



Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

Volume 20, Issue 8, XUL
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The Magic Wondershow Presents Conversations with God

By Sean J. Stanley

Recent events have spurred many to reluctantly retreat into an introspective mode in order to come to terms with tragedy and loss. I find myself pondering the tangible evidence of something that can only be adequately described as the greatest comedian that ever existed. Evolution as a system is a truly ingenious idea, something that creationists always overlook in favor of pressing their literal tripe upon the masses. The masses are no better, having little concept of exactly how evolution functions beyond the notion of "survival of the fittest".

Granted, the salient nature of evolution is noteworthy, but the sheer hilarity of evolution lies in the randomness. Millions of years ago, the random marking on a butterfly's wings makes it less susceptible to predators and as a result, *Caligo* butterflies (among others) have two perfectly formed eyespots on either wing. The implications of this are staggering. After a bit of patient observation, one has to assume that God created evolution (and most everything else) for Its own personal amusement. It may have created the Heavens and the Earth because It was lonely and they were indeed good, but just as you or I would read a book or watch a film, God put Evolution in motion so there was something to watch on the day of rest.

Nature is full of things that indicate a higher force is at work, and that higher force is drunk about ninety percent of the time. From the beginning, it's pretty apparent that when God became bored with the banalities of Its work, It would sit and toss a comet or two at Earth just to mix it up a bit; tis a giant etch-a-sketch which requires shaking from time to time to keep things interesting. Australia had to be the result of some insane bender.

Evolution: Howabout an eight-foot tall rat that can jump high and has a pocket?

God(snorting a fat line): That's great. Give it some boxing gloves...

And as the duckbilled platypus (unequivocal proof that God is the life of the party) emerged from the billabong in search of things to kill itself with, God had gotten bored and moved on. The real fun began with the advent of humans, which are what you get when you slap thumbs and thought together.

Shit. What the hell are these things? And they've got thumbs? This ought to be entertaining.

Thoughts can evolve too. Memetics and such, Richard Dawkins type stuff. Where thought and biology meet, God gets the running jokes. Religious Celibacy! Esperanto! Women's "Liberation"!

And so God takes another hit and gets back to work, a stoned, omnipotent five year old playing "lets see what happens" but instead of feeding things into the VCR or garbage disposal, God decides to throw together conceptual elements, placing the thoughts of an individual against the dynamic background of group behavior. Consider if you will what you get when you combine mathematics with say...pedophilia? An overweight computer engineer beating it to Poltergeist is an acceptable result, although a more interesting answer is "Alice in Wonderland". Many enjoy the whimsy and wordplay of Carroll's seminal work, however most people don't realize the breadth of his other legacy. In addition to his literary creations, Lewis Carroll wrote numerous treatises on mathematics and symbolic logic under his real name, Reverend (I almost forgot that) Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, with titles like "A syllabus of plane algebraical geometry" (1860). From Alice:

"Contrariwise", said Tweedledee, "if it

was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be, but as it isn't, it 'aint. That's logic."

He also came up with the theory of proportional representation in politics and a slew of other things not entirely related to lost little girls eating mushrooms.

The tendency for one to view God as a benevolent overseer is annoying at best. Hindus almost have it right insofar as they recognize that deities can be both good natured as well as evil. Christian litany would be far more interesting if prayers like "Please Jesus, don't strike down my cow with lightning..." were introduced. Benevolence is boring and God knows that as he tosses the sheet of blotter acid into the punch and sits quietly on the sofa as things start to develop. A child in the throes of heuristic hysteria, God casually tosses things together, and makes careful note of things that don't, because they're funny. Good material, gotta work that bit into the act. Seatbelts work. Car seats work. Airbags kinda work. I know, howabout airbags _and_ car seats...

"God?"

<pause>

"What?"

"What are you doing?"

<splash, pause>

"Nothing."

"Are you in the tub again?"

<long pause>

"No."

"We've got three thousand penguins and four killer whales here, what the hell are you doing?"

<giggle>

"I've got the wino driving the supertanker..."

And don't think that death isn't funny. Death is the greatest joke of all. The build up is sound, the punchline is tried and true, it just depends on who's telling the joke. Humans have evolved some fucking hilarious ways to die: the guy who drowns in the pool on the Carnival Cruise ship, hunting accidents (drinking and hunting, what a sublime combination), top-

pling vending machines; consult the Darwin awards for more proof. There has got to be a guy in some GM plant somewhere running crash tests who loves his job and wishes that one day, one blessed day close to early retirement, that he could actually use human test subjects. His brother works at a morgue. His cousin is a doctor in a teaching hospital. If only he had that kind of access. And god loves to tempt. Even if he did cart a few cadavers into the high bay, he'd pay the price because God hates it when people steal its material; they always tell the joke wrong.

Hitler: So I've got about fifteen Jews, ok? And they're all lined up next to this pit, ok? Now I'm gonna shoot them with a rifle and we're gonna see how many this bullet can go through before it stops...

God: I've got a better one, but I won't tell you until your honeymoon.

