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TEEN FAG

MAGAZINE

ISSUE #5

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ABORTION

AMPUTATION

EMERGENCY
ROOMS

PENIS
WARTS

PAP
SMEARS

SKIN
EATING
DISEASE

NURSING
HOMES

SICK
PEOPLE

and MORE

MEDICAL! MEDICAL!

Crazy Christian Conspiracy Comics Part 2: Prequel to the Conspiracy

WHAT HAS ALREADY TRANSPIRED: Jehovah, fed up with the constant interference of his brother Lucifer, has conceived of a plan by which he will gain total control of the planet Earth and its inhabitants, the Humans. Calling Jesus before him, Jehovah tells him that he is being sent down to Earth in order to play the part of the "Son of God". Through Jesus, Jehovah hopes to tighten his control completely over the Human herd, extending his power beyond the small scope of the Jews. A miraculous birth is engineered for the delight of the humans and Jesus is later sent to Tibet to receive training from the world's greatest religious con-men. This time CCCC takes a look at how this rivalry between two brothers began.

The true origins of the planet Earth and the myriad of life forms that inhabit it are lost in the mists of aeons long gone. Even the Elder Gods themselves have only the vaguest memories of the cosmic primal forces that originally gave them their mission of farming life forces or "souls". The Gods were instructed in techniques that were used on lower species to subjugate their wills and intelligence therefore rendering the souls fit for "harvest"

The Universe was divided into plots, each including at least a few inhabited planets referred to as farms. Each sector was overseen by a pair of beings so immensely powerful that to the "cattle" populating the farms, they became known as gods. These gods used whatever means necessary to fill the storage silos with plenty of souls.

The storehouse was bursting at the seams with souls, but when after a few epochs the bosses never came to collect the harvest, ENS and NHGH became bored with manipulating the affairs of such worthless species as the humans. So at the annual gathering of the Family an announcement is made by these two most powerful of the "gods."

To tell you the truth were just plain bored with dealing with these creatures and their petty lives

So we're going to divide our holdings and give everyone their inheritance so we can retire and have some fun. Beginning at the bottom of the list we'll start with our nephews Lucifer and Jehovah to whom we leave equal shares of the farm called Earth. Good Luck.

Jehovah took to his new "job" with relish. He began to immediately try and recruit some "souls". He made use of some of the basic tricks he had been taught by some of the older "gods". One of his favorites was the old "voice out of the flash of blinding light" schtick.

I am God. You will do what I say no matter how stupid it seems!

Initially his success was somewhat limited. Despite his best efforts he was only able to rope in one old coot by the name of Noah. Eventually out of frustration Jehovah hatched a plan that would guarantee that everyone on earth would be one of his pawns.

Noah was ordered to build an ark even though there wasn't any water to float in on for miles around. It was at this point that Jehovah pulled the first in a series of power moves designed to teach the humans their proper place in the scheme of things.

Noah's Great Flood would ultimately be followed by plagues, edipses, earthquakes, wars, and even more floods. No matter how much he tried though Jehovah was never able to recruit anyone much beyond one small tribe of desert dwellers - The Hebrews.

While Jehovah was busy starting his long career as the "God" of Earth, his brother Lucifer had not even bothered to visit his new property. At the moment he was enjoying a binge on Planet X that was well into its third decade. He was particularly enjoying the local smoke which came from the plant habatropil-zipulops and was called frop for short.

Thanks for the lift Winthorpe. I'm a little out of it right now. Do you have any idea what's so important that Unc would drag me home like this.

If I'm not mistaken Master Lucifer I believe that your Uncle thinks that it is time for you to assume a little responsibility.

So deep was he into his buzz that Lucifer never realized that his Uncle NHGH had been trying to reach him for months. Eventually NHGH sent one of his servants to fetch Lucifer.

Lucifer, as much as I know that you like to avoid work I'm afraid that I'm going to have to order you to go to earth and start shouldering your half of the load. Normally I might have let you slide for a while longer but your brother Jehovah is out of control. And get up off of your knees!

Thanks to your brother the quality of souls being produced on that mudball is worse than ever. The council expects you to come up with some way to put a stop to this crazed god act of Jehovah's. So get going. The shuttle leaves in a hour.

And so began the great rivalry between two powerful brothers to see who would control the souls of the poor creatures of Earth.

Teen Fag

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Hello lovely readers, welcome back to another issue of my zine.

I'm not sure whether I'm going to keep doing theme issues in the future, so if you have an opinion one way or the other, I'd be curious to hear it.

When I first decided to do a "medical issue" I didn't really know very much about the subject. Now I find myself reading obscure books on subjects like diseases and operations - I guess I now have a new hobby! Not everything I originally had planned for this issue got included due to space limitations, so I guess there may be some medical topics included in future Teen Fag's. I didn't even attempt to include any (mis)information on AIDS/HIV this time around. If you have any questions concerning AIDS or HIV, check in the yellow pages under "AIDS" or "gay" and contact one of the organizations listed. It doesn't cost anything to ask. Considering the number of people who are still catching this disease, there are plenty of people who either don't know enough about AIDS, or just don't care about it. Do yourself a favor and become aware. And use condoms if you have sex!

Contributions are always welcome in Teen Fag. Articles, comics, drawings, stories, etc.. if you have an idea and think that it might possibly be of interest to readers of this zine, then get in touch. Likewise, if you want to write/draw something but don't know about what, it never hurts to ask me, cause I usually need help following through on my ideas. Basically I'd like to publish more writing other than my own.

I'm always looking for new stores that might be interested in carrying Teen Fag. If you know of any, tell me who they are (include a contact name and phone number if possible!) Currently Teen Fag is distributed by See Hear (in New York) and Desert Moon Distribution. Bulk sales of over five copies are also available from the publisher (which is me). Write for more info.

Thanks for reading Teen Fag.

-gordon2

cover art by Dean Keasey

Although I stated above that I might not be doing theme issues in the future, I am sort of considering centering the next issue around "fear", so if you want to tell me what it is that scares you, that would be nice.

Back issues:

#1-3 are sold out.

#4 (the damage control special) is still available for \$3.00 CASH, postage paid. Supplies are limited.

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Letters

...The interview with Bill Andriette (of N.A.M.B.L.A.) was cool! I've read quite a bit about Bill, but it was good to see he's still at it. One hint though, be careful about sending stuff with any possibly positive reference to kid-sex into the province of Ontario. They've got a cop squad called Project P(ornography) which is totally dedicated to busting any kinda porn that's not your boring middle of the road het vanilla fluff. (Which has its own merit, but can be kinda dull if it's the only thing available.)

Since the "kiddie-porn" law passed in summer 1993 they've added to their list any material, including writings, which can be perceived as advocating sex with anyone under 18 years old. (Even though our age of consent laws say you can consent to everything but anal sex when you're 14 - anal sex = 18.) Teen Fag's interview with NAMBLA might be considered to contravene these laws. Fucked, eh?!? You won't get nailed but if you got a subscriber in Canada you might just warn them to get informed about the "kiddie-porn" and obscenity laws - and about the massive busts in southern Ontario.

- Robin/Smut zine, Vancouver BC

In my opinion, the most fucked up part concerning the debate around NAMBLA is how eagerly people seem to embrace the idea of censorship. Canada's anti-pornography laws are a perfect example of how this kind of thinking can back fire. These laws were partly based on lesbo-feminist anti-porn writings, but when the laws were applied women's erotica and literature particularly suffered from government censorship. If Nambla is successfully censored, what's to stop the law from being used on other forms of marginal, unpopular or minority thoughts and ideas (gay and otherwise?) Judging from Canadas example, not much. -gg

...I really, really want to express my appreciation for the piece on Camille Paglia. I had coincidentally just started reading Vamps and Tramps about a week before I read your zine, and I think Dion Hansen's critique is right on. A few other issues I thought of while reading her that I would add: She continually refers to herself as "an authentically Sixties libertarian" and sets up her perception of "authentic" Sixties experience and values as a standard against which she measures all contemporary discourse

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and political or artistic activity. This drives me nuts! Does she not know that it is now 1995, and it's possible that in thirty years, people's frameworks for understanding and acting in the world have changed? And that it is not only inevitable that they should have done so, but absolutely desirable? I find this tendency of hers to be egotistical (her experience defines "authentic") and extremely reactionary.

Also, she is really very comfortable working with traditional stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, and in the context of these stereotypes she is really very anti-female. She idealizes traditionally masculine qualities, and her goal for feminism seems to be for women to become more like men, in a very traditional masculine sense, without men assuming any of the traditionally feminine qualities. However, contradictory as this may seem, she feels closest in identity to her

idea of who gay men are - and gay men certainly have a complicated and somewhat paradoxical relationship to traditional masculinity.

Another thing that bothers me is the way she relies so much on psychological speculation to debunk prevailing views on rape and sexual harassment. So many of her arguments are based on absolutely no material evidence at all. She literally creates characters and writes little scenarios, complete with Freudian psychoanalysis of the characters' motivations, to explain what "really happens" in date rape or harassment situations. And this is supposed to disprove the massive amounts of concrete evidence that date rape and sexual harassment are real.

Finally, she relies heavily on "great works" of Western art and literature to represent what is "real" and "true" in human experience and culture. Without disputing the value of these



works, I find it really irresponsible not to at least acknowledge that these works were largely created by men in times and places where men were dominant in many ways.

Still, I refuse to believe (as some do) that she is the Anti-Feminist. Many of her views on pornography and sexuality really are quite radical and worth listening to, and the woman is not stupid. She has an incredibly broad and well-grounded sense of history, at least as seen through the Western intellectual and artistic tradition. I see her point, too, that much contemporary political activism does seem to arise from a sense of entitlement that is an essentially white, middle-class notion. If nothing else, she's kicked a lot of people in the butt, and opposition is good for the soul - it's energizing and invigorating from my activist perspective.

-Aral Griffen/Face zine, Bellingham WA

...I'm sorry I'm not a gorgeous YOUNG male writing to tell you he's crazy about your zine (that would have thrilled you, I'm sure) but the terrible truth is I'm one of those depraved guys in his 40's who gets a hardcock just looking at the title of your zine. It's us depraved guys who are most apt to get our roving fingers on your zine. ...Even tho it's true I bought a copy of Teen Fag because of the titillating title (I admit it,) I would still, even so, advise you to change the title for the simple reason you wouldn't have to be so careful about the contents. I think you could turn out a much more erotic zine if you didn't have to be so careful. I love the name "Fly" (Last issue I mentioned that "Fly" was one of the names I was considering, before I came up with Teen Fag. -gg) - but would love it even more if you called it "Open Fly." Us depraved guys have really dirty imaginations and the very title would give us hardcocks.

-Horny Arnie, Seattle WA

...I'm glad you included a letter defending NAMBLA. I think they're such an easy target. It's such an emotional subject that it's hard to have any rational discourse about it. I always cheer them when they march in the Pride Parade here. Everyone else booes the throws shit at them. They are very brave, revolutionary people. Or are they just depraved? Who knows.

-Miles, San Francisco CA

...please help me to get something about gay. Please, because I don't know much about gay. You know, very difficult to get something about gay in Malaysia. Not available!!! It's very difficult for me to be gay because I am a new gay. Very sad! Nobody can help me in Malaysia. Can you help me? OF COURSE!!! Because you live in U.S.A., you can get anything about gay. I think I want live in U.S.A. too. I hope you can send me something about gay like you zine, picture/page from gay magazine, classifieds about gay. I never seen anything about gay. You are very lucky. I very.. very.. very hope to you please help me to get the things. Please... only you can help me.

-Gil, Malaysia

...I'm a 22 years old boy - about to turn 23 - and I realize at this age I'll try to do for the first time what I could have done like 7 years ago. I'm a queer since I can remember, and having already had terrible struggles against myself, now I want to face the environment and come out. It's been a very hard decision to take, specially considering some possible reactions. I'm sure my mother will go away mad - I'm talking about something really serious - and the rest of my family won't get on with the news. With my friends will be even worse 'cause they're all straight, and since they don't know any queer boy, don't know anything about them (Latin countries have included in their cultures a notorious scorn against homosexuality.) Now I see you having a zine, sharing your ideas with others like you (where are the others here???), being a part of something big, important, and I feel I'm late. I want to join you but I know it's not the same it could have been if I'd put my rocks off. In my time. I'm late.

I'm not depressed. Just sad, very sad. Just waiting for encouragement for facing the facts...

-Jafael, Argentina

Writing letters is an easy way to contribute to Teen Fag and are very much appreciated. Send your thoughts to: Teen Fag c/o Chow Chow Productions, P.O.Box 20204, Seattle, WA 98102.



The Republican Party would like for the voters to ignore the fact, that if Bob Dole becomes President this year, he will be the oldest ever elected. They'd like us to believe, that just because Mr. Dole is old, it doesn't mean that he's likely to become ill during his administration. Well I beg to differ. The United States (and the rest of the world actually) has a rich history of electing to power, those who are teetering at the edge of death. Presidents, not nearly as old as Dole, are often voted into office with ailments that are routinely ignored, denied or hidden, to the voters, Party and sometimes even the candidate themselves. Take for example, the past one hundred (or so) years in...



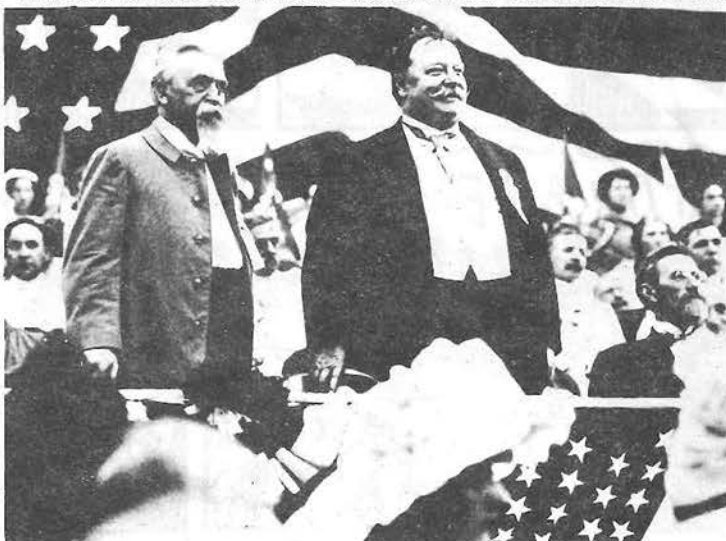
In June of 1893 President Grover Cleveland had an operation to remove a cancerous growth from the roof of his mouth. The operation, which was performed on a private yacht, needed to be kept a secret because of the political enemies (including the Vice President) who would have taken advantage of Cleveland's moment of weakness. In the course of the operation his entire upper jaw was removed and eventually fitted with a prosthesis made of rubber. The White House explained the Presidents' post operative appearance on a tooth ache and actually succeeded in this subterfuge until Cleveland had recovered.

After the Great War, Woodrow Wilson was a busy busy man. Way too busy to take it easy and get a check up, despite the fact that he was having continuous headaches and feeling generally exhausted. During a speaking tour of the west the President began to experience the affects of a slow stroke, but he ignored them until it was too late and his entire left side was paralyzed! Once back at the White House Wilson's doctor, wife and personal aide mounted a massive cover up by explaining his illness as mere exhaustion. As the drooling, paralyzed and mentally vacant President laid in his bed, his "inner circle" successfully kept everyone away from him and essentially acted in the Presidents behalf. For seven months this went on, virtually paralyzing the Government, before Wilson was well enough to emerge from his room without help. By this time everyone in the Government knew that there was something terribly wrong with him, except for maybe Wilson himself, who wanted to run for a third term as President! His feelings were hurt when he didn't get the nomination.

In a way, for Franklin Delano Roosevelt sickness wasn't only a way of life, it was also a political virtue. When the wealthy FDR was stricken with polio (at the beginning of his political career) it was his wheelchair and leg braces that made the aloof politician more accessible to the voters. As a result both the media and his fellow politicians made a point of not noticing Roosevelt's less than commanding figure, even when his illnesses had nothing to do with polio. While the planet was preoccupied with World War II, FDR's body was waging a war of its own against a variety of diseases which included: anemia, acute bronchitis, hypertension, heart disease and more. By the middle of Roosevelt's third term as President, he was often found staring into space and physically showing signs of acute illness, yet for unknown reasons his physician al-

ways denied that the President was anything but "a little tired." Neither the voters, his family, or Roosevelt himself realized the seriousness of his condition until the beginning of his fourth term in office. Although the President was often active and alert, at other times his voice was thick and blurred, his eyes clouded, his face slack, his head hunched over and he would have difficulty expressing his thoughts verbally. Four months into his fourth term, FDR died.

When President Dwight D. Eisenhower had a heart attack in 1955 it was just a year and a half into his presidency. Either foolishly or bravely Eisenhower's personal physician decided not to admit the President into a hospital right away and instead treated him at home during the first twelve hours after the attack. This could have been disastrous to Eisenhower if he had had complications, but his doctor decided that it was best not to get everyone overly excited and instead reported that the President had "indigestion." While it may have been tempting for the Eisenhower staff to keep up the ruse, eventually (once it was clear that the President was going to recover) the whole episode was explained to the public. Two years later, when the President had a stroke, the White House was very reluctant to tell the public anything about it. Unlike a heart attack, a stroke may permanently affect the mental abilities of the victim and Eisenhower's stroke worried his



advisors a great deal. They were worried that this was only pain may have done to his mind. An good example of the the first stroke in a series (which is something that often Presidents clouded judgment came when he waited over happens) and that the President would deteriorate much two years before getting the cancer in his colon removed. the way President Wilson did years earlier. Although he Reagan and his staff worried that the voter's might not eventually recovered, the stroke had affected Eisenhower's want to reelect an ailing, cancerous old man and this delay ability to think clearly and communicate verbally, but for put the President in extreme danger, as the cancer could various political reasons (such as no one wanting Vice have entered his liver and killed him quickly. After Rea- President Richard Nixon to take the office) it wasn't sug- gan's reelection and subsequent operation, the White House Council made the decision to rush the ill President

back into service - whether Reagan wanted to or not. While the operation most certainly was a painful ordeal for the President, they felt that the public needed to be reassured that Mr. Reagan would be soon back on his feet and back on the job. But the stress, drugs and physical toll was more than the man could bare; the President's public appearances presented him as being more and more enfeebled and behind the scenes Reagan was more interested in watching old movies and television shows, than in running the Government. It wouldn't be surprising to some day discover that the President was first discovered to have Alzheimer's Disease during his second term, but carefully covered up by his staff, who were actually running the Government anyway.

That John F. Kennedy suffered from Addison's Disease, (a chronic fatigue type of ailment,) and was treated with steroids for it, was no secret. Still Adrenal Steroid Therapy can produce: euphoria, depression and despair, among other things and it is believed that Kennedy suffered an attack of steroid psychosis sometime before he became president. Not exactly a major medical problem, but Kennedy's consumption of energy enhancing medication wasn't always restricted to steroids. JFK was a friend and patient of Doctor Max Jacobson (also known as Dr. Feel-good), who had become popular with celebrities because of his willingness to supply under the counter amphetamine injections. Although there is no hard evidence that the President took the injections, or even knew what they were if he had (Jacobson's medical records are "missing") - it's widely believed that Kennedy selected the Doctor as his physician precisely because of the amphetamine shots. Unfortunately Kennedy's assassination spared the U.S. of the ultimate 60's experience: a speed freak president.



Soon after John Hinckley shot Ronald Reagan, the President was making regular appearances on the evening news showing off his amazing recovery. In reality the elderly Reagan's recovery was a slow and painful process. While news clips were specifically chosen to show a vigorous and smiling President, behind the scenes he was often crippled with pain, could barely walk, and was totally dependent on a breathing device to aid his wounded lung. Those who actually saw the pale and disoriented President worried that he would never recover his full mental and physical capabilities. Eventually Reagan did regain his physical health (for the most part,) but some still wondered what affects the powerful medication he took for



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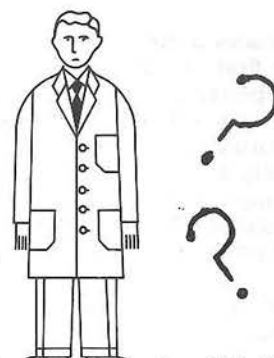
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A Short History of Western Medicine



According to the ancient Greeks, Æsculapius was removed from his dying mother's womb and nursed by a friendly goat! Apparently in real life he was a man of intelligence, who practiced the then unknown science of healing and medicine. As reality evolved into myth, temples were built in Æsculapius' honor that were places of healing and maintaining the health of the citizens. Although the priests and temples of Æsculapius became the prototypes of doctors and hospitals, the popular medications of the time was rest and proper diet, and the actual curing of any disease was left to the gods.

During the fifth century B.C., Hippocrates separated medicine from religion for the very first time; he believed that disease was man's problem not the gods', and therefore man's responsibility. Hippocrates was the first physician to differentiate diseases, as opposed to considering all sickness to be one great disease. Under his influence medicine became an art of observation and Hippocrates so accurately described diseases, that scholars can easily match up his descriptions with their modern names. Along with giving mankind the Hippocratic oath (which basically states that doctors will not harm the patient,) Hippocrates also laid down the principles of medicine which are still used today: There is no authority except facts; Facts are obtained by accurate observation; and Deductions are to be made only from facts.



