling at pointy ears and unable to determine a course of action. He was roused from his reflection by Suzie, who took his arm and said, "What's going on?"

"It's terrible. The Trekkies have taken over the lounge. I don't know what to do. I don't know how this happened."

"Didn't you sign up for the lounge this week?" Suzie asked.

"No, I forgot. I guess with finals and everything, I just didn't even think of it."

"What about that girl who's always here?"

"Oh, the *Cheers* lady?" he said. "I don't know. I guess she forgot too."

Darth Vader's door was only a few steps away from the lounge. As if on cue, the door opened, and Darth Vader moved, as if on a cloud, from her room, the door closing, as if by magic, behind her. She floated, it seemed, toward Dean and Suzie, taking their breath away with the econ-

omy of her motion.

"Come on!" she said, passing them, seeming to have already sized up the situation, requiring no explanation, knowing, as if through sheer instinct, that all had gone terribly awry this week. Dean and Suzie looked at each other in amazement and then followed her toward the stairwell. Pulling back the heavy metal door in one quick, apparently effortless gesture, Darth Vader led the way into the stairwell and then down to the 2nd floor, with Dean and Suzie in breathless pursuit.

Once she'd reached the 2nd floor landing, Darth lunged at the door AND flew toward the door of the 2nd floor lounge. From a tiny black purse, Darth produced a key, and in two seconds, she had turned on the lights of the empty lounge, had sprung upon the television, and was rapidly depressing its channel-up button below the screen.

Reaching the door in time to prevent its slamming in his face, Dean stopped and looked at the sign-up sheet that hung outside the door. It had been signed out for Thursday night from 8:30 to 10 by one DARTH VADER.

That was the first night Darth had really opened up to them, and it was just this small little crack of an opening. But nevertheless, that was the beginning of their friendship, of their weekly saying hello to each other, which culminated a month or so later, in their introducing themselves to one another, and then, close upon the heels of



that remarkable moment, the conversation in which they'd breathlessly confessed their love for *Cheers* to each other, recounting plot details, reciting lines, discussing their respective and mutual hopes and dreams for story lines to come, reveling in their shared geekiness, becoming emotionally naked, as it were, as innocent as children, before each other.

It had been discussed in the media that this was to be the last season of *Cheers*, and so emotions were running especially high with Darth Vader and Dean. Having watched the show since its inception, they agreed that crucial to the show's satisfactory conclusion would be the return of Shelley Long's Diane. As far as Dean and Darth were concerned, it just had to happen. If it didn't, it would be the saddest thing to happen in their lives.

They disagreed on what precisely should happen once Diane got back to Boston. Dean thought she and Sam should get married, but Darth thought that would be trite. She thought that would be selling short Diane's character; she thought that Diane should instead initiate another

a reading from The Cubby Bible

The Adventures of Darth Vader Chapter 5: A Love Story

When Darth Vader was in college she wore black from head to toe and only associated with people who wore black from head to toe. Dean was the only exception, and she excepted him from her rule because he was in the same TV lounge every Thursday night doing the same thing that she was doing there, which was watching *Cheers*. While she and Dean had nothing else in common, she thought, there was this one strange connection. They had both watched *Cheers* since childhood and now called it their



favorite show. In fact, neither of them had watched anything else since moving into the dorms.

Darth Vader had lived in the dorm two whole school years, and this was her third. She had seen a lot of brats and hippies and yuppies and artists and goths come and go, and nothing had much impressed her. The goth boys would sometimes come on to her, but she had no time for them, and she was aloof with them.

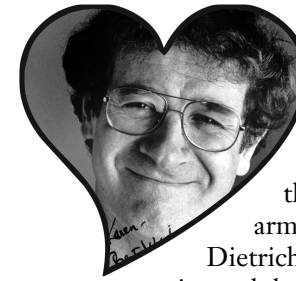
Dean at first had seemed like nobody in particular. He was just some kind of fashion-backward preppie jock type of person from the suburbs. And like others of that ilk, he never spoke to her or seemed to take any notice of her. He'd always show up with Suzie, his little girlfriend, who would be quiet as a mouse, just giggling shyly during the show and then politely leaving, holding Dean's hand and

following him out afterwards, seeming to Darth Vader to be the very picture of submission.

