

"If you can forgive the fact that it's a ragbag of half-digested intellectual ideas dressed up with trendy references, you should have a good laugh."

— Time Out Guide

"Cold Bacon almost single-handedly has revived the genre of web site to book to web site back to book and made it a fresh art form."

— People

"Let Cold Bacon be a book, so I can recommend it to you; but I'll be embarrassed to watch you read it. It's hard going at times, and the reasons to love it must be particular and your own."

— Artforum

"This book sucks. Wow."

— New York Times Book Review

/index.html

coldbacon

coldbacon



*Till human voices wake us*

Copyright © 2006 by Cold Bacon

All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part (except those wholes or parts I didn't write either), including illustrations (see previous), in any form (beyond that permitted by Section 107 and 108 of the US Copyright Law and except by reviews by the public press), without written permission from the author or unless you really feel compelled.

**[/index.html](#)**



*/virus.html*

**Warning:** This is a computer virus. Opening it will completely destroy your computer and send other viruses to all your friends and destroy their computers too. However, you will get to see a picture of a naked woman.

**[Click Here To Open]**







*Every self-published internet author has a diary. Why should I be different? Except for one thing. This is not my diary. This is the diary of a man who was, for a brief time, mad. He has long since recovered, and I feel now is an appropriate time to share his story with the world in the hope that it may help prevent this (these thoughts) from happening to others. As for the title, it was chosen by the diarist himself after his recovery, and I did not change it.*



## Diary of a Madman

4/23/00

Today, I borrowed someone else's joke for my review of *American Beauty*. Is it plagiarism if the website you got it from no longer exists? What if you just can't remember the URL?

4/23/00

Snapple's website just went offline!

4/23/00

Today, I stopped bothering to put two spaces after sentences. Tomorrow, I will pick my nose in public.

4/23/00

Rewrote my review of *Happiness*. New version definitely better than old.

4/23/00

I just saw a middle-aged man in a suit walking down the street with headphones on.

4/23/00

I just saw two more! Men. Walking around with headphones on. I think they are listening to music.

4/23/00

Snapple's website back online!!!

*/feedback/colleen.html*

From: Colleen@ecompany.com

To: Cold Bacon

Date: Monday, August 28, 2000 10:15 AM

Subject: Your Site

Hi,

Are you David? I stumbled across [your site](#) while looking for poems on [T.S. Eliot](#). I was quite impressed by the lay-out, by the way.

So, I also happen to write site reviews for a new Web site called eCompany and was interested in possibly writing on yours. Is cold bacon a personal Web site of yours? Why did you put it together?

Colleen

</feedback/somegirl11.html>

From: somegirl11@yahoo.com

To: cold bacon

Date: saturday, september 9, 2000 1:47 am

Subject: your site

kicks ass.

;) )

So, from this, it's obvious that she is beautiful. But not only is she beautiful, she's a genius, a genius art critic. She's already assimilated Barthes, Barthelme, Borges. She agrees with me that X is overrated, and she didn't even waste her time with Y, which she calls trite trash for the masses. She's seen all of Kubrick's films, including *Paths of Glory* and *The Killing*. She's even reserved judgment on *Eyes Wide Shut*. She knew they wouldn't give Radiohead best album this year but still was allowing the tiniest ray of hope. She knows good food, but can go for long stretches without it. Oh, and she craves sex—good sex—a lot. And she knows it's not a good idea, but she's already fallen in love with me. Obviously her name means this and could mean nothing but this.



*/feedback/laura.html*

Subject: Please Answer

Dear Cold Bacon,

I am 9 years old and I have a question. Do you know if Peppermint soda has been invented yet? I am inventing it for a school project.

Thank you, from.

Laura



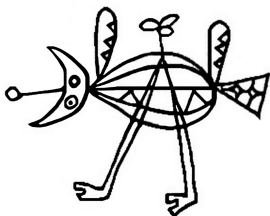
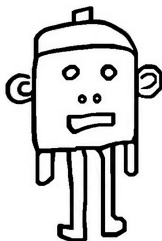
## Such Is The Difference Between Big and Little

Ever notice how adults can be so much more magnanimous than children? Adults will often let things go. Kids will not. If you took Jimmy's Dragon Ball Z action figure, then Jimmy is either going to attempt to do real damage to you, tell mom, or both. There will be no appeals in this. But an adult, James, might just let it go. Why is this? Simple economics. You see, James knows he can earn \$300,000 if he shows up to work every day and plays by 90% of the rules. Therefore, \$3 is nothing to James. To Jimmy, on the other hand, \$3 represents a substantial fraction of his weekly allowance. \$3 is not nothing.

For a rational adult, most problems can be equated to small sums of money. Can't find a parking space? Valet it. Don't like your cocktail? Order another. Such problems are as insects to people with money. The true test of whether an adult is really laid back is time. Time is the only real currency for the moneyed American. See how James does with a flat tire, or a ten car pile-up—or even two, if it's the right two. And so I say put James in jail with Bubba for ten to fifteen, and give Jimmy his \$3 back, with interest.

My name is, I forget my name  
But touch my microchip the same.  
Love gets faster every day.  
In Sweden now they just say, “hey.”

LEGALIZE ROBOTS  
LEGALIZE ME.