Although people probably learned about medicinal herbs very early in history (much the same way they learned which plants were good to eat,) actual drugs didn't exist for quite some time. Even then a lot of the so called cures were rich in regional superstition (such as rubbing virgin urine on sore eyes) until physicians became interested in poison and its antidotes. During the second century B.C., an early pharmacologist named Mithridates tried to discover a universal antidote against poison by studying venomous snakes. He would administer different poisons to slaves and then try to counteract them with various compounds. After Mithridates' death, his experimental recipe was developed into a standard cure-all drug called Theriac. The main ingredient was the skin of vipers, as well as

thirty-seven to sixty-three other ingredients of dubious medical value. Hippocrates was pretty much forgotten at this point in history and various versions of Theriac were used by physicians for a multitude of ailments, well into the 1800's (A.D.).

Another big move away from Hippocrates came with the influence of Galen in the second century A.D. Galen was a clever physician and author who had an elaborate explanation for everything. His medical theories were based on the assumption that the body was composed of the four elements (fire, air, water and earth) and that health consisted of preserving this balance. In Galen's view diseases were an imbalance; if a person was burning with a fever, the proper treatment was to eat something cool, like cucumbers (hence the expression: cool as a cucumber!) Galen was an egotistical man, who never recorded his failures and likewise treated his theories as the absolute truth. Galen's anatomical drawings influenced surgeons for generations, even though he made them by dissecting animals (as cutting open humans was taboo.) So much of his work was haphazard and wrong that Galen would've been little more than a footnote in history if the Christian Church

hadn't adopted his writings as their official dogma. To challenge Galen's writings was considered heresy for the next 1300 years and physicians who did so risked death by torture or burning at the stake.

In the early 1500's the mystic and physician Paracelsus revolutionized medicine with his belief that demons did not cause diseases. He thought that every disease had a specific remedy if only it could be found. Surprisingly the introduction of syphilis to Europe was the only thing that saved him from the Church, as syphilis was not mentioned in the teachings of Galen. As Paracelsus was interested in chemistry (then called alchemy) and favored mineral drugs over herbal ones, he discovered that mercury was a successful treatment for syphilis. As physicians reluctantly adopted Paracelsus' mercury cure, the infallibility of Galen's word was for the first time successfully doubted and set the stage for further discoveries.

In 1543 Andreas Vesalius made the next great contribution to medicine by stealing a dead body from the gallows and dissecting it. During his examinations Vesalius discovered that the drawings of Galen (which contained pig livers and monkey muscles among other things) were inaccurate and misleading. After stealing many other bodies and making detailed drawings of his own, Vesalius published the first true book of anatomy, which scandalized the world of medicine and religion. Although Vesalius eventually retired from medicine, somewhat in disgrace over his blasphemous views, his book inspired others to begin anatomical studies of their own.

Also in the 1500's lived Ambroise Paré who is considered one of the greatest surgeons of all time. At this time all surgery was "wound surgery" and Paré's greatest discovery was the fact that wounds didn't have to be cauterized to prevent infection. The popular procedures of cauterizing wounds with boiling hot oil, molten pitch or a red-hot iron, was replaced by Paré with turpentine and clean linen. (Imagine having your leg amputated and the doctor closing the wound with boiling oil!) Surgery wasn't the

only field he revolutionized, Pare' also introduced a procedure known as the "podalic version" as an aid in abnormal births. Before this, when an unborn child was in the wrong position to be discharged (sideways for example,) there were only two ways physicians dealt with it: one was to chop up the infant so that the woman could expel it and the other was to cut open (ie: kill) the woman in order to remove the child! With the podalic version Pare' showed that you could reach into a woman, turn the child around, and yank it out. It may sound pretty obvious now, but back then Christians were a bit squeamish when it came to vaginas and would rather pray to God than touch one. Although the podalic version made physician aided child-birth acceptable, it was still a number of years before doctors were actually allowed to see a vagina.



By the 1600's the belief that the Church and Galen were infallible was beginning to wane. People's beliefs were further strained when William Hunter proved that the heart had an actual function (circulating blood), and not just the center of the soul. The heart's purpose was the first explanation of an internal organ and lead the way for others to understand how the body works. This knowledge helped the physician Giovanni Morgagni learn how diseases damaged the organs and helped him understand the meaning of "symptoms." Until this time the symptoms were thought to be the problem, not suspecting that they were just the warning signs of disease.

Despite these advances in anatomy and surgery, diseases still made civilization a very unhealthy place to be in the 18th century. No one understood how diseases were transmitted and people were contaminated through improper sanitary practices: (toilets were rarely used; people casually handled the sick or dead; the presence of plague carrying rats in the cities; etc.) In 1796, Edward Jenner made the first important move against disease when he inoculated a boy with the "liquid" from from a milkmaids arm. At the time smallpox was killing over 60 million people a year and Jenner had noticed how milkmaids became immune to smallpox after being exposed to the less deadly cowpox. He correctly assumed that the two diseases were related and Jenner's experiment proved to be a great discovery.

The next big discovery didn't happen until 1847, when Ludwig Semmelweis made the connection between unwashed hands and "child-bed fever." Up till this time physicians would go from dissecting corpses directly to treating patients, with barely washing their hands (if they washed them at all.) What seems obvious to us, was incomprehensible to the 19th century physicians and Semmelweis was ridiculed and disregarded by the majority.

The idea that child-bed fever and wound infections were the same thing seemed absurd at the time, as the contagious nature of diseases and the concept of micro-organisms were still unknown. Eventually, as the mortality rate of patients under Semmelweis' care decreased, the idea of washing hands before touching a birthing woman caught on and saved the lives of hundreds of mothers and infants.

At about this same time Florence Nightingale made nursing a dignified profession. Before, only the wealthy had access to trained health care workers after the surgeon had operated on them, and everyone else took any kind of help they could find. In the 1830's Theodore Fieldner created asylums to train discharged female prisoners to care for the sick, but for the most part these nurses were dirty, inefficient and often drunk. Despite family protests, Nightingale decided to attend one of Fielding's schools and later inspired other "well-bred" women to do the same. These well-trained women eventually replaced the "ill-bred" servant nurses in the hospitals and got rid of the grubbiness when it came to caring for the sick. These nurses brought with them the first step towards the greatest aspect of a modern hospital: cleanliness.

Another big break-through happened in the 1840's with the discovery of anesthesia. Prior to this the concept of anesthesia didn't even exist, and operations were only preformed from the direst necessity, with the fully conscious patient tied and gagged! Amputation was the most common operation and the quicker the surgeons were able to preform their work, the better it was for the patient. The first recorded use of anesthesia happened in 1846 after William Morton noticed students inhaling ether and not becoming hurt when they fell down. He tried ether first on his dog and then himself, before administering it to a dental patient with excellent results. In 1847, James Simpson discovered the anesthetic affects of chloroform and used it to aid in a difficult child-birth. This created a religious controversy (the Bible says childbirth should be painful!?) but not even the church could repress this important innovation and the discovery of anesthesia forever changed surgery.

(continued next page...)



A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY AMPUTATION
TEENFAG page 9

(continued from previous page)

Although anesthetics removed much of the pain associated with surgery, it wasn't until Joseph Lister discovered the concept of antiseptics, in 1866, that operations were finally made safe. In the past all wounds, both big and small, were plagued by infections; injuries like compound fractures, because they almost always became infected, often resulted in amputation. With amputation the mortality rate was near 50% and a compound fracture was nearly as fatal as the bubonic plague! Lister correctly guessed that something in the air was causing infections and first tried painting wounds with carbolic acid in order to protect them from "it." This sterilization was a step in the right direction and worked fairly well. At the time, operating theaters were much like dirty class rooms and Lister suspected that these large open rooms were a possible cause of infections. Despite the protests of his fellow physicians, Lister tried spraying carbolic acid into the air during surgeries, and while the incidence of infection once again was lowered, inhaling this substance proved both unpleasant and dangerous. Eventually Lister came upon the idea of sterilizing not only the wounds and the air, but also the instruments and dressings before they were to be used (instead of afterwards!) He also reasoned that the physicians themselves needed to be sterile and directed surgeons to wash their hands before operating, and to avoid breathing directly onto wounds by covering up their faces. The results of Lister's antiseptic procedures were dramatic and the number of surgical infections quickly dwindled to a fraction of what they were. By the time Lister retired in 1896, he was considered the greatest surgeon of all time, and later his name became immortalized as a mouthwash (Listerine.)

At the same time Lister was developing the concept of antiseptics, Louis Pasteur was busy discovering what was

causing diseases to occur. In the mid-1800's, while studying the diseases of wine, Pasteur proved that yeast was a living organism and that micro-organisms did not spontaneously appear, but floated invisibly in the air. (It was this discovery that inspired Lister to consider the presence of air born organisms as the cause of infections.) Pasteur proved that bacteria were not only living creatures and present during disease, but were actually the cause of disease. While studying a fatal poultry disease he made an important discovery when he accidentally fed some chickens a weakened strain of bacteria and they didn't die. Later he gave the chickens a virulent strain of the disease and discovered that the chickens weren't affected at all. Thus Pasteur discovered the principle of bacterial vaccination! Unlike Jenner's earlier inoculations (which actually gave the patient a contagious disease,) Pasteur's vaccinations remained safely in the blood stream and affected only the patient. Pasteur's work brought him worldwide fame in 1885, when he discovered an antidote for rabies, which was then a common and lethal disease. By showing how it was possible to isolate and weaken diseases, and then use these weakened bacteria as a form of treatment, Pasteur began the age of preventive medicine. From this point on physicians turned their attention to the microscopic world, where they now search for the cures of the deadly diseases that afflict human-kind.

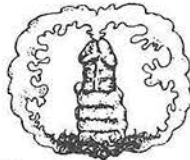
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The main source for this article is a book called **Devils, Drugs and Doctors**, by Howard W. Haggard, M.D. (1929). This book has tons of illustrations about the history of medicine and surgery, as well as detailed descriptions of all sorts of crazy medical practices from the past. It's creepy, gross and terribly fascinating if you like this sort of thing, and can be found in almost any used book store for only a couple dollars.

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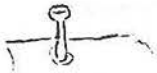


Lets Go to the

Hospital!

with Tony Arena

Ron and I are in Chicago and we decide to go shopping at Wax Trax Records. This was when Wax Trax was still a pretty good store. The car we rented had a door lock that I wasn't used to. I've only ever had old cars and this was a pretty new one. The kind of car lock I'm used to looks like this:



ya know? A pole with a little knob on it. Well this car had a door lock I'd never seen before, it kinda looked like this:



I didn't know how to unlock it, so I put my thumb under the little ridge of this thing and tried to flick it open. Instead my thumb flicked right into my open eye!

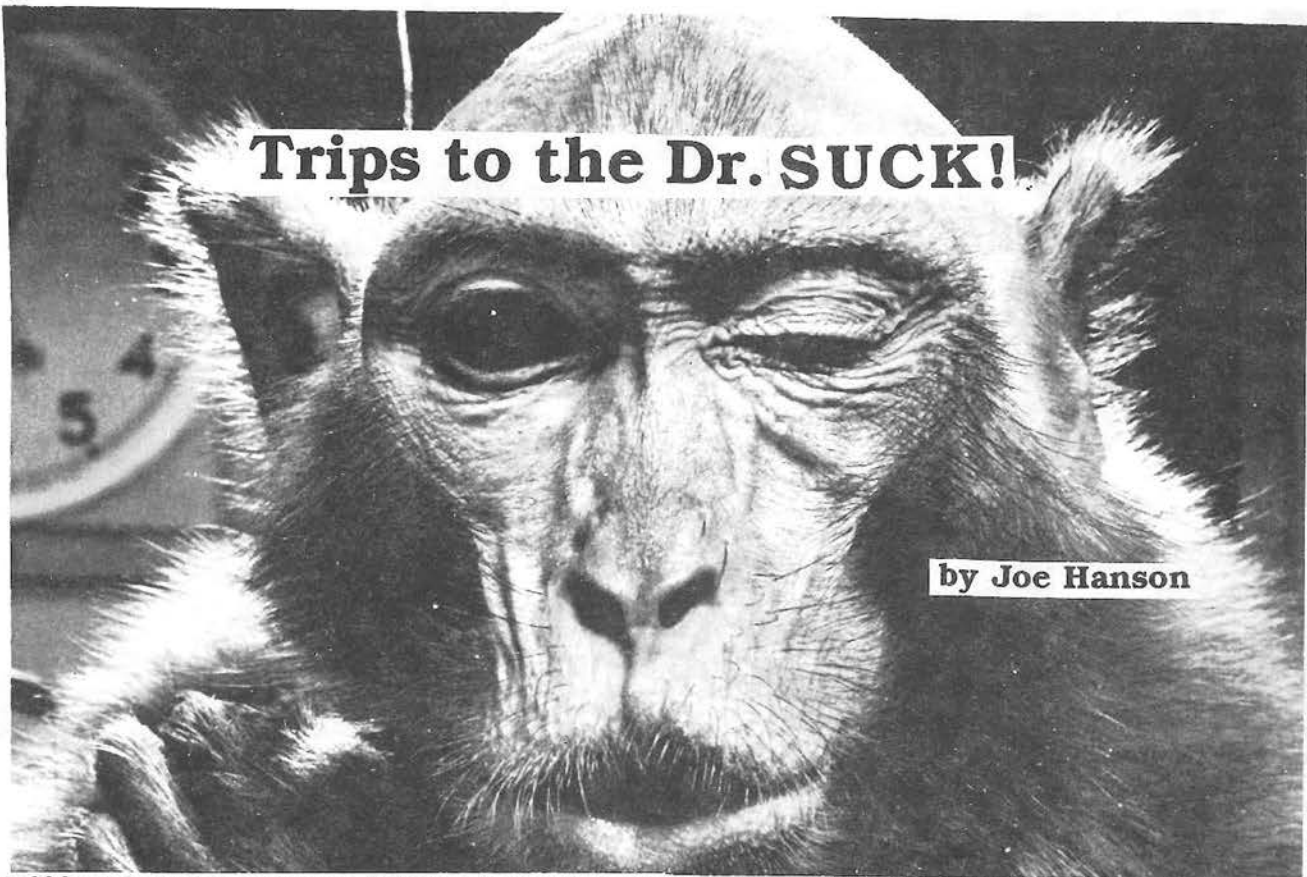
I didn't go to the hospital in Chicago, because I thought the pain would eventually go away if I laid down with an ice pack over my eye, but it didn't and the next day we had to catch a plane back to N.Y.C. It didn't help that we had all this shit to carry back with us. That's when Ron made up the joke - Q: What has four legs, 3 eyes and 6 bags? A: Ron and Tony trying to get back to New York. As soon as we got home Ron took me to the emergency room of the hospital and that's where the real fun began.

At first it seemed like I was going to get attention right away, but once this doctor, by the name of Koniearis got assigned to me, it was horrible from there on in. First this Dr. Koniearis (his name is burned in my memory) took me to a hallway, stood me in the corner and said "wait here." Well I stood there in misery holding my eye for two hours! Finally he showed up again, saw me standing there and said "Oh, I forgot about you." By now I am not in the best of moods. He took me to an examination room and there was some sort of intern there. He started showing the intern all the tests he had to perform on my eye. Most of them were ok, but there was this one where he had to take his fingers and literally squeeze my eye in between them! It was fucking agony. Then he says "Something's wrong. It's not working. I'll have to do the test again." So I say "Please don't!" and he says "No, I'll have to do it again." So he does it again and it hurts like hell again! And he says "It's still not

working. I don't know what's wrong!" I'll have to do it again." So I say, pleading now, "If it's not working and you don't know what you're doing wrong, please PLEASE don't do it again! You did all those other tests, that's enough! Please don't squeeze my eye again!" I guess the desperation in my voice convinced him not to do it again. After that he wheels me to a waiting area and says "You're all done. Wait here." So I sit there, with my now bandaged eye. And I sit there, and sit there... and sit there... And finally I plead with some nurse.. "Please, the doctor said I was done... Why am I waiting here?" And she says "Oh. I'll find out." And she goes away and never comes back.

Meanwhile Ron is wondering what's taking so long. He's told he's not allowed to enter the waiting area where I and all these other people have been dumped. Finally a custodian type guy goes up to Ron and says "Hey you wanna find out about your friend? Just go up to that window and demand to be let back there! Go on, Do it! They gotta let you back there if you make some noise." So Ron goes up to the window and demands to be let back in the waiting area. They tried to pull some "You're not family" shit, but Ron can be very insistent and loud when he has to be, so they finally said "Ok, but only for a minute" or some such shit. So he goes back there and sees all these injured and sick people all sitting in chairs, but he doesn't recognize me. Just when he was thinking "I guess he's not here," suddenly he recognizes that a desperate, slumped over wretch with his face in his hands is actually yours truly. I hear a faint, unsure voice say "Tony?" I look up to see Ron's shocked face and I beg him to "Please get me out of here!" From there Ron said "Don't worry" and took charge of the situation... and I got processed and we got outta there pretty quickly.

I did have to go back a couple of times and once in a while I had to deal with that incompetent Koniearis, but one time this other Doctor took care of me who was so young and beautiful and cute and sexy and gentle and sweet, with soft caressing skin and a light soothing voice. That was real nice. He made me feel safe; he was in charge of the dept. and knew exactly what he was doing. Actually Koniearis was cute too, but the difference between being in the hands of someone who cares and being in the hands of someone who clearly doesn't is very enormous when you're in a situation of vulnerability. **end**



Trips to the Dr. SUCK!

by Joe Hanson

I would have brought my camera if I'd had known I would be writing a story about this episode in my life (I know they would be welcome in this zine.) But back to the subject at hand: I'm sitting here sweating my ass off, reading a fucking *Field and Stream*, trying to keep my mind off my appointment.

"Next! The nurse burst through the door, scaring the shit outta me, "Take the third door on the left and put your specimen in the small door over the toilet. Close the door."

Down the hall to the left I go with thoughts of complete penis removal. You heard right, I'm at the Dick Doctor, not a bad choice for a profession huh? Anyway, I piss in the cup and in the process piss all over my hand; and the toilet; and the wall; and then I spill some. There has got to be an easier way! I mean, I had piss everywhere in that stall. Well, I'm done and I look down to examine my penis thoroughly. It just hasn't been the same since that discolored spot I had for years, turned into a small cluster of warts. At the time I had no idea what it could be, just that it wasn't natural and it's gonna hurt. I put the now cleaned cup, (these fuckers are small and clumsy,) in the little door and proceed to shut it, for the person on the other side to scoop up.

The nurse shows me down another hall to a room that I couldn't believe was there, where the hell am I in this building? Completely disoriented, the impending entrance of the Dr. drawing near, *I hope I don't get a hard on!* I think and at that instant, as if to spite me for doing whatever the hell I did to my dick, it starts to pump blood into the head and elongate my shaft.

"Mother fucker! I think you're doing this on purpose." I say aloud, not realizing that I'm talking to my crank. Then I giggle at the concept of talking to my prick, pretty stupid huh? Pick up another mag, the place is loaded with them cause they know you're gonna wait a while. *Good House-keeping*, yeah like this isn't something to wipe my ass with. Wait they also have *Time*, The WAR MEMORIAL issue - whoopee I'm set for life!

The Doctor arrives, like a late period and proceeds to ask me a set of questions that eventually lead to me being

very open telling him everything. (Hey, this is my dick at stake here!) He tells me I have a very promiscuous sex life and that I should have been having regular check-ups blah, blah, blah,

Is he gonna fix my dick or what? I think.

"Well, lets have a look see, huh?" He mutters trying to be as comforting as possible - not! "Disrobe and lie down on your back." I do what he says, as he looks through a set of my records and jots down shit.

He bends down and takes a peek, "Hmmm..." Snapping on a set of fresh rubber gloves, he reaches for my dick. I brace myself, and like a hooker in heat he snatches it up with his Goddamn cold ass hands! Nothing worse on a sensitive dick than a cold clammy hand. He bends it around and looks at it from all angles.

"Have you ever had genital warts before, Mr. Hanson?" he asks.

"No!" I say, relieved that it wasn't syphilis or something worse.

"Yeah that's what you got here, a little farm of warts, with a couple scattered about by the head of your member" he says confidently. Then he rips a penis sized hole in a paper towel and sticks my pecker through it.

Nice set up I think. *What a cute little fucking anecdote, bunghole*, as he sprays down my dick with a solution, covers it with another paper towel, spraying it down good and wet. It kinda burns a little but I can handle it. The solution he told me was plain vinegar. I was told by him that vinegar will kill small warts before they develop. This might be advice of sorts: to wash your penis with vinegar after unprotected sex, or just have protected sex, as I should've done. I must admit, that I didn't use a condom three times in my life and one of those three got me. Very bad percentages here.

"Genital warts are like weeds," He explains "you don't just weed the garden and expect to get rid of 'em all. They'll be back next week for more attention. Like weeds, genital warts can all be removed and more will pop up at any time. They hide in the skin, you see, so there is no way of ridding yourself of them. I can't say that one treat-

ment will work, you may have to have multiple visits to get them all. It may last forever or you'll never get 'em back. Might get more next week. One patient asked me 'Are they all gone yet?' and I told him the only way to find out is to slice his penis into thousands of microscopic layers and look at each, one by one, to make sure. I told him I'd be glad to do the procedure for him, but he refused."