In order to secure the dorm's communal lounge, residents were required to fill out the name of the show, the time, and the day on the clipboard that hung outside the door of the lounge. And to actually get into the lounge, one would have to get the key from one of the hall's designated keyholders or the hall's resident administrator, a sophomore who received free room and board from the college.

Between Dean and Darth Vader, the lounge was always secured every Thursday night for *Cheers*. One of them nearly always signed up for the lounge at the beginning of the week, and the other, not far behind in showing up at the door of the lounge for the same purpose, would happily find out that the lounge had already been signed out for the show, and each felt inwardly happy to have, in the other, a silent ally.

On one occasion, an obnoxious group of Trekkie geek specimens had signed out the lounge for *Star Trek: Next Generation*, and




Barney Miller: Detective Ron Harris kept me up at night. I loved the thought of laying in the arms of Detective Arthur Dietrich, with his deep monotone voice and dry wit breathing down on me. And Detective Stan 'Wojo' Wojciehowicz? WOOF!

M.A.S.H. I wanted to hit a bivouac with Radar O'Reilly. He was a big kid . . . a puer eternus . . . like me.

OH! Jody from *Soap*. The first positive queer role model on television.

TV crushes today? Not really. My mind has expanded, my soul awakened . . . my desires and needs have become more realistic and tangible. Dreams and fantasies don't do it for me anymore. I crave reality.

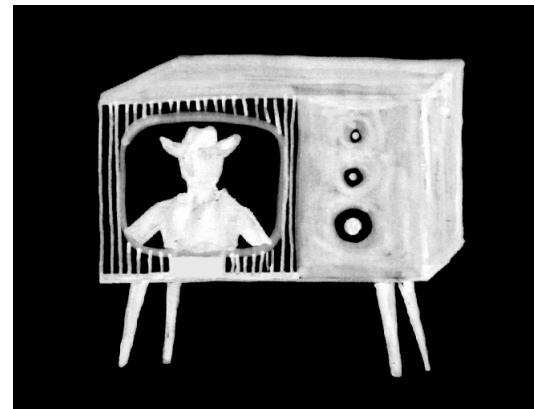
So, I focus my energy towards manifestation of the world I want to live in . . . the life I choose to lead. I've pretty much turned my television off . . .

Though, I do fantasize about creating a spin-off from *The Simpsons* called: Lenny & Carl. 

Tawdry Lowlife is an emerging being.

20 (WB) Reba—Comedy

Barbra Jean suspects that Brock is having an affair, but his erratic behavior has more to do with his head than his heart. **NEW**



Put the role of the witch doctor, the troubadour, into the hands of the consolidated few. Let this consolidation create our myths, our dreams. control the flow of culture. Stop local production and introduce pure consumption. Create a digestible facsimile of outrage, of lust, of danger. Enter their dreams through repetitive images and sudden swells of speaker volume. Create desire where desire was not; create schemas and systems of thought that justify the desire. Respond to malaise and meaningless drone activity with the offer of thrill/anxiety-based consumerism. Consume beyond the limits that the drone activity can support. Replace personal meaning with the desire-consume-desire cycle. Push beyond the limits of desire, by changing the format and enforcing a complete consumption system change through the artificial obsolescence of the older system. Stay inside. Speak only to the consolidation, not to one another. Reinforce time segmentation through scheduled programming. Alter the brainwaves. Entertain, divert, sedate, seduce, program. And believe in it, above all else. Make it seem important, more important than the artificial wood paneling on the drawer next to the sink and the artificially burnished die-cast metal handles on the drawer and more important than the white plastic handle on the large kitchen knife sticking out of your mouth.

The Cubby TV Survey

Cubbies and Cubby offshoots personalize and prattle on about TV with wildly entertaining results. Let's listen!

What tv character are you and why?

Jason: I'd have to pick Special Agent Dale Cooper from *Twin Peaks* because he enjoys coffee so much and has unorthodox detective techniques.

Bill: Mr. Spock and Dr. Teeth and Mr. Rogers and Dr. Ruth. I'm the guru who stopped his breathing and got inside the plastic box for three days on *That's Incredible*, and I'm Fran Tarkenton saying, "That's Incredible!" I don't know why.