From: QuickWlf@aol.com

To: please please please have a REAL person respond!!!

if you read it write MANGO in your letter

me and my sister have a GREAT story

2 or 3 infact

My sis drew some GREAT pictures of the new Characters involved

if you answer and ask i scanned the pictures into my COMPUTER and we are

re-writing the story/ies

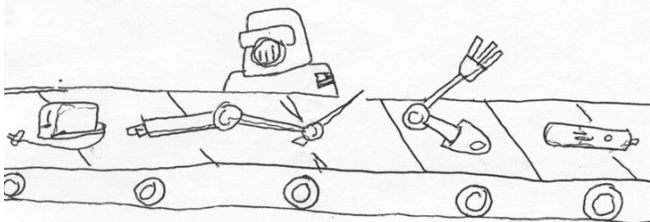
PLEASE RESPOND

the CN(cartoon network)Website didn't, not with a real person

The #1 PPG's Fan

Christina Cook

Age 13



Dear Joe et al,

I cannot say who it is at your company because I have only the IP address to go on. But I suspect it is either Tim, Corey, Chris, Doug, Scott, and especially Leon.

**Exhibit A:**

7 29 Oct 2002 10:01:56 PM bj-4-2.mcbone.net

Referrer: [http://www.google.com/search?q=dirty talk poetry](http://www.google.com/search?q=dirty+talk+poetry)

Which takes one to the following bit of smutty material,\* which I definitely had nothing to do with. The culprit could, of course, be any one of your sex-minded interns. But I am certain it is Donna, Jill, Casey, Emily, Lesley, Maria, or Lisa. Unless I have sorely misjudged them.

Nevertheless, I am sure you will agree the time for forgiveness is now. We are all humans here. We all have our limitations, needs, frailties. I do, however, believe a more strict policy of internet policing must be instituted if we are to keep “McBone” on the high moral footing it currently enjoys. We cannot turn our backs on the values and standards laid down by our glorious predecessors. We cannot let ourselves give in to each and every fleshy temptation and lurid fantasy that presents itself. Even in our weakest hours, we must find strength.

I prescribe the following:

No more “ecstasy” for McBone interns. I don’t care how much they protest and make idle threats of switching over to that firm across the street. They need you as much as you need them. And they definitely don’t need X.

No more casual Monday thru Fridays. Actions follow clothing. If you dress like a slut, you are a slut. If you dress like a top-class advertising firm, you are a top-class advertising firm. I trust we are all in agreement.

Strict internet controls. Net Nanny, See No Evil, and Back In Your Pants are some of my favorites. Complete banning of Google is also imperative. Google has revealed its inability or unwillingness to remove these bubonic sites. Now it is time to remove Google. Let your firm make a clear example of what happens when the cries for reasonable censorship are ignored.

Sexual abstention for one week. You are all soiled. If you did not participate in this sordid act, then the person in the cubicle next to you did. We are only as strong as our weakest link. I suggest you all go home and take a bath. You will know when it is the right time to resume the earnest pursuit of real intimacy.

5. Letters of apology to the Pope. The Vatican does not guarantee His Popeship will read each and every letter, but this measure will help ensure that for all your employees, when that golden parachute opens, it's not in a flaming bowl of hell.

### **Exhibit B (much too late)**

"We're radio directors, and we take our creative position from sound and then kind of back our way into the lines," says McHale. "But radio is naked," he cautions.

*I think we have a winner. I'm sorry, Leon.*

"It has to be really honest, because there's nothing to look at to distract you..."

*Oh, we definitely have a winner.*

"Comedy is even more demanding. It's one of the most effective ways of radio advertising, but it's also dangerous," according to McHale. "There's nothing worse than a funny ad that's not funny."

Except of course, sin. But remember, forgiveness. We're all radio directors here.

Yours Truly,

Cold Bacon

\* Link turned off for your protection.



## **Sharks**

If you're ever attacked by a shark. And then someone says, "Hey, you have to get back out there. If you never go back out there, then the shark wins." Don't listen to them. If you go back out there, and the shark eats you. The shark definitely wins.

## **Desert Islands**

People always ask me who I would pick to be stuck with on a desert island. Most people say something like their wife or girlfriend—Halle Berry. But I wouldn't want someone I cared about to be trapped on a desert island. No, I would pick someone I really hated. And then make their life a living hell.

## **The Third Key**

Is it just me or is there always a third key on your key chain that you have no idea what it's for?

## **Not Just Now Thank You**

John always tried to be polite. Whenever someone offered him something, even if he wasn't interested, he would always say, "Not just now, but perhaps a bit later, thank you." So on the way to prom, when Tricia Roberts expressed some interest of her own in the back of the limousine, "Not just now, but I think I will have some later."

## **People**

People are like stocks. Just wait long enough, and they'll come back up.

## **Arm Hairs**

How do arm hairs know when to stop growing? And can we give some of that to George Lucas?

## **We Need a Word**

For feeling sorry for a piece of ice as it melts in a really hot drink.

### **Brother Find Your Brother**

One day I was standing in front of a vending machine about to make a selection when I noticed I had three pennies in my pocket. Of course, who needs three pennies? So I reached up and placed them on the top of the machine without another thought. I made my purchase and was about to walk away. But for some reason I decided to look up on top of the machine. I saw six pennies there.

### **Old Habits Never Die, They Just Try To Negotiate**

I used to have this silly habit—whenever in a public place—of planning how I would escape, if it were to suddenly become—necessary. I could be sitting at a table in the back patio of some quiet little bistro when I would imagine some knife wielding maniac bursting onto the scene and picture myself jumping over the fence to safety. In my daydream, getting over the fence was always just a formality. Today I caught myself doing this for the first time in many years. But now, when the maniac arrived, instead of jumping over the fence, I found myself rather casually scanning for an opening through which I might pass without too much effort.

### **A Small Miracle**

Every time I click “print” and hear that little clunking noise, like it worked, like it’s going to print, I can’t help but feel as though a small miracle has just occurred. I mean, all these years, and I still get just as excited as if it were the first time.