HAHAHA how funny, fuckhead, you're talking about my cock here! There I go again. He's relating my penis being violated to weeding the fucking garden for Christ' sake, like I can't comprehend what a virus is Asshole. But at least he is being tender with my member.

The doctor announces that there are three ways I can deal with these pesky little buggers. (Only one of which I can use so why he even gave me a choice is beyond me.) Burning - that's the ticket! They must be burned off! With that said he leaves the room, for me to think pleasant thoughts by myself.

Burned off! Burned off!! BURNED OFF!!! Holy shit, this I didn't expect! Shots, yes. Burns, no!

Too much time passes before the Doctor comes back. He's equipped with needles, (my greatest fear but that's another story,) a weird looking burning device and a slew of other goodies I was too afraid to look at.

He preps up a needle saying comforting things, as if I could hear his voice through my own raging thoughts now.

He's gonna stick that needle in the place I have never fathomed being stuck at. I pass out if they take blood and now this! Bad boy, where did you stick your dick and get this at? The Doctor says that they could've been there for years. That needle looks pretty fat to me!

"See, it's a small needle." He smiles.

WHOA! He grabs my dick up again and says "You're going to feel a small pinch."

PAUSE.

SHIT*SHIT*SHIT*FUCK! Here it comes fuckboy and it's gonna hurt. This'll teach you to fuck around!

"NOW" he says, and the word itself hurts as he inserts the needle through the flesh of my penis, right at the mid shaft point. The needle must have been in my dick, hurting like hell, for at least an hour before he finally pulls it out. He picks up the little tool for burning and I ask about it. It looks like an electric toothbrush with a small soldering type tip. It works like those electric lighters you see. The tip got white hot!

"Can you feel this?" He asks as I hear a sizzle. The acrid smell of burning flesh fills the room, burning my eyes and nose, (his too I bet.) He starts waving the smoke from my dick and I look down.

Look at that sight. There's a man waving away smoke, that's coming from my DICK that's being burnt. MY DICK. But wait a minute, it doesn't hurt now. Past the pinch and you're through the game. COOL. Lets check it out!

He's talking and I'm looking at my penis being burnt by this tool and a guy who must love his work from the looks of it. I watch him administer a shot to my penis and notice that the Novocain actually swells up underneath the skin when injected. So I had a boner anyhow, full of Novocain to boot. It was quite the uncomfortable experience having a numb penis. You think leaving the dentists office is bad, HA! try walking with a numb dick, very different, if I do say. Bet you never thought that you'd see that in Teen Fag; a story about having a numb dick - but if you can imagine it, then that's all I ask.

After the Doctor gets done he tells me my next appointment date and I go back. Three more warts pop up; am I a glutton for punishment or what? Then he informs me that masturbation can help spread the warts. Oh just fanning-fucking-tastic, now I can't even beat off! Be careful out there in Sexville, USA. Trips to the Doctor suck. **end**



(*CHARACTERS ARE ACTUALLY 18 YEARS OLD OR OLDER)



GO-GO



An interview with Loretta

Gordon: Why don't you tell me about your intestinal thing?

Loretta: My intestinal thing? There is no intestine, that's the intestinal thing. It got chopped out when I was about eleven.

G: Why did it get chopped out?

Loretta: 'Cause it had bleeding ulcers in it. That's what everyone thought... well not everyone. The psychiatrist that I went to when I was seven, thought it was because I wanted to be a boy. Then the doctor thought that the psychiatrist was wrong and nobody knew why I got them. At the age of six I developed bleeding ulcers.

G: And they didn't know why? They didn't even know that they were ulcers at first?

Loretta: No, they didn't know it was ulcers, they thought it was salmonella. Which is what... salmonella is like a parasite thing too; you get it from uncooked poultry, or eggs and things. It wasn't it that. They thought it was a tropical disease. Then they determined that it was called ulcerative colitis, which basically means a bleeding ulcer in the colon.

G: How rare is that?

Loretta: It's not very rare. It's more common in middle aged people and people getting on towards old age, but I think in the past twenty years or so the incidence of it in children has been more reported. When I got it as a little kid, it was relatively unheard of; that's why everyone was like "oh no, it can't be this, it has to be salmonella." But now it is recognized as a... it's still more common in middle aged people, but it's not uncommon in kids. They still don't know the reason for it though.

G: They don't know why you get it?

Loretta: No.

G: Do they know why adults get?

Loretta: Not really. It's sort of like the same way they think of cancer; "well your body's aging" type of thing.

G: But when a little kid develops cancer it's not...

Loretta: Right.

G: Something happened... you were exposed to something...?

Loretta: Well, there are various reasons why they think that I may have got it. First of all, my Mom had chicken pox when she was pregnant with me. Second of all, I didn't get breast feed as a baby and you're suppose to get various immune abilities through breast milk. Even if you're only breast fed for a couple of days, your mother passes on these various immune factors that help you resist different things. So maybe it's part of that, maybe it's because my Mom had chicken pox when she was pregnant, maybe it was in part of the development of my intestines or whatever. My Mom was old when she had me; she was thirty nine... and a half. So I was suppose to be retarded. Maybe my intestines came out retarded instead of my brain.

G: Obviously you had to go to the hospital...

Loretta: I had to go the hospital... The first time I went to

the hospital, they didn't know what the deal was and they did exploratory stuff to figure it out. Then we moved. That was in New York, and we moved here and I immediately went into the hospital. Then they figured out what it was. I got lots of enemas and I.V.'s and all these people doing all this stuff to me - without telling me what they were doing at all. I had never been in the hospital before and I didn't know what the hell was going on.

G: How old were you?

Loretta: Six. It seemed to me like everyone was really mean and I think that was during a time, in the early 70's, when the theory of medicine was that you don't explain anything to the patient at all. Especially if it's a kid, because they won't understand you. Later that theory sort of changed. But I would go in the hospital for like three or four weeks at a time.. When I was about seven or eight I went in the hospital for really long stretches, but I can't really remember. I can remember various things that happened to me in the hospital, but I can't remember for how long I was in for... at which hospitalization each thing happened.

G: It sounds like you were hospitalized a lot...

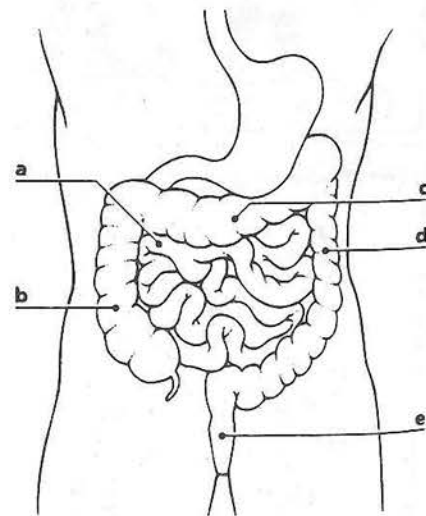
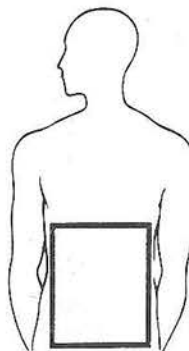
Loretta: I missed a lot of second grade and then I missed... every year I would go into the hospital for some period of time... and I missed like half of sixth grade.

G: When did they take out part of your intestine?

Loretta: When I was eleven, I had a really bad episode. I went to the hospital and they discovered that there was this part of my intestine that was really thin; it was about to blow out.

THE INTESTINES

- a Small intestine
- b Ascending colon
- c Transverse colon
- d Descending colon
- e Rectum



G: How were they treating your ulcer before?

Loretta: With steroids.. drugs... I had steroid enemas and also various steroid pills. Steroids basically reduce inflammation; it's sort of like if you had a oozing boil on your skin - if you took steroids it would reduce the size. But it

didn't really work. It would reduce it, I guess... it would lessen the affect, but it wouldn't get rid of it.

G: So it would wear off and the ulcer would come back?

Loretta: Yeah. I don't know if there was anything actually growing, but I would get more and more ulcers.

G: What exactly is an ulcer?

Loretta: An ulcer is... let me look in my medical dictionary and give you the exact definition... a canker sore is an ulcer... (reading from the dictionary:) "An open sore or lesion of the skin, or mucus membrane, accompanied by sloughing of inflamed necrotic tissue" (Sloughing: to separate from the surrounding tissue; to throw off, discard - the word 'necrotic' isn't in my dictionary -g)

G: So anyway your intestine kept getting more and more ulcerous...

Loretta: Then they finally found this part, when I was about eleven... I had to go into the emergency room and they found this part of my intestine that was really weak. It

Loretta: That's alright. I can't put it in a time line... It will come in bits and pieces. I've locked it all in. I thought the operation was going to make me into an old person. Like instant elderliness. Before I had the operation there was this group in the metro area, the Ostomy Association and they had a youth group. I went to a couple of their things and it seemed to me that a lot of the people that had ostomies in the youth group, were also in a wheelchair. Sometimes problems with your intestine will be a complication of Spina Bifida, so a lot of Spina Bifida kids will have ostomies of either their urinary tract or their intestinal tract... so that made me think...

G: That wasn't their main problem though?

Loretta: Right, it was a secondary thing, but I'm like looking at these people in a wheelchair thinking: "Oh my God, this is what I'm going to be." But it really wasn't. Another thing that helped me decide to have the operation was: I had met this woman, who must have been fifteen or six-



was about to... basically pop. My intestine was about to perforate, which means a hole would form, from the inside of the intestine into my body cavity. When that happens, it's really dangerous; it can get what's called peritonitis, which means inflammation of the body cavity and the lining. And that's fatal usually.

G: That means your shit is getting into your body?

Loretta: Right. That is one of the biggest complications of gunshot wounds to the abdomen; you get peritonitis. The gunshot wound can be plugged up but then the peritonitis kills you.

G: So it's like an infection?

Loretta: Right.

G: I guess shit isn't very healthy...

Loretta: Right. In your intestine it's in an enclosed system; the whole mouth to anus is it's own system - it's not getting into your blood stream or anything like that.

G: I guess with a gunshot wound shit could get into all kinds of things, since these blood vessels and stuff are getting broken open.... blech!

Loretta: Anyway, they sent me home for a month, so I could get healthy enough to have this operation, but.. at that point there was no 'out' for me... I was like "Okay, I'll have the stupid operation." They had been telling me since I was about eight: "Okay, the way we're probably going to have to treat this is by doing this operation... we're probably going to have to take your intestine out." And I was like: "No. That's for old people." But then when I was eleven, the emergency nature of it was just... I just kind of gave up and said "Okay."

G: Was you in a lot of pain at the time?

Loretta: Yeah, it was a lot of stomach pain... a lot of shitting all the time... bloody shit... I couldn't really control myself very well. I don't think I ever actually had any shitting my pants kind of episodes, but it was all due to preparation... I had to wear diapers for a while. I had to eat baby food and all kinds of wonderful of stuff. I had forgotten a lot of this...

G: I'm sorry I'm bringing it up...

teen at that time, but she was a glamorous teenager lady that I looked up to... very much. She had had an ostomy and she wasn't in a wheelchair. She was a very 'with it/ happening' 70's girl - and that was a big relief for me to meet her.

G: Someone who wasn't old or in a wheelchair...

Loretta: Right... and didn't smell bad.

G: So then you had to have the operation...?

Loretta: I had to have the operation. Then I had the operation and over the next nine years, I kept having complications from the operation.

G: What exactly happens during the operation?

Loretta: Basically they chopped my entire large intestine out and part of my small intestine, just a couple of inches of the small intestine, to make sure that they got all the ulcer. They left my rectum intact. The rectum is the end part of your large intestine where it empties out... They left that there, because what they were thinking was: if the rectum is not infected, in a couple of years they may want to try to reconnect it. That was an operation that some people had: where they reconnect your small intestine directly into the rectum. Then you don't have as much control over yourself, as if you had a large intestine, but at least you don't have a bag hanging off of you. So they left that there. They pulled the end of the small intestine, where they had chopped off the large intestine, they pulled that out through my abdominal wall on the right hand side; right next to my belly button.. and attached it to the abdominal wall. So I have my small intestine coming out of my lower abdomen.

G: Is it actually sticking out?

Loretta: It sticks out about an inch and it looks sort of like a tomato. That's different from person to person though: on some people it will be flat; other people it will be really long and hang over the side. Mine sticks out about a inch and it's basically round and squat, almost like a little cherry tomato. Except it changes shape with a peristaltic motion, which is basically the motion of your whole digestive tract when it's digesting. I don't know... I've stopped

(continued next page...)

(continued from previous page)

paying attention to things like that... I can't remember whether it's right after I eat, or after I've eaten certain types of foods... later on there will be a certain amount of peristaltic motion and it will change shape quite a bit. I use to pay more attention to it a couple of years ago.

G: So the part of your intestine that sticks out changes shape?

Loretta: Yep. It will look sort of like a cherry tomato and then it will kind of like dent in on itself and get a little bit longer; basically it just squirms around and then something usually comes out after that.

G: I'm sort of confused. I thought there was a tube of some sort that was inserted... I didn't realize that a part of you was sticking out...



Loretta: Some people.. That's how they get stuff out; they insert a tube into it. Mine I don't have to do that. I just wear a bag and it comes out on it's own.

G: So I guess that's better..?

Loretta: I dunno... The people who insert a tube don't have to wear a bag. They can usually get away with... they can wear a band aid over it or you can wear a gauze pad over it or a flat thing.. But then again that's how you get the stuff out, you have to irrigate it; you stick a tube in and kind of douche it out with water. Usually that's the type of operation that you still have some of your large intestine left, because the large intestine is the one that has bowel control. That's what is prohibiting stuff from just emptying out. Like mine... I don't have any control over it; it just empties into this bag.

G: So this is what happened to you when you were eleven?

Loretta: Right. I think I made the decision before I had the operation to just not think about it, you know? I woke up and it's like "alright this is my life now" without doing any... "what if?" kind of thing. I think I probably did that in dreams more, instead of actual consciousness... I don't know.

G: Did the operation give you any relief at all?

Loretta: Oh yeah. Totally. It was alot better.

G: Other than having to look at it you felt better?

Loretta: I don't think I really had that much of a problem looking at it, but then I don't know. My Mom would probably say differently.

G: But you physically felt better?

Loretta: Yeah. Once my incision was healed, all the stomach ache stuff was over with. And I was not constantly on the toilet... which was one the hallmarks of my youth! I knew all the bathrooms...!

G: You mentioned 'new problems'...

Loretta: My body formed a lot of scar tissue and the scar tissue on the inside would tend to choke off the intestine. Sort of throttle it so nothing could get through. They kept having to go in and cut out the scar tissue and then I would form more scar tissue. That happened like five times, in between the time when I was eleven... and the last time it happened I was twenty. Since then I haven't had any problems. I think that probably it had something to do with puberty and growing and stuff like that... all your organs shifting around.

G: Now that you're a mature adult everything's in it's place...

Loretta: I guess. Maybe I'm just lucky.

G: That must have been really rough in school. What was it like in gym class and stuff like that? I guess you must have had difficulties even before your operation...?

Loretta: I can't really remember before the operation... I can't remember gym class necessarily. I remember when I was in seventh grade, which is right afterwards, my Mom made me a protective foam thing that she wanted me to wear. I got away with... nobody knew. I didn't tell anybody about this operation and nobody ever found out, I don't think, but I just kind of avoided contact sports, so I wasn't being kicked in the stomach or anything. But I don't think that was really a big concern.

G: Once the operation healed you could run around and do anything you wanted to?

Loretta: The only restriction that I was told, was that I wasn't suppose to lift heavy things, because that could cause the abdominal wall to rupture. You know, where it was weak from being cut already. That was fine, because I didn't have any plans to become a weight lifter.

G: Is that even now?

Loretta: Supposedly yeah, but I think it's a little bit less of a deal than it was. It's the same kind of thing with women who have had caesarean... Once the abdominal wall is cut, it's going to have a weak point. When I was fourteen I got the part of my rectum that was left... I got that removed, because they did some more test and they found out; okay this still has problems and if we leave it in there it's just sort of rotting. It could probably turn cancerous and cause me more problems later on, so they just took it out. So I don't have a butt; they sewed it all up... I still have the muscles though. I'll have phantom sensations every once in a while. It's pretty weird.

G: Like farting or something?

Loretta: Not phantom farting, but like phantom.. sphincter contractions. It feels like.. it doesn't feel like shitting, it's more like what it use to feel like when I would be bleeding out of my butt...

G: Did it affect your reproductive organs?

Loretta: I don't think so, but not having had any children I really couldn't say. The only affect it's had on my reproductive organs, I think, is that the uterus and stuff sit kind of in front of the cervix, or what ever it is down there...

G: When they take your intestines out, they don't stick anything else back in there..?

Loretta: No.. no my cervix is tipped back.. that's what I was told; it's kind of tilted. I read somewhere that's because there's no support.. usually I guess it kind of sits on top of the intestines, but I don't have any intestines so it doesn't have anything to sit on.

G: I guess the rest of your organs just kind of move in and take up more space or something?

Loretta: Right. They get lazy and lie against the back wall down there.

G: Do you think you could eat a lot and not have your stomach stick out as much?

Loretta: I think that any shifting or whatever that was going to happen is all over with. If I was going to eat too much, I would still get fat I think. It wouldn't just fall into

the cavity... I've probably got a big bladder... I don't know... No it doesn't go out actually. It use to.. no I guess it still does a little bit. Where the scar is, it goes basically from the top of my pubic hair to about just below where my rib cage starts.. and in the middle. It nipples in my stomach; there's a bulge and there's the scar and there's the bulge on the other side. It's not a big bulge, not like I have a fat stomach or anything. My scar is really fat and looks like a caterpillar.

G: How did you tell your first boyfriend about this?

Loretta: Well, I was totally drunk and stoned... and so was he! It wasn't much of anything. The first actual boyfriend I had, I told him and he was totally disgusted by it. So then I was like "fuck you," but then he kind of got over it. Then he turned out not to be the boyfriend that I wanted anyway. I just remember telling him while we were in the car somewhere. We had already had the whole make out thing and he was all attracted to me or whatever. But he was pretty weirded out by it.

G: It must have been a pretty important issue for you; just mentioning it to someone for the first time?

Loretta: Yeah, except by that time I had already.. he was my first boyfriend, but I had had.. previous experiences. Being completely out of my mind, it wasn't like he was the first guy that I ever got naked with that way. When I told my latest boyfriend, I was like "okay I have something to tell you." He told me later, that he thought I was going to say that I was a man! So he was actually relieved at what it was.

G: I guess everyone reacts differently.

Loretta: One person, it wasn't really a boyfriend, he was like "Oh it doesn't matter." And he showed me this huge scar on his chest from open heart surgery from when he was a kid! I was like "AArggh!" - so it goes both ways; you just never know.

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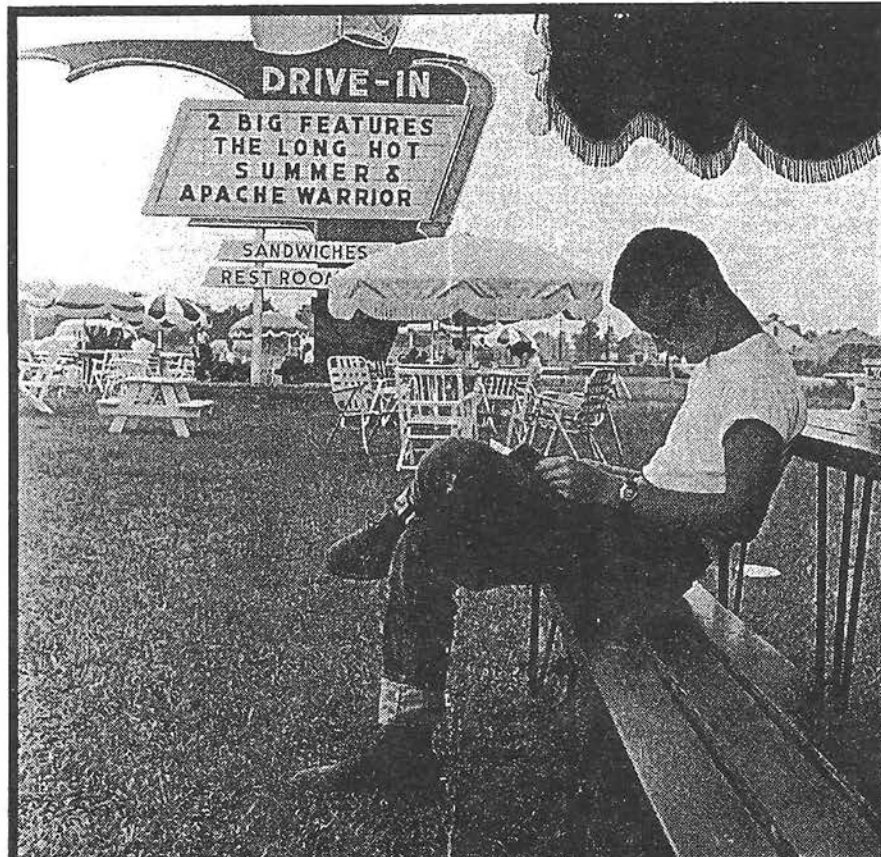
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G: Do you think that all these problems you've had as a kid made you more interested in pursuing a health job?