Justin: I used to say I was most like Chandler—because I wear sweater vests, am often thought to be gay, and no one knows what I do for a living. And because I get coked up and wrap my car around trees. But now I'm more like Ross, since I'm going to be an under-30 divorcee. And of course I'm Jewish and have no post-friends prospects to speak of.

Jol: i'm jol, because my show is all about me.

Ben: Will Robinson on *Lost In Space*. Why? 'Cuz he's a greasy kid who wears velour.

Emily: Claire Fisher, *Six Feet Under*

Brian: Hawkeye Pierce—intelligent, irreverent, anti-war, witty, and always horny.

Coretta: Nikita—from the USA series, because she's a disaffected youth who kicks ass (at least this is who I want to be).

The pagan woman in the colonial house, because I would be just as annoying about going to church. monica from friends, because she's anal and likes to plan.

Alissa: Elaine from *Seinfeld*, except I think I'm a better dancer and don't wear shoulder pads.

Liz: Buffy. Because I am so not her!

Doug: Stan Marsh because he really is the voice of reason while his whole town is nearly hysterical. Also good taste in hats and jackets.

Ilan: Tom Brokaw . . . can't pronounce "L"'s properly in some words . . .

Which tv family is the most similar to yours and why?

Jason: Alice's family on *Alice*, except that my mother wasn't a single mother who was a waitress and I had three sisters. It was more like that family in spirit because my mom was a working-class mom. I wasn't very much like Tommy though, except that my hairstyle sort of resembled the one he had during the first couple seasons. My three sisters were more like the Bradford sisters from *Eight is Enough*, except that there were five of them. Not at all like the Brady sisters, because they were children of the 70's. I was glad that my stepfather was not like Dick Van Patten. We all know about the Van Pattens. He was more like a guy trying to be Andy Griffith but ending up more like Barney Fife. My Aunt Nette was definitely like Flo.

Sue: None of them. Because none of the TV families are as messed up as my family is.

Bill: *Family Feud*. They don't allow families like mine on TV under any other circumstances.

Justin: My family is like the family of *Mornings on 2*.

Brian: *Porno Bachelor*—it's like *Bachelor*, except, well, you get the picture. Or how about *Execution Survivor*, in which the losers are simply shot in the head execution-style. And then there's *Court Fights*, which is a show devoted to fistfights that happen inside court rooms.

Coretta: I would like to see a show based on the movie *Thirteen*. When you asked me what shows reflect my childhood, I couldn't think of any but this movie certainly did. Also, *Thirteen* portrays a time in every girl's life and yet is a undeveloped story. Of course, we've had the female teenage anxiety shows, but the girls always come from stable homes and rich areas. What about the crazy single mom teenage female existence?

Alissa: *Lear Factor*—a new reality show in which two teams of actors compete against each other performing *King Lear*. One team is famous Shakespearian actors, the other is TV hunks, and each week an actor is eliminated.

Hosted/judged by James Lipton and Will Ferrell as James Lipton.

John: It's called *Kill Your Television*. Viewers across America would simultaneously throw their TVs out the window. The end.

Doug: *Candid Trans*, where contestants think they're getting extreme makeovers, but really get sex-change operations. It's like *The Swan* meets *Queer Eye* with a lot of the best things people expected from *Joe Millionaire* and *Candid Camera*. ☐

THE CARESS OF THE CATHODE ~RAY



Doug: Desslock of *Gamilon*. He had blue skin and ruled a whole planet. Also he had a bevy of bitches

Ilan: Connie Chung . . . She is completely ruthless . . .

If you were a producer pitching your own show to the networks, what show would you pitch? Please pitch it to us . . .

Jason:√Tentative Title: *Idiots Rule*

The main protagonist is a middle manager, Jesse, at company that specializes in “Idiot Testing,” that is testing products for safety as to prevent liability suits. His job is to hire testers, so he has to look for people who are especially uncoordinated or generally unclear on many concepts. He hires people under somewhat false pretenses—they don’t know that they are specially chosen for their particular qualities, but they are always impressed by the amazing health coverage. There is always some time devoted to his interviewing potential new hires—turnover is very high.