### **The World**

There are two kinds of people in the world, my friend. Those who are leaving little bits of toothpaste in the sink. And those who are trying to make them feel bad about it.

# ENLARGE YOUR FAVORITE

You're Paying Too Much / abuzadoras@yahoo.com  
Magical Laser Key Chain / bloodrose@21cn.net

*Dear Sir or Madam:*

*I'm intrigued. Perhaps you could clarify what are some of the major features  
of your "Magical Laser Key Chain"?*

FIND THE DIRT ON EVERYONE U KNOW!maliciousmoltenrock@hotmail.com  
FIND THE DIRT ON SOME OF THE PEOPLE YOU KNOW  
rotating@music.net  
A PICTURE OF MY NEIGHBOR'S MARIJUANA PLANT  
candyclover911@yahoo.com

*[pause]*

Are you low on ink or paper??/ nguyen\_2099@hotmail.com  
Is your ink cartridge dry? / gssreinksavings@yahoo.com  
Do Me Now!! / mary691@kfunigraz.ac.at  
See Your Favorite Celebrity in Action. / lola\_portal@yahoo.com  
You have been accepted. / retro887@cadnet.co.jp  
Help Me!!! / carmina24@vampiress.zz.com  
Beat ME. / vuiquiqwr58155@msn.com  
Need a mortgage...we care / bigsharky@reefer.au  
are YOU tired of being tired? / tunasalad@theocean.h20  
try our new hair spray / pickle9@aol.com

# JUNK EMAIL FOR FREE

GET A HORSE COCK NOW! abra\_2198458@msn.com

Ancient bread recipe will make you lose weight

Timlang2002@hotmail.com

Raping Animals Into Action! sflvx@bigfoot.de

Hypnotize Women Into Bed! fightfair@yahoo.com

Hypnotize Women Out of Bed bettyanne3@msn.com

Control your mother ma3323@remotemoms.com

[pause]

I have your \$200 now raddishlover@linkbot.com

*Dear Sir or Madam:*

*I do not know how you got it, but I insist that you return my \$200 immediately.*

Congratulations colcerium ! ! ! colcerium@hotmail.com

Coral Calcium Discovery Letter coral calcium@calcium.biz

Colcerium For Your Body bob@calciumworld.com

*Dear Sir or Madam:*

*What in the—oh, just send me it.*

Pill to Increase Your Ejaculation by 581%

bizop@btamail.net.cn

Adult-FREE Lesbian Live Feeds! \* arlene@barelylegal.com

Ice Cold Sow Needs It 21764 47@kali.com.cn

Dreammates Are You Single? eam@zmedia.oenl.net



When one toaster cycle isn't enough, and you attempt the ill-advised extra half-cycle, which you will then forget about and burn the damn thing anyway.

When you realize the food is too hot just when you're about to put it in your mouth, but you can't stop yourself, because—you just can't.

When you're getting into or out of some pants, and you lose your balance, somewhere between pants-on and pants-not-on. You're goin' down and there's not a damn thing you can do about it.

When you've just finished drying off from a shower, and you realize you've still got soap under your arms. A very difficult decision lies ahead. It will require conviction.

When you try to figure out what word someone was trying to type by looking at the keys around the letter in question. This technique can also be used to determine whether someone has spelled a word incorrectly because of a typo or because they're a damn idiot. Ha ha. It's your friend.

When you discover the remote was underneath a cushion the entire time, and you're not sure if you're happy because you found it, or sad because you wasted all that time looking for it. There's a parable for this, but who cares.

Few things are worse than a surprise empty CD case.

There is one thing worse than a surprise empty CD case. When you stamp and address an envelope, try to not seal it before putting the contents inside. There is little more horrifying than that, except some of the stuff they have on rotten.com.  
[/movies4.html](#)

*The following are actual search strings that were used by people to get to my movie reviews page. When humor like this is delivered right to one's desktop, one can only rejoice and for the most part, thank AOL.*

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=movies with sick children &hc=0&hs=2>

<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=brazil naked boys first=6&last=17&next>

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=russian pedophilia>

<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch?query=russian girls in houston &first=11&last=next=item&>

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch?=stills from mermaid movies>

<http://search.netscape.com/google?search=disney movies sexual &start=30>

<http://google.yahoo.com/query?p=secret sexual parts in disney movies &hc=0&hs=6>

*God damn, why can't you people just rent regular porn like the rest of us for crying out loud!*

<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch?query=older more mature naked women>

*Amen! Nothing worse than those damn older, immature naked women.*

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=good Kevin Costner sites\(naked\) &hc=0&hs=0](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=good Kevin Costner sites(naked) &hc=0&hs=0)



*This is me hitting my own head with a hammer. I think I need a couple more.*



<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.query=how tell someone that you love them>  
%F3%F3

*How tell someone they're at the wrong site?*

*Occasionally, there are people interested in movies.*

<http://search.aol.com/dir?query=what are the top movies to rent>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=dumb movies>  
<http://www.google.com/search?q=stupid real movies>  
&hl=en&lr=&safe=off  
<http://search.aol.com/adp?query=movies ripe>  
<http://search.aol.com/adp?query=movies about teamwork>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=the best italian movies of all times ever>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=EFFECTS OF BOLD FILMS TO THE SOCIETY&hc=0&hs=0>

*I swear to God I did not.*

<http://www.google.com/search?q=why i like frightening movies>  
&btnG=Google Search&hl=en&lr=&safe=off  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=I want to know everything about stereotypes&hc=0&hs=0>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=movies that are similar to other movies>

*Talk about narrowing your search strategy...*

<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=negative american beauty reviews>  
&hc=0&hs=0  
<http://www.google.com/search?=did siskel change review on unforgiven>  
&btnG=Google%20Search  
<http://www.google.com/search?q=Maximus' Dog&btnG=Google Search>