Loretta: I think it defiantly made me interested in pursuing some kind of health career. When I was younger, like ninth grade/tenth grade, I thought that I was going to be a doctor. "I must be a doctor" and I think that was right after I had some really bad experiences. I was feeling grateful to be alive and kind of in awe of the medical profession. Then I settled down in my head and realized that I would never be able to do that much schooling and I don't want to be a doctor anyway. I don't have patience for that. I wanted to be an artist when I was a little kid, but later I realized that I needed a skill and I would like to know how to take care of myself, so I think that had a lot to do with it. I don't want to depend on somebody to take care of me, I want to know what to do. **end**



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The Check Up!



this is only going to pinch a little bit!

by Sarah-Katherine

Originally published in Pasty Zine #5

Today sucked. I had an appointment with my gynecologist at 11:15, so I had to get up early in order to give myself time to get there on the bus. There was nothing to eat in the house but a pint of Ben & Jerry's Cherry Garcia frozen yogurt, so I ate that when I really would have preferred something a little more breakfast-y, like Pop Tarts or cold leftover pizza. After eating the frozen yogurt, I checked my pussy for lint, got dressed, and left the house, feeling beat up and groggy.

On the way to the bus stop the cold air on my face perked me up slightly, but then I took a detour to my mail box and found it empty. Nobody likes me, everybody hates me...okay, I was starting to suspect that this was going to be a very bad day after all. I caught the #15 from Ballard to downtown, and then the #12 from downtown to First Hill, which was where Dr. O was waiting for me, speculum shined and ready.

I like Dr. O I think he's very handsome. He's got pretty, curly black hair and cute round glasses, an aquiline nose and a shapely mouth. Bonus: he's tall, and on the skinny side. (I like men that are either a bit skinny or a bit heavy; it gives their bodies character.) I've had a couple of sexual dreams about him, but only one involved him fucking me during an appointment, while my feet were in the little stirrups. I've been going to him for a couple of years, so I thought I knew what to expect.

First of all, his idiot nurse got my name wrong. When I corrected her, she wrote it down wrong again. Finally I asked her for a pen, and I wrote it down correctly on my chart. She got pissed--a mere patient writing on the Sacred Chart!--but what the fuck, I refuse to be addressed by a name that isn't mine. ("Your name *Toby* now." "NO! Kunta Kinte!") She weighed me (210 pounds) and took my blood pressure (er, something over something, I forget--on the low side of normal, anyway.) She asked what method of birth control I was currently using. I told her my recent method was comprised of hostility and rudeness. She didn't think that was very funny. As revenge, she told me to strip and get into the paper dress.

Shoes off--panties off--skirt off--shirt off--bra off. Paper dress on. I waited, and waited, and waited. Dr. O--we must stop meeting this way! I wondered if he would even recognize me in clothes, after several years of him seeing me draped in sterilized paper. Finally he came. He looked a bit gaunt, which made him even sexier to me, but he was also looking kind of tired. Yeah, me too. "How are you?" he asked, his voice admirably hearty, as he donned latex gloves from the box on the counter. "How was your summer?" I babbled something. I really hate it when people ask me how I am. The worst is when you go to get a hair cut and the stylist wants to talk. Blah blah blah fucking blah, and you'd ask them to shut up but they've got the scissors.

First up was the breast exam, which is usually my favorite part of the whole thing, due entirely to my dear doctor's sex appeal and my very active fantasy life. But not today. As he manipulated my breast tissue, searching for lumps, I thought about how much like bad sex an annual gynecological exam is: first they pay rudimentary attention to your boobs, and when they've poked and prodded them for a


minute or two, they move right down to your pussy. With not even a kind word to your clit, they stick it in--the dick in one case, the speculum in the other. After a few minutes of that, they're done, and you're left all alone to get your clothes back on and leave.

"Okay, now scoot down to the edge of the table and put your feet in the cups." I did. "A little further." I moved down until it felt like half my ass was hanging off the table. Attractive view, doctor? All of a sudden I had to fart really bad--I knew if he touched me down there I wouldn't be able to hold it in. Luckily for him, he had to get his fingers lubed up. By the time he was ready to stick his fingers in me, the need had abated. Oh no, that wouldn't have been humiliating at all.

"Now I'm going to touch you." I felt his fingers separating my labia, and then suddenly, he had a few fingers in my pussy. Pressing on my lower belly with the other hand, he felt around to check on the locations of my uterus and ovaries. They seemed to be in the right places. The lube felt cold and greasy, and I could feel my muscles tensing. "Take a deep breath," quot Dr. O. I did. It helped a little.

Then came the worst part--the speculum. Just as my poor pussy was rejoicing at not having his fingers inside me anymore, he slipped the speculum in. Ouch! Name of god, it hurt! It felt like I was being parted by a baseball bat, even though he knows to use the smallest size speculum on me from my previous visits. I thought it would get less painful after the initial shock, but as he prepared the slide for my pap smear, it became excruciating. *Get it out--get it out--get it out.* "This really hurts," I said, trying not to sound whiny. My voice seemed very small, like a child's, and seemed to come from very far away.

"Take a deep breath--it's almost over," came the disembodied voice from between my legs. He sounded sympathetic, but I wondered if he knew how much pain I was in. Maybe lots of patients complain just because it's slightly uncomfortable, and he thought I was just being a baby



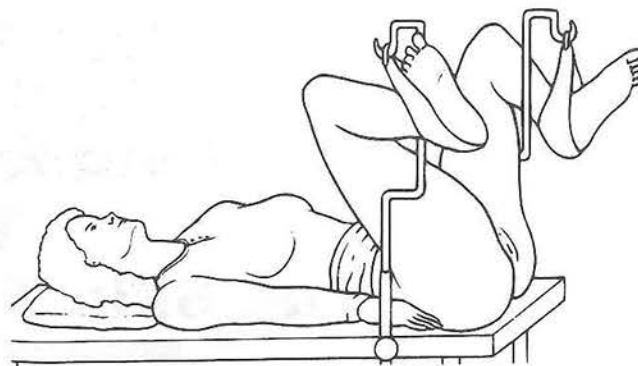
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Sarah-Katherine
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like the others. I felt the speculum twist and move inside me, in and out, almost as if he were fucking me with it. I knew he was looking for my cervix, which is tipped to my left and hard to find. I could feel my vaginal muscles spasm against the chilly metal. It seemed to go on for ages, and yet amazingly, the pain kept increasing. "Now you'll feel a slight pinch as I scrape your cervix for cells..." Yeah, I know what a pap smear is, I've had them done before. *Please hurry.*

A pinch? It felt like razor blades and broken glass. The pain was red-hot. I heard myself gasp, and I was distantly annoyed at myself, in spite of it all... why couldn't I just stop being such a drama queen, he said it was almost over, pretend you're Galileo, and this is the Inquisition... take it like a damn woman, this is just a fucking pap smear! It's funny how pain is exponential-you think you've reached the extreme, you've had all you can take, and then it gets worse... is there an end to the amount of pain the human body can feel, or does it just keep expanding indefinitely? And why is this routine exam hurting so fucking much? "You doing okay?" "Yes." My voice sounded low, shaky, and surprisingly close to tears.

Scrape, scrape, scraaaaaape, and it was suddenly all over. The speculum, finally nearing my body temperature, was yanked out, and I could sit up and watch Dr. O spray fixative on the slide. "That really hurt," I said. "Why did it hurt so much? It doesn't usually." Was I babbling? I wasn't sure. I pressed my knees together, noticing my legs were shaking. My body was alternately freezing cold and unbearably hot, as if I had a fever. I could smell my own sweat--a sour stench. My pussy felt like a battered, gaping hole. "I'm sorry," replied my doctor, genuinely. "You were pretty tense, and the tenser you are, the most uncomfortable it can be. I'm sorry it hurt you."



"Okay," I said. Then: "Thanks." What else do you say? Fuck you? He said he was sorry, and besides, it was over. My handsome, curly-haired doctor peered regretfully at me from behind his round lenses. I felt a desultory flicker of lust, but it was more a reflex than any real interest on my part.

"Okay, thanks, Sarah--I'll see you next year." And he was gone. Well, you got half my name right. I got off the table, being careful to avoid any bumps or jostles that might bring the pain back, however briefly. Got dressed. Thought about stealing the Vogue magazine I'd brought in from the waiting room, but left it instead. As I strode through the waiting room and back toward the elevators, I heard myself thinking: *That was awful. Just awful.* I cried a little on the elevator, got myself under control, and cried again at the bus stop. I mean I didn't wail or beat my breast or anything, but tears dripped out of my eyes and I'm sure if I had tried to speak I would have sounded all blubbery. Strange, because I never cry. And there I was, crying because of a pap smear.

end

Steven's Comics

The Dead Deer ©1996 by David Kelly

My Uncle Merrill took Tim and Corby hunting, I didn't want to go. When they got home, I crossed my fingers that they didn't get anything. But I could tell they did.



In the back of Merrill's truck was a deer. It didn't look very old. It made my heart sink into my stomach. Jasper, that stray dog, wouldn't stop sniffing it!



They took it and hung it in the shed. Corby and Tim were teasing me about not wanting to look at it or touch it or anything. Why would I want to?



That's when they pushed me in and held the door shut. I yelled and screamed to get out for a couple of minutes. Then, I finally looked at the deer. It looked so sad and helpless.



There was no way I was gonna eat that deer like everyone else. Grandma tried to sneak it in stew and stuff and not tell me what it really was. So I ate cereal and peanut butter sandwiches instead.



It still creeps me out everytime I go into the shed. If you look closely, you can still see blood and fur and stuff on the ground. Those guys always want to go in there and do stuff.



When I first met Jennifer she was working as an autopsy assistant at a Washington D.C. hospital. She always had interesting stories about working in (what for most people would be) a very unusual environment. Today Jennifer works at a busy hospital emergency room and (of course) she's loaded with fascinating stories of that place too! Naturally I just had to interview her for this issue and the following piece could only be called...

Jennifer Ballard VS. The Skin Eating Disease

Gordon: I was wondering if you could tell me about your experience with the Skin Eating Disease?

Jennifer: You mean the Fleshing Eating Bacteria?

G: Yes. I heard that you had an encounter with it and was wondering if you could tell me about it?

Jennifer: Yeah... I just hope that I don't provide any misinformation.

G: I don't know if there's anything more to that disease than misinformation.

Jennifer: I'm sure there is.

G: Well, as far as the general public is concerned.

Jennifer: Okay, how do you want me to start?

G: Tell me about your job.

Jennifer: I work at Prince George's Hospital (just outside of Washington D.C., in Maryland) and I work in trauma; in surgery. I see patients in the emergency room who have just come in. Not like in a regular emergency room, but they have a whole separate section for trauma; so it's people who've been shot, or car accidents... a lot of car accidents... stabbings, beatings, stuff like that.

G: Not just a sore throat.

Jennifer: No, I don't see people with sore throats. I also... go to the operating room with cases; some general surgery cases, some trauma cases. Anything from a breast biopsy to a penetrating gunshot wound to the abdomen. I also see patients who have had surgery who are on the floor. Like that was the thing with this lady who I saw.. I got called by this doctor, which is pretty routine; they'll call and say "Hey, this is Doctor So And So, can you do a dressing change on Mrs. Whatever, and she's in room 824?" or something like that, and I'll go "sure." That's pretty routine. So usually when I go up to the floor I'll get a few gauze and 4x4's (which are like 'gauze packs') and wraps, like 'ace wraps', or something like that and tape, etc... Saline and Betadine. Then I'll go to the room. So I went into this patient's room... I almost always look at the chart before I do, but for some reason I was really busy and I had other shit to do, so I just went in there.. I figured it was just a little dressing change; she had surgery on her leg... She was kind of a heavy set woman and she was really nice. I was talking to her and asked her "What kind of surgery did you have?" She had one whole leg wrapped with ace bandages and then part of the other leg wrapped the same way. Usually when I see bandages like that there's certain kinds of surgery I think of. Like something called a Femoral Popliteal Bypass, which is arterial venous surgery; people have blocked arteries, so they open them up or reconnect them to different things in the legs and stuff...

G: Is that like Varicose Veins?

Jennifer: Well not really, it's more similar to blocked arteries... But that's a pretty clean surgery and there's usually just one long incision put together with staples, and it's clean. So I asked her what happened to her, I asked her "Did you have this surgery?" and she said "No." Then I



said "What kind of surgery did you have? What happened to you? Are you a diabetic?" And she said "No." And I said "Well, what happened to you?" She says "I don't know what happened to me." I'm thinking that she's fucking crazy or something, like she doesn't even know what's wrong with her... Which is... that's a kind of routine as well, sometimes you get people who are totally out of it and have no idea of what's wrong with them or whatever. So I said "Why did you come to the hospital?" And she said "Three days ago I had this little cut on my leg..." and I said "How big was the cut?" She says "I don't know, maybe the size of... a little bit bigger than the tip of a pencil." And I was like "Oh." Meanwhile I'm taking off all the bandages on her leg. I have the nurse in there helping me, because someone has to hold the leg up while you unwrap all the dressings... So I take off all the bandages and I'm thinking "Oh my fucking God!" The whole fucking back

of her leg is missing! From her calf... like she didn't even have a calf... and the back of her thigh, like her hamstrings... you could see the muscles. All of her skin, from the back of her leg and the back of her thigh was just gone! And I was like "Ahh.. what kind of surgery did you have?" I'm kind of freaked, because it's really gross looking; it was like she had gangrene of her whole fucking leg. It was just missing.. it was half the size of her other leg. So I kept taking the dressing off and the back of her thigh, where her ass starts, this whole 'packing thing' fell out... Sometimes when someone has an open wound that's really deep, we pack it with clean gauze soaked in saline or something, to help the tissue grow again... Literally the whole back of her leg was missing. I went and I got more dressings, because I only had enough for a little tiny dressing change. I had to get tons of more gauze and ace bandages and stuff. Then I took the dressing off her leg and it was like all the way up from her right leg, all the way into her butt, and down the other leg. So I did the dressing change; I rewrapped everything; I cleaned it off really good... This thing that I thought was going to take me fifteen minutes, took almost an hour. After I finished and I washed my hands about eight times, I went out to her chart: There was a diagram on the chart of what she came in with and she had this teeny little mark on the back of her calf. It was like a circle. That's where I guess she had been infected. It's a bacteria called Group D Streptococcus; I guess that's the flesh eating bacteria. So just that one little area, the size of a quarter, had totally eaten all of the skin from her ankle to her thigh, all the way into her ass and into her other leg. In a matter of two days. I've never seen anything like it before and it totally freaked me out.

G: Did you ask her doctor about it afterwards?

Jennifer: I asked the doctor about it and he'd never seen anything like it before. They had to do all this special stuff

in the operating room.. I mean they always keep the operating room sterile, but they had to....

G: Make extra sure..?

Jennifer: Yeah, make extra sure, because it's incredibly dangerously spreading or whatever. They also had to de-breed, or cut away all the dead tissue that they even thought might be infected, because if they didn't then it would just spread. That tissue basically never grows back at all. So what they have to do, is do skin grafts and muscle grafts to that area. She's in the hospital for months.

G: Do they know where she caught it at?

Jennifer: No, they have no idea where she caught it.

G: She'd never been overseas or anything?

Jennifer: No.

Months later Jennifer told me that the woman eventually was able to walk again, although she has muscle defects in her legs, due to the severity of the disease and treatment. But she did survive it. No one seems to know much about Flesh Eating Bacteria, except for maybe the NIH (National Institute of Health) or some other such organizations. Jennifer said that she'll eventually study the disease further, but right now she's too busy treating stab wounds and gun shot victims to really follow up on it.

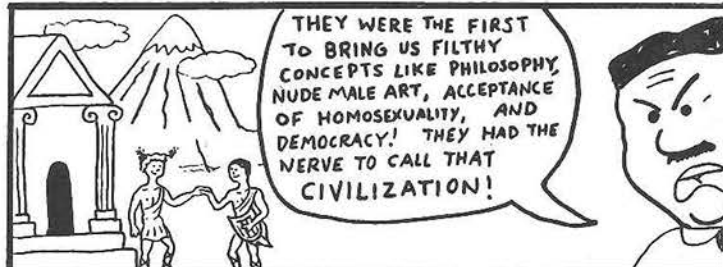
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I've never seen anything like it before and it totally freaked me out.



STRAIGHT and NARROW

TONY
ARENA



MY LEG
WAS...

AMPUTATED!

An interview with Bruce

Gordon: How old are you?

Bruce: 27

G: How old were you when you got your leg amputated?

Bruce: 21

G: Why was your leg amputated?

Bruce: Ahh... The shorter version would be: I had a tumor in my lower limb and when it was removed, there was an infection that replaced the tumor (essentially.) It was a malpractice situation.. the doctor did some poor surgical methods and my leg got infected and damaged the nerves. This was in the Philippines. After ten days, I was rushed home to the states and had a number of surgeries to try to salvage the leg, but there was just too much nerve damage. I didn't have any sensitivity in my foot... They basically said I would be a lot more active if they amputated the leg and allowed me to use a prosthesis rather than having a dead foot. So I could have kept my leg, but it wouldn't have been effective at all.

G: So basically you had a choice?

Bruce: I was given three days to decide, but the way they laid it out, it was like a sales pitch: "these are the pros and con's." There was really no reason why I would not have it amputated. I was so doped up on morphine that I think my family were going to help me make that decision anyway. But as I recall the situation.. as distorted as it was.. because of the drugs... and the degree of sickness that I was in... it was an easy decision. I mean between the two.. not an easy decision, but to decide between the two...

G: What do you mean it was an easy decision?

Bruce: It was hard to say "yes amputate the leg," but there wasn't too many other options. I had a situation that I couldn't avoid.

G: So when you were in the Philippines did you realize how bad off your leg was?

Bruce: Not at all. I knew that my leg was bad... and it hurt! It hurt really bad and I wasn't given any medication. In fact they called my home here in the States and said I wasn't going to make it home alive... that I'd probably die before I got home because I was very ill. But having my leg amputated never crossed my mind. And when I got back to the states, they said "there's an 80% chance we'll be able to save your leg," so I was pretty optimistic. You know... 20% - it won't happen... but I had a blood clot in my leg and the longer the surgeries kept failing and so...

G: Surgeries done by the Philippine doctors

Bruce: In the Philippines, he (the doctor) had most of his training in the states... some quack school (who knows?)..

G: No one took you to a military base?

Bruce: No. I had very good doctors in Portland.

G: It seems like a military base in the Philippines would have been closer.

Bruce: Oh, I see what you're saying. Well like I said I was near death, so I was really in the hands of my friend who was caring for me. He stayed with me every night in the hospital and the situation turned on me so fast; I went in one night and was expecting to come out in one piece in a matter of days... two. They said I'd be out in a day or two. So I was not anticipating such a catastrophe. When I woke up the next day, I had a fever of 105° and was in shock. So I was really at the mercy of everyone around me.

G: What's the time frame; from when you first went into the hospital, to get the tumor removed, to when you actually had your leg amputated? How many days are you talking about?

Bruce: About thirty days.



G: Thirty days? That actually sounds like quite a long time.

Bruce: That is a long time. I had eight surgeries in that time. So it was really a whirl wind... I was just in and out of the operating room and... it was just chaotic. When I got to Portland I immediately went on morphine and... God bless America for having wonderful drugs like that!

G: You weren't on any big pain killers before then?

Bruce: No. When I flew back on the airplane I literally had a wound open to the bone, without any medication. Except aspirin.

G: (Ouch!) After your leg was amputated and they began to take you off morphine... when did you start to think about you accident?

Bruce: When I got home from the hospital, there was a report... I had all the doctor's reports.. and I started looking through those reports. In the report it said that the tumor was actually benign and not malignant. So the entire operation... the entire experience was.. unnecessary. That's when I really freaked out. That was the catalyst to my facing the situation and realizing how fucked up it was.

G: What do you mean....

Bruce: Well I broke down. That was the first time I just broke down and bawled. Not from pain or anything, but just the realization of what had happened. I was just trying to stay composed during that whole time and get through it... just for my own health reasons. I was just trying to deal with my own physical health and that was my only concern. I didn't have time to deal with emotional baggage. That's when I really realized how screwed up everything was.

G: You were back at your parents house at this point?

Bruce: Yeah. Just laying around, for a number of days. I had decided right then, that day, when I read the report and realized how screwed up it was, that I didn't want to waste anytime wallowing in a really horrible situation. I was very self determined to get back.. to take back the lost ground... to essentially just get a life again. So physical therapy and just getting on my prosthesis... getting active again, was all I concerned myself with.

G: Did your physical therapy start right away?

Bruce: Yeah. They had anticipated that I would be walking after six months, following the surgery... and I was running on my prosthesis in about six weeks. I was really motivated into the whole therapy...

G: Did they fit you for a prosthesis right away?