Five miles from where I live there is a suburban town called Laurel. Its along US Route-1 and features a wide variety of flea markets, truck stops, industrial parks, and several dozen rent-by-the-hour motels. Within this picturesque snapshot of Americana (remember what we're fighting for), the following incident happened: Two weeks ago, right as the dastardly Anthrax threat was churning to the surface the dull-witted curds from the American whey, a mail carrier noticed that a letter had torn open and was leaking a strange white powder. Fearing the worst, he stumbled about the neighborhood, banging on doors and requesting from the terrified inhabitants a bag or other suitable container in which to deposit the bleeding package. Needless to say, his inquiries were met with hostility and had the powder been Anthrax spores, he would have been quite effective as a vector, spreading the powder over several lawns, across busy streets, and into the air as he ran around, not to mention his visit to a local restaurant before noticing the letter was damaged. After the police and hazmat teams arrived and cordoned off the entire neighborhood, the powder was tested. It bore little resemblance to Anthrax, however a trusty narcotics field test showed that it did look a lot like \$50,000 worth of uncut cocaine. The incident gave me several minutes of hard laughter, so I can only imagine what sort of amusement God had watching the hasmat crews scurry about, sweeping up powder residue, taking statements from the gun toting, trailer

bound locals, and handling the barrage of angry telephone calls reporting the ordeal. Meanwhile, in Baltimore, locals spoke with the news affiliates about “Amtracks” and how they were protecting themselves.



Lest we not forget this image, which came about wholly from an act of god, sacrosanct synchronous serendipity from the man upstairs. Bert IS evil.

And what of this scenario:

“Man, those summer tour series sucked. The Warp Tour? The HORDE Tour? Every goddamn alternative music radio station has their version of a summer concert festival and they all suck. I tell you what I want, can we get some of the old names together with the new guys?”

“Like who, God?”

“Oh, I don’t know. Paul McCartney, David Bowie, Billy Joel. Oooh! What about Billy Joel versus Elton John. We could set up two pianos, give them crazy hats, the whole shebang, it’d be like

a Franz Liszt thing!”

“I don’t know about that. I don’t think they’re on the same record label.”

“Make it happen. And get Michael Jackson, James Taylor, and those guys that sing that song about Superman in on it.”

“But...”

“Fine. I’ll arrange it myself. I tipped the security guys at United Airlines.”

“You didn’t tip them, you paid them minimum wage!”

“Yeah but check this out. Got these two planes, right? Stop me if you’ve heard this one...”

Christopher Hitchens, author and columnist, recently made the poignant observation that the ends quite often are the means. The weapons in the 9/11 attacks were planes full of civilians. The targets were buildings full of civilians. The greatest “God Jokes” have this exquisite sardonic bend. That in mind, there is an interesting phenomenon that continues to boggle evolutionary researchers, linguists, and cognitive scientists alike. It is how the stages of human development mirror the stages of human evolution. Just as our ancestors are believed to have emerged from the sea, conquering a few million years in order to walk upright, a child begins life-breathing fluid. Birth leads to a phase of life in which the child crawls on all fours. Crawling leads to walking, Nevermind the babbling that segues into language and expression. God created us in Its own image, did he not? Still, the concept of “god” much to Nietzsche’s dismay, doggedly refuses to evolve.

Perhaps the ultimate joke.

SUBMIT.

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EXPOSE: Single Girls Exist At RIT

By Beck

What? There are single girls at RIT? You're kidding right? Honestly, I think most guys don't realize we exist. I've met plenty of "nice" guys, who complain about how they can't get a girlfriend. What really ticks me off is when they complain about this problem to their single female friends.

A thousand times I've seen it. Guys whose hearts are supposedly overflowing with love, falling at the feet of a bleached blond who's wearing gap clothes and is exhausted from all the male attention she gets, while ordinary girls look on in disgust. Guys claim not to care about outfits, not to like girls who wear make-up, or spend an hour in the bathroom, or diet. You really don't care you say? Prove it. Smile at the girl who rolled out of bed and threw on her clothes in a hurry just like you did. By the way, the next time you have a great female friend, maybe you should do something about it before she goes to some jerk who'll pay attention to her. The horndogs are willing to be friendly to shy girls, why do so many of the "nice" guys only see snotty fashion plates?

If you really want to try to pick up a girl on campus without seeming creepy, don't pester the beauties. They've gotten tired of guys looking at them and it does begin to creep them out. If you are trying to pick up on a really gorgeous girl, talk to her about a com-

mon interest, she might appreciate an interesting discussion as a nice break from pick-ups. However, I don't suggest this, since they're not often single.

Instead, get out of your room, study on campus instead. Next time an ordinary girl stops and tries to make conversation with you, follow up on it. You might as well suggest a cup of coffee at Wally's or Crossroads. If someone wanders through the cafeteria and there aren't any free tables, offer a chair at yours. By the way, don't waste so much time worrying. If you smiled at that girl in English class, instead of throwing worried furtive glances her way, or staring at her nervously, she would probably be flattered, not freaked. Ask for (or offer) some help with a class. If you're really curious what she thinks of you, or whether there's a boyfriend back home, ask. Long evening talks over coffee/dessert/homework provide great chances for odd questions like that.

So, here's my challenge to all the "nice" single guys: consider, have you actually been nice?

So, here's my challenge to all the "nice" single guys: consider, have you actually been nice? Is the real reason that you don't have a girlfriend that you're casually ignoring nice girls? Is it because the mind games you play are as nasty as the "pretty-boy assholes" that your female friends choose over you? This is another very commonly ignored problem. If either of these are the cause, apologizing can change a lot. Oh, and if the problem is just that you're freaked out by talking to girls, please take pity on us. Toss a smile, help us out. Some of us are lonely too.

The Bushpass Filter

By Rocko Bonaparte

Seldom does the liberal arts and technology work well together. This is worst in politics. Engineers lack the social flare to understand what it's all about to be a politician, even if they have sharp political views. One of the setbacks comes from empty political speech. Sure, engineers start every sentence with "basically," but their use of empty filler is nothing compared to a career politician's. Saying much of nothing is the trademark of a shrewd political mind. One cannot get into any trouble due to their mouth if one's mouth is empty.