Bill: It’s a comedy about Islamic terrorists? No seriously, they’re on their way from Iran to Mecca, and they stop with some relatives who live in the middle of the Iraqi desert, and it just so happens that the oldest daughter is going to be married that night, when BAM! F-16s kill two-thirds of them. The remaining folks have a religious experience in the aftermath and realize that they have to dedicate their lives to the Jihad. Funny, huh? It could be called Real Reality TV.

Justin: Ok, I happen to think that Comedy Central is on a helluva roll right now. Have you seen *Shorties Watching Shorties*? It’s a bunch of little stand-up comic vignettes with animation over



“ I want to be a guard in the Abu Ghraib reality show, so I can tap into my id and do all the things to Iraqi prisoners that I’m not able to do to people in real life. ”

host with obscure, notorious, and drug addled musicians and composers from years past, we would discuss things such as “back then/now” type things, guests like Roky Erickson, Syd Barrett, Sam Rivers, Archie Shepp, Gyorgy Ligeti, Sky Saxon . . . and then they would wind up the show with a solo performance on our cheesy stage, next to my cheesy desk w/plastic plant, and easy chair for said guest . . . It would be incredibly depressing, funny, and informative . . . what America loves . . .

Emily: It would be called *The Answer* or something like that and it would be 2-5 minutes long and come in-between shows. It would be me, furrowed brow, wondering something aloud. And then the question would be answered. It would come on between all the prime-time shows, everyday. It could almost be like a music video stylistically. I would quickly become a cultural juggernaut and then leverage my image as a marketing tool for products and services I think would help the world. Sort of like *Oprah*.

them. Bite sized, tasty, non-linear treats. Plus the *Chappelle Show*—best sketch comedy on TV—and *Reno 911* and everything else. I would pitch them a parody of the VH1-model list show/nostalgia show. Never mind, that’s stupid. I would pitch Nigella Lawson in a no-laugh-track comedy like *The Office* called *The Kitchen*. How’s that?

Jol: i’d pitch the *Jol’s World* show that i tried to pitch to my dad back when i was a kid. in it, i would be the protagonist who has all kinds of adventures, makes all kinds of friends, goes all kinds of places, becomes all kinds of things.

Ben: I would be a talk show host with obscure, notorious, and drug addled musicians and composers from years past, we would discuss things such as “back then/now” type things, guests like Roky Erickson, Syd Barrett, Sam Rivers, Archie Shepp, Gyorgy Ligeti, Sky Saxon . . . and then they would wind up the show with a solo performance on our cheesy stage, next to my cheesy desk w/plastic plant, and easy chair for said guest . . . It would be incredibly depressing, funny, and informative . . . what America loves . . .

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My father is Ross McGowan—curmudgeonly and sedentary. I am Mark Pitta—running out of cute years and things to say. My mother, bless her, is Tori Campbell, and my brother is Frank—most likely to be spotted with his shirt off at a baseball game. And I want to point out that my boss, while not Japanese, is a dead ringer for Kim Yononaka.

Jol: mine, because it really is my family, however terribly, absurdly miscast it is; and i don’t know why my family should be so similar to my family, but it just seems logical to me, so i don’t question it.

Ben: *Family Ties*, hippy parents w/arch conservative brother

Emily: My family is not represented on TV. We are just too odd.

Brian: *Leave it to Weaver*.

Alissa: I guess *One Day at a Time* for the single-mom-and-daughter[s]-in-a-cramped-city-apartment factor, although the similarities pretty much end there.

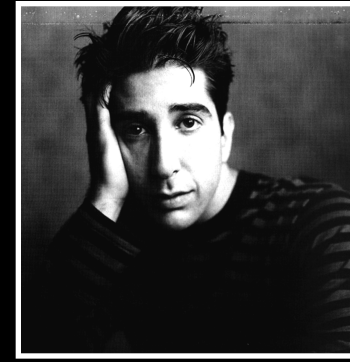
John: Sorry, but the nearest representation I’ve ever seen of my family was in the film *Ordinary People*; as an adult, I’ve never seen any TV family come close to representing my own.

Doug: *Mork & Mindy*. She’s all serious and me, I’m like from another planet.

Ilan: *The Partridge Family* . . . massive incest and quaalude usage . . .

What was your favorite tv show as a child and why?