[http://www.google.com/search?q=brazil "terry gilliam" furniture  
&hl=en&lr=&safe=off&start=20&sa=N](http://www.google.com/search?q=brazil+\)

*This Glorious Bunch was collected January 2001*

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=films moves about the evil  
&hc=0&hs=0](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=films+moves+about+the+evil&hc=0&hs=0)

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=mid evil furniture&hc=0&hs=0](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=mid+evil+furniture&hc=0&hs=0)

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=evil celery&hc=0&hs=0](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=evil+celery&hc=0&hs=0)

[http://www.google.com/query? what really happens in cinema paradiso](http://www.google.com/query?+what+really+happens+in+cinema+paradiso)

*Uhh...*

[http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=watching the latest movies on  
my computer&first=11&last](http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=watching+the+latest+movies+on+my+computer&first=11&last)

*Okay.*

[http://www.google.com/search?hl=Gladiator sex women blood excited](http://www.google.com/search?hl=Gladiator+sex+women+blood+excited)

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=things cartoons wouldn't do](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=things+cartoons+wouldn't+do)

[http://search.msn.com/spbasic.htm?MT=forced crossdressing](http://search.msn.com/spbasic.htm?MT=forced+crossdressing)

*Don't you just hate that?*

[http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=face slap movie](http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=face+slap+movie)

*Yeah, face slap movie!*

[http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?= kevin spacey naked](http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?=+kevin+spacey+naked)



*All I can say is I love people:*



[http://www.google.com/search?q=scarface furniture](http://www.google.com/search?q=scarface+furniture)

*...or perhaps find a deal on...*

<http://www.google.com/search?q=italian flammable mahogany tables>

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=Royal Fashion in 1960&hc=](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=Royal+Fashion+in+1960&hc=)

[http://search.dogpile.com/search?q=who got inspired by the movie "Bicycle Thief"&fs=w](http://search.dogpile.com/search?q=who+got+inspired+by+the+movie+\)

[http://www.google.com/search?q=why is Rome the subject of movies  
&hl=en&lr=&safe=off&](http://www.google.com/search?q=why+is+Rome+the+subject+of+movies&hl=en&lr=&safe=off&)

[http://www.google.com/search?hl=why is movie called Ran](http://www.google.com/search?hl=why+is+movie+called+Ran)

[http://www.google.com/search?q=wind is a mystery to me](http://www.google.com/search?q=wind+is+a+mystery+to+me)

[http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=racing movies for rent](http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=racing+movies+for+rent)

[http://www.google.com/search?q=free of cost on line movies](http://www.google.com/search?q=free+of+cost+on+line+movies)

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=free fucking movies &hc=0&hs=0](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=free+fucking+movies+&hc=0&hs=0)

*Okay, okay. Just calm down.*

[http://www.google.com/search?= conan to drive my enemies before me](http://www.google.com/search?=conan+to+drive+my+enemies+before+me)

[http://nl.altavista.com/q?q=conan the barbarien&what=&kl=&st](http://nl.altavista.com/q?q=conan+the+barbarien&what=&kl=&st)

[http://www.google.com/search?q= bowling for columbian](http://www.google.com/search?q=bowling+for+columbian)

[http://www.google.com/search?q= I will like to see a clip of the movie Y Tu  
Mama Tambien](http://www.google.com/search?q=I+will+like+to+see+a+clip+of+the+movie+Y+Tu+Mama+Tambien)

[http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=look me naked](http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=look+me+naked)

[http://www.google.com/search?&ie=Flash cartoon Darth Vader  
Emperor Chinese Restaurant](http://www.google.com/search?&ie=Flash+cartoon+Darth+Vader+Emperor+Chinese+Restaurant)

[http://www.google.com/search?q=how much money an actor makes verse how  
many times movies watched](http://www.google.com/search?q=how+much+money+an+actor+makes+verse+how+many+times+movies+watched)

(all facts personally verified by Joey Fatone)

Congress! They added twenty years of copyright protection to works created from 1923-1963, which means my grandson will be in a nursing home before my xylophone version of “Love Me Do” can be played on the airwaves. It means that Lexus can use a Louis Armstrong tune to sell luxury cars because they can afford the royalties, but KIA will have to use Hall and Oats, while the Pine Oaks fifth grade production of *Hair* will settle for an Andrew Lloyd Weber booger. The purpose of legislation is to make sure there are enough rules so everybody is happy. The purpose of this legislation is to make five billion dollars go to Paul McCartney and make him happy. Congress represents the people. The country contains the electorate. The electorate is five people whose primary function is to be challenged by CNN, Blockbuster and a polling booth.

Now the Supreme Court has taken up the case because they couldn’t get out of it. The argument *against* is easy. All great artists are dead. So keeping their work protected will offer them very little incentive to produce more art. The argument *for* is essentially the “it’s ours and you can’t have it” argument. But has anyone bothered to ask the art what it wants? What would Louis Armstrong say about “Mahogany Hall Stomp” being used to push frozen peas? And for that matter, what would he say about the Pine Oaks first grade jazz ensemble’s creative de-interpretation. There is the distinct possibility that great art may be cheapened by misuse and overuse. This can only be avoided by keeping royalty fees as high as possible, higher than possible, ensuring only the largest corporations can use the material.

I know the Lexus Corporation would surely think twice before using a Louis Armstrong classic merely to boost sales, unlike that headstrong KIA Corporation, which is capable of anything. Damn Koreans. So I say keep royalties up, and keep great art off the street and out of the hands of the Koreans.

## **Milk and Honey**

You've heard it a hundred times, but have you ever actually had milk and honey? It's really quite good. I recommend trying it in a cup of Earl Grey tea (with Bergamot™).

## **Well, There Is That**

What a great phrase. Anyone who uses it is automatically okay. Simple enough, yet virtually impossible for anyone bad to use properly.

## **The 5 Second Rule**

What a great concept. I wonder who thought of it. King Lear? Why not? He thought of everything else. "Give me that piece of non-specific roast meat forthwith. It's been hardly five seconds on the floor."

## **The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same**

This is a really dumb expression. It's completely wrong. The more things change, the more things *do not* stay the same. In fact, that's precisely what change means, not staying the same. So you see, it's quite impossible that the more things could change, the more they could stay the same.

## **Less Is More**

Less is not more. Less is less. How could less possibly be more? What is going on here?

United Airlines - Come fly the friendly skies.

Delta Airlines - You'll love the way we fly.

New Air - Look, do you want to get there or not?

**List of people astutely pointing out that everything has already been said and done before:**

Research Scientist, San Francisco, December 10, 2001

While giving a talk on unbelievably small particles.

Jon Stimson, Boise, March 22, 1999

Talking with friends.

Jon Stimson, Boise, March 12, 1999

Talking with friends, ten days prior.

Sociology Professor, Wellesley College September 3, 1996 or 7 (not sure)

During sociology class.

Joe Fitzwater and Sarah Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles, August 2, 1996

Discussing complicated plot twist while working on season finale of *Barney*.

Francesco Bugatti, Rome, February 13, 1995 (in Italian)

Trying to come up with a new flavor of gelato.

Jens Jensen, Stuttgart, October 14, 1994

Discussing idea for a new model Porsche.



First

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.



We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.



...ing invariably the same  
...espotism, it is their right, it  
...w Guards for their future  
...fans; and such is now the  
...er Systems of Product  
...ry is a history of repeated  
injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute  
Tyranny over mankind.

**LARRY-BOY  
eJECTS FROM  
Seat!**

sea foam

head hunter

I am a race car driver



```
<SCRIPT LANGUAGE="JavaScript"><!--
```

```
// *****  
// AUTHOR: WWW.CGIScript.NET, LLC  
// URL: http://www.cgiscript.net  
// Use the script, just leave this message intact.  
// Download your FREE CGI/Perl Scripts today!  
// ( http://www.cgiscript.net/scripts.htm )  
// *****
```

```
function text() {  
};
```

```
text = new text();  
number = 0;
```

```
// textArray
```

```
text[number++] = "$50 only $49.95!!!"  
text[number++] = "God Bless America, Inc."  
text[number++] = "Who am I calling solipsistic?"  
text[number++] = "Bach doesn't owe you anything."  
text[number++] = "Porcupines will always be funny."  
text[number++] = "These days, not even science is science."  
text[number++] = "Harry Potter: one million kids can't be right."  
text[number++] = "As time passed Psyche fell in love with no one."  
text[number++] = "Giving someone a 'smack down' will always be cool."
```

text[number++] = "We're buying 8-tracks like they were going out of style."  
text[number++] = "Because no one gives a shit about a well-written essay."  
text[number++] = "Friends are good. Potholes are bad. Both are inevitable."  
text[number++] = "If we're going to play good cop, bad cop, I want to be the  
hooker."  
text[number++] = "Art is taking an obvious truth and pushing it almost out of reach."  
text[number++] = "Cause it's root root root for the home team. If we don't win it's  
a scam."  
text[number++] = "Remember, you've got to help troubled teens, because they  
could kill you."  
text[number++] = "It was like something returned from the dead to haunt you in  
undetectable ways."  
text[number++] = "Lo, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I  
fear no evil. Because I am stupid."  
text[number++] = "We've captured the imagination of the American people and  
compressed it to the size of a pea!"  
text[number++] = "Here's a tip. If you're writing a rock song, please do not mention  
eggs, unless of course, you're going to say 'I am the egg man.'"

increment = Math.floor(Math.random() \* number);

document.write(text[increment]);

//--</SCRIPT>

I've always dreamed of a vampire's life

Breakfast food for breakfast

Blood at night.

ERROR: The address "johnwettland@hotmail.com" does not exist. This mail has not been sent.

Hi. This is the qmail-send program. I'm afraid I wasn't able to deliver your message to the following addresses. This is a permanent error; I've given up. Sorry it didn't work out.

A message that you sent could not possibly have been delivered to one or more of its recipients.

Cannot load the media you have selected. Perhaps you are not in enough with the network.

We are currently experiencing slowness. Engineers are working on the problem. We will send you an update on the progress throughout the day, but you probably won't receive it.

We're sorry, but the account entered could not be located on this server. Please make sure that you are using the correct URL. Please do not be afraid to contact Yahoo Customer Care for further information.

6/5/05 U.S. Warns Luxembourg to Get Its Shit Together. (Yahoo)

1/17/05 Putin Firm Despite Bush's Worries. (Yahoo)

1/15/05 Bush Seeks End to Tyranny. Will Step Down Next Week. (CNN)

1/11/05 CIA Says Grinch Stole Christmas. "It's a slam dunk!" (Yahoo)

9/14/02 Bush Urges UN To "Show some backbone." U.S. Has To Show Some Leg First. (Yahoo)

4/16/02 U.S. Denies Ties to Venezuela Coup. Also Denies Ties to Next Week's Coup in Argentina. (Yahoo)

12/15/02 Source of Amazon River Pinpointed. Republicans Ready Bill To Destroy It. (Yahoo)

2/14/02 Bush Unveils Plan to Accelerate Global Warming, Dubbed "2010 By 2010." (Yahoo)

3/02/02 U.S. Bombs Afghan Mountains. God Says He Can Make More. (Yahoo)

12/28/01 U.S. Says China Can Have Its Damn Pandas Back. (Yahoo)

11/3/01 Bush Urges Calm on Anthrax. Will Meet with Mosquitoes Next Week. (Yahoo)

10/28/01 Iraqi Prime Minister Calls Claims They Are Producing Anthrax Ridiculous. "Shit, We Had That Ten Years Ago." (Reuters)

10/25/01 Anthrax Sent to Daschle Was Pure. (Yahoo)

3/23/01 Russia Expels Fifty U.S. Diplomats. U.S. To Counter By Expelling All

People Whose Names Begin with the Letter Y. (Yahoo)

2/12/01 U.S. Video Kills Libya's Radio Star. (Reuters)

9/26/00 U.S. To Create Life-Sized Replica of Cuba. (Yahoo)

8/10/00 U.S. Warns That North Korea Faces Isolation. (Yahoo)

4/30/00 Clinton Declares Montana Disaster Area. Montana Calls Arkansas Cheap Slut. (Yahoo)

6/1/00 68 Kids Eliminated in Spelling Bee. Al Gore Quick to Blame NRA. (Yahoo)

2/19/00 NATO Vows Never To Stop Vowing. (Reuters)

9/8/99 U.N. Summit Ends with Resolution To Solve World Problems. (AP)

3/22/99 U.S. Denies Everything. (Yahoo)

But not everything in the news these last few years has been of a purely geopolitical significance. There have been some other very important developments in the world around us.

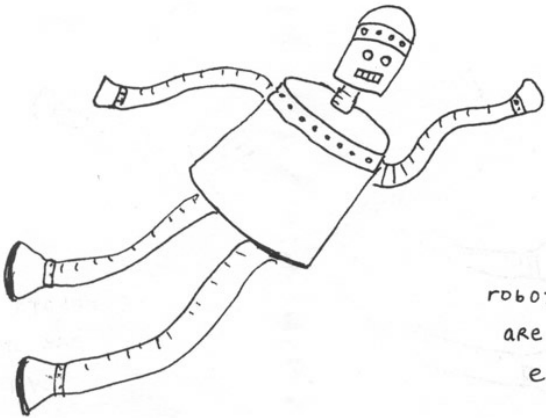
5/6/05 Dozens in U.S. Get Sick of Small Pets. (Yahoo)

1/30/03 Shoe Bomber Sentenced to Life, on Nike Assembly Line. (CNN)

9/3/02 Sniper Offers To Turn Himself in in Exchange for Immunity. (AP)

7/11/02 Courtney Love Sentenced to Death. (Yahoo)

9/30/02 Report: Ozone Hole Shrinks, Splits in Two, Then Goes Out for Beer. (Yahoo)



robots  
are not  
evil

The following bit of paper was discovered in a storm drain in Iowa City on November 18, 2002. Scribbled in short-hand in the top right corner was the phrase you've got to convince them and further down in the right margin whatever it takes along with a few other frantic scribbles. The main text went as follows:

It's risky, and it's hard to do right. But worst of all, it's hard to remember to do it at all. Personification works because it forces the reader to imagine and project. As soon as I read the words "sad blade," I've already got this whole story cooked up about how some great warrior chef has lived a life of noble battles, how he has been forced on more than one occasion to choose between loyalty and friendship, possibly even having to kill the woman he secretly loved because of a tomato, how his armor is beautiful, but that he just lost his favorite horse in battle. I'm surprised the blade doesn't just commit sepulcher right now, or osso bucco, or whatever it is when they accidentally fall on their sword and call it suicide.1

Your brain is like a master statistician, always making calculations, at speeds almost unimaginable. You may not be aware of it, but your brain carefully analyzes thousands of tids and bits of information, from multiple angles, weighing millions of possible outcomes each second, every second. In other words, you would never carry a heavy appliance with the cord dragging behind on the ground—at least not without a good reason.



Life's lessons, like ice cream, come in thirty-one different flavors. When you do decide to go "cord-on-floor," of course, you know you're walking on thin mint. And when the cord does get snagged, and you pull and it pulls back like a gold medal ribbon, and you have to stop and turn slowly around, that's when you're traveling a rocky road. But you will not set that television down. Instead, wisely, you'll use one hand to balance it against your chest while the other attempts to yank the cord free. And now it's confirmed, your status as number one nutty coconut. Of course, if you do have to put down that television set, that's like stopping to ask for directions. My god, you're a cookies and cream puff. Now actually dropping it would be chocolate chip cookie "doh!" And if it breaks, a closed fist and fudge. Maybe you do have a chocolate almond for a brain after all.

chance of breaking something = (laziness x unfounded sense of urgency x 1.5 presence of Y chromosome + belief in floor gnomes) / fear of having to buy a new something

Here are the flavors that didn't make it: chocolate chip, coffee, bubble gum or pink bubble gum, butter pecan, blind date, pistachio almond, running with scissors, strawberry cheesecake, vanilla, promise and cream, orange sherbet, zipping it up too fast, world class chocolate.

9/19/02 Tropical Storm Isidore Heads for Cuba. Will Have To Connect in Mexico. (Yahoo)

7/31/02 Study: Dogs May Be Smarter Than Previously Thought. Caribou Downgraded Slightly, Rock Crabs Up 4% and Porcupines Off By a Nickel. (AP Wire)

6/16/02 Four-Year-Old Sees Meaning in Art Deco Style. (Yahoo)

6/13/02 CDC: West Nile Virus to Spread West. (Yahoo)

4/30/02 Oil Firms Say They Don't Control Prices. Britney Spears Says She Doesn't Control Twelve-Year-Old Girls. And God Says Bad Things Definitely Not His Fault. (Yahoo)

3/19/02 Scientists Solve Neutrino Puzzle. Will Now Begin Work on JonBenet Case. (Yahoo)

11/14/01 Ancient Erotic Frescoes Unveiled. Covered Back Up Immediately. (Yahoo)

11/15/01 Study: 85% of Women with Pierced Navels Want It. (Science)

10/5/01 Giant Deep-Sea Creature Amazes Spanish Scientists. Tastes Incredible! (Reuters)

10/21/01 Giuliani: N.Y. Never Wanted To Be Attacked. (Reuters)

4/2/01 Metallic Sound Heard by Space Crew. (Yahoo)

7/23/00 Drinking Water Aboard Airliners Worsens. (Yahoo)

8/17/99 Astronomers Spot Mysterious Star. (Yahoo)

6/19/99 Russell Crowe Declares Himself God. (Yahoo)

This Just In: Abraham Lincoln seen getting bagel at street-side cafe in Washington.

This Just In: Our sources tell us this would be virtually impossible. We'll have to check. But we promise to break in the minute we find out. We take you now to our correspondent on the ground, at ground zero, at the scene, live, coming to you live, risking everything, in harm's way, only a five second delay, edited only slightly, edited for your protection, twenty-four hours in one day. Back to you, Fred.

This Just In: President Washington may have used racial slur. Country in crisis!

Because of email, the quality of my friendships in general is

1. Better.
2. The same, it was already perfect.

1. Worse.
2. It's hard to explain.
3. It's better not to explain

Your Vote Is Important

<http://www.alltheweb.com/search?q=the best pregnant movies&c>

*Remember, you don't have to tell me anything you don't want to.*

<http://search.lycos.com/default.asp?loco=searchbox&=I'm sleeping with the ghost of me and you>

<http://google.yahoo.com/query?p=movies I can watch on the internet that include Julia Robert and>

<http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=i don't even know what a quail looks like>

<http://search.yahoo.com/search?p=platoon me-love-you-long-time>

*Not Platoon.*

<http://google.yahoo.com/query?p=this is my rifle, there is many others like it>

*Full Remedial Jacket*

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=funny adult videos =item&cat=>

<http://sidesearch.lycos.com/?query=phonesex for me &first=31&sv=&age=1&page=more&hurl=&>

[http://search.dogpile.com/taxis/search?q=\"saw me naked\"](http://search.dogpile.com/taxis/search?q=\)

*David Copperfield tonite on the Spice Channel*

<http://hotbot.lycos.com/?MT=peeing rhinoceros pictures &SM=MC>

*Now I normally like to consider myself an open-minded person, but I just have to say this one time: FREAKS!!!*

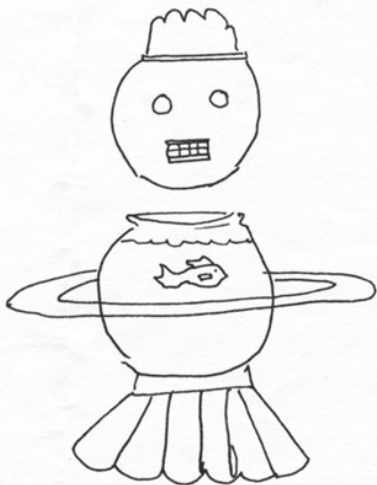
<http://search.dogpile.com/taxis?=3p=Why French People Suck &fs=web&to=five&p=1&brand=frog>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=dirty french saying &hc=0&hs=0>  
<http://www.google.com/search?q=stethoscope playboy>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=Nora Raum>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=what does work mean to mature age people in the U.S.,A &hc=0&hs=0>  
<http://www.yahoo.com/query?= cowboy poerty words that form a picture &hc=0&hs=0>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=cowboy hat poerty>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query= step by step how too cook meatloaf recipes>  
<http://www.webhelp.com/gotoresults? how to cook a damn meat loaf &y=16>

*And talk about multitasking...*

[http://infoseek.go.com/?win=\\_searchv=M6&qt=restaurants in houston &oq=gifts for geneologists](http://infoseek.go.com/?win=_searchv=M6&qt=restaurants in houston &oq=gifts for geneologists)

*Other socially minded queries:*

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirs?query=black restaurants of Houston>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=+gay +guacamole + recipe>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=sucking heads>  
<http://www.altavista.com/cgi-bin/query?=blood sucking leech %22&kl=XX&stye=stex>  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?knf=1&query= use trucks in houston that does not run for sale>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=used trucks for sale in west texas by the owner>  
<http://search.aol.com/adp?=totally free stuff at free stuff plaza>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?=big fat bloated people>  
<http://www.google.com/search?q=houston fish rest>



they  
can be your  
friends.

*And then, while your fish is resting comfortably, you might want to enjoy Houston's most endangered beverage...*

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?knf=1&query=Turtle latte>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=options>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=facts and options>  
<http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=truth about seafood>  
<http://search.msn.com/results?q=How to open up a creole restaurant?>

*Yes, well. First, you get on the internet...*

<http://aolsearch.aol.com/?query=dirty hands touching food>  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=is bread bad to eat>  
<http://search.aol.com/?query=ice cream trends>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=Who invented spring rolls>  
<http://www.altavista.com/cgi-bin/query?q=%22and besides>

*That's hilarious. Who the hell gets on a search engine and just types "and besides"? That person deserves a medal.*

<http://google.yahoo.com/?p=the meaning of coffee shop>  
<http://hometab.bellsouth.net/?spage&string=ingridiants for>  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?=odd flavored chicken>  
<http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=show me used trailers>  
<http://search.aol.com/minisearch.adp?query=mufflers that sound loud and they are big>

[http://aolsearch.aol.com/adp?=is carbonation bad for you  
&submit.x=27&submit.y=](http://aolsearch.aol.com/adp?=is carbonation bad for you &submit.x=27&submit.y=)  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch?query=why is soda bad for you>  
[http://aolsearch.aol.com/adp?query=why is there acids in beverages  
&first=26&last=40&next=i](http://aolsearch.aol.com/adp?query=why is there acids in beverages &first=26&last=40&next=i)  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=phosphoric acid>  
<http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=how is phosphoric acid used in the>



**body**

<http://www.google.com/search?=&hl=en&lr=&safe=off&start>

[http://search.aol.com/dirsearch?knf=water as a thirst quencher](http://search.aol.com/dirsearch?knf=water+as+a+thirst+quencher)

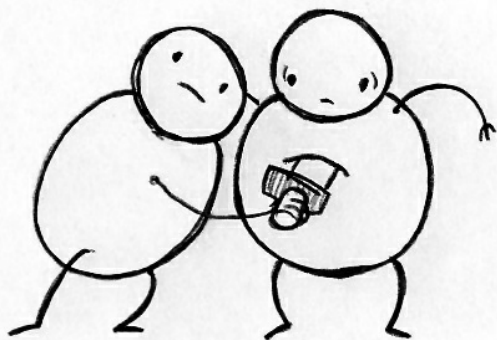
[http://www.google.com/search?q=evian ingredients](http://www.google.com/search?q=evian+ingredients)

[http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=abdominal six pack](http://aolsearch.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=abdominal+six+pack)

[http://google.netscape.com/netscape?query=where are beverages](http://google.netscape.com/netscape?query=where+are+beverages)

[http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=naked belly dancers](http://search.aol.com/dirsearch.adp?query=naked+belly+dancers)





“Oh sweet name, I call you again, you’re born once again for me  
Just because I believe don’t mean I don’t think as well  
Don’t have to question everything in heaven or hell.”

— unimportant musician

There is this idea that when you are working, you are the work. That you can leave your personal views behind. This notion of man and job being separate is undoubtedly playing now at a congressional hearing near you. Does he hate this group or that group more? Does he hate your mother? I hate your mother. Other questions—did he really give Bob Jones a hand job in the back seat of a V-8, American style? Mr. A, when did these symptoms begin? Does he dream of wrestling snakes, law-breaking snakes? We have to kill as many snakes as possible. We have to set an example.

While focusing on whether he could or would be confirmed, the media ignored the more interesting question of why John Ashcroft would want to be attorney general anyway. It seems like the attorney general should be in love or at least have a big crush on the law itself, to have and uphold. He should not be of the mind that fanatically pushing one view or another is cool, while philosophical detachment is not. In other words, he should probably not be a U.S. Senator. Perhaps no senator should ever be attorney general. Perhaps all senators should serve two terms and then be immediately jettisoned into space. Now you’ll tell me half our attorney generals have been senators—damned good ones! I have no response to that, except that I hate you.

Think of it in terms of rational versus irrational thought. I once knew this scientist who was so rational in his work it was maddening. Day after day, from one experiment to the next, I saw not a single irrational move. Yet this same person went home at night and used a special machine to create an even more special electric field under which he slept. This protected him from getting colds. He insisted. Because both rational and irrational thought coexist in all people, it is certainly possible for John Ashcroft to perform rationally as attorney general.

Possible but not likely, that is, unless he was just kidding when he played Jim Crowe on my knee, with a fully black paddy wagon throw away the key. Like Eminem, he was merely trying to generate healthy discussion. Look, if I were against masturbation, and my job made me do things to protect those who gave glory to it, I would look for another job. Unless, of course, it paid a hell of a lot, in which case, I would look for the Vaseline.

I am a Republican, so whenever I can't decide whether to put jam or cinnamon on my hot-buttered toast, I think "What would John Ashcroft do?" Not John Ashcroft, civil rights advocate gourmet, but John Ashcroft, attorney general gourmet. Because I know he would make that choice with integrity. He would never let personal preference enter into such a serious decision. That's the kind of man I want for breakfast. Oh nix the toast, I'll just have a scotch. I'm a Republican, you know. I can do that.

I am a Democrat, so I think we should put a tax on both butter and jam. Then we can use it to start a program to help people with their toast problem. It's an outrage that ninety-five percent of the toast in America is concentrated in five percent of the toasters. I want to know, "Where are those toasters and what is John Ashcroft going to do about it?" Oh, forget it. [finger on intercom button] Ms. Stevens, could you please hold all my calls? [wondering aloud] Now where's that blow job I ordered?

From: Dave Eggers

To: Me

Date: Sat, 27 Jul 2002 13:27:54

Subject: your essay

Has this piece been published before elsewhere?

Dave

From: Dave Eggers

To: Me

Date: Sun, 28 Jul 2002 14:29:4

Subject: re: your essay

Figures.

Best,

Dave

The next generation of great writers will need to fork over traditional prose in favor of cooking terms. “He walked through the crowd” will become “he sifted through the crowd” or even “she stir-fried her way between the hot peppers and leering meat at El Ray de Cabrito a-Go-Go.” Conventional plot elements must give way to more modern epicurean concepts. Romantic buildup is a slow marinade—character development, a thorough deglazing. “They hung out and ate avocados and turned the living room into a big bed.”

### **Baste**

She basted me with science.

### **Boil**

She boiled me, like a potato.

### **Broil**

She broiled me like—a different potato. Don’t miss Derek Jacobi’s epic performance in *I Potato*. Nominