



## Ohse

*"They can take our lives, but they cannot take our freedom!"*

"What a load of crap," mumbled Ohse as she ravenously ate a Cool Ranch Dorito crumb.

"I take it you disagree with the concept of Scottish nationalism?" I asked as she finished her crumb and began chewing on the edge of the issue of Rolling Stone with a very fey<sup>f</sup> IRA member on the cover.

"You should know by now that I don't give a rat's ass, no pun intended," she said as she pooped in Michael Collin's urn, "about micro or macro nationalism. I know you're a proponent of Hanseatism and are upset by the forces of Balkanization, but what bearing does that have on my life. I was merely commenting on the quaint idea of freedom." †

At this point I should explain about Ohse. Ohse is a mouse, yousee. From when I first started living with and feeding her, I've talked to her about various topics as a means of distracting myself from the fact that I pamper her. Her current living arrangement is what visitors have referred to as Biosphere 3. A fish tank, complete with pump, that has various land masses and running water, which is itself inhabited by the various denizens (not of the Funk) of her little world: Fish-fish (a bottom feeder that keeps the slime under control), Orwell (a fu-fu beta fish that eliminates any parasites that find their way into the water<sup>∂</sup>), and Newt (a salamander that really doesn't do much but serve as a companion to Ohse<sup>√</sup>). It wasn't until I placed some plants in Ohse's rectangle of influence that I learned she could talk. She began digging and ripping the plants apart while singing the Flight of the Valkeries...and rather well, I might add; she has a stunning baritone.<sup>¥</sup>

"That's a rather weighted way of describing freedom." I could tell she was itching for a fight by the way she'd stand still, then do a little jump and land facing the opposite direction. Mice aren't really big on the idea of looking people in the face when they're talking or being spoken to, which takes a while to get used to. "I take it you are talking in an abstract sense and not a legal sense."

"Hey, what do I know about laws? The last time you told me about law was when that chick was thinking of suing for libel. Now pick me up for my exercises."

<sup>f</sup>read as: Irish-Catholic and queer

† Hanseatism is the worship of Hanson (capital 'H' because they think they're an ethnic group) dressed in middle age costume at Tupperware parties. Balkinaztion is when people on the short bus whine about freedom and Muslims (captial 'M' because they think they're an ethnic group).

∂ Allowing for a clean new world if not a brave one.

√"Ow, quit it! Ow quit it!"

¥ Baritone for a mouse. When your lungs are smaller than a thimble, there's only so deep you can make your voice go. She does perform a wonderful rendition of die Königin der Nacht in Die Zauberflöte, but the Three Tenors she is not.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

**Publisher:** C. Diablo

**Editors:**

Matt Weaver  
Jeremiah Parry-Hill  
Giles Francis Hall  
Adam Fletcher

**Layout:**

Kelly Gunter  
Giles Francis Hall  
Adam Fletcher

**Illustrator:**

Matthew J. Weaver  
Clare Terni

**Writers:**

Brendan Stewart  
Eric Thomas  
Clare Terni  
Sean Hammond  
Kelly Gunter  
Adam Fletcher  
Aaron Cooper

**Contributors:**

Matthew J. Weaver  
Jeremiah Perry-Hall

**Cartoonists:**

Gil Merritt  
John Holt

**Cover Artist:**

Scott Peterson

I stuck my palm down on the table and she clambered into it. Once safely in my hand I transported her to the open window where she promptly began climbing the screen. Prior to the time I had started jogging again, she didn't exercise. Soon afterward, however, I caught her running up and down the screen counting off her reps. She's very competitive.



"The point," she said panting a little from the top of the screen, "is that the legal sense of freedom is little more than an extension of the philosophical concept. So in the end it doesn't matter what sense I mean.

"But really, how free do you want to be? If you're like most monkeys, when you were a child, you wanted to be an adult so your parents couldn't tell you what to do. Now that you're an adult, there are laws protecting others from you, you from them, and even you from yourself. So are you free?"<sup>Σ</sup>

"Wow, you're quite the little anarchist. I had no idea. And yes, I am free. Simply because there are laws prohibiting me from doing something doesn't mean I can't do them. I could go out right now and kill 23 people with an NRA approved semiautomatic hunting rifle just as easily as I could drive 17 miles over the speed limit. There's nothing stopping me from doing these things, just as there is nothing stopping others from punishing me for stepping outside societal norms."<sup>ø</sup>

"And driving 17 miles over the speed limit."

"Right. No one really cares if I kill 23 people; it's a part of the culture now."

"OK," Ohse said while climbing down the back of the couch to stand on my leg. It was raining outside and while climbing the screen a few times she had gotten a little wet, something that obviously didn't please her. "We're sup-

<sup>Σ</sup> "Just Say No!" and "My D.A.R.E. officer smokes crack!"

<sup>ø</sup> "People who shoot people give guns a bad name!" Bless us, we're the NRA!

posed to live in the freest country in the world, but if you head out to a secret military base, there's no way they'd let you in. They've obstructed your freedom."

Hmmm. She had a point, but I wasn't going to let her win that easily. She obviously had a larger point to make but wanted to play Socrates for a while. Fine.

"Well, you could argue that by allowing the present government to function the way it does the people in this country agree to certain limitations. Besides," I said suddenly remembering my Richard Bach, "We're all free to do whatever it is we want to do.' They're free to stop me just as I'm free to enter that base. The apparent lack of freedom comes when two spheres of individual action overlap. Robinson Crusoe was ultimately free because there wasn't anyone there, until Friday, to cause a conflict of individual wills."

I was feeling rather proud of myself on that one. I wasn't entirely sure if I believed all that, but it sounded good. There was still something that was missing, though....

"So Mr. Crusoe was free. He could zip down to Kensington Gardens and pick up some Fish 'n Chips from a vendor any time he wanted, huh?"

My stomach took on the distinct sinking feeling you get only when a rodent has gotten the upper hand. Ironically, it's the same feeling you get after having eaten too many fish and chips. "What do you mean?"