Jason: When I was about 6, I was very into *The Six Million Dollar Man*. I had the doll and learned to do the sound of his bionics pretty well. Plus, this guy came to my school once and told the real story behind the crash of the experimental aircraft that



“ Now I’m more like Ross, since I’m going to be an under-30 divorcee. And of course I’m jewish and have no post-friends prospects to speak of. ”

was featured in the origin story. That was the first time I ever heard of the aeronautical term yaw. One sad thing was that for many years *SMDM* ran on ABC at the same time that *Little House on the Prairie* ran on NBC. My three older sisters were often able to get their way and I had to settle for Michael Landon’s frequent weeping instead of Steve Austin whooping the Bigfoot.

Sue: *Fame*. Because I wanted to go to a school for music and dance, and I wanted to live in New York City.

Bill: *Star Trek*. The 60’s version. There will never be an equal. Three seasons, 79 episodes. The greatest show ever, by far. Yes, the camp. Yes, the sexism. Yes, the overacting. But seriously, the episode with Joan Collins won an Emmy for a reason, and that reason is because the show was totally fucking amazing! Okay, maybe *Twilight Zone* at its peak was a rival, but I still have to go with *Star Trek*.

Justin: My favorite show was called *Force Five* which was a set of different japanamation rip-offs— or maybe it was actual dubbed over japanamation— one for every day of the week or something. There was one called *Grandizer* with a character named “panhandler”. There was another one that presaged *Transformers* and *Voltron* with three different fighter-plane things that joined up to giant fighting robots. I was OG with that stuff.

Jol: i loved *Laverne and Shirley* because they were hilarious. i told my dad as soon as i could talk that i wanted to do a show about me. we wrote a letter to “mr. tv. producer.” i think he was just humoring me. i don’t think he even knew who to send it to.

Ben: *Star Trek* . . . all of that velour and velcro, never mind the high water slacks and beetle boots

Emily: *Sesame Street*—I was amazed at how the

(NIK) SpongeBob SquarePants
SpongeBob uses a "bad" word repeatedly.

muppets could only open and close their mouths, but they could make more sounds than just "maa maa maa maa". I also learned my first words in spanish—abierto and cerrado. And I thought Luis looked like my dad, just latino.

Brian: *Twilight Zone*, because it taught me everything I needed to know about humanity, and also because it was hella cool. Plus, you can't beat the theme song.

Coretta: *Fantasy Island*—"boss, the plane, the plane," *Charlie's Angels*—women kickin' ass.

Alissa: I never admitted this back in the day, but I loved *Dance Party USA* because I was in awe of watching these South Philly and Jersey kids with really bad accents and 80's hair dance to cheesy 80's pop. Kelly Ripa was a regular, therefore I will never respect her—what a poseur.

The Great Space Coaster because I loved the speed reader and the claymation shorts featuring blue and red clay blobs fighting (some *amazing* claymation, puts *Wallace and Grommit* to shame, I tell ya). Speaking of claymation, this Jew loved the heart-warming Christian message of *Davey and Goliath*.

John: *The Brady Bunch* because life was simple, moral boundaries were clear, hard problems could all be solved in under 30 minutes, and I was too young to realize this was an inaccurate representation of life.

Liz: *The Love Boat*. Because it was pure escapism. Also, *The Dukes of Hazard*, cause of Boss Hogg eatin them livers and being all nasty.

Doug: *Starblazers*, Japanimation serial. The art was 100x's better than anything cranked out by Hanna Barbera and the story-lines were so serious and involved. Also WW2 style space warfare was a total turn on. The charcters were good too.

Ilan: *Battlestar Galactica* . . . Erin Grey's cameltoe . . .

If you could be in any reality show, which one would it be and why?

Jason: I'd have to go with a classic: *Cops*. Being berated and roughly handled by morons is something that holds a special place with me. But wait—taking that in to mind I might just have to go with *What Not to Wear*.

Sue: *American Idol*. Because I can sing circles around Diana DeGarmo. Don't mean to brag, but it's the truth. She sucks.

Bill: I would never, ever appear on a so-called reality TV show.

Justin: Is *The Price is Right* considered reality?

Jol: *jol masturbates* because i love to masturbate and would love to have people watching me masturbate all the time, and if i could get paid for it i'd be thrilled.