Bruce: Yeah. I was fitted and as soon as I got it, I started walking on it.

G: How sensitive was it?

Bruce: I was completely out of it. I do remember them discussing the tools they were using... the saws, the chisels... and that kind of freaked me out. Just the thought of sawing and hard tools being used on your body is a strange concept... an uncomfortable concept.

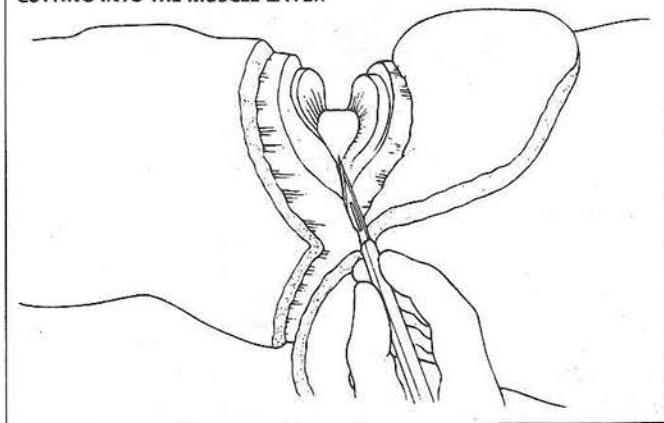
G: It doesn't sound like a very comforting thought, but I meant after the operation... was the stub... or stump... sensitive?

Bruce: Stump (I guess.) It was really sensitive. The nerves have to reroute themselves; instead of going to the foot, now they stop short and reroute themselves back up the leg. That's what happens to them.

G: When they fit you for a prosthesis does it hurt?

Bruce: Yeah, there's quite a bit of pain involved. All the weight being on... they try to distribute the weight evenly around the entire stump, up to the knee where the prosthesis stops, to prevent it from setting right on the bottom. So I don't really have a lot of weight right on the bottom of the stump. It's distributed clear around my leg. Even so

CUTTING INTO THE MUSCLE LAYER



it's a lot of weight to resign on the leg. I guess it's like wearing a big boot that's two sizes too small. You can get your foot into it, if you cram it in there, but it's not comfortable.

G: Your leg was amputated at the mid shin?

Bruce: Yeah, about six or seven inches below the knee. Which is a long stump... it's considered pretty long.

G: So the infection was near your ankle?

Bruce: It was actually... just about where it was amputated. They amputated right where the infection had set in. So the infection went from mid shin to the foot. It didn't go up my leg at all, so I was fortunate.

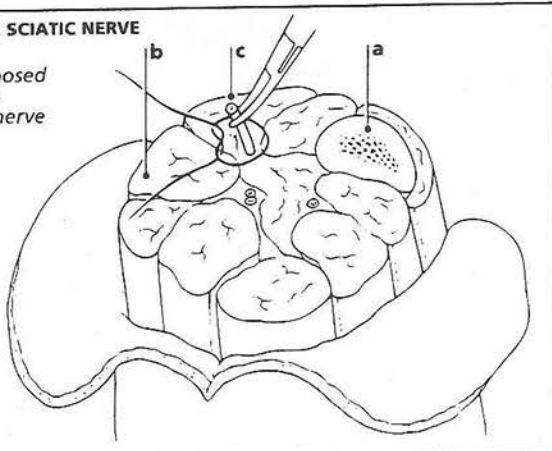
G: After the operation and you got your prosthesis, what was your main concern? Were there things you were particularly worried about not being able to do?

Bruce: Prior I had been so active athletically... I was very athletic. They said "well you'll be able to do all the things you did before" and I was very doubtful. Even though I can't do some of things I did before, I can still do quite a bit. It may not be at the same degree of intensity, but I can still do quite a bit. That was definitely a concern. And I think aesthetics were... it's kind of vain, but it was very real. Just the ugliness of it; I didn't want to be ugly, or have this... stigma of being an amputee and having my pant leg waving...

G: What was your perceptions of amputees before? Had you ever thought about them?

TYING THE SCIATIC NERVE

- a Femur
- b The exposed muscles
- c Sciatic nerve



Bruce: I don't know.... I probably felt sorry for them, or fortunate for myself. I knew a guy in high school that had his arm amputated... it seemed gruesome, very gruesome.

G: Had you ever seen his stump before?

Bruce: I think I had. He was on our football team. So I must have in the locker room or something...

G: And he played foot ball?

Bruce: Yeah, he did.

G: So he was a positive role model..?

Bruce: In a sense... yes. I guess I always felt that it was a huge deficit, that they were really missing out... or that they really had to overcome a tremendous amount to have a peaceful life.

G: Are prosthetics' very expensive?

Bruce: Most of them are about 10 to \$12,000. I've had four... no five. This is my fifth one.

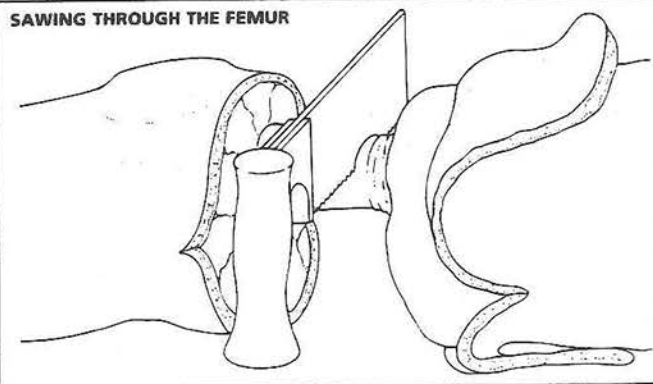
G: How do you pay for them?

Bruce: I've had insurance pay or help pay for most of my medical expenses, and I've put in about \$10,000.

G: You mentioned that you were worried about aesthetics... meaning your attractiveness...?

Bruce: Yeah, attractiveness.. self esteem... Like I said, a lot of my self esteem and drive was my ability to be very physical and active. After having my leg amputated, I had to deal with a new center... a new drive... I couldn't rely on being physical. Before, athletics and being active was kind of what I was comfortable with and now I couldn't rely on that. It would be like someone very intelligent having brain damage and they couldn't be intellectual anymore, they would have to find a new medium for being active in life.

SAWING THROUGH THE FEMUR



G: But, you said you're still active...

Bruce: I am, but not as active. It's not something I can rely on. Even though I'm active I still have situations or times when I'm not... I can't be. My leg is really screwed up and I'm somewhat disabled.

G: What do you mean by that? What happens?

Bruce: Like sores develop on my leg and I have to slow down quite a bit.

G: Blisters?

Bruce: Blisters... This is a new prosthesis I have now and the last one I had, for about a year, I had a lot of troubles with it. I was in pain almost everyday for about six months. So everyday I would get up and have to deal with pain.

G: Where you wouldn't want to put it on?

Bruce: Exactly. But I have to go to work. So I have to get up... psyche myself up... and know that I have to get up and go.

G: But what are your choices... crutches?

Bruce: But they annoy me, so I'd rather deal with pain.

G: Do you ever get any drugs for pain?

Bruce: No, but I tend to drink a lot.

G: You can't go to the doctor and say that your prosthesis hurts and you need some drugs?

Bruce: Yeah, yeah, but it's just more convenient to go to the liquor store and buy whiskey.

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G: Before your operation did you drink very much?

Bruce: No. Never really did. A lot of that has to do with the fact that I was very athletic in school and they just don't go too well together.

G: Are you concerned about your drinking?

Bruce: Not really, I enjoy it. It definitely helps me feel better physically and also just to numb everything. My drinking is usually associated with being around my friends and having a good time, so in a way it's very positive therapy.

G: How long was it after you had your leg amputated, that you had your first sexual experience?

Bruce: Umm... a matter of weeks, less than a month.

G: Were you already seeing someone at the time?

Bruce: No, this was an old friend from high school, who asked me to come down to see her in Oregon. My mom lives in Oregon so I stopped in and saw her and she was very kind and offered herself as a get well present.

G: So she already knew what had happened to your leg?

Bruce: Yeah, but we never had sex before, so I was very surprised.

G: Did she present herself as a "get well present" or is that how you interpreted it?

Bruce: That's how I interpreted it. It was surprising and I was very nervous about it as well.

G: Because of your leg or because it's sex?

Bruce: Probably both. I still am nervous about my leg as far as sex... getting undressed and taking it (the prosthesis) off... with someone I don't know very well. If I am in the locker room, at the YMCA, it doesn't bother me so much because I'm not being intimate with anyone around me. I'm just doing my own thing; taking a shower or going to work out. In an intimate situation they're going to ask questions... and there's the contact also. That's really a big part of it, because it's such a personable thing for me. I'd rather have someone touch my genitals, than touch my leg, because there's just so much more trauma attached to that part of my body.

G: Do people you're with sexually want to touch your leg? Or does it just happen?

Bruce: It just happens. Over time, girlfriends I've had just want to check it out. It's really soft so they like it if I rub it on their butt or something.

G: What was your first experience like with someone who didn't know your leg was amputated?

Bruce: I've only had a couple of one night stands, but they've both been pretty interesting, because they didn't find out until the very last minute. It's not something that came up in conversation, and as you know, I don't have a limp and you wouldn't notice that I had a prosthesis... so it was right at the last minute, I would say "oh by the way." Both times it was no big deal, and in fact both women had known someone else who had lost a limb, so it wasn't any ordeal for them.

G: Since your prosthesis isn't very obvious, it's not something that comes up in conversations?

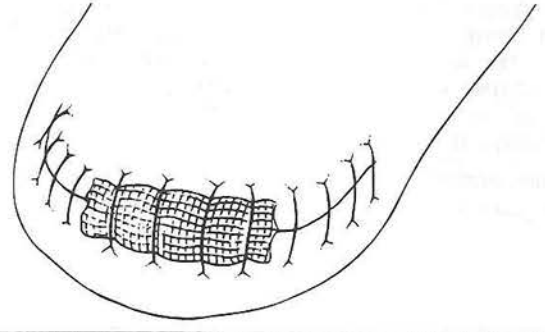
Bruce: I'm not about to tell everyone that I know that I have a prosthesis, unless I'm going to be around them for a while. Or if it happens to come up in conversation. It's not anything I need to hide or want to hide, but it's not something I want to announce. It's not always enjoyable to talk about. Sometimes I can be pretty casual and flippant about this situation - I don't get dramatic all the time about it - but other times it's not something I want to talk about. It spoils the mood sometimes, when I'm having a good time I don't feel like spilling my guts just to enlighten someone about what happened.

G: Do you still become depressed about it?

Bruce: Actually yes. Yesterday I did. I don't get depressed too often... or so.. I think I don't. Depression's probably one of those things.. that you're not always aware of... if you're not feeling good - then why are you not feeling

CLOSING THE SKIN FLAPS

The skin flaps are closed in such a way that the join does not fall across the muscle sutures.



good..? I'm not too analytical in that sense; I just don't like to dwell on that.

G: Depression?

Bruce: Yeah. Why I don't feel good and what I need to do... Yesterday I was kind of having a shitty morning. I was having a hard time dealing with my leg and how its limited me, or if it has limited me.. in the past few years. Like I said I've done quite a few things; I still stay active and I've gone through school.. but I was feeling like I haven't done enough and I want to do more... that socially it has held me back in ways that I wouldn't think have happened... it's irritating.

G: Do you ever think that it might motivate you to do more things than you would have otherwise?

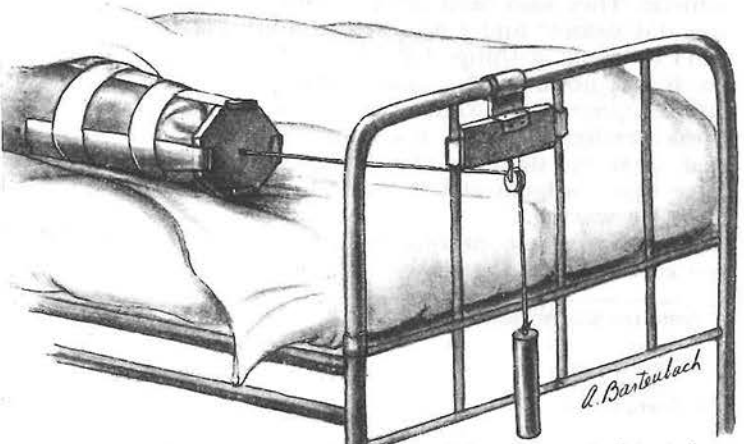
Bruce: It has in some ways.

G: Has it risen your expectations in yourself...?

Bruce: It has and like I said before it's caused me to not be so centered on just being physically able to do things; I've taken up music, I read more, I'm into more cultured things than I had been before, because it's caused me to appreciate different things in life.

G: So it's had it's positive side?

Bruce: Yeah it definitely has. It's an extreme.. I think any time someone goes through an extreme situation, or has had a traumatic experience, that their life has to change. Sometimes some of it's good... or positive.



G: I guess it limits you if, for example, you wanted to take a Thai Chi class or... well I guess you probably could but...

Bruce: Yeah. I guess how it limits me is how I really enjoyed being active and that was to the extreme. Climbing mountains... just my activity level was very extreme and I can't be extreme anymore. I can't go out and run ten miles if I want. In fact I don't run anymore at all. One of my passions was running...

G: Can you run at all?

Bruce: I could probably, but I don't enjoy it. Just because the way I use to run before... I just don't enjoy the level of... that.

G: If you don't have your leg on, how do you get around?

Bruce: Crutches.

G: What about at the gym?

Bruce: Hop. I haven't been on my crutches, literally haven't used them for three weeks. I'll get up in the morning and I'll put my leg on, and I'll take it off when I go to bed. So it stays on all day.

G: Kind of like wearing glasses?

Bruce: Yeah.

G: Can you swim and stuff like that?

Bruce: No, I take it off when I go swimming. The things I do without my leg are... I guess that's about it. Swim... shower. I take it off to shower.

G: What else besides running have you found that you can't do? I guess you don't play football.

Bruce: Yeah, I don't run. I don't play basketball as much, though I can. I go climbing, but smaller mountains and more trails. I don't climb as much as far as rock climbing. I can still do some. There really isn't too much... I think a lot of the things that are hard are the simple things, that are more subtle. Like going barefoot. Something I enjoy, walking barefoot when it's sunny out in the summertime. I can't go barefoot, just because this foot is designed to have a shoe on it.

G: You can't get an attachment or something... different, so it lowers?

Bruce: No, it's not that. It's not designed that way. It's not that big of a deal, but it's subtle. There's a lot of little subtle things... sitting Indian style. If I want to sit down and be comfortable on the floor, I have to pretty much stretch my leg out... I'm not very flexible. It consumes my thoughts quite a bit. Just having the leg on and being concerned with how it fits. It's not like I'm directly thinking about it, but it's in my thoughts during different parts of the day. Yesterday I'd been thinking about it for about an hour and I normally don't dwell on it too much... but I'd been thinking about it quite a while. So I decided to stop thinking about it.

G: How do you stop thinking about?

Bruce: I just stop. I have good self-preservation and have learned to not think about it. Call it repression if you want, but I can just say "aw, I'm tired of being annoyed or depressed this morning." I think a lot of depression for me... like yesterday... is bullshit. I'm getting down about the things I can't do, or haven't been able to do, or the future. I really get annoyed if I start getting depressed about the future.

G: Has your experience ever made you think about suicide before?

Bruce: Yeah, I have thought about suicide. A number of times.

G: Had you ever thought about suicide before your accident?

Bruce: Never. It was the furthest thing from my mind. I've never seriously considered it, but it's been in my mind... as if it were possible. Not that I'd actually do it... but if things got so bad, or if I couldn't do what I wanted to do in life, then it would be an option.

G: What do you think of people who commit suicide? Have you ever known anyone whose done it before?

Bruce: Yeah, I had a friend who killed himself... I was very sad. I thought it was so pathetic. His reason for committing suicide just seemed so trivial. I know that it's easy for someone on the outside to look at the person who commits suicide and say that, since the person who kills themselves is obviously very distressed over it. I guess it really doesn't matter... the reason. I can definitely understand why some people do

commit suicide or consider it more seriously than others. But it's such an extreme solution... it's the final solution. I always want to assume that there is a different solution, because it's so drastic. I've had times where I've just said I can't take it. I don't want to take it. I probably could but it's more like I don't want to. I've had enough... of physical, mental, emotional pain and I just didn't want to take it any more. But I was more driven by the things I still hadn't done, that I'd like to do... the possibilities... the things I want to do, the places I want to see... That's what keeps me going. And if you end it, then there's no chance to ever find out.

G: Have you ever considered filing a malpractice suit against the doctor who fucked up the operation?

Bruce: I tried to sue and... having to deal with the Philippine Government was becoming impossible. I was going to have to tap all my financial resources to even begin the procedure, let alone complete it... In a third world country like the Philippines, it was just about impossible. After two years of doing general background information; talking to various law firms... I was really exhausted and I didn't want to deal with it anymore. I had to get on with my life, and that was really hard because right afterwards I felt so wronged. And I still feel very wronged, I was really fucked over. I really wanted some justice to be done, but I had to realize that there wasn't going to be any justice. That I had to just give it up. I'm not going to get my revenge, unless I want to go do it myself. But I'm not going to be rewarded any money. I had to take my losses and move on. **end**

A Case of Apotemnophilia: A Handicap as Sexual Preference

Little is known about apotemnophilia, the desire for amputation.

Money et al¹ reported two cases of apotemnophilia. Both had a preference for partners with amputations. They also fantasized about amputation of their own legs. One of them had made serious attempts at infecting his leg and by doing so make an amputation necessary. He failed because the wound was continually treated and an operation was not indicated. The other did not make any attempt at self-amputation.

Griffith et al. stated: "This sexual variance, which is a form of fetishism, occurs, to my knowledge, in men only. These men have gone so far as to form organizations. They look down upon the female amputee who covers her stump with a prosthesis, referring to such a woman as one who 'tries to pass.' They call themselves 'hobbyists' and write short stories or draw pictures about their fantasies." Money³ finds that amputees, on the contrary, can have very positive relations with people who have a (sexual) preference for amputees.

Besides a number of contacts with amputees, Mr. A. met or corresponded with people who had alloapotemnophilia. In this way he heard from a correspondent friend in the U.S. about people who had been amputated. This friend gave detailed information about how two of those people had progressed. For one person the leg had been misformed through use of a brace, after which amputation was obtained.

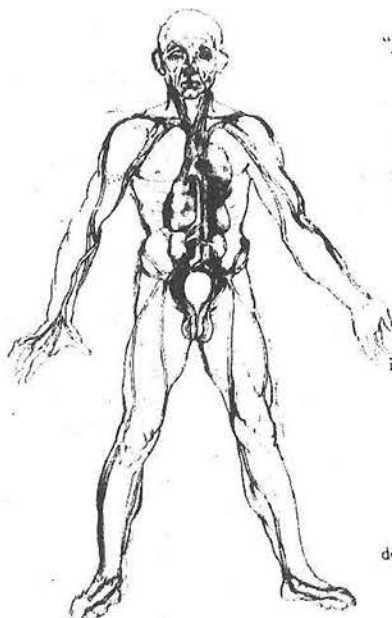
The other had his leg amputated by a surgeon with whom he originally had had a pedophilic relation.

"Just as a transsexual is not happy with his own body but longs to have the body of another sex, in the same way I am not happy with my present body, but long for a peg-leg." "When I was 8 years old, I became conscious of the fact that I was strongly attracted to people who were missing a leg. It was in the beginning of the 1920's and at that time prosthesis was not paid for by national health insurance. There were, therefore, few people who could afford it. Amputees were thus more easily recognizable then, Men and boys were way in majority.

"In the area of sex, the seeing and touching of a leg stump gives me an enormous kick; it nevertheless does not have to be per se my own leg stump. I have had experience in this area. This is, however, not the reason I want to be amputated. To be amputated is only important for me insofar as it is the necessary condition for wearing a wooden leg. Without this consequence I do not need to be amputated. Naturally over the years I have thought of many arguments against amputation, have carefully considered them and rejected them, and not only for emotional reasons.

It is not normal. But what is normal and who is normal? It is perverse. But perverse behavior does not exist, only deviant behavior. And what is the objection to deviant behavior as long as it does not bring damage or harm to anyone? As long as I stick to these rules, I feel that I have the right to decide my own behavior. No one has the right to deny or keep me from this way of life.

OK!





I Had An Abortion!

An interview with Ellen

by Heather Curtis and Amy Watson

(Originally published in Rotten Fruit #20)

This is an interview with a girl I knew who had an abortion. I hoped to go beyond the rhetoric and the beliefs, to focus on the reality of the situation. If some of the questions seem leading, it is because I had spoken with her earlier about doing the interview and already knew part of the story. I learned a lot from asking the questions I had always wanted to ask, but considered too uncouth to bring up.

Maybe this will shed some light on it for some of you: maybe recall painful memories for others. For me, it made me cry and wish to hell I could have helped her; to help anybody in that godawful situation. What do you do? I wish I knew. Turn back the clock and fix it? Unfortunately, things don't work that way and we struggle on with our mistakes as best we can.

-Heather

Teen Fag: How old are you now, and when did it happen?

Ellen: 17, and it happened 6 months ago.

TF: How long had you been seeing your boyfriend?