G. W. Bush is no exception. Engineers rapidly washed him off as "stupid" upon first impressions. This is normal for the engineer, because the engineer washes everybody off as stupid. However, engineers everywhere have been baffled with what exactly makes G. W. seem so simple-minded. Much dialog has been exchanged in private, designs have been scribbled on the back of cocktail napkins, and many late nights have been devoted to the problem.

One theory was that G. W. Bush is rather intelligent, but his mouth dispels such a preconception. It was then concluded it was Bush's political language that was at the heart of his perceived stupidity. Engineers cringe and change the channel when G. W.

speaks on TV. It's just that hard to listen to.

Fortunately, a solution has been found amongst digital signal experts. A group of engineers with experience in filters applied their knowledge to Bush's speech patterns. Coupled with some linguists, psychologists, and the Inconspicuous Can of Beer™, they developed the "Bushpass" filter.

Basic filter theory revolves around frequency and phase attenuations. The Bushpass filter is much more complicated, and is based neither in the t-domain, s-domain, or z-domain. Rather, as a mathematician puts it, it revolves around "p-domain," better known as the "political domain." Transfer functions for such filters are modeled using p-variables, which are subsets of frequency and phase. The subsets are complicated by their dependence on the partials composing human speech, English and political dialog.

P-domain filter design is still limited to passive systems that require all the input to be available at once. In other words, no real-time filters have yet been designed using the methodology. Part of the problem is because of dependence in the obscure field of "reverse speech." Linguists argue that a reverse sample of human speech reveals the subconscious messages being communicated from the messenger. To be able to use this successfully, the whole speech segment has to be available from the onset. This is an acceptable constraint – it is fine enough to feed the filter a sound byte.

To an extent, p-domain filters can be modeled using "poles and zeroes," akin to their conventional counterparts. Engineers have made the filters stronger by using additional poles and zeroes, a typical practice. The resulting circuits can be quite a mess. Thank God for dedicated digital signal processors.

Included in this report is a sample from the "Bushpass filter." It is designed to allow only components of G. W. Bush's genuine message to be "passed through" while all the political jargon is removed. The filter becomes more effective as more poles are added to it. Included is sample output for variations of the Bushpass filter.

A sample, from http://www.krr.org/archive/gwbush_-_address_to_nation-september_11.html

Original G. W. Bush speech (input):

[omitted for space – it's at the URL above, but you probably know it anyway.]

Output from 2-pole Bushpass filter:

Good evening.

Today our way of life came under attack through a series of terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes and offices — secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil acts of terror.

The images of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger.

These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot shake American resolve.

America was targeted because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. No one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw the very worst of human nature, and we responded with the very best of America.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans.

Our emergency teams are working in New York City, and Washington, D.C., to help with local rescue efforts. Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to protect our citizens' home and abroad from further attacks.

Our government continues without interruption. Federal agencies that had to be evacuated today will be open for normal business tomorrow. The American economy will be open for business as well.

I've directed the full resources of intelligence gathering and law enforcement to find those responsible, and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts, and those who harbor them.

I appreciate the members of Congress who have

joined me in condemning these attacks. Also, on behalf of the American People, I thank the world leaders who have called to offer their condolences, and assistance.

America, and our friends and allies stand together to win the war against terrorism.

This is a day when all Americans unite for justice and peace.

America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day, but we will go forward to defend freedom, and all that is good in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

The 2-pole output is not much different from the original. Plenty of dry speech continues to pass through to the output. The advantage of the filter is that it's cheap, and it affects the output enough that an engineer would actually listen to a G.W. sound bite afterwards.

Output from 4-pole Bushpass filter:

Good evening.

Today we came under attack from terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes and offices — secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers. Thousands of lives were ended by acts of terror.

The images of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, buildings collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, sadness, and an unyielding anger.

These acts were intended to frighten our nation, but they have failed. Terrorist attacks cannot shake American resolve.

America was targeted because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world.

Today, our nation saw the worst of human nature, and we responded with the best of America.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans.

Our emergency teams are working in New York City, and Washington, D.C., to help with local rescue efforts. Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to protect our citizens' home

and abroad from further attacks.

Our government continues uninterrupted. Evacuated Federal agencies will be open for normal business tomorrow. The American economy will be open for business as well.

I've directed all intelligence and law enforcement resources to find those responsible, and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts, and those who harbor them.

I appreciate the members of Congress who joined me in condemning these attacks. Also, on behalf of all Americans, I thank the world leaders who offered their condolences, and assistance.

America and our allies stand together to win the war against terrorism.

This is a day when all Americans unite for justice and peace.

America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will forget this day. We will go forward to defend all that is good in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

This is slightly better, but the underlying message is still heavily camouflaged. Note that the line "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts, and those who harbor them" continues to pass through. That is because this is a very strong statement.

Output from 8-pole Bushpass filter:

Good evening.

We came under attack from terrorists. The victims were in airplanes and offices. Thousands of lives were ended by acts of terror. The images have filled us with disbelief, sadness, and an unyielding anger.

These acts intended to frighten our nation, but failed. Our nation saw the worst of human nature, and we responded with the best of America.

After the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our emergency teams are helping in New York City and Washington, D.C. First, we must help those who have been injured,

and protect our citizens from further attacks.

Our government and economy continues uninterrupted.

I've directed all resources to bring those responsible to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts, and those who harbor them.

I appreciate those joined me in condemning these attacks. On behalf of all Americans, I thank those who offered their condolences. America and our allies stand together.

This is a when all Americans unite.

America has stood down enemies before. None of us will forget this day. We will go forward.

Thank you. Good night.

Now this is the stuff. Good, clear output. Some of the message seems crude, but that's a side effect of the Bushpass filter. One may argue this is becoming closer to engineering speech. However, note that there is no use of the word "basically." That immediately disqualifies it from engineering speech.

Output from 16-pole Bushpass filter:

Terrorists attacked us. We're sad but angered, but not frightened. America is responding with it's

best. I implemented our emergency plans. We must help the victims and protect our citizens. Our government and economy have not been disrupted. Everything is being done to bring the terrorists to justice. On behalf of all Americans, I thank all who offered condolences. This will not stop us.

This is close to how Sept. 11 will be mentioned in a 2150 U.S. history book. Basically, change to a narrative perspective and it would be perfect.

Output from 32-pole Bushpass filter:

Please like me.

Ah-ha! The truth has been found! This is the fundamental force that drives G.W. Isn't it cute? We wondered if our own speech has the same undertone. More experiments need to be conducted. This would expand p-domain to include engineers, and eventually all English speakers. There is some potential in this field . . .

It is speculated that a 64-pole Bushpass filter would result in the sound of random giggles. This could not be proven without using more powerful digital signal processors. This doesn't matter much, since the message becomes rapidly attenuated at 16 poles. Any readers interested in more sample output from the Bushpass filter should write Rocko Bonaparte at rockobonaparte@hotmail.com.

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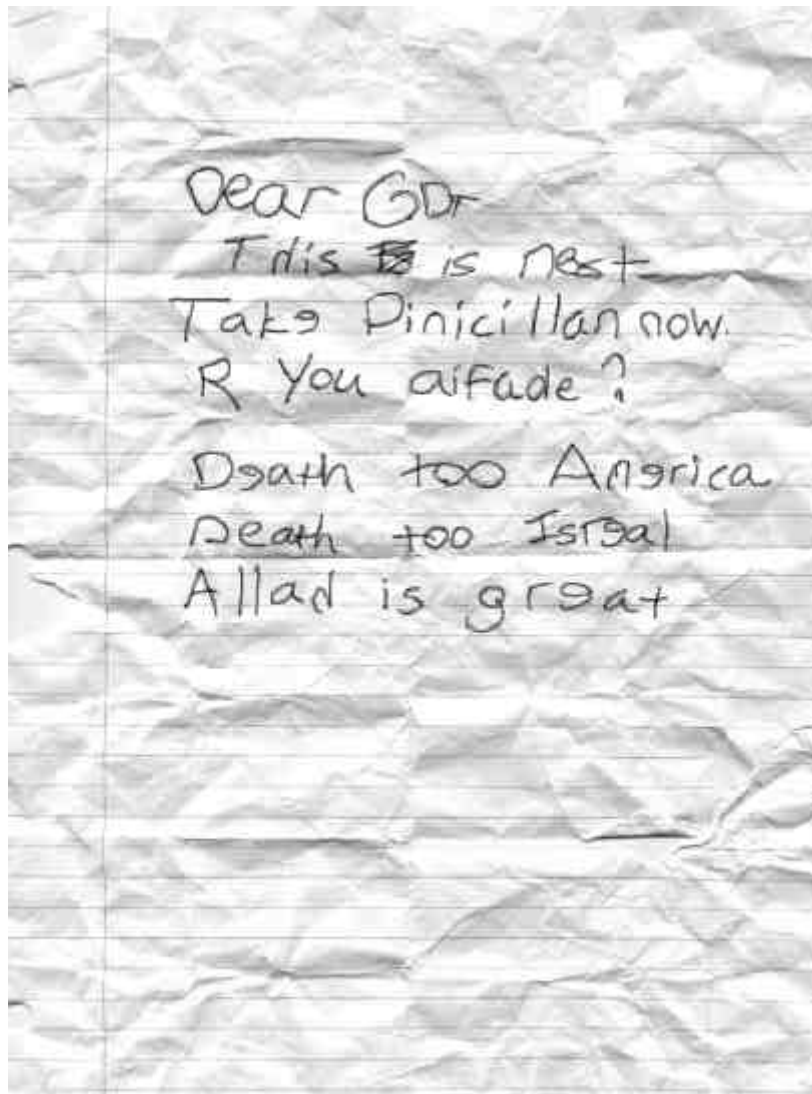
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Food For Thought
By Andrew J. Graves

I heard something on the radio a couple weeks ago that I thought was very relevant to the terrorist attacks. So, to all you *GDT* readers out there, here is some Gracie's food for thought... In 1992 Bill Clinton was elected as President. Through his two-term presidency, the Clinton Administration, as well as 18 state governments, have invested millions of dollars and priceless amounts of time to prosecute Bill Gates and his Microsoft Corporation in the world-famous antitrust case. Also during the Clinton Administration, Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization made several terrorist attacks, including the 1993 bombing of the World

Trade Center, the al-Qaeda assistance to warlords during the Somalia crisis¹, the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing that killed 19 American servicemen, the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa, and the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000. In response, Clinton fired off a few Tomahawk cruise missiles and destroyed a couple empty tents and maybe a camel. Two very wealthy men. One manufactures cheap software and gives to charities. The other is a murderer, a conspirator of mass destruction, and a terrorist. So why did Clinton spend so much time worrying about Bill Gates instead of Osama bin Laden? And the most important question of all - If Clinton had put a little more effort in capturing Osama bin Laden, could the tragedy of September 11th been avoided completely? Enjoy your lunch.

¹ Which, by the way, included the downing of two U.S. Blackhawk helicopters and the killing of 18 American soldiers, whose bodies were dragged through the streets by al-Qaeda extremists.



The Erection of a New College

By Joe Allen

The story begins to some degree at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new COC (pronounced ‘Cock’ or to evade censors ‘Cawk’). What is COC? COC is the greatest thing ever to come across our beloved campus since the smoothie bar. The College of Computing (Known by ‘officials’ as the Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences, but once a COC always a COC) is being built on funds donated by Rochester’s favorite philanthropist Thomas Golisano (second only to the respected Robert Ontario). So now it comes to pass that we must open another building with someone’s name on it (which in all fairness means it’s his. Can’t argue with that logic). This process includes, among some Irish rituals, an opening ceremony fit for a king, or at least anyone in a suit.

Let me tell you my brothers this ceremony was full of neat things to take. Pens, notepads, pens, key chains, and most importantly, lunch. Once you negotiated your way around the bigwigs, there was a feast to behold. Grapes, cheese, bread, meats and hell, even the tables were edible. It was like a surreal dream of generosity, even if for that brief moment. At the other side of the tent, (past the waterslides and the clowns) you could vote for the shape of the COC’s logo. These had to be submitted by future members of COC, all which have no artistic talent whatsoever (when you spend your time slaving over the lords of the CS department, use case diagrams are about as pretty as you’re going to get). As the ground for COC was being broken by it’s founders and thus ushering a new age of freedom and peace in the world, my compatriot and I were gazing at the most wonderful of God’s cre-



From The GDT Mail Bag – Snippets to the Editor

“You think RIT *Reporter* sucks? Try reading the RIT Pravda without retching in disgust. It should be called News, Events, and Propaganda.” – Dmitriy Shnyder

ations. We saw amazing curves, and a voluptuous backside. Surely this was the single most beautiful being in the land. It called out to us in its fiery orange sweetness, and we were drawn to it like a film student to Brian O’Hallaran. We knew we had to get it, and nothing would stop us in our goal. We looked that two foot pumpkin in the eye, and it gazed lovingly back at us. As applause cheered from the tent that covered the young COC, we carried our liberated pumpkin through the vast empty reserved parking spaces with tears in our eyes (there was a small dust storm). Sure, many won’t be around when COC is completed, but oh my brothers, let us never forget the true beginning of COC, for surely free pumpkins will come to those who believe.

COC is more than just a building. When COC is finished we will flip off the dark College of Business and the sinister College of Science and run free in our own land. No longer will we be outcasts and refugees! We need COC now more than ever. Our COC will dwarf your puny colleges with its might. It shall extend to the length of a football field, and be a beacon of hope to my people. There will be Java fountains made of the sweetest compiled code (by now, the music should reach its climax). We will bask into the glory of Sun. The COC will attract girls as far as you can C. Our flag will be raised on high, and like an assertion it will stop everyone in their tracks.

So here I sit dreaming my little dream and thinking my little thoughts. I sip my mountain dew and lean back. Yes, there will be others structures built. We will gaze upon other new buildings, and even a 1.5 million dollar phallic symbol, but I know when I gaze at my large red COC covered in pure white snow I will say “I was there, bitch.”

“When did it become a crime to have a dirty mind?”
– Adam Preble

“Don’t worry too much about ... fucking God ... perilously ... for most of the last week - seems we are granted some leeway ... be aware that ... both are the path to more betterness. Have a nice day.” – GDT Staff

Three Simple Ways To Appease People & Destroy Terrorism

By Andrew J. Graves

You know...I was doing some thinking the other day about why the Middle East hates the United States. To find the answer, I turned to the always-reliable [RIT] *Reporter*. Hmm. "The United States always has it's nose in other people's business." Ok, now let's analyze the problems of the United States and these plaintiff countries.

1. Stop bin Laden.

I actually had a friend recommend this one. Since al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden are MUSLIM extremists, we know several things about them. Firstly, their religion dictates that pigs are sacred animals. Now, here's the plan...we take some All American country grown pigs and fly them over to Afghanistan. Pinpoint an al-Qaeda stronghold. Let the pigs run amok through their camp. In the confusion, send in Seal Team 6, the Army Rangers, Delta Force, and whoever else we have, and then there is no more al-Qaeda. As a side effect, the U.S. government investment in pigs will help out the economy, and all non-Islamic Afghanis can have food to keep them from starving in the winter!

2. End U.S. influence in the Middle East.

Why does the United States always have its nose over in the Middle East? Did we care about the Kuwaitis during the Gulf War? Hell no...to put it bluntly, we are greedy bastards. Here is a simple logic proof -

Saddam Hussein hates us

Kuwait likes us (kinda)

Kuwait has oil (lots)

We need oil

Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait

THEREFORE: Oil go bye bye

SOLUTION: Bomb Iraq into the stone age

The ONLY thing keeping the United States' nose in the Middle East is oil. One unlikely solution is that OPEC will give us free oil and we'll never have to worry about it. The other solution is that the United States places a greater emphasis on developing other portable energy sources to run our cars, etc. If we no longer need oil, we no longer need the Middle East. Other countries also find alternative energy solutions...soon nations that rely on oil production no longer get any money... their economy goes in the shitter... and so on. So, to the complaining nations in the Middle East, look at it this way - either the United States is always in your business, or you go out of business.

3. End financial assistance.

Ok, so we're greedy bastards. But we're also pretty damn nice. Sure, we may reduce your country to complete rubble, but then we'll build you back up out of the kindness in our hearts. Look at Germany and Japan from World War II. Yes we killed many people and used atomic warheads. But we were at war. After winning the war, however, we rebuild the two nations, and now they have two of the strongest economies in the world. We also give out a pretty big chunk of change in financial assistance to many of these poor countries. Remember the next time that the Taliban defies a U.S. demand to turn over bin Laden that last year alone Afghanistan received \$125 million from the U.S. Many other anti-U.S. governments also received economic help. To all those countries that just want the U.S. to butt out of their business, that burn representations of our American flag that so many of our ancestors, family, and friends are fighting for, remember this - if the United States leaves you alone, you will have nothing. And when you're in dire straits, don't come looking to us for help.

The Diary of a Jai #2 ½
By Jai Ramachandran

I was going to write about how my weekend sucked, and why I hated my job (I don't really hate my job, but I like to bitch) but then I read a news story Monday morning. Keep in mind that I am fairly liberal so liberal in fact that my fiancée frequently calls me "one of those pinko fags" (she has no problems with gay people, her best friend is gay, she just knows that when she calls me gay I get defensive. She calls me a pinko and a fag, but usually not at the same time. I thought I'd clear that up). Also keep in mind that I support the military involvement we currently have in Afghanistan, and I think the men and women serving there are doing a great job. My problem is simple; I think that the people who run our armed forces are complete fucking morons. In case you didn't catch that M-O-R-O-N-S. Case in point, I read a quote by Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary of Defense) that read "we are engaged in a military exercise of self-defense." Don't get me wrong I don't nit pick on every quote I see, but this seemed too easy. I just don't see how attacking another country, across the globe is "self defense". I agree that it will prevent further attacks, but its still not self-defense. Period.

After reading this interesting quote, I went searching from some more equally intelligent quotes (hell maybe I'd stumble onto Bush talking about limiting our freedom...AGAIN), and I found this: "India's Defense Minister George Fernandes, who has been quoted as calling the U.S. bombing raids in Afghanistan a 'waste of explosives'." That had to be the highlight of my Monday morning. I've always supported the fact that we are attacking Afghanistan's leaders; I just never supported how we're going about doing things. I also don't understand this, when we aren't in a wartime situation, we claim that we could hit a dime on the ground from a jet with a bomb, but now that we're actually in a war we're "accidentally" hitting civilian targets. WHAT!?!?!?!?!?! The government can't have it both ways; you can't be deadly accurate at one moment and blind as a bat the next moment. And what about this technology that claims to be able to see the date on a dime from space, why cant w find bin Laden with that, it's not like bombing them is exactly working right now.

Of course I am not one of those complete fucking idiots who thinks we should let the UN deal with this matter. This how a conversation with the Taliban and UN negotiators would go:

UN Peacekeeper: Give us bin Laden and we'll put him on trial.

Taliban: DIE YOU INFIDEL NON-MUSLIM UNHOLY BASTARDS, I HOPE

YOU BURN IN HELL, PRAISE THE LORD AND LET HIM BE WITH

US IN THIS JIHAD.

UN Peacekeeper: Fine.

Maybe that was a bit extreme, but I included the three main points of every speech I've seen on TV made by Osama bin Laden. 1) Include something about Americans being Unholy. 2) Say praise the lord at least once. 3) Mention a Jihad (I'm pretty sure he doesn't even know what a Jihad is, but that's besides the point.) This seems very similar to me, to a "religious leader" right here in our own country. What you say, who is this masked assassin, who is this unholy non-Christian terrorist. Well, its everyone's favorite minister Jerry Fallwell. The three main points of Jerry Fallwell's speeches are: 1) Include something about non-Christians being unholy. 2) Say praise the lord multiple times. 3) Mention God's divine intervention to rid the world of "All those gay people". Seems pretty similar to me, or maybe I am missing something. Does this mean that all Christians are gay bashers because Jerry Fallwell is a gay basher, no, but for some reason there are some extremely dumb Americans who think that because Osama bin Laden attacked Americans, and is Muslim, that all Muslims must hate Americans (not true, no matter what they say on TV).

This week's issue of Newsweek (the November 12th issue) has the headline "Generation 9-11: Terror, War and Recession Hit home on Campus". That's supposed to us, I think. I'm not really sure, I can't see through the marketing blitz. What was once a tragedy is now a money making machine. If you don't believe me, go to any mall across America and look at the number of stores selling red, white and blue flags or t-shirts (I know they are being patriotic but please). They ask us how we deal with these things, while trying to sell us the same retrodden t-shirts they sold the "generation X" college kids in the nineties, except now they have a new slogan. I don't mean to shove my political beliefs in people's faces, but when did this tragedy stop being a tragedy, and start becoming a marketing campaign.

Why is it necessary for the media to label everything? From the time this event started they have been

showing us their fancy logos with the words “America Under Attack”, “America Strikes Back”, “Bush Speaks” I half expect them to have one soon enough “Tom Brokaw sticks nose a bit too far up Bush’s ass” but I don’t think we will ever see that kind of honesty in journalism. Now for some fun quotes from the past little bit of time (I didn’t have any last week, and I wasn’t writing articles for a little bit so there will be a few older ones):

“If the American government adopts policies based on principles of justice and equality, Osama bin Laden will be finished, wiped out politically and ideologically. But if you are going to eliminate him physically through modern weapons, you will not be able to eliminate him politically and ideologically.” - H. Mir

“According to the annual survey of college freshman conducted by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, only 28.1 percent of last year’s freshman class reported following politics, compared with a high of 60.3 percent in 1966” – B. Kantrowitz (from the before mentioned Newsweek article.)

“Almost everyone at Kappa Alpha Theta sorority

house feels vulnerable on a campus where safety was taken for granted” – B. Kantrowitz

The quotes will continue but I had to comment on this, I knew the girls in sororities were brain-dead, but this is ridiculous. The only reason any of those idiots were “scared” was cause they wanted their prissy little pictures in Newsweek (half of the page the quote is on, page 51 for all of you Newsweek readers). I’m sure they would be much more concerned if it happened at their school, and not in some far off and distant corner of the country. I would continue, but I am already rambling. A few more quotes, and then I’ll shut up for this week.

“When they attack us, it is terrorism. When we retaliate it is a warranted tactical maneuver. When they respond to their retaliation it is again terrorism.” – Anonymous

“This is an evil man that we’re dealing with, and I wouldn’t put it past him to develop evil weapons to try to harm civilization as we know it,” Bush told reporters at the White House. (Bush speaking about Bill Gates)

House of Fun – Part VI

By Rich DeTommaso

Fuck dreams, I’m starting to hate trees. The flesh is tender around the serrated edges of the gash encompassing the top third of my right arm, which, by the way, is now crawling with maggots. The interesting thing about maggots is they will only eat away the rotten flesh. Or at least that’s what I was told. Sage advice from one of the myriad of walking encyclopedias that I went to school with.

The best words of wisdom I ever received, believe it or not, were from a teacher. It was during high school. Well, one of them. The schools, that is. We walked down the ancient hallways, stirring up the dust that once so simply laid in the corners, but now dance and stir with life... Some teacher, who was more of a friend to me than a teacher, said to me, just before he entered his class, “Don’t fuck with the Bullshit.”

I wish I had listened. I was young. I didn’t give two shits about what someone twice my age was telling me. Come to think about it, what do you really know? You’re schooled for years and years, listening to professors and doctors speaking affluently with their superior diction. But what do you really learn? After twelve or thirteen years of elementary school, countless additional years of college schooling, all you can honestly say you’ve learned

are half-truths. It’s always been like this. For once, I want the whole story. Complete. Unedited. Untweaked. Real.

Life.

Death.

It’s all the same if you’re ignorant.

In a bathroom in some liquor store, I remember seeing, scribbled in the usual half-assed manner, on one of the walls, “What do you think about Western Civilization?”

Underneath it, scrawled in a neat, capitalized print, “I think it would be a good idea.”

It’s amazing what you find written on the walls of liquor stores, gas stations, highway rest stops or any other public restroom. In fact, I bet that Prof. What’s-His-Name’s inspirational quote came from the mind of someone taking a crap. Sure, ignorance is bliss, but so is sex.

Jesus, I can’t even remember the last time I had sex; it was so many years ago. When you live a sheltered life, tucked away in some cube farm, the details of life pass you by. It’s just the same shit, but it’s also the same toilet, and I’m out of TP. You see, someday, I’m going to die. You’re going to die. But at least I know that I’ve gotten away from “the Bullshit.”

Samhain

By Gary Hoffmann

It was Samhain – the transition day between the old year and the new (yes, I celebrate Samhain; yes, it is a pagan holiday; no, I do not pronounce it “**sa-mayn**” – eat that Campus Crusade for Christ). It was also the night of the full moon, and unseasonably warm. Around midnight the moon was high and the sky was clear – the moon had a halo, a wide, hazy, glowing ring surrounding Diana’s face. It’s not something I haven’t seen before, but that night it looked magical, a gateway to another world shining feebly in the sky. Thanks to my brother, I know the halo is caused by microscopic ice crystals floating high in the atmosphere, refracting the light rather similarly in fashion to its better known prismatic cousin, but I don’t think about this at the time (arbitrary tense transition as my consciousness traverses from the realm of merely memory to the actual past, and I begin reliving the event, rather than just picturing it in my mind – drugs are useful for introspection).

Instead I ponder while gazing upon the infinite purplish cosmos – a shooting star flies from Orion’s bow and hits the horsehead nebula in preparation for a feast on Jupiter’s moons (Iapetus, that malicious orb, is staring at me). I reflect upon another rejection that took place not hours before and then rationalize that I didn’t really know her and she wasn’t my type and she’d never understand why I admire Orr so much and want to be George Dorn so she’s not worth my time, but we’ll still be friends. If this is my fate, I decide, so be it. As the serenity of the night surrounds me and faeries dance on my moonshadow and a thousand sprites smile at me invisibly from the trees I become accepting, or apathetic perhaps.

Wanderlust finds me then, and I start walking. Streets dissolve into each other like faces in a crowded room – each unique but all the same – and time disappears like a cheap whore when she’s done felling an easily satisfied and wholly unimaginative client. The moonlight makes the streetlights superfluous and lends a diffuse paleness to the world – not the paleness of the sick, but of lovers who spend too much time indoors and children who are too young or too old to enjoy the sun. The world is comfortable with nightly endeavors, shunning any possibility of the sun ever returning.

The moon is music – a haunting melody from a distant past, nostalgic harmonies that play softly in the background and remind me of dead friends and forgotten lovers. My thoughts drift and all is fog and mist as I allow starshadows and Discord to guide me until I arrive at the avenues and boulevards of six years ago – there is my high school and here is the diner we once spent hours of wasted time in, solving the problems of the world and our own tiny lives with equal ease.

I go inside to find the same Greek waitresses still working there, but don’t remember me or the boy I once was. I sit down at a booth in the smoking section – O, how my convictions have changed; there was a time I looked upon those seated here with disgust, knowing well that I would never be among them, I was better than that – and take out a cigarette. I don’t actually smoke, but I intend to order coffee, and somehow it just seems wrong to ponder over life’s irrelevancies in a tiny diner over a cup of hot, black coffee without a cigarette in hand, or at least not when it’s this late at night. Call me pretentious – I prefer to think of it as searching for an epiphany. That’s ultimately what I’m always trying to find, an epiphany, the epiphany, when everything, every microscopic element of the cosmic equation will fall together into a singularity of perfection and stay that way, instead of falling back apart as quickly as it came like it always has before.

The coffee arrives. Coffee always keeps me up later than I intend to, disallowing me sleep while draining me of energy, but at this point I don’t really care if I stay up any later . . . hey, how late is it? Jesus, I must’ve walked farther or more slowly than I thought. What’s a little caffeine going to do, then?

“What are you reading?”

Hmm? Oh, I hadn’t realized I was reading anything. A book that I’d forgotten I had with me has found its way into my hands, and is disgorging its contents into my brain, which I forgot to bring. It was a small book, full of underlinings and notes in the margins. *73 Poems*, by ee cummings. I bought it used for a quarter two years ago, but all of the marks and scribbles are my doing. I keep it with me partly because ee cummings is my favorite poet and partly because I hope some gorgeous girl will notice and ask me what I’m reading.

“It’s a book of poetry.” I hand it to her – she’s

sitting at the table across from me – because I don't feel like explaining too much, and maybe she'll see how much I've written inside it, the scrawlings of some poetic genius, perhaps, and she'll think I'm some great writer myself: angstful, brooding, but darkly charming in a not-quite-definable way.

Yes, I think about these things, but for a moment all thoughts vanish as I get a good look at the face that belongs to the voice, but claims no ownership of it. I could describe to you what she looked like; I could tell you of every detailed perfection and every contrasting imperfection, imperfections that make her real, human, and thus that much more beautiful. But I won't describe these to you, because it doesn't matter, and in this moment I realize it.

She hands the book back after briefly perusing it, moves herself to my table to sit facing me, and then proceeds not to tell me her name. Neither do I ask, but I would guess it to be something that suggests Kat as a nickname, just because I know so many. Introductions seem unnecessary and vaguely disrespectful, some things that belong to different people at a different time, but we do not need to bother with. We've never met, but we know each other, and we agreed beforehand to meet here for coffee, old friends returning after a long – far too long – separation.

In our firm commitment to our loyal readers, we offer the following addendum to the policies of *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*, as well as an announcement or two.

Submissions received without a real name will not be printed.

While pseudonyms often find their way into our pages, we dislike the fact that most of the submissions we've received this year have come from anonymous sources. It is getting to the point where the staff cannot keep track of who's who.

If you have submitted this year (or have been thinking about it), realize this: you should be proud of your work. At the same time we feel that a writer should stand behind his/her writing, or else what is the point?

For every person who dislikes your writing there will be countless others who will come up to you and tell

I don't know where we are. We searched around for a place neither of us had seen before, and we seem to have found it. We're underneath a bridge, standing on some railroad tracks. Occasionally a car will pass overhead, sending dim, low vibrations into our valley. The cars could just as easily be drunks coming home late from a party as they could be men and women with early jobs: garbagemen and postal workers, paperboys and radio personalities. I notice the weeds that grow up the hills on either side of us, and love them because they are not grass that's been sprayed down and forced to grow. They are alive through their own will, their own fertility, their own vitality.

In the dim light of the full moon, nearing the end of its journey, and I feel the night's sorcery slowly waning, and time fighting to return. I begin to feel old again, mortal, and immensely transitory. But the morning has not yet come, Diana is not yet asleep, and for the briefest speck of God's eternity the entire world is ours, and we are free.

I still don't know her name, and as Dawn awoke I became filled with doubt that I'd ever see her again, but as we watched the sun rise and spill out reality onto the earth I thanked her, and left my demons there to rot as I walked silently home.

you how much they agree with you, and how glad they are that you wrote in. Rarely (if ever) have any of the *GDT* writers received nasty threats due to our writing.

Also bear in mind that exceptions will be made for those writers who have been writing for an extended period of time, whose pen-names are synonymous with a particular writing style.

Mistakes/Retractions

Two weeks ago, we printed "I Need To Get Laid" by Josh Brown. Unfortunately Josh didn't write it – Gary Hoffmann did. We offer our apologies for the mix-up.

We aren't likely to give you "a shiny press pass," although we might be able to rip off a slightly used (read: un-shiny) press pass from the offices of the *Democrat & Chronicle*.

The Love-Song of the Tulip
by Andrew Gill

3. Void

Sometimes I'm thinking that I love you,
 but I know it's only lust.
 - Damaged Goods, Gang of Four

Something's missing. A beautiful hole, an exquisite
 Void.

Contented Yearning. Love.
 To be blissfully ignorant—unaware of What
 was not there.

It's tangible.

Even though it's never been felt.

The happy couples half a room away.

Separated by
 reconstituted wood pulp
 and a focal length.

Are the only consolation.

Every time, the gulf grows wider.

Love's what I want.

4. Rebirth

POETRY

ocean

By Gary Hoffmann

you are my ocean
 I could lay upon your beach
 and stare for hours at your serenity
 and at the swelling of your waves
 as they rise and fall from Heaven's breath
 I want to watch your tide
 coming in and pulling out
 I want to watch it recede
 until it uncovers a thousand
 tiny mysteries
 and then return to send them back
 to the darkness of your depths
 I want to be submerged by you
 slowly entering, deeper with each
 caressing wave
 allowing it to wash over me
 and the shoreline
 until finally I am floating within you
 surrounded by you
 dreamily comfortable in your salty warmth
 and then I'll open my eyes
 to gaze upon upon the winter sunrise
 over Pemaquid point that is yours
 as softly blue as where
 the sky and sea meet as tentatively
 and shyly as virgin newlyweds
 but lit with a brilliance
 that can only be compared
 to God

10-26-01

What is this magazine?

This is Gracies Dinnertime Theatre, a magazine of satire, literature, poetry and art. We publish out of Rochester, NY but we have readers around the globe. We exist as a medium for your expression and invite you to contribute.

Anyone is welcome to submit.

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