"He was shipwrecked, you imbecile! It was physically impossible for the man to

get anywhere in London, let alone fast food, because he was surrounded by water. He was in a cage and his freedom's were limited."

At that moment I heard Giles burst into the kitchen from the basement. "Red Alert! We have a flood." he shouted as he came around the corner.

"Oh, shit." I said as I got to my feet. Ohse, who had moved to the arm of the couch as Giles came into the room, was passed out. Sometimes I wonder if she is narcoleptic In the middle of doing just about anything she'll suddenly fall asleep for a few moments, then wake up and go about her merry way...which usually consists of killing plants or terrorizing her aquatic friends by throwing rocks at them.

I rushed into the basement with Giles and was hit by a wave that crashed against the stairs. It had been raining for three days and in back of the apartment a minor lake had formed. With all that water on the surface of the ground, the water table was so high that little streams were actually shooting out of the cinder block wall making it look like a nightmare dyke from Amsterdam (You know: a big butch lesbian that offers you lots of legal weed). Knowing the superb engineering that went into each and every one of RIT's buildings,<sup>π</sup> everyone prepared for floods by suspending their belongings from the ceiling using ropes attached to pallets and hanging from overhead beams, reminiscent of an Incansic suspension bridge worker's nightmares.

Previously when we'd checked the basement, the sump-pump was working

---

<sup>π</sup>Sinking library, motorized sculpture that kept shorting out in the rain, lack of insulation...

full time and kept everything under control. As we stood in the surf and looked at the pump, however, we could see that the water was being forced through the pipe into our basement. What was evidently happening was that the amount of water in the storm drains was so great that it had shorted out the sump-pump. That's what it looked like, anyway. All I knew was that the pump wasn't pumping and we were up to our shins in water.

"Uh, I don't think we have enough fingers to plug all the holes."<sup>Δ</sup>

Giles takes a hit from the helium balloon and squealed his agreement. "I'm gonna call physical plant," he said, running to the stairs.

While Giles called the "professionals", I began to examine the pump. Just then there was a sudden gushing of water and a hum from next door.

"Arr. Avast ye scurvy landlubber! Looks like the sump-pump from next door be pumpin' into your basement. Arr, har, har!"

Looking down I saw a small raft of popsicle sticks held together with copper wire that I'd gotten from one of RIT's Neibleums.<sup>Ω</sup>

"Holy shit, Ohse! Where'd you get the

raft?"

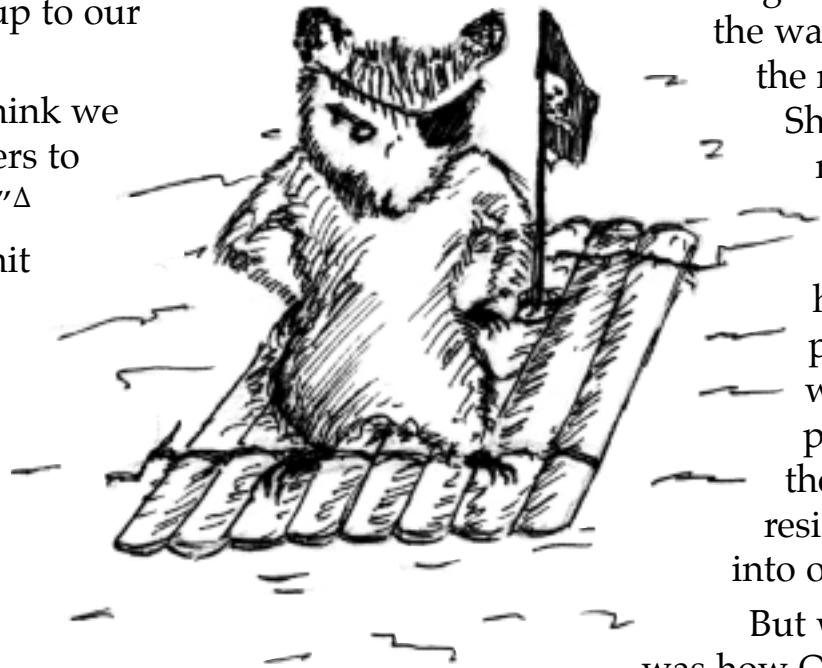
Giving a noncommittal shrug--which is really a trick for a mouse-- she said, "You think MacGyver is the only person who can make thermonuclear devices from old radium covered watch dials, duct tape, and Hubba-Bubba bubble gum? Paa-leze."

She slowly made her way around me, making sure to stay clear of the water coming from the neighbor's pump. She was obviously right about the neighbor's pump: they were having the same problems as we were, and with our pump not working, the path of least resistance was right into our basement. Yeah!

But what fascinated me was how Ohse's little pirate ship, complete with crude Jolly Roger ("Where did she get a pirate's flag," I wondered. "It looks like she used crayon's, but she couldn't possibly have held them easily." With my luck I'll find my crayon pack all chewed up and worn down into convenient mousy sized bits), was able to navigate. . . obviously under power.

Forgetting the Deluge for a moment, I broke down and asked, "So Captain, what's powering your flagship?"

"Oh, I put together a John Galt Self-



<sup>Δ</sup> Every little Dutch Boy's dream

<sup>Ω</sup>See "Talk with Thor" (1995) and "The World" (1997), copyright GDT

generator and strapped it to the bottom.”

A little afraid that she might be telling the truth I picked up her raft. At the last instant she scrambled up my arm screaming, “You fucking monkey! You trying to plunge me into the drink?!”

There, strapped to the bottom of the raft with more copper wire, was a very embarrassed looking Fish-fish. “She said she'd show me the world,” he said as way of an explanation.

Sighing, I very carefully placed the craft back into the water and Ohse re-boarded her slave galley. Deciding I'd had just about enough of Ohse and her antics, I started looking at the pump. It's one thing to deal with animals that talk to you on a regular basis, but when they insist on doing goofy things specifically to fuck with you, it is time to take stock in what your world is like. Right then all I wanted was a working pump.

“So you kidnapped Fish-fish and made him a slave to power your little raft, huh? How'd you get him down the stairs? No, I don't want to know about that. Tell me how you're steering it though.”