Ellen: A year and a half.

TF: Under what circumstances did you get pregnant? Did he use a condom?

Ellen: We didn't use anything.

TF: Had you done that before, or was it just a one time thing?

Ellen: No, we'd done it before, but only a couple of times.

TF: When you did it before, were you practicing the rhythm method or was he pulling out?

Ellen: Most of the time pulling out.

TF: So did he pull out that time?

Ellen: No.

TF: He didn't?

Ellen: No.

TF: He didn't even attempt to?

Ellen: No.

TF: Did he apologize afterward?

Ellen: Yes.

TF: How long was it before you found out you were pregnant?

Ellen: About a month and a half, or two months.

TF: What happened? How did you find out? Was it a home pregnancy test?

Ellen: No, I went to Planned Parenthood, and that's when I was tested.

TF: What were you thinking when you got the positive results?

Ellen: I wasn't really shocked. I mean, I knew already. It was a really big shock to him, but I wanted it. All he could say was, we couldn't have it.

TF: What did he do? Did he shout or just tell you "you can't have it," or...?

Ellen: Yeah, he said, "You can't have it. We can't afford it." He just kept saying that.

TF: How was your relationship before you got pregnant?

Ellen: Really shitty. We were fighting all the time and I was trying to break up, but he wouldn't let me.

TF: How was it after?

Ellen: It was better for a couple of weeks, then after that it just went down. We broke up a month later.

TF: When your relationship was bad, did you still pay attention to his opinion, that you couldn't have it...? I mean, if you thought that you weren't going to be with him, did it still matter to you what he thought?

Ellen: Well, I didn't want to be with him, but I knew I would have nowhere to live, if I didn't have him helping me to support it. I mean, my family would kick me out anyway, so I kinda had to go with what he said. And if he wouldn't support it... then I would have no other way.

TF: When did you decide you wanted to have an abortion?

Ellen: Well, it was a few days after, because I was really sick and getting tired of it... being sick all the time. He was being a real jerk, repeating, you know, we can't have it and stuff. But after I had it done I realized I shouldn't have. That maybe if I had waited another week, I wouldn't have.

TF: Did his parents know?

Ellen: Now they do. They didn't know until around two months afterwards.

TF: How did they react?

Ellen: They were shocked at first. They weren't mad, they were just mad that we didn't tell them, but they took it really well.

TF: What would have happened if you had told your parents?

Ellen: My parents would have disowned me. I've been told that many times.

TF: So once you made your decision, how did you feel? Did you feel a sense of relief or did you feel...?

Ellen: No, at first I thought that was what I wanted because he had kept talking me into it. You know, "you wouldn't have a life if you had a kid," etc.. So I was glad at first because I wouldn't have been able to go out with any of my friends and stuff. It didn't phase me at first really.

TF: Was it before or after the abortion that you ended your relationship?

Ellen: After.

TF: How was he acting?

Ellen: Afterwards he was really nice. He treated me really well for a week. He kept telling me he had changed. After that week, he went back to his old self... a real jerk. That's when it ended.

TF: When you had the abortion, did you know somebody that had already had one, someone who could help you through it? Or did you set it up by yourself? How did you get down there and make the plans?

Ellen: Well, Steve brought me down and everything. He knew a girl that had had one already, so he talked to her and she told him stuff. He knew a lot about it.

TF: Who paid for it?

Ellen: I did.

TF: He didn't help?

Ellen: No, and that just shows there, that he wouldn't have given me any support.

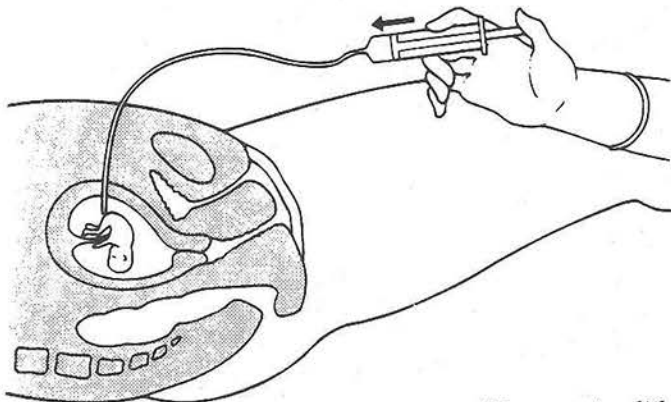
TF: What were you feeling? I mean, what was going through your head while you were riding down there?

Ellen: I was really nervous. I don't know; I don't really remember it all. I was just real nervous. I didn't know if I wanted to do it, I kept having second thoughts, that maybe we shouldn't. He just kept saying we have to.

TF: So what happened? I guess part of this interview would also like to help girls who are going to have to go through this themselves. Tell me about the court stuff. How were you able to have one? I mean, the laws in Ohio, being what they are now say that you can't have an abortion without parental notification... and I don't think you can go through the courts anymore. I'm not sure... But you did. What happened?*

Ellen: I had to go get a judicial bypass, and I had to get a lawyer and everything; it's all free. They asked a lot of questions and I had to prove that I was responsible enough to make my own decisions. They presented me in front of the judge and asked questions; then the judge asked me questions and I answered his. I proved that I can make my own decisions - with questions about jobs, how many classes I take at school, and sports. I guess they show if you're responsible or not.

TF: Ever wonder how they can decide you're not mature enough to have an abortion, but you're mature enough to be a mother? Doesn't that seem kind of contradictory? So, after that the courts gave you permission...



Ellen: Yes, they sent the papers over, (the courts didn't know my name. I signed one piece of paper, and that was put away. I went by a different name in the courts.) They sent that to Planned Parenthood and gave me some other papers I had to bring in.

TF: So after that, when you were at the clinic, what happened?

Ellen: I waited forever and then went in and had my blood taken and stuff. Then I had to wait a little longer and finally, the operation. I had to go after that and sit in a room... and they gave me medicine to calm my nerves or something.

* (This interview took place in 1992. Laws in Ohio may have changed since then, but I don't know either way. -gordon)

CULTURAL JETLAG—JIM SIERGEY & TOM ROBERTS

I HOLD IN MY MIND THE PICTURE OF A HUGE CROWD OF CHILDREN, CHILDREN I KEPT FROM BEING BORN BY MY LIFELONG HABIT OF MASTURBATION! I SEE THEM GROWING UP, GOING TO SCHOOL, PLAYING GAMES, LAUGHING TOGETHER — ALL PREVENTED BY MY RECKLESS SPILLING OF SEED! IF YOU THINK MASTURBATION IS HARMLESS AND DOESN'T HURT ANYONE — THINK AGAIN!!!



Life. What a Beautiful Choice!

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TF: Were you "out" during the operation?

Ellen: No.

TF: You weren't put out?

Ellen: No. I heard that you're supposed to get pain-killers but if you ask me, I never received any. They gave me Advil afterwards, and the Advil is supposed to help in seven minutes, but it never helped.

TF: So, you're done and he brings you home...

Ellen: I was all sick and tired... and I slept all day.

TF: What was he doing? Was he being considerate... quiet?

Ellen: He was just shocked, I think. He didn't talk.

TF: Did he comfort you in any?

Ellen: When we got to his house, (that's where I slept,) that's when he started to be nice. I guess, he could tell I was in a lot of pain. Cause I was in a lot of pain after it, and they give you medicine, but you don't have to take it or anything. Everything's free.

TF: I'm going to ask you to get real specific here. What exactly were the factors in your choosing to have one? I mean, what exactly was it that made you decide?

Ellen: Well, money and the fact that I didn't want to marry Steve. I wanted nothing to do with him. That's pretty much it.

TF: Was he abusive?

Ellen: During this or before this?

TF: Just your relationship in general.

Ellen: Yeah...

TF: If you knew another girl that got pregnant in an abusive relationship, what would you recommend her to do?

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Ellen: Get out of it. I guess... now I mean, I regret what I did, but when I think back, there's no way I could of married him with how he treated me... and I wouldn't expect anyone else to either.

TF: What, to marry him?

Ellen: Yeah, to marry a guy like that... if you do something wrong, you get hit. You know, he doesn't want the kid and then when you do that, he blames it all on you and says it's all your fault. I mean, if I would have had it, it would have been all my fault, and I would have been left alone. So, there's just no way to get out of it feeling good.

TF: It's the lesser of two evils... When you were going through all of this, were any of your friends... I mean... did you have anybody else that you could talk to - that



were there for it, just to kind of be there...?

Ellen: Well, three of my friends knew about it. Two of them I didn't really talk to because one of them was telling me "have it, have it - who cares what they said," and the other one was like "don't have it, don't have it - I won't support you." My third friend supported me either way.

TF: How do you feel about it now that you're out of the relationship? You've been out for a while, you realize that it was an abusive relationship. Tell me how you feel about it; what effects you think it will have on the rest of your life?

Ellen: Well, I really regret.. cause if I would have had it, I would have had it around now... and thinking about it.. I hate myself for doing it and I'd do anything to have had it.

TF: Why?

Ellen: I don't know. I mean just the fact that I killed him... just what goes through my head because of all that jerk said...

TF: But do you really feel that it was a life? I mean, did you always think this, and you just went against your..?

Ellen: No, I didn't always think that, but now I think: yeah, I'd have a little kid now. It makes me mad.

TF: Looking back and realizing what you would have, makes you feel regretful?

Ellen: Yeah.

TF: I can completely sympathize with that, but I still want to go into why you feel regretful. Assuming that you did have a kid right now, where do you think you would be?

Ellen: When I think about how much I regret it now... that's what I think about... I don't think I'd be living here 'cause of my parents... they wouldn't let me.

TF: So where do you think you would be?

Ellen: I don't make enough money to live on my own...

TF: Do you have anywhere to go? Do you have any friends who'd support you if you had a child?

Ellen: Yeah, Sue's mom knows about it... and Sue was like, "you could move in here", but I could never do that. Like if I had an apartment and a car, there's no doubt about it, I would have had the kid. Or even if I just had a car, 'cause then I'd have transportation to places... but I think if I did have it, there's the slight chance I'd be living

here.

TF: Do you think you would have given it up for adoption?

Ellen: No. I wouldn't have done that.

TF: So basically, if you had a chance where at your age, you could have had it, and been able to financially support yourself and the child, you would have had it - but as it was, you wouldn't have been able to. You wouldn't have had support from anybody..

Ellen: And it wouldn't have had a good life. I mean, I want my kids to have a good life, not something where their grandparents support them and me. And that's the thing I had to tell the court.

TF: Do you feel that your parents would be bitter towards you?

Ellen: Yeah, 'cause I get along with them good, and I'm the only one out of three that gets along with them... and that would have just ruined everything.

TF: Before you had it, were you pro-life or pro-choice?

Ellen: Well I guess I was more pro-life, because I thought it was just like two people were using it as birth control, but once I started to think about it... if a teen gets pregnant and their parents won't support them, where do they go and what happens to them? So then I started to be more pro-choice.

TF: But I think, it's not pro-abortion. It's pro-choice because what you did affected the rest of your life, both emotionally and...

Ellen: But now I think I'm more pro-life because, I mean, I don't want people to have to go through what I'm going through. Right now it's getting easier for me because, I mean, so many things have happened to me, I'm just not trusting about anything. But.. I've got... like my doctor gave me a number to call for like counseling and stuff...

TF: Do you think this would have been easier for you if more people had been.. are there.. were there.. for you, even now, would you feel better?

Ellen: I don't think so. I mean, I'll always hate myself for it. My mom does that. She still regrets it, and she's forty now. (?)

TF: Part of the pro-life (movement) is banning abortion. Would you do that?

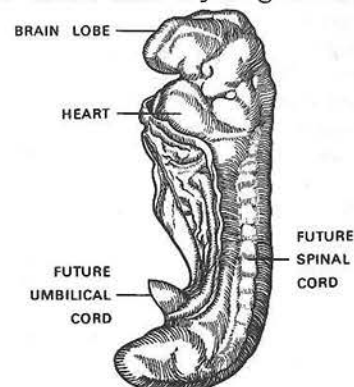
Ellen: Well, no... I wouldn't ban them, but I think that you should have to go through more than I had to...

TF: Do you need more counseling or telling your parents?

Ellen: Yeah, well, a little more, like.. telling your parents and I guess, more counseling, because it did help me through a lot; I think if I went through more counseling, I wouldn't have had (the abortion.) Yeah, I think parents should know. I mean, I still haven't told mine. I don't plan on it for a while.

TF: Is it worth it? I mean, do you feel badly enough yourself, for not telling them and ruining what you have? Or is it the type of thing where you're going to tell them at thirty?

Ellen: Yeah, I don't want to tell them now, cause see, since Steve and I broke up he went crazy. So now they're afraid to let me go out with other guys, because they're afraid they're going to do something to me like he did, and if I tell them about "that", then it just gives them another reason



to keep me away from guy friends. So I don't want to tell them yet, but if this would happen again or anything, I wouldn't tell them 'cause there's no doubt about it, I don't care if I wasn't staying with the guy or anything, I would have it.

TF: How would you support yourself?

Ellen: I don't know. I mean, I know for one thing (cause my mom and I were talking about this once) and she got real mad when I said that you could get on welfare. But, I mean, if that's what I had to do, then I would. With how much I've had to go through, there's no way I could do it again.

TF: So, basically, your views are - any way you can get around having another abortion?



Ellen: Yeah, because I mean, I talked to a girl there and this was her second time. I don't see how she could do it, but she was fine. She talked to me after I had it done, cause she could tell I was scared and nervous, but I don't see how she could be so calm. I guess that just shows that some people aren't ready, because if she would have had it, how would it have grown up? That's why I feel people like "that" should have "one."

TF: So it's kind of a personal decision?

Ellen: Yeah.

TF: Where do you think the government's place in this comes in?

Ellen: Well, for one thing, it's all guys that are protesting against (abortion.) At least most of them... and that's what makes me mad, because most guys don't even stay with girls (that get pregnant) and then they're out protesting against "it", saying that girls can't have "it" done? Then what are they supposed to do if they're not going to have a guy to support them? I mean, that's what makes me so mad. And all the government people are guys and they're saying that girls shouldn't have "it?" I mean, I hate that.

TF: Basically, what they're saying is that even if your life will be fucked up if you have the kid, too bad, you can't do anything with your own body.

Ellen: The guys don't even know what girls go through.

TF: Okay, let's say someone's pregnant; their parents aren't going to support them. They don't know what to do. What's your advice?

Ellen: Well, does she have a job or not?

TF: Yeah, but it's \$4.25/hour and they're only 16. They've got two more years of school left.

Ellen: Does she have a boyfriend that has a job?

TF: Yeah, but he's 17.

Ellen: See that's how it was with Steve and I. But see, Steve can't hold down a job... smart-ass, so he could get fired and it'd be my \$4.25, which it was, to support us. So I mean, that, no, if you really want the kid, have it. But if you're like, I don't know if I want it or not, but not really... if you're more on the "not really" side, then don't have it. You don't have any money to support it, your family's not

helping you.... I mean, I think the kid would be better off not on this earth. I know it's bad to think that way, but...

TF: Well, it's not... it's hard being realistic, but it's better than being unrealistic and being 17 with a baby and no job or high school degree, you know?

Ellen: I would have planned to finish high school...

TF: But how would you have finished?

Ellen: See, that's what I couldn't figure out, because there's no way that I could go to high school all day and then work at night.

TF: And even if you did, when would you be with the child?

Ellen: I wouldn't because... I mean I wouldn't get to watch it grow up... I wouldn't see it a lot. And there's no one I could get to watch it all day, and until like, 8:00 at night...

TF: So you'd put it in day-care....?

Ellen: Yeah, but day-care's don't stay open until 8:00. So what would I do while I was at work?

TF: I just want to say - that based on your situation I think you made the right decision.

Ellen: When I think about it, I just have to think really hard to go through everything.

TF: I guess it's kind of... if I had one (abortion), I'd mourn for it, you know? I'd grieve for it for the rest of my life, but at the same time, it's not a human being... not quite, not at that point. And at your age, what 17...?.. to give yourself all the odds against you, right from the start, and to give the child all the odds against it right from the start...

Ellen: I mean, for a while I had so much blame on me that I was just like, "well, this isn't my fault." He didn't really think hard about it and didn't listen to me. The guy has nothing to do with it. But, I'll always regret it. And there's like one out of a 100 chance that I won't be able to have children. And if I'm not able to adopt them, then I'll really hate him, because he got me into a situation. I mean, yeah, I had a part of it too.. but when I'm older, if it's just me that can't have kids, then I don't think he should have them either. It's stupid to think, but we both went through it...

TF: He's never gonna have to think about it. It's with you for the rest of your life.

Ellen: For all I know, he forgotten about it now, and from what I hear, I hope he has. I hope he's forgotten all about me.

TF: Do you think that your experience has.. well, I know you regret it, but has it affected your everyday life?

Ellen: Yeah, I've seen four different guys over the summer and I hate all of them except for one now. Because everytime that they start to like me or I start to like them, I all of a sudden start to hate them, because I'm afraid that they're going to do the same thing. Like treat me real bad.. hit me and stuff... and be a real jerk, like Steve was. It just scares me off. Out of four guys, it happened with three of them. No, actually it happened with all of them, but now I'm just starting to get back with one of them again. I mean, he really ruined my life.

end



Write to: Rotten Fruit: 816 Coss Cir., Westerville, OH 43081)

A chat with Helen

"Have you ever had a kidney or bladder infection?"

It's like a burning sensation, as if you always have to go to the bathroom. Picture yourself at the moment, when you are just on the border and feel like you may not make it, if you don't find a toilet quick. Now picture feeling that way twenty four hours a day, year after year... with a burning sensation."



A Child of the Sixties

Growing up in Hollywood, California during the 1960's must have been an amazing experience for most children, but not necessarily for Helen. Beginning at age five and lasting until she was twelve years old, Helen suffered from almost constant urinary infections. For Helen these infections were life threatening, because she was immune to the drugs that were used to treat this problem at the time.

"Initially they tried to treat the infections and as the infections were not responding to medication, they kept changing the medication. But in the meantime I kept getting sicker and skinnier and more... wasted away, because I was having sometimes as many as two infections, three infections a month."



Urinary infections can be a painful and humiliating affliction at any age and this was especially true for a young girl.

"Constantly I was going to the doctors in the urology department, (urology being the field that deals with kidneys and bladders and things like that,) and so there were constant reminders and admonitions to wipe a certain way and to make sure I fully emptied my bladder. They were constantly lecturing me about how I went to the bathroom which was.. you know... disturbing."

As if the urinary infections weren't problem enough, Helen also had the (bad) luck of being treated at one of the early HMO's (health maintenance organizations) which were then just becoming established in the U.S..

"As much as people complain about the limitations of HMO's now, imagine what it was like 30 years ago. For a long time I never saw the same doctor twice, even though my case was obviously kind of complicated and weird. Each time I went to the doctor I would see a different person and that was very difficult, especially with what my problems were and being an girl. It was very difficult to

have a different strange man poking at me every week."

"There were a couple of occasions where it crossed into an abuse situation. What they would do ... they needed to see what was happening with my kidneys and everything. What they did with me was check me into the hospital for the day and put me under general anesthesia... as if I was going under the knife type surgery anesthesia... in an operating room and then they would insert a small camera through my vagina. These kinds of object explorations were still new then and my gut feeling.. I have no proof of this... but my gut feeling is that they were all real excited with their new camera technology and everytime they had an opportunity to they'd use it on me. I can't honestly understand why it was necessary to do so many invasive procedures, but they did it. So you can imagine this was a very scary thing for a young girl. It was also uncomfortable when I would wake up, because the equipment wasn't nearly as small as they'd like to think it was. Also the tube that leads to the bladder out your body is called the urethra and mine was too narrow, which was contributing to the infection(s). They felt it wasn't emptying fully, so they did what's called dilation. The best description of it basically... if it was performed on a man it would be the equivalent of them pushing a tube down the tip of your penis to try to widen it. Normally they would do that at the same time that they did this exploratory stuff, so imagine what that would feel like the next day."

Obviously Helen didn't have an easy time growing up in this hospital setting and it wasn't only the doctors that mistreated her, but the nurses did too!

"I got my first period the day after a surgery. It wasn't fun. The nurse was actually really mean to me. She was... this is one of the complicated stories: At the time, I was 12, and had collapsed for like the third time over a three month period, so they decided to do an emergency exploratory. They opened up my stomach and they did what they were going to do and the next day is when I got my first period. So I kept thinking that the nurses were being really mean to me, but I kept telling myself that I must be doing something wrong.

"Years later when I was 23, I was reading my medical records at the hospital (they were going to charge me a quarter a page, so I couldn't afford to take them home) and I discovered that when I went in the ER that last time, one of the doctors had written down my diagnosis as syphilis. I was 12 and had nuns from my catholic school coming to visit me everyday! This was really upsetting to me! As I

checked the records very closely, I discovered that it took them over two days to correct that misdiagnosis. And yes I was a virgin then, I had never had sex, etc.etc. It took them over two days... a full day after the exploratory surgery, to even change the diagnosis on the chart. That explained a lot to me, that I wasn't as being over sensitive or it wasn't my fault that they were being mean to me. They were being mean to a 12 year old girl they thought had syphilis.