Ben: *I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here*. Why? I'm a Celebrity, get me out of here.

Emily: I am in one. It's called *The Office*.

Brian: I want to be a guard in the Abu Ghraib reality show, so I can tap into my id and do all the things to Iraqi prisoners that I'm not able to do to people in real life.

Coretta: *Boarding House: North Shore*, because I want to hang out with surfers. PBS back-in-time shows—because I want to go back in time.

Alissa: Probably *The Mole*, since it's all about smarts and you get to stay in chateaux in the S. of France and hang out with the suave and debonnaire Anderson Cooper. But an even better idea is *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, so I can get pimped out—it's all about the free, baby.

John: *The Amazing Race* because

I could win.

Doug: I think we all know I have what it takes to be the next *AMERICAN IDOL!*

Ilan: *Drug Survivor* . . . I would be the host . . .

Who is your favorite tv villain and why?

Jason: There are several contenders: Adam Chandler from *All My Children* (keep in mind I had three older sisters) because he was your typical soap opera megalomaniacal prick, but later they wrote his mentally-retarded identical twin brother Stewart into the script to play his foil. I think the actor won an Emmy.

Zoltar from *Battle of the Planets* because I later learned from reading manga that in the Japanese version of the story he was a tranny.

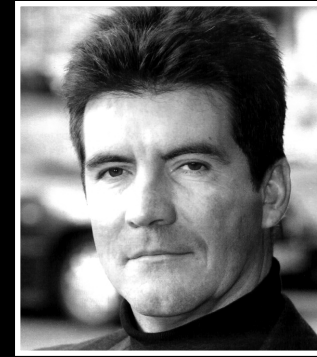
Colonel Klink from *Hogan's Heroes* for obvious reasons.

My choice: Boss Hogg from *The Dukes of Hazard* because he was so entirely absurd. I mean what kind of guy can become mayor if he's too dumb to realize that he should have fired his inept Sheriff and Deputy and replace them with someone more like McCloud. (A union thing?) He wins the big points for doing things like chasing Roscoe around the desk and falling down in mud puddles.

Sue: Simon Cowell. I don't agree with him all the time, but sometimes he's so right-on I get giddy. Some people just need to know they're causing other people pain, and he's not afraid to tell them. He provides a much-needed public service.

Bill: The Gorn, because he looked bad ass. Or maybe the Anti-Spock, the one where he has a beard, for the same reason. Both from the aforementioned greatest show of all time.

Justin: Michael Mancini of *Melrose Place*. He is the



“Some people just need to know they're causing other people pain, and Simon's not afraid to tell them. He provides a much-needed public service.””

MacBeth of our time.

Jol: tony soprano, because he's not really a villain. he's just a normal guy whose job happens to involve killing other people (RIP Adrianna) and whose home life is totally f*cked *p. but really, his flaws are just manifestations of his learned behaviors; they're not him, they're just the consequences of his being unable to be his true self. all of the conflict and antisocial behavior that marks his life is just what he's born into and forced by birth to deal with, and i think that's how it is with everyone, and strangely enough, that's what somehow ennobles us. charles dickens once had a poor orphan say, "i'm as innocent of my birth as the queen of hers," which was a radical notion at the time. and i think that's really true

of tony soprano. he's just born to be a mobster, and he's doing the best he can.

Ben: Endora on *Bewitched*, she's just like my maternal grandmother . . .

Emily: Montgomery Burns

Brian: Louie DePalma (Danny Devito's character on *Taxi*), because you loved to hate him. He made fun of everyone's character flaws, and so he was kinda like this character that represented the part of their psyches that was doubtful, paranoid and self-critical. And, he did it in such a funny way.

Coretta: Endora—she had awesome eye makeup & glittery clothes.

Alissa: The Smoking Man from *X Files*, because he's Mulder's creepy cancer-free father and a member of the New World Order. Also, Bill O'Reilly, and anyone else with a regular show on Fox News Channel, because they're all completely insane.

John: Natasha on *Bullwinkle* because she is a cartoon character that exudes sex and smokes cigarettes.

Liz: Spike, cause he's tough and tender and wry.

“We all know about the Van Pattens. He was more like a guy trying to be Andy Griffith but ending up more like Barney Fife.””