I couldn't help but be interested. She was tooling about in the water obviously under power (a la Fish-fish), and with definite direction without an apparent rudder.

With a smile Ohse pointed behind her with her head. “I've got an outboard Rebecca.”

A small black head looked up over the back of the raft and said, “My name's Newt. No one calls me Rebecca except my dorky brother.”

After a few moments of Ohse putting

down the minor slave rebellion, which consisted mainly of trying to bite the top of Newt's head, she turned toward me. “I didn't come down here just to test out my boat. I want to continue our little discussion on freedom we were having earlier.”

“Hey Giles, what's the word from physical plant?” I hollered to stall. I needed just a few minutes to re-balance myself before getting into any real discussion with Ohse. It was one of her tactics in winning arguments to make people feel like they forgot which way blue smells.

“Well,” came a voice from the stairs and drawing closer, “the guy said we aren't the only ones, and that we're actually better off than most, and do you know your mouse is wearing an eye patch?”

As far as I know, I'm the only one Ohse talks to, so it's no surprise that my room-mates don't know why I apparently do all sorts of odd things to her. Just another weapon she uses against me.

“Yeah. She's a pirate mouse today. I'm gonna see if I can do anything with the pump.”

Giles gave me a sort of forced grin and waded back up the stairs.

“OK. Freedom,” I said while detaching the pump from it's pipe so I could remove it from its water filled pit. “You'd said that freedom was an illusion. Crusoe couldn't get fried food cause he was chilling on a beach in the middle of nowhere. As much as I hate to admit it, you've got a point. But his freedom has been limited by a physical universe acting on his physical body. It's not quite the same as someone refusing to sell him haddock and potatoes cause he had long hair and smelled like

coconuts."

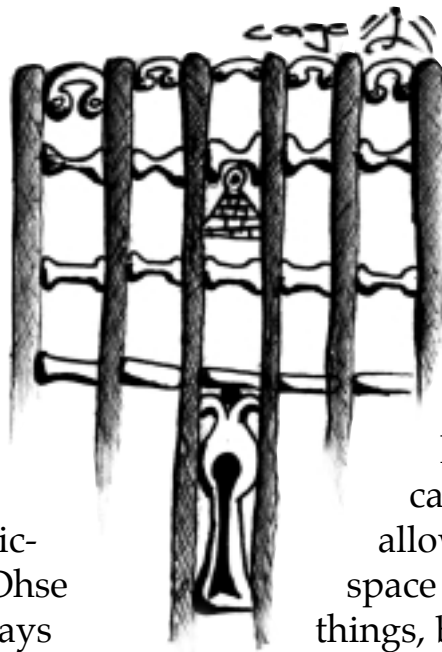
I'd taken the pump and laid it out on the table. There was a thin stream of water that had flooded the top of the table, but as the pump was designed for submarine work, I didn't think it would hurt.

"Ya might want to unplug that unless you like the idea of playing with electricity while standing in water," Ohse said off handedly. "In some ways Robby's lack of chips is worse than if someone were denying him the right to buy the chips. People change, see. Think about this country: women couldn't vote, now they can. Blacks were forced to use separate facilities from whites legally, and now they're just forced to do it socially."<sup>u</sup>

"Stay on topic. No tangents into the socio-economic perpetuation of segregation or we'll be at it all night," I warned as I carried the dead serpentine cord of the pump to the table.

"Right. Well, if you're in a cage, that's it. You're stuck. You and the people around you can change your world views as much as you want but you'll still be in a cage."

"That all depends on what you think of as a cage, Ohse. Change your world view so you're satisfied with how things are and you have as



much freedom as you want."

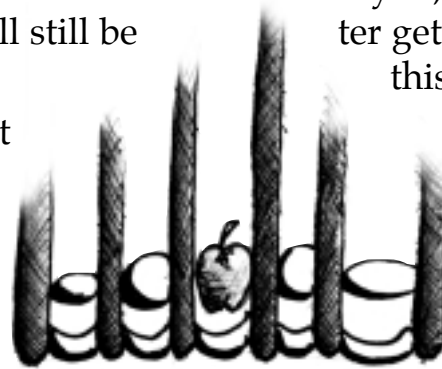
I looked over at her and saw a smug smile on her little face. Shit! I'd just walked right into her argument.

"Exactly. You have as much or as little freedom as you want. Take me, for instance: I'm a mouse and have a cage. It's a very nice cage, I might add, and you allow me an absurd amount of space to run around and climb on things, but it's still a cage. And to be honest, I wouldn't want to be one of those feral mousies. What have they got to look forward to? Wet when it rains, cold in the winter, and dead when death comes from on high. Why would I want that much freedom?"

Newt stuck her face up over the edge of the raft and spoke in her lilting voice, "I remember that time I crawled out of the Brita water filter you put me in while cleaning the tank and got stuck in one of Kelly's hair balls.<sup>≈</sup> I can honestly say I didn't want all that freedom. Freedom sucks!"

"Yeah, freedom sucks, monkey boy. And you, you little amphib, you'd better get back into the water and steer this crate or I'll give you more freedom than you've ever had. MOVE!"

"Grunts, you just have to know how to talk at them."



<sup>u</sup> The Rich White Men (acronym: FRATS) used to be in charge, now they are just another drunk ethnic group. See: 1. Irish 2. gay IRA members 3. Michael Collins

<sup>≈</sup> Hair balls are a lot like the coveted snack food, cheese balls, only without the consumer conscience raising voice of a spokes-cheetah.



Just then the smooth motion of her sleekly lined craft jolted. She was spiraling towards the cinder block monsoon as two little signs emerged from the water beside her craft and circled her in a hair-raising Jaws-like fashion.

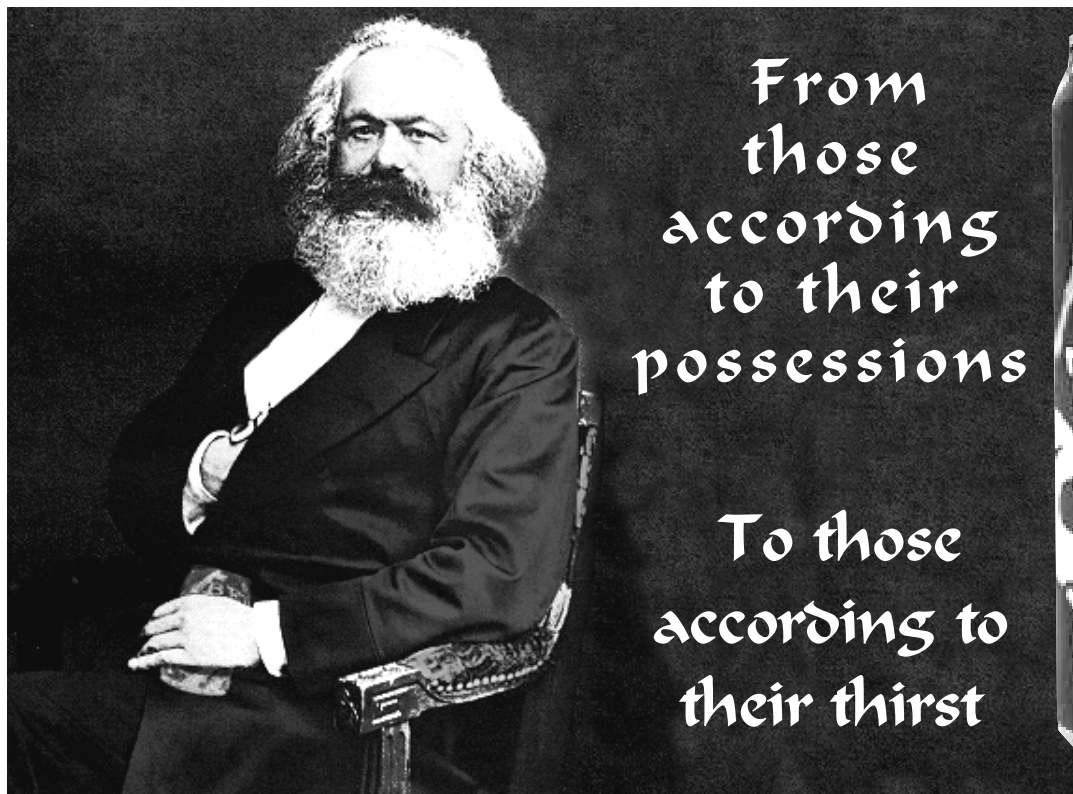
The signs read, "The local 245 water engineers on strike!" and "Support your local union." A third, a latecomer, which was obviously not held by either Newt or

Fish-fish and made me nervous to stand in the water, said "Fungal infections to all slavers!" Ohse's smug expression disappeared from her furry little face the closer she got to the dreaded wall of water.

"Ahh?" she managed almost inaudibly.

Reaching down to her rescue I laughingly said, "Freedom sucks, huh Ohse?"

"Shut up and take us home."



From  
those  
according  
to their  
possessions

To those  
according to  
their thirst



## White To Play And Win

by Adam Fletcher  
(adamf@csh.rit.edu)

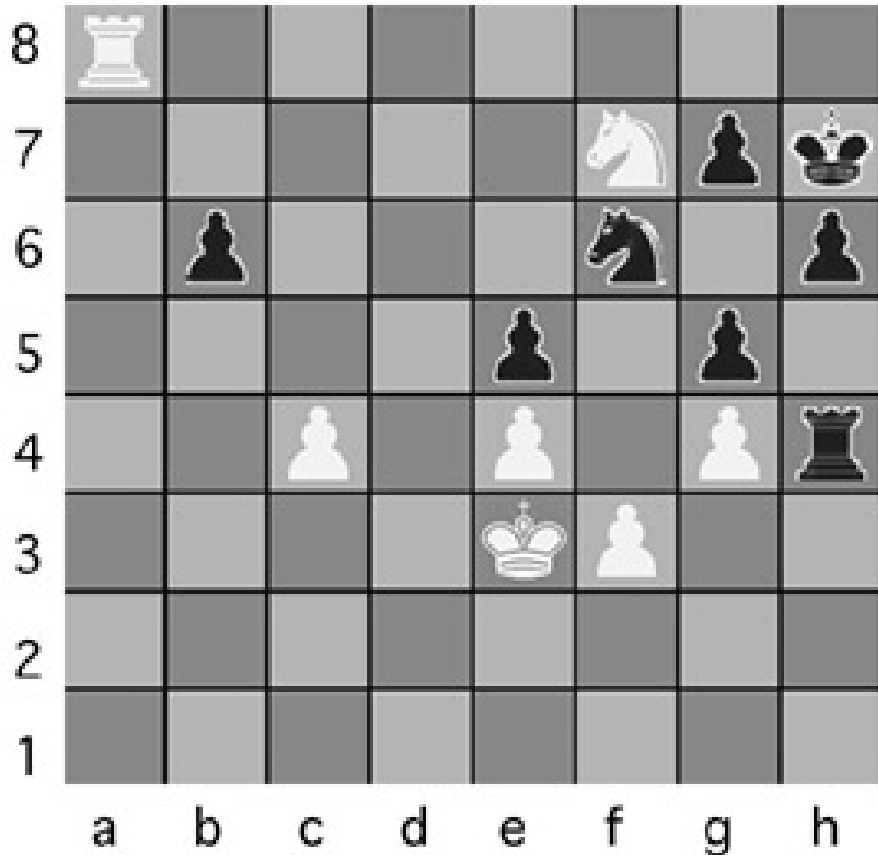
Genna found his knight very handy in this tournament in the small Dutch city of Tilburg. The power of the knight's unique movement is shown:

### 1. Rh8+

The knight on f7 defends the rook from Black's king.

1. ... Kg6
2. Nxe5 mate.

Delivering the mating attack. The knight attacks the king and blocks the only possible escape square.



Genna Sosonko vs. Jan Timman, 1983  
Tilburg, Holland

**Have a problem? Want a topic discussed? Email me!**  
**adamf@csh.rit.edu or adamf on the Free Internet Chess Server**  
**(fics.onenet.net 5000).**







# Shirk'n'Shout

This Week - Rants from Work by Eric Thomas

## Evil Nun of Doom Versus Smiling Corporate Public Relations Man

You know, it is definitely time we went after more challenging targets.

I've hit basically the same ones that the rest of GDT has. Ultra-conservatives, ultra-liberals, ultra-politicals, distracted activists, Luddites, fratboys, the French, decency, the Christian Coalition (starring Ralph Reed as the Unholy Spawn of Our Lord Satan), portly bureaucrats, laughable hypocrites, holier-than-thou department store Santas. No problem.

A useful strategy (and one that GDT has, itself, employed more than once) is to let your opponent do your work for you. Frank Capra, director of such Hollywood classics as "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" and "It's a Wonderful Life," produced a series of films just before World War II called "Why We Fight." Under the guidance of the propagandist Office of War Information, Capra whipped the American movie-going public (which, at that time, was just about everyone) into a frenzy of depraved nationalism with footage from Germany, Italy and Japan ("...obtained secretly by the intelligent, athletic, and sexy boys over at the OWI...") accompanied by a patriotic voice-over and dramatic classical music. Capra's technique was to throw some subtitled scenes of Hitler addressing the masses up on the screen, or Mussolini marching through Rome, or some Japanese children learning hand-to-hand combat.

After a few moments of silence (to let the audience absorb and begin to despise the new cultures), the narrator would pick up with some rhetoric about the fanaticism of the Axis and how they'd be on American shores soon, so give us all of your spare metal and rubber so we can dump them into the ocean just to make you feel good. And we'll make explosives out of your cooking fat.

But I digress. The point is that Capra's genius lay in his ability to use his target's words for his own purposes. Hitler gives a speech, the OWI translates it, Capra puts it in one of his films along with some "Look at how CRAZY these people are!" narration, and the American people take care of the rest. Brilliant.

Of course, the success of this negative spin doctoring depends on the availability of quotable material from the target; this can be a problem if your source is incapable of coherent thought (see "fratboys," "portly bureaucrats" above); it becomes downright frustrating when you're out to bash a large group without a convenient figurehead.

This last is more common these days. Often, the enemy is not a Reed, a Helms or a Gates. We find ourselves staring down the gullets of animals much too broad to fit within our narrow fields of vision. We are forced to walk the fine line between seeing

## The Power of (Exploiting) the Individual

It is here that we must personalize. We must bring the story down to the audience's level. If the piece is on teenage drinking, constrict the focus to the exploits of a single kid over the course of one weekend. If the piece concerns mistreatment of the elderly, go mistreat the elderly and interview them afterward. If the piece mentions lesbian sex, go engage in or observe lesbian sex. You get the idea.

Mike Barnicle, a Boston Globe columnist for over 25 years, falls into this mode almost every week. Barnicle has long been celebrated as a champion of the working man, a warm humanist with an eye for subtlety, and the only Globe columnist who ever pays any attention to the city of Boston. The technique that earned him this respect and admiration is the heart of personalization in journalism. Here's a sample:

"Mario Tawfiq was born Mario Corleone Fusilli on a boat to Ellis Island in 1914. After Mario was delivered, his mother, widowed after his father was killed in the Naples Sambuca Riots of

1913, returned immediately to prostitution and gambling aboard the ship, the U.S.S. Dysentery. Mario was left to be tortured by the ship's crew, all of whom had bad cases of halitosis.

"Mario moved to Boston in 1934, during the Great Depression. He became involved in a small-time ring of thugs smuggling crack-cocaine from Canada.

"It was there he met "Lucky" Lucy Ricardo."

And so forth. By the end of the column, the reader is convinced that Mario's story proves the tenacity of the human spirit, the inner strength we find despite harrowing odds, and the inefficiency and futility of the welfare system.

Boston Magazine attempted to track down some of Barnicle's Everyman characters, and were unsuccessful on many counts. This led them to the conclusion that a lot of Barnicle's work is a good story, but a big lie. (Barnicle denied the allegations, calling Boston Magazine a bunch of people who "sit in cubicles all day and put out a hotel guide." Ouch.)

## The Yale Ratio

I know three people who go, or went, to Yale University in Connecticut.

The first graduated last year. She was a great student, a genius thinker, a talented musician, and a fun person to be with.

The second is a junior. He is a flaming racist, misogynist, homophobe, and acquaintance rapist who cheated his way through high school. I once overheard him boasting about a New Year's Eve party, where he had gotten some girl nice and beshitted, then taken sexual advan-

tage of her once she was too drunk to care. That year, he was named Citizen of the Year by the local newspaper. Why? Because he plays soccer.

The third was accepted on a football scholarship. During a break from school last year, he and some friends (all residents of the town that I live in) beat another young man comatose.

Conclusion: Two out of three Yale students belong in Hell.

## Asshole Phenomena Plus a Checklist for a More Well-Defined Personality

If you tell him he's smart, he'll believe you. If you tell him he's talented, he'll believe you. If you tell him he's gifted, he will most certainly believe you.

Inevitably, he will develop warped standards of measurement in an attempt to quantify intelligence, talent, or beauty. He will think to himself, "I know more words than that guy." Or, "My grade point average is higher than his." Or, "Chicks dig me." He will tailor standards of achievement, customized to match his present skill.

He will find distractions - he will define himself through categorization. He

will proudly proclaim, "I'm smarter than 99.9% of you, and I'm gay." He will miss the point by a wide fucking margin.

Here is a checklist for a more well-defined personality. Try it at home.

- 1.) Generalize.
- 2.) Narrow the scope of your record collection.
- 3.) Use cultural "catch phrases": da bomb, mad props, ill
- 4.) Carry props - bags, hats, belts, knives
- 5.) Self-mutilation - tattooing, piercing
- 6.) Hone arguments on binary issues - abortion, welfare, financial aid, vegetarianism

---

### Ask Aaron: What to Do About Those Gun Totin' Chillun.

While Hell's Kitchen is proud to be a member of U-Wire, the "Associated Press" of college newspapers all over the country, sometimes we disagree with the merit of their inclusions. In the case of Aaron Cooper's opinionated editorial, "Violence involving children should be stopped at the source," published in its original form in the *Daily Nebraskan* at the University of Nebraska, we had a few comments.

While some people may find these comments offensive, we encourage you to read the article out loud to yourself. Really, it's funny. In the spirit of post-modernist deconstruction and appropriation, we offer our opinion of Aaron's work.

GDT's comments appear in italics. Please note also that the paragraph breaks are Aaron's. Comments made to items within paragraphs were inserted in the text.

### "Violence involving children should be stopped at the source"

By Aaron Cooper

Daily Nebraskan (U. Nebraska) 08/28/98

(U-WIRE) LINCOLN, Neb. -- Names of children appear under headlines almost without pause these days. For many of us they pass through our memories just as quickly as they come, like ghost ships in the night.

*I dig. I miss those ghost ships all the time. It must be great in Nebraska, watching the ghosts ships sail on the amber waves of grain.*

It has escalated beyond the point of our dismissing this pattern with a mere shaking of the head and mumbling of "It's a shame."

*With a shake of the fist: "Those goddamn kids!"*

It is turning into an epidemic.

*Yes, like the Bubonic Plague or AIDS.*

The virus of violence continues to spread with a recent confrontation coming

in Chicago, with the death of Ryan Harris, an 11-year-old girl.

*And the confrontation is?*

"That's a shame, too," we might say or think, but tragedy doesn't begin to scrape the surface of this latest outbreak of child hostility.

*Okay...somebody needs to connect the words "shame," "tragedy," and "scrape" for me. Remember, the average American reads at a sixth-grade level.*

The accused, a phrase we usually associate with the likes of serial killers played by John Malkovich or Kevin Spacey in movies, are two boys - ages 7 and 8.

*Those boys were 2 degrees from Kevin. Face it, the kids don't mean as much as the President blowing his load all over some intern's dress.*

What would it take for two boys, barely beyond diapers, to beat another child to death?

*All of those diapers must be rough on elementary school septic systems. 7 is awful late for diapers. What's up with Nebraska?*

This question gets at the center of what is causing youth all over the country to take the lives of their peers. *[Stinky diapers]* What makes the difference between a child deciding that killing is more "stimulating" than watching Sesame Street or playing Nintendo and any other child?

*Gun training instead of potty training.*

That is not a question or problem we like to think about, *[What question? Get out your Warriner's, 'cause that's a weak reference.]* but it is one that has to be answered and rectified. Otherwise, Associated Press headlines may soon originate in Lincoln or another town *[AP doesn't cover Nebraska?]*, which immediately would prompt us to call family, praying that it wasn't our relatives who were victims of another shooting spree.

*Or praying our relatives weren't the perps. "Oh my God, Helen, did little John tweak today?"*

Is this realistic? I don't think we want to find out the hard way.

*Is what realistic? The AP covering Nebraska? No, they cover states that can read and write.*

The rippling effects of shooting sprees may never be fully realized by the family and friends of those who have fallen victim to internal battles with common sense and fantasy.

*So what your saying is the families of the young brothers who have fallen in the good fight have not died in vain, but have instead served to perpetuate the dual tropes of gang violence in Nebraska and run-on sentences.*

After being convicted of the Jonesboro shootings, Mitchell Johnson (now 14) and Andrew Golden (now 12) were sentenced to the custody of juvenile authorities, where they could remain until age 21 or longer.

*Where they in camouflage diapers when they earned their stripes?*

Under Arkansas' current legal system, they could be released by age 18 - something the families of the victims have a hard time dealing with.

*No shit. My kid gets blown away and the killers walk at 18. Not read, walk.*

On May 21, Kipland P. Kinkel decided it might be "cool" to go on a shooting rampage of his own, and authorities say he started with his mother and father, both found dead later that day. Next, he proceeded to shoot and kill a classmate and injure 23 others at Thurston High School in Springfield, Ore.

*The problem was that Mom and Dad didn't pack the FlufferNutter™ before he capped them.*

What baffles most people, beyond the brutal assault at the high school, is the fact

that Springfield police had to send in a bomb squad to defuse the house before they could even search it or bring out the bodies of his parents.

*This kid has mad skills. Booby traps? Remember "Goonies?"*

Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse - it did.

If we shift our focus momentarily from these childhood horror stories in America, we need not look far to other recent out-

bombing of their house. The bombing was the result of hateful attitudes geared toward the Quinns' Catholic mother because she was living with a Protestant companion.

*Ireland is far from Nebraska. Obviously geography is another failing element of the Nebraskan education. Perhaps we should be more worried about Nebraska's affect on children.*

If you are expecting further explanation as to why this happened, beyond the long-standing unrest in Northern Ireland, you won't find any. Someone decided that the



### **Tripping through Nebraska . . .**

breaks of violence toward children of the world.

*What did? What's worse? Did Timmy fall down the well? What happened?*

Richard, Mark, and Jason Quinn, ages 11, 9 and 8 respectively, lost their lives in Northern Ireland in early July during a fire-

message their mother was sending to the community crossed unspeakable religious barriers and "accidentally" killed three of her sons, leaving their brother, Lee, an only child.

*Do we need more explanation than the long standing unrest in Ireland? Does the IRA?*

Many residents of the Quinns' community still feel it was a justified attack.

*Maybe the Quinns were assholes?*

In Sierra Leone, a land recently plagued by civil war, there is disagreement as to who has more power, the government or the rebels.

*TRANSITIONS? DID TIMMY FALL DOWN THE WELL?*

A group of rebels loyal to the ousted military regime are warring against a Nigerian-led West African intervention force. They tear through the country and carry out random acts of violence just to spite President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

*Meanwhile, back in Nebraska...*

Children are beaten, disfigured, raped and killed because a group of people think that is the way to power. Too many pictures have surfaced in the media depicting children with fingers sliced partially or fully off, hands missing or slashed faces.

*It happens to everyone. Builds character. Scars are good when trying to pick up girls. And you know what they say about men with no hands.*

Here, the only hope we have is to raise children that don't look to Beavis and Butthead for moral guidance and don't take peer influence as superior instruction to parental authority.

*Beavis and Butthead told me to hate Bon Jovi. Words of wisdom.*

Then we have another issue: the parents.

How many alcoholic, drug-infested parents with gambling, abusive and other tendencies can we have before we will begin to see truly irreversible patterns of behavior and violence against children in more communities than we already have?

*Drug infested? Is that like rat infested?*

*And he still hasn't told us if Timmy fell down the well!*

Someone or something needs to change. Who's it going to be? Parents? Children? The media? Simple.

Everyone.

*Pick one. Make sure to fill in your circle completely. And by the way, the Blues Brothers say that EVERYBODY needs somebody. They must be from Nebraska*

I want to see newspapers printing big, front-page stories and headlines when a third-grader gets an "A" on a test. Forget the lure of violence and mayhem on the front page.

*Did they even HAVE 'A's in third grade? And wouldn't these headlines crowd out really important things like shootings and Presidential "little messes"?*

Show me a child learning how to write in cursive or hitting a home run in Little League.

*Show me a child learning how to write in Nebraska, and I'll show you a future victim of a grain silo accident. "Little Will should have paid more attention when I was learnin' him, 'stead of writin' all the time*

I want to see parents praising their kids more in public. Enough of the excessive disciplining of children in front of others.

*Sometimes I want to discipline other people's children in front of others. Preferably their parents.*

Treat kids better than strangers, not the other way around.

*I thought we were supposed to be nice to everybody? If they treat strangers better than kids, what do you think they do to black people in Nebraska?*

Parents need to pay more attention to and spend more time with their children. Some studies have suggested that quality

family time is decreasing rapidly in the average American household.

*Quality family time in our household started to decline when Mom started drinking and Dad had to work two shift in the mill to keep all of us in diapers.*

Give kids more books to read, unplug the Nintendo three days out of the week and take kids to the park or beach rather than the arcade.

Show them how to use the Internet as an educational resource and not as a television supplement. Otherwise we will see the birth of Generation Zombie.

*And now, the children of ROB ZOMBIE! Those kids will be 'more human than human.'*

With all this violence and tragedy, it would seem hard at times to find hope in those we look toward to become our future politicians, doctors, secretaries and esteemed burger-flippers. But what's done is done. Be thankful for what the departed have taught us and don't let the memories of them be in vain.

*This closet caste system we've got really kicks ass, don't you think, Karl?*

Cooper's Law: You can't change the past, but you can prevent it from consuming the future.

*That must be a damn hungry future.*

So what can children do? Nothing by themselves, and that is we come in. Give kids good things to emulate and they just might turn to good deeds instead of bad ones.

*Children are empty vessels, 'that is we come in.' Huh? I say stuff those kids with lovin' from the oven. I bet Albert Einstein's mom told him the whole theory of relativity over a nice plate of sauerbraten.*

Children have a right to their innocence. Give it back to them.

*Is that his closing? I'm sorry.*

# Gar

By John Hat



**HEY! Maybe you think you can write.  
Find out! Come to a Gracie's  
Dinnertime Theatre meeting! Saturdays  
at 2pm, Computer Science House  
lounge, 3rd Floor, Nathaniel Rochester  
Hall, RIT.**

## Journalistic Integrity

-Kelly Gunter

Over the summer I had the misfortune of learning first-hand what biased diatribes pass for the local news in the Rochester area. A story broke on Channel 13 News (WOKR) about a friend of mine.

There is some relevant background to this story: my friend was released from prison eight and a half years ago. The first time I met him was shortly after his release. I will not tell you that he had been falsely incarcerated or falsely accused. He had done some offensive things in his past. I'm not inclined to prattle on about the details, but suffice it to say he was a multiply convicted felon. A societal threat in his day.

However in the last leg of his incarceration a change had taken place. He was sick of his life and where it had led him. Wanting to make a difference, he attempted to help children growing up in similar situations to his own upbringing. He wanted to show them how to avoid making the same mistakes he had made. He sincerely wanted to make up for what he had done.

Over the last eight and a half years, he has done just that. He has worked through multiple organizations to help children in chaotic circumstances avoid taking the wrong road. He has also helped other convicted felons eschew a continued road of violence. He has even worked with the mayor on several projects. He has helped more people in this community than I can imagine. Just this summer he asked for my assistance in tutoring a couple of young high school students in math, to help them attain their degrees.

But, like most men with a past, he wonders if he's done enough. He often thinks he has not, and it has haunted him. An old compulsion of his has also been haunting him, a gambling problem. The kind of problem that can slowly, subtly creep out of control.

Recently he was experiencing some money problems. Debts were mounting from his gambling habit. His self esteem was falling as he tried to hide the truth from his friends, so they would not feel as disappointed in him as he felt in himself.

Everyone goes through hard times, everyone makes poor choices, everyone has to live with the consequences of those decisions, and yet those consequences should be within reason. My friend made a poor choice, drawing on his past in a time of trouble. He stole somebody's wallet in a grocery store, and got caught. When questioned by police, he denied nothing and confessed his actions.

The courts could go one of two routes: treat this behavior as a misdemeanor and give him a short prison sentence, or because of his prior record (twenty years prior) treat it as a felony conviction and give him a minimum of fifteen years to life imprisonment. I don't believe that my friend deserves to walk away without penalty. On the contrary, I believe a little punishment is important to remind him how fragile his current situation is, but let it be tempered with reason and not hysteria. Prior to the newscast given by Channel 13, it seemed the prosecutor in the case was inclined to be more lenient on my friend, because of his clean record for twenty years and his service to the community. After the broadcast, however, the political tide had turned and the prosecu-



tor would be shown publicly as being too soft on crime if he did not pursue a full felony sentence.

Channel 13 had taken this friend of mine and highlighted his prior criminal record and asked the question 'how?'. How could the mayor place a convicted felon in a position where he'd have access to children? The answer of course was that the kids found they could relate to his experiences and would listen to his warnings and advice. He's made a powerful difference for many children, showing them that they have more choices than it seems at first glance. This question Channel 13 asked was not the crux of their issue. They highlighted an incident from the past that was never even substantiated. This is where their integrity had faltered. This is where they took everything he had done in service for this community and vilified it.

There was a twenty year old incident in my friend's past in which two friends of his had assaulted a man. The man saw two of his assailants before he was blindfolded or otherwise made unable to view his attackers. He was beaten. When the police investigated, there was a charge of sodomy along with the assault. The victim accused many people of involvement in the attack, including my friend and the known assailants. He had implicated my friend simply because he had associated with the two assailants in the past. So my friend was charged for this assault.

At the same time that he was charged with this assault he was being accused of a much worse crime for which the sentence was pending. In order for it not to reflect badly upon this second case, he pleaded the assault down to a lesser charge and

accepted it. In the time preceding his sentencing the investigation into the assault determined that there was not enough evidence to sustain the victim's claims, and the case was thrown out. My friend, however, had already pleaded his assault charges down and was therefore unable to have it removed from his record.

So when Channel 13 learned of the "sodomy" charge, they pounced at the opportunity to set up a perfectly vile juxtaposition. They asked how the mayor could allow a convicted felon that had been accused of sodomy to work with children. The implication was, of course, child abuse and sexual misconduct, and this misinformation was accordingly well received by the viewing public.

I've learned that just after this "news article" aired, a mutual acquaintance of ours who had seen it, called up another and said that my friend had been arrested for rape. Rape? How does someone determine rape from a charge of purse snatching?

I'm sure that Channel 13 would defend itself by insisting that it had not said anything about rape and that it was the fault of this viewer who had merely assumed incorrectly. But I'm afraid I can't let them wriggle their way out of this situation that easily. You see, half of an article is what is said, and the other half is implied. Whether they say it or not, they made an irresponsible implication simply by how they sequenced their story and juxtaposed the available information. They implied child abuse and sexual abuse when they placed the word "sodomy" near the word "child." They drew a picture of a far worse crime neglecting to state what he had been initially arrested for and what

he was finally charged with. The world needs a fantastic story and what is not really in the story can be inferred to make it more colorful.

The only problem is that what they were colorfully slandering a man's life. A real man's life; not a story, not a scoop, not another dreg of humanity on which some aspiring reporter could climb to better fame for "protecting the community". They ruined my friend's life, they've torn at his spirit and his heart. He's lost his job, and he may lose the rest of his life to incarceration, because he made a mistake and someone at Channel 13 had a torch to bear.

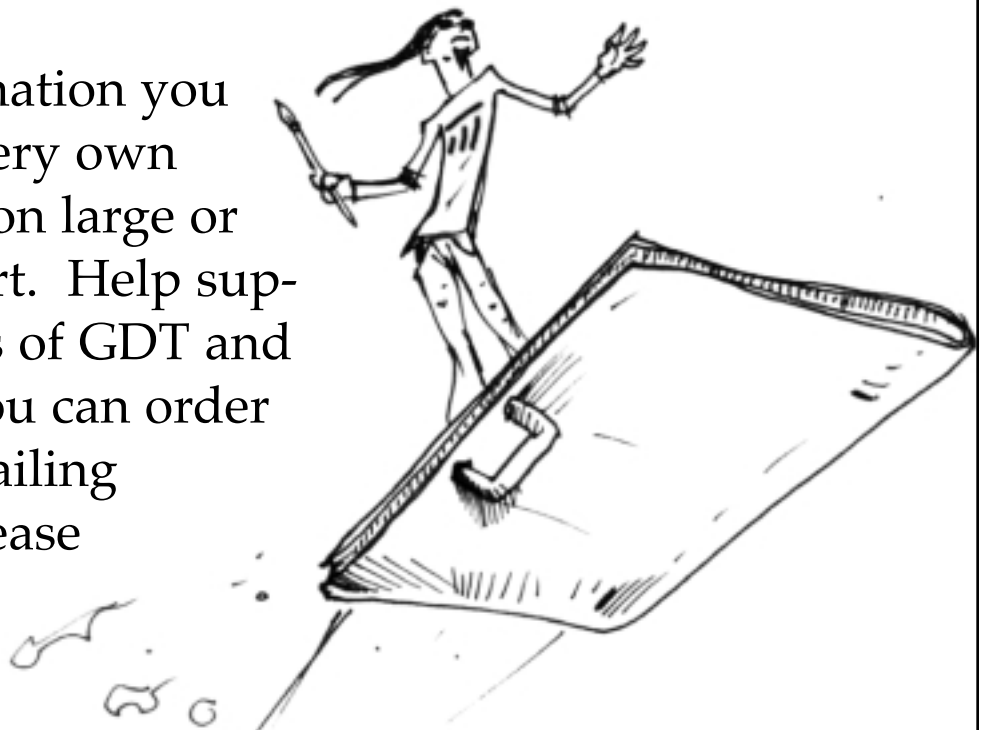
My friend is carrying on now, crutched by the help of his supporters. The prosecutor is fighting hard for a

felony charge because of the negative publicity brought by Channel 13. In recent days things have been looking a little better. The judge at one hearing had stated that he had never seen such an extraordinary public outpouring on the behalf of one man before. It is probably because such an extraordinary person seldom finds himself in such circumstances. In the mean time all of his friends are praying for a light sentence and reason to outweigh political game playing.

And to the members of Channel 13, I salute you. Your inquisitive nature and journalistic intuition has truly aided the people of this city. Now that you have destroyed one of Rochester's strongest role models, you can probably look forward to reporting more colorful, violent crimes.

## GD Tee-Shirts are back!

For only a \$10 donation you can have your very own *Flukemunschelfen* on large or extra-large tee-shirt. Help support future issues of GDT and Hell's Kitchen! You can order your shirt by mailing [gdt@iname.com](mailto:gdt@iname.com) please specify your desired size.



## Support the Arts