"Now, that asks why adult nurses felt they had a right to morally judge a 12 year old they believed to have syphilis. I never knew this misdiagnosis had existed till ten years later. All I knew was that they had been really mean and it never made any sense to me until I read this. It was a very hurtful episode, to realize that I had tried to convince myself for so long that I was over sensitive, but I wasn't at all. They really were treating me like shit! They were being judgmental and they really did think I was trash. And that hurt. It hurt my heart that anyone could treat a child that way period. And of course it hurt that I was that child."

Helens kidney problems were resolved in the early 70's, after she participated in a study of the drug (brand name) Macrochantin.

"I don't know whole history of Macrochantin, I just know that I was a guinea pig in this medical trial. I had to be check into the hospital because they couldn't give it to me in pill form; and that they woke me up every four hours the whole week to give me another shot. I could sleep in between shots if I wanted to, but every four hours someone was going to poke a needle in me and tends to wake you up. After that I stayed on maintenance Macrochantin by

A chat with Helen, Part 2

1981: Hollywood, CA and the emergence of AIDS

"When AIDS first started happening... that I was aware of, which was very early on (like '81-'82) I was involved in theater. There were lots of gay men in Hollywood and I worked on some of the very first gay theater done... I was the stage manager for the L.A. premiere of the Torch Song Trilogy, by Harvey Firestein... and as a matter of fact from that one production there are only a few survivors, today. There were four actors, the director... and except for me, as far as crew chiefs go (stage manager, lighting designer, set designer, costume designer) I'm the only crew chief still alive. There are two actors still alive. Everyone else, the other two actors are dead, the director, Frederick Cones and all the designers are dead. It was a hard time and people died fast then. My brother was diagnosed in '88 and he's still alive, but that was unheard of then. In retrospect you can sort of see, with some measured kind of reflection, but in '81-'82 all I could see was that these friends of mine... there was also my parents AA connection; a lot of gay men in Hollywood were in AA, so a lot of death in that area too. All I could see... we didn't even have the word "AIDS" then, it was still called gay cancer... we'd never even... no one had conceived yet of the concept of HIV. There was no test. There was just friends of mine dying from these infections that no one could control. And for me that rang a very deep bell. It really freaked me out."

(Gordon: Because it reminded you of your own infections?)

"Right. I wasn't dying of a disease either, I was dying because the doctors couldn't get my infection under control. And then suddenly, as I'm becoming an adult, all the people that I admire, that I work with, that I respect, are suddenly dying and they're doing it fast - I mean like in two or three or four weeks sometimes; from the point that a doctor says 'you have this gay cancer' and people would be dead within a month."

The Story of Joe

"One of the reasons I became so involved was because of my own problems as a kid, so often I felt like people didn't protect me. So helping people with AIDS felt almost like a crusade... which is not an easy way to walk through life emotionally. It felt at times very desperate. Like something was very very desperately wrong with the planet. That all these really lovely and in many respects harmless people were just getting mowed down. From my point of view, I'm looking at a bunch of people who just loved to make the world pretty, you know? Actors and costume designers and lighting designers..."

"I was on the executive fund raising board for AIDS Project Los Angeles from '83 to '85. I resigned to take care of my friend Joe, who was blind, bed ridden and afraid to tell

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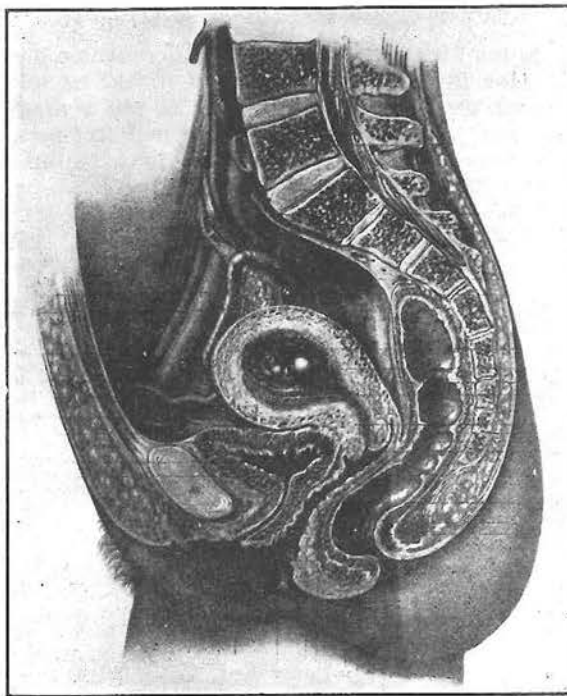


FIG. 93—Sagittal section of female bladder and genitalia.

oral form.. pill form.. for the next two or three years. Macrochantin is now one of the top two or three drugs that are used to treat kidney infections."



(continued from previous page)

any body in his life that he had AIDS. There was a lot more fear then. Joe finally contacted me, I think, because he knew my back ground. He told me that he was scared, that he didn't know what was going on, but it didn't seem like his nurses were taking care of things right. He also told



me that he had AIDS. So I went to see him and I started checking things out. Basically they (the nurses) had emptied his savings and checking accounts. I found his car in the parking garage of his apartment building totaled. I talked to his neighbors and found out it had been towed and placed there about two months earlier and the best we could figure was that one of his nurses had taken it out, wrecked it and had been afraid to tell him. Since he was blind, when in hell is he going to figure it out? I guess they were just booking on none of his neighbors knowing him or caring about him - and they were right.

"I tried working with the nursing agency to get Joe's money reimbursed, because he had no money to live on. He didn't want his family in (up state) New York to know. At that point the nursing association began pulling what I came to discover was a famous stall tactic; they know they owe this money, because their nurses are bonded, they

have insurance to cover this type of situation. But they always had an excuse why they couldn't get the insurance process through. 'Oh we need him to come down in person.' He's blind and bed ridden!! Those kinds of ridiculous demands. Then they needed a police report. It took me three months to... the police refused to come to his home, L.A.P.D., they always had a hundred excuses, but basically they didn't want to walk into the room with some one they knew had AIDS. Bear in mind that we had funeral homes refusing to pick up bodies; ambulance services refusing to transport; it was a very very bad time. Ultimately I poured my story of woe out to a detective over the phone and he agreed to come in before his shift the next day. Even though he wasn't even a robbery detective, he agreed to come and just do the paper work for me, so that I could show the nurse's agency an actual police report. That was a three month process! To just file a police report for a blind, bed ridden man, who had been just ripped off of every means of supporting himself. I find that really pathetic. And the upshot was that the agency kept dragging their feet, because they knew that people died fast then, and if they waited and let the person die, the family wouldn't pursue it because they'd be covering up the fact that their family member died of AIDS. That happened a lot. A lot of people took advantage of people with AIDS, knowing that families were going to sweep it under the rug, rather than have to admit that their family member died of AIDS. That was another real sad display, that happened over and over again in those years.

"After five months... like I said, I got the police report filed and two months after that I still couldn't get anything from the agency. I couldn't afford to keep paying both his rent and mine. So I had to break my word to Joe and called his parents. I just didn't know what else to do... that was a hard decision to make. His parents reacted better than some. They came out. They cared for him the last month. They were very grateful to me. To this day his mothers voice in my head echoes "My Joey", but at the same time they hid from the entire family. Joe had a brother and a sister, and his brother was the only family member, besides his parents, that was told that Joe was dying of AIDS. They buried him in L.A. so they wouldn't have to take the casket back to New York."

A chat with Helen, Part 3

Please Don't Put Me in a Nursing Home!

Helens past medical problems and her working with people with AIDS, eventually lead to her job as a Personnel/Business Director at a local Seattle nursing home. A major portion of Helens time at the home was spent dealing with the employees.

"The turn over in health care is pretty bad. Every Monday I did orientation for at least ten plus people. So think about that: ten times fifty two weeks a year... in a 12 month period, practically half the staff turned over at least once! Partly it's because the jobs are hard and pay shitty wages. Who takes a hard job for shitty wages? People with out many other choices. So when I talk about personnel and the turn over, think about trying to process through that many employees. I had very little support staff for clerical type stuff, so I did it pretty much on my own. Plus I'm getting four, maybe five garnishments a month landing on my desk (and that is a very low estimate.) I would sometimes have four or five garnishments a week!"

(Gordon: What do you mean by garnishment?)

"That's when you get into such terrible bill problems that your creditors start going to your employer, through the courts, and take a quarter of your wages. And you get no choice in it. I tried my best to do things to make that better for the employees as well. For instance, most people have heard of being garnished, but they don't know that the law says it can only run sixty days, then the creditor has to go



back to court to prove that you still owe money. Every time the creditor goes back to court, every sixty days, their attorney is going to charge you two hundred bucks! So do a little math: you're a janitor and you make six bucks an hour. A quarter of your wages are being garnished over a two month period and then you get hit with a two hundred buck attorney fee on your debt! You're going further in the hole, you're not even getting ahead here, you're not even getting twenty bucks ahead after two months... it was a bad scene. Everytime I got a garnishment, I would go to the employee and offer to work out a payment plan for them with the creditor. I'm just trying to keep a steady employee base, because I figured that with the rate I'm getting garnishments, that's the pool I'm drawing off of, so I might as well try to stabilize the ones I got. You know? What's the use? They would get a garnishment; I would tell them about it; they would not show up for work and let their creditors start chasing them... What they did was play revolving doors at nursing homes. If you look, what you will find is a pool of nurse aides, and a pool of laundry work-



ers, and a pool of kitchen workers and their lives are very unstable and they've gotten use to working in nursing homes... And they know that the homes are always looking for people. If you open up the Sunday newspaper, to the classifieds, and looked at that health care section, you'll find two, maybe as many as five columns all calling for nurse aides. I've had some people who were third or fourth time rehires... I would raise my voice in protest, and say 'you know what? This person has been fired for nonattendance, this person didn't show up.. job abandonment. Why are we rehiring them?' They need a body. They need a body who has that nurse aide certification to meet staffing requirements, or the home can get shut down. That's why it's tolerated. It's a sad catch 22: you've got this unstable population playing musical chairs with the different nursing homes; the nursing homes need to meet their staffing requirements, so these aren't the employees they necessarily want, but honey you gotta take what you can get. Now think about what this means to the poor person sitting in the wheelchair on the second floor."

Not surprisingly, the fastest growing segment of people going to nursing homes today are not the elderly, but are those who recently received treatment in a hospital.

"Basically I think it's because insurance companies are refusing to pay the hospital for more than a minimum number of days per operation, so the hospital has to get you out of that bed. They're not going to let you lay in there and not get paid for it. They call that subacute. You're not acutely ill; you've had your surgery, but you're not well. You can't go home, you can't take care of yourself: you're subacute. And that's the big thing. All the nursing homes are going to management seminars to learn

how to launch their own subacute unit and make more money. At the same time the nursing homes are all cozying up to the hospitals, so they can be the nursing home the hospital shunts their subacutes to. Just a purely medical recommendation.

"Another major change in nursing homes these days is that the Federal Government's Medicare regulations changed a couple of years ago for physical therapy. It use to be with physical therapy, you had to justify it by showing the advances that people would make. Then the Federal Government changed it to, quote: 'to maintain function.' So in other words: you didn't have to prove that you'd be able to get this 90 year old guy out of bed walking again. You no longer had to prove that physical therapy could do that. All you had to do was say 'look he can't walk, but he can move his arms, so we're going to give him P.T. five times a week to maintain function.' He probably doesn't know that he has arms. Don't get me wrong, I don't think that you should go 'look they're old and they're going to die, stick them in a wheel chair and sit them in a corner.' There is something to be said for maintaining function, so I don't want you to think that I'm just saying that's a bullshit term. It isn't. But like anything that has to do with insurance and the Government, it's getting abused. It wasn't happening where I worked, but I do know that it was happening at a lot of other places."

Helen's experiences with being a patient and working within the medical establishment has made her a bit cynical, but has also given her definite opinions about today's current level of health care.

"Health care has gotten way too removed by layers of bureaucracy and insurance and this and that... away from an commitment to help ill people. Too many of the employees walk in and it's just a job to them. Well I'm sorry but you're not just working in a car wash polishing bumpers, these are humans and it's very sad. It is very very sad how most people, who are at the mercy of a care giver, get treated. Even at the better homes, with a turn over like we had.. that means that a different person is cleaning your privates every night. And that's a hard place for a seventy year old person, who has contributed their whole life to their community to be. And the way we tend to handle it in this world, is to try to pretend that that doesn't matter. Because we don't have any other options. There's nowhere else for them to go and our staffing's not getting better, so we try to say that that isn't an important thing. We're doing the best we can; that's just the way it is. But you know what? It's not right. People shouldn't have to live some place where strangers are constantly at them. Where they don't get a measure of quality of life. Where they get warehoused. That's not right and it's not right for those of us doing the administration of it. To pretend it is, because it makes it easier for us to ignore our failures - and it is our failure that we can't staff places with greater consistency. That is our failure and we should be taking responsibility and changing it. These are other humans and one day we are going to be on that receiving end, if we haven't already been there. We should not be pretending that it isn't important. But instead, because we're all focused on insurance and health care reform and this, that and the other thing...

"If you want my gut reaction, I pay taxes and I think the God damn Government should make it possible for me to see a doctor. Most of my employees, who were providing health care for other people, could not afford insurance for themselves. They're health care workers who have no health insurance. That's pathetic. People have gotten so accustom to having no rights on that level, that they think that's reasonable, or they accept that in their life. I really think that all Americans should challenge that."

end

Zine Reviews

When writing to publishers it's always nice to mention where you heard about their zine at. If you're asking them to write you back, it's best to send a stamp; often zine publishers are scrimping along money-wise and sending a stamp can mean a lot. Also cash is better than checks or money-orders, especially when there is no personal name attached to the zine (for example: I can't cash a check made out to either Teen Fag or Chow Chow Productions.)

Queer Zine Explosion #14

This is the most extensive listing of homo-related zines that you can find. While there's lots of zines from other countries, and also some books, videos and music reviews, the bulk of the QZE is reviews of queer zines and small press publications from the U.S., with detailed descriptions and ordering information. Although *Fact Sheet Five* reprints much of the QZE, by ordering it direct, you'll get the most current version. (price: two 32¢ stamps c/o Queer Zine Explosion, Box 590488, San Francisco, CA 94159-0488)

Fact Sheet Five

Many of you are already familiar with this magazine, that reviews hundreds of zines, which are conveniently broken down into separate categories and indexed. FS5 has the most complete listing of zines available and is certainly worth a look, especially if you have never seen a copy before. Sadly, it looks as if the frequency of the magazine is going to be slowing down and might even become an annual or something. (Available at newsstands or \$6. c/o Seth Friedman, Box 17099, San Francisco, CA 94117-0099)

Lezzie Smut #8

Lezzie Smut contains lots of erotic photos, stories, advice and commentary about lesbian sex, in a frank and sensual manner, that's also very friendly and nonjudgmental. Lots of piercings, tattoos and S&M, give this issue a kinky slant, that I'm not sure will appeal to everyone - but then, what would you expect from a mag with the word "smut" in it's title? My favorite article was about how to watch (straight) porn videos from a lesbian perspective. (price: \$6. c/o Hey Grrrlz! Productions, Box 364-1027 Davie Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 4L2, Canada)

Steven's Comics #3

Boy Trouble #2

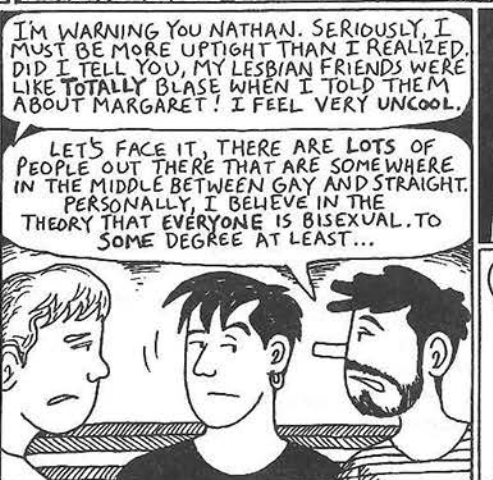
Unlike most other queer-boy comic books these two titles focus more on day to day life, rather than sex. David Kelly's *Steven's Comics*, is written from the perspective of a elementary school aged boy, who obviously is going to grow up into a gay man someday. Steven deals with a lot of the same issues that many gay people have had to deal with as a child, such as: difficult parents, mean classmates, first crushes and gender identification. It's sort of like a queer Linda Barry, but with clearer drawings. *Boy Trouble* is a cool anthology comic, edited by David Kelly and Robert Kirby, and contains comics by lots of different homo boy artists. As expected the drawing and writing styles differ greatly from artist to artist and give this comic a diverse perspective about gay male life. I don't think I've ever seen a queer boy anthology that didn't center itself around graphic sex before, so *Boy Trouble* is a nice change of pace. (price: \$3. each c/o DK Press, POBox 1450, Chicago, IL 60690-1450) Both David and Robert are contributors to *Teen Fag*, so look for examples of their work elsewhere in this issue!

CURBSIDE

ACROSS THE LINE

© 1995 BY ROBERT KIRBY

WITH THE NEW-FOUND KNOWLEDGE OF HER GIRLFRIEND MARGARET'S BISEXUALITY, LINDY TURNS TO NATHAN AND ROB FOR SUPPORTIVE FEEDBACK....



Inkling #2

This is a wonderful little zine that gives biographies on different women from the past. The main focus of the issue is the "old west" and features in depth articles on Belle Starr, Pearl Hart and (of course) Calamity Jane. Melissa, the editor/writer, recently moved to San Francisco, so she also has quite a few bio's on local women of historical interest, such as Sarah Winchester, who built the Winchester Mystery House (a mansion with stairways that go nowhere among other oddities.) The biographies in Inkling are well written, concise and contain lots of interesting information - hopefully there will be another issue in the near future. (\$1 plus a stamp. c/o Melissa Klein, 1184 Florida, San Francisco, CA 94110)

Black Sheets #9

This is the latest copy of the always interesting sex magazine, that likes to cover all the bases: gay and lesbian, bi and straight. The current issue is about "sex work" and likewise covers a wide range of topics. Lap dancing, erotic massage, prostitution, phone sex and even sperm donation are all written about in this issue, either through interviews, articles, fiction, etc.. *Black Sheets* is very well written and laid out; erotic and sleazy; interesting and informative. An excellent issue of a great magazine! (price: \$6. c/o Black Books, POBox 31155, San Francisco, CA 94131) *Age statement required.*

DWAN

I'm not usually a big fan of poetry zines, but DWAN consistently publishes poems that I actually like to read. I don't know if this means that Donny, the editor/publisher, has a good eye, or if I just don't bother to read enough poems in other places (??) Usually the pieces are medium to short in length and often have queer content, which is probably why I like them. Besides the poetry there's usually other writings and comments, that's a little on the intellectual side, (but not pretentious) - these are fun and interesting to read. Past subjects include: Jeffrey Dahmer's racism; gay celebrities; christianity; etc.. The occasional zine/book review and story or excerpt round things out. (price: a couple of stamps. c/o Donny Smith, Box 411, Bellefonte, PA 16823) Donny is very prolific, so you might want to order more than one issue. This will give you a better idea about what the zine is like, as each issue is often quite different from another content-wise.

This beautiful drawing comes from the mini: "From Hell to Breakfast", and is available for \$1, c/o Blair Wilson, POBox 12368, Seattle, WA 98111-4368. Blair has lot's of other titles available also, so send him a few bucks and ask for some samples.

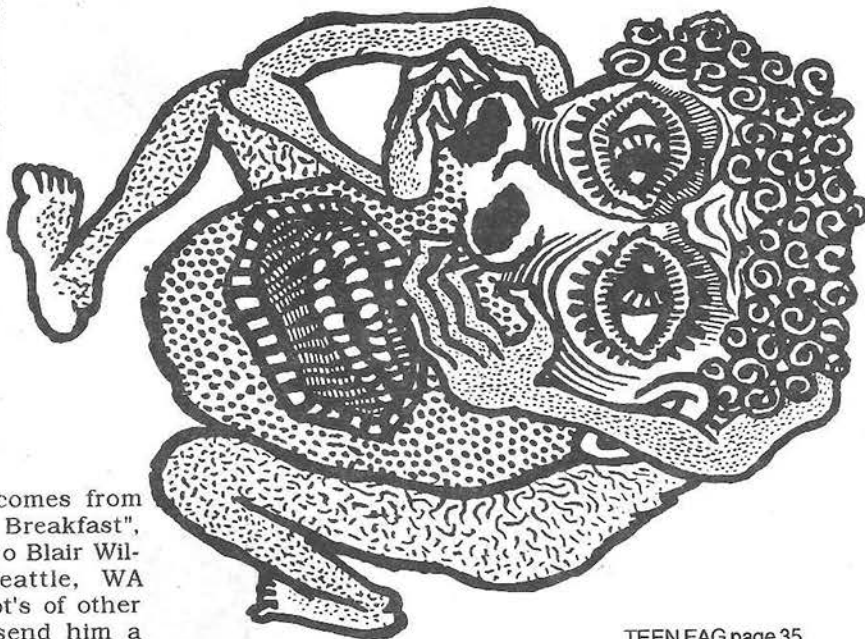
Bitch Nation

Kind of a newsletter, kind of a catalog... *Bitch Nation* talks about, and puts you in contact with, a lot of the queer underground culture that's often censored by Canadian customs. While issues of *Hustler* and *Playboy* easily cross the border, the words and images of fags and dykes are routinely destroyed, as if they were "kiddie porn" or some kind of infectious disease. I'm not sure how such a law was ever able to pass in Canada, (it seems like such a nice place otherwise), but it only strengthens my belief that any form of censorship is bad, bad, bad! Along with discussing censorship, the current newsletter features zines, videos and music (including back issues of the pioneering queer-core zine *J.D.'s*). *Bitch Nation* is cool, empowering and an essential queer resource. (send a few stamps to: Hide Record and Tapes, POBox 55 STN:E', Toronto, ON, M6H 4E1, Canada) *You probably shouldn't write Bitch Nation on the envelope, unless you want customs to open the envelope.*

Happy Fag #2

Scooter is a very happy and positive person and it certainly shows, not only in the title of his zine, but in the contents and writing also! Fun on the internet; a happy tongue piercing; cute guys in their underwear; a long-term relationship and a school report, written by Scooter's daughter (about her dad, the fag) are only some of the topics found in this happy zine. It's not that I'm an unhappy person, but I think my last few issues may have inspired Scooter, as *Happy Fag* is sort of the opposite of *Teen Fag*. Full color cover. (\$3. c/o Scooter, 323 Broadway East #902, Seattle, WA 98102)

Illustration: Blair Wilson



Outpunk #5

Definitely the most well executed and thought out queer-punk zine being published right now. Contains: interviews with Donna from *Team Dresch*, Joan Jett Black and Pedro Serrano (a gay HIV+ skinhead!); a report about the time *Tribe 8* met Luke Skywalker (from *Too Live Crew*); an article on Lesbian HIV/AIDS transmission; and a detailed essay about how "punk rock" isn't as revolutionary as many people think it is. *Outpunk* is also a record/CD label, so there's information on related artists and upcoming releases. Comics, zine/book reviews, and music reviews are also included, plus lots more! (64 pages for only \$2.(worldwide!) c/o Outpunk, POBox 170501, San Francisco, CA 94117)

Farm Pulp #28

At first glance *Farm Pulp* can be confusing; the pages are often different sizes and fold in among themselves, hiding pages within pages. This is a neat idea and after the initial confusion, it's apparent that this zine is thought out and put together with a great amount of care and intelligence. #28 is the "Wake Up" issue and the articles and graphics are all about God, Christ, the second coming and various other religious topics - written in a hilarious, creative manner that isn't like most sacrilegious humor. It's rather difficult to explain in such a short space, but if you'd like a good chuckle while reading silly religious stories, then this is a zine you definitely shouldn't miss! (price: \$3. c/o Gregory Hirschak, Farm Pulp, 217 NW 70th Street, Seattle, WA 98117-4845) I believe that each issue of *Farm Pulp* has a different theme, so be sure to ask for issue #28 if you want to get this particular one.

Video Reviews

Let Me Die a Woman

(1978, Doris Wishman)

This interesting "mondo" styled documentary/exploitation film about transsexualism, apparently played in porno theaters during the 70's. It starts out like an elementary school educational film, complete with monotone narration and stock footage of lunch hour crowds, but quickly turns sleazy, as a woman "picks up" a man at a park. After they have sex, the man leaves and the camera zooms in between the woman's legs to reveal (gasp) a penis! "Doctor" Leo Wollman, M.D. then makes his first appearance (in an office covered with very official looking degrees and diplomas) to explain the how and whys of the sex-change operation. He talks to, psychoanalyzes, examines and prods various transsexuals during the film. At one point he even lubes up his finger and sticks it into a (transsexual's) vagina to show how natural it is! The film is sort of sick and kinky as occasional quick sex scenes (included to keep the audiences attention?), and are followed by actual surgical footage! Still a lot of what the film says rings true, even if I'm not sure where they got the part about under developed sex glands resulting in homosexuality. Very 70's!!! (Something Weird Video, P.O.Box 33664, Seattle, WA 98133)

Green Pubes

(1995, Anonymous Boy Video)

Some of you might be familiar with the "anonymous boy" comics that have been featured in numerous homopunk fanzines over the years (sort of like a punk Tom from Finland); *Green Pubes* is the animated version of these comics. The video is about a punk with green hair, the two boys that want to fuck him, and what happens when he takes only one of them home. It's an erotic and hilarious story, with lots of music, fucking and punk rock ethics. The animation itself is also very creative and punk, utilizing cut-outs, transparencies and other ingenious methods - definitely not the same kind of cartoon you see on tv. The scenes where they're slam dancing, and when they're engaging in mutual masturbation especially cracked me up, not only because the story was funny, but the way it was animated was funny too! I certainly hope there's another anonymous video being planned. (\$20. c/o Tony Arena, 321 West 16th Apt. #2W, New York, NY 10011)

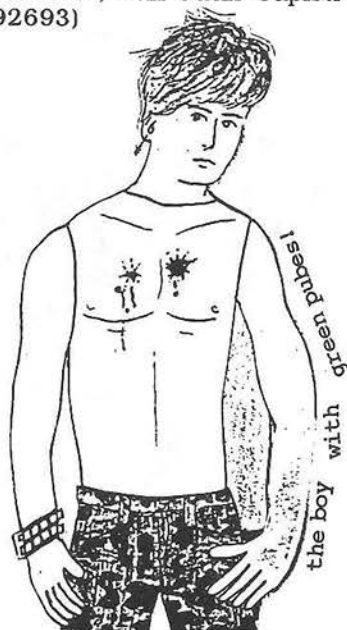
page 36 TEEN FAG



StickBoy Video #2

(1994, Dennis Worden)

Dennis Worden has been creating hilariously pessimistic comics for a number of years, so I was very happy to get my hands on the video version of his comic book, *StickBoy*. Basically the video is a haphazard puppet show of various negative, crude, violent and sacrilegious skits- in other words: great! One funny skit has his character, StickBoy, trying to decide which dildo he'd like to have attached to his body ("the black mombo" or "the republican"?), while another piece has two puppets named Wacko and Psycho looking for God (so they can kill him.) The jokes are kind of dumb and the dialogue seems made up on the spot (he says as much at the beginning of the video,) but it still left me laughing out loud and reminded me how much I liked his comic books. The fact that he stopped doing comics for a couple of years, (after a bitter feud with *Fantagraphics*.) also shows up on the video in the form of a song about wanting to be a cartoonist. Luckily, Dennis has decided to get back into comics recently, so keep an eye out for his *StickBoy* book. (\$10. ppd, c/o Dennis Worden, P.O.Box 192, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693)



Linda/Les and Annie

-The first female-to-male transsexual love story (1990 Aja Video)

This documentary, written by and featuring former porn-star Annie Sprinkle, is about her boyfriend Les Nichols, who was once a woman named Linda. It took Les twelve operations and over \$50,000 to become a man, and this fascinating video provides an intimate look at the possibilities that exist for those who desire to do so. When Annie met Les, he had just completed his penis construction surgery and much of the video documents the first time they have sex using it. I've always wondered how a penis was made in female-to-male (FTM) transsexual operations and they do a complete job of not only showing and explaining Les' operation, but also describe other operations that are available - including the different degrees of risks and successes of these operations. Because Les still has a vagina and clit, he is especially unique as a man-made hermaphrodite (or as Annie describes him: a man with a cunt) - apparently this is often not the case with other FTM transsexuals. The film is interspersed with interview clips of Les explaining the reasons why he decided to have a sex change operation and how he thinks and feels about it afterwards. *Linda/Les and Annie* does a good job of dispelling a lot of the myths of transsexual operations. (For more information write: S.G., P.O.Box 615, Tenaflly, NJ 07670 - I'm not sure they actually sell the video, but they should be able to point you in the right direction)

Incredibly Strange Wrestling (1996)

If you have a perverted sense of humor and are also a pro-wrestling fan, then don't miss the *Incredibly Strange Wrestling* (I.S.W.) video. This is a show put on by the C.C.W. (California Creative Wrestling) at different venues in the S.F./L.A. area, and features wrestlers with names like *The Abortionist*, *The Great NAMBLA* and *The Rapist*! Like these names suggest, the wrestling show is very tongue in cheek and the tape I saw included: a wrestler going down on his (female) valet; the announcer interviewing a homeless man; and a valet pissing into a wrestlers mouth in the middle of the street (she was trying to revive him after he had been knocked out!) Despite the humor, the wrestlers do the matches with a straight face and a lot of talent, especially when they're flying out of the ring on to the floor, or smashing each others heads with a chair. (\$15., Omni Sonic, P.O.Box 786, Millbrae, CA 94030)

CD Reviews

Team Dresch *Captain My Captain*
(Chainsaw/Candy Ass Records)

A great second release by the northwest's premiere queercore band. The music chugs and soars in a way that will appeal to fans of both punk and alternative rock; some times slow and restrained and at other times fast and chaotic. In other words it makes you want to dance, rock out and hold your boyfriend/girlfriend, sometimes all at the same time. The vocals are especially passionate as they sing about a variety of queer topics such as being estranged from your mother, depression and being out in public. If you're a homo and your life was a movie, *Captain My Captain* would probably be on the soundtrack.

Tribe 8 Snarkism

(Alternative Tentacles Records)

This CD is a total punk rock explosion, with all the trademarks of a classic: intelligently expressed anger; dark humor; irony; indignation; and a lot of diversity in the music, that rips, chugs and is sometimes even funky. Many bands find a "sound" and stick to it, while *Tribe 8* have adapted an "attitude" instead. *Snarkism* is a state of the union address for queer punk, as much as it is a collection of songs, and covers a wide range of topics near and dear to (non-mainstream) homo hearts. As the band is composed of tattooed, pierced, leather wearing lesbians, you can rest assured that a lot of what they sing about isn't something that you're going to hear anywhere else. *Snarkism* is the best, most rounded out punk record I've heard in a long time and you should check it out, regardless of your sexuality.

Juliana Luecking/Eve Beglarian

Dream Cum GoDown (Kill Rock Stars)

This is a spoken word/interview CD that asks different queer women the questions: What makes you cum? How do you go down on another woman? What's your favorite fantasy? The people answering these questions are not celebrities or academics, but instead were women interviewed outside of concerts, at festivals and on the street, who had no idea that they were going to be asked these questions beforehand. The results are both entertaining and educational, as the answers span the range from giggly and silly, to frank and revealing. This is a great idea and sure to of interest of queer women of all ages.

Kaia Wilson Kaia

(Candy-Ass/Chainsaw Records)

Kaia has left the band *Team Dresch* and moved to the mid-west, but be-

fore she left, she recorded a CD! While Kaia's songwriting/lyrics are not that far removed from what she was doing with the band, the fact that this release is all acoustic music is definitely a change in her sound. Song topics seem to be about dyke love, dreams, self reflection and etc., and Kaia proves here that she's more than just a rocker, as the songs are very listenable and nice. I think I'm going to miss her influence in *Team Dresch* though, but then everyone has to follow their own path or whatever.

Sister George Drag King

(outpunk records)

A balls (and tits) to the wall queer punk rock band from Britian, with all the features of a great band: raw, passionate vocals; bare bones drumming; and catchy, abrasive guitar playing. *Sister George* plow through a variety of songs and topics, including girl to girl HIV transmission, cross dressers and reproduction, in a straight forward manner that's sometimes kinda funky, yet always rockin'. Their number, "Janey's Bloc", is one of my favorite songs in a long time and should be considered a classic; not only because it's a great fucking song, but because it's so unique.

Yoko Ono Rising (Capitol Records)

After years without releasing any new music Yoko is back with her best work in a long time. *Rising* is a strong and consistant CD, containing practically all the elements that has made her previous recordings so excellent: avant garde pop, traditional japanese folk vocals and even modern rock. Her son, Sean Lennon Ono, and his band has even added an element of

speed metal crunch to Yoko's reputation, which will probably appeal to even the most hard core of Yoko haters. I'm sure that you readers of *Teen Fag* are much more adventurous than the adverage shmuck and recommend that you at least give this CD a listen, even if you don't buy it.

Yoko Ono Rising Mixes

(Capitol Records)

Mostly, but not totally, remixes of songs from the *Rising* CD that have been redone by *Thurston Moore*, *Cibo Matto*, *Adam Yauch*, *Ween* and *Tricky*. It's quite a bit more funkier and ambient than the regular release, so it probably won't appeal to as many of you, but equally as excellent! For those of you with the equipment, there's an extra CD-ROM track also - don't worry if you can't access it; I can't either, but I love this CD anyway.

The Warmers (Dischord Records)

This band sounds somewhere inbetween minimalist Olympia folk punk and crunchy garage rock bands. Very stripped down, forceful and restrained in a way that suggests emotions that are near the boiling point. The lead singer, Alec MacKaye, use to be in 80's D.C. hardcore bands (*Faith*, *Ignition*) so a punkishness exists in their energy, if not in the actual music. I'd love to see this band live.

The Jesus Lizard Shot

(Capitol Records)

Of the hand full of underground bands from the 80's to move to major label statis, I think that this is the one that has least changed. The coarse vocals, throbbing rhythms,

(continued next page...)



new Outpunk things...

Cypher in the Snow

"Badass and Free" 7" single

**Behead the Prophet
No Lord Shall Live**

"I Am That Great And Fiery
Force" LP/CD

Sta-Prest

"Let's Be Friendly With Our
Friends" 7" single

Outpunk, POB 170501, SF, CA 94117

(continued from previous page)

and soaring, hypnotic guitar are all still here. Sort of like a frantic hanger-on speed, (or something to that effect.) *The Jesus Lizard* plow through thirteen new songs much like they have always done. I only wish this was an example of "selling out," because I'd love it if they played this kind of music on the radio more often.

tracy & the hindenburt ground crew
Margaret Dumont
(Action Box Records)

This is an unusual CD full of quirky, funny and clever songs with a variety of musical styles. The arrangements change from song to song; everything from old country music, odd distorted sounds and even a cappella (but never straight out rock). While the songs are humorous but it's not very obvious at first, because the jokes are more subtle than in-your-face. In fact this band works well on two levels, because you can focus on the lyrics and chuckle along, or you tune out the words and have some fine background music. Perfect for parties or reading a book!

The Make-Up Destination: Love, Live!
At Cold Rice (Dischord Records)

This band features ex-members of *Nation of Ulysses/Cupid Car Club* and sort of follows in the steps first took by those bands. *The Make-Up* plays what they describe as "gospel yeh-yeh" music and is kind of like a combination of *James Brown* and *Thee Headcoats*. It's a raw, somewhat funky garage rock sound, that's sung, mumbled, squealed and thrashed about in a high energy fit of passion. As in the past, their liner notes, clothes and attitudes have as much to do with the band as the music does. A very creative group of people and definitely worth a listen.

S.F. Seals Truth Walks in Sleepy Shadows (Matador)

This band features the song writing/vocals of Barbara Manning and is well worth checking out, especially if you've never heard of her before. Much of her lyrics are about isolation, difficult relationships and dream-like (drug?) experiences - sung in a mellow, but not sappy manner. The music is kind of bubbly, acoustic folk-rock, that's almost psychedelic due to the inclusion of violins, cello, vibraphone and other non traditional (rock) instruments. It's kind of trippy, happy music that leaves you feeling sort of melancholy at the same time. A very cool experience.

V.3 photograph burns
(American Recordings)

V.3 play a great mix of good old fashioned (indie) rock and roll. They remind me of the late 70's New York (new wave) rock scene... bands like *Televi-*

sion or *Patty Smith*... but with a more low-fi junky pre-grunge sound. At times the production reminds me of a really good demo tape and this is a good thing, as V.3 stand out from most of the other bands I've heard in the past year or so. It's not pretty music, but it is pretty brilliant; especially if you're hungry for something new that isn't influenced by MTV or alternative radio.

Lint Cold Scene (Plumb Records)

Lint is a really cool band that has the interesting gimmick of having different "guest" vocalists on every song. As a rather somber tone permeates most of the songs on this CD, the different vocalists break up it up a little bit with their own personal touches. Much of the lyrics seem to be sad/love songs, from a drunken perspective... or at least that's how it seems since there's so much screaming and distortion going on, but as the music is rather up-beat most of the time, it's not all depressing. I find this sort of music relaxing. Another neat feature of *Lint*'s is how they package their releases: This CD comes with an extra track you can play on a turntable (as long as you don't have an automatic return tonearm.) Previous singles have been one sided releases, with drawings scratched in on the other side, or even a different record glued onto it.

DEVO Adventures of the Smart Patrol
(Discovery/Warner Music)

I love *Devo* and I love this CD. Music from the CD-ROM game that was developed by the band containing a couple of new tracks; some alternative mixes of lesser known songs; two *Devo* inspired cuts by other bands; and a brief greatest hits package, all on one CD. Graphics on the case gives me the impression that the game itself is both creepy and funny! Apparently the band is getting ready to do a full costume tour next year and I can't wait to see it.

Bikini Kill Reject All American
(Kill Rock Stars)

In a way *Bikini Kill* remind me of an updated, progressive version of *The Ramones*. They're very punk rock, very consistent in their sound, and very influential (often copied, but never undersold!) The fact that *Bikini Kill* is fronted by women and sing a lot about relationships and feelings, makes them seem more real to me than a lot of groups do, and I'm sure this is especially true if the listener is a woman (since that's their point of view.) *Reject All American* is a great release that has all the expected trademarks of a *Bikini Kill* release: rousing punk rock; sensitive slow songs; diverse vocal styles; and an energetic, fun attitude that's balanced with an awareness of the bullshit that's around all of us.

Mavis Piggott you can be low
(Flydaddy Records)

This is a rock band that mixes slow, heavy jams with breathy, ethereal female vocals. Part heavy metal and part ambient free form rock, *Mavis Piggott* ignores a lot of the traditional song stylings of other groups, and instead seem a swirl of sounds, somewhat similar to jazz (at times). Mixed into this are vocals that soar in and out and along side the music, which often gives a haunting feel to the music. Rather unique and difficult to pigeon hole.

The Frogs My Daughter the Broad
(Matador)

If you like music that's wierd and slightly offensive, then you'll want to check out this latest release by *The Frogs* (the band that did the "It's Only Right and Natural" album back in the 80's, where they pretended to be a gay militant rock band.) Cripples, old people, molested children and even homos are topics of songs by these oddest of odd musicians, and everyone should be able to find something



The Killing Times!
ISSUE #3 Available Aug/Sep
ISSUE #2 Avail. NOW!

"Pretty dark and very damaged"
FUNHOUSE

"Disturbing...Comprehensive
Informative...recommended to
fans of 'Murder Can Be Fun...'"

FACTSHEET FIVE

**And They haven't even seen
Issue #2 Yet!**

**11651 Norbourne Dr. #316
Forest Park, OH 45240-2162**

\$2.00 and two Stamps

to offend them on this CD. Not all the songs are offensive though, some are just plain strange or dumb. The song "God is Gay" is about Lucifer losing his wings because he couldn't convince Jesus to be straight. Their upcoming release, "Racially Yours," (containing mostly racial songs) should be super controversial and will spur some interesting reviews in magazines, if nothing else.

Everlounge vodka context (WM/O-Rama Records)

This is a pretty cool Cd that I thought that I was going to hate at first. I was expecting a *Tony Bennett* or *Martin Denny* tribute kind of thing, but Everlounge is so much better than that (thank heavens). This six piece band, plays a variety of styles that I guess all fit into the "lounge music" concept, but reminds me as much of show tunes or eccentric British rock ala *Elton John* or something... There's a couple of songs that make me think of *Alice Cooper* (the band) or *Roxy Music*... I'm rather perplexed by this CD, but I like it and think it's fun.

Free To Fight

Self Defense for Women and Girls
(Candy-Ass Records)

This is a CD & booklet compilation that's purpose is to make girls aware of how to defend themselves. Basically, the book states, if women know how to defend themselves, then they will have the confidence to deal with situations where they feel physically in danger. *Free To Fight* teaches and addresses self defense issues, through a diverse assortment of music, articles, spoken word and comics, and should be accessible to a wide variety of women and girls. The fact that it includes rap music, punk rock and folk music is only a small example of the wide range of contributions and talent presented on this collection. All women should know how to defend themselves; if you're a girl, or have a girlfriend, sister, niece, roommate, etc. that you care about, then you should tell them about this CD.

indie addresses:

Chainsaw, P.O.Box 1151, Olympia, WA 98507-1151

Alternative Tentacles, P.O.Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141

Action Box, P.O.Box 10423, Burbank, CA 91504

Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State #148, Olympia, WA 98501

Matador, 676 Broadway, 4th floor, New York, 10012

Outpunk, P.O.Box 170501, San Francisco, CA 94117

Plumb, 1085 Commonwealth ave #215, Boston MA 02215

vietnam

by grunkern



WM/O-Rama, P.O.Box 68, Garwood, NJ 07027

Candy-Ass, P.O.Box 42382, Portland, OR 97242

Dischord, 3819 Beecher st. NW, Washington, DC 20007

Flydaddy, P.O.Box 4618, Seattle, WA 98104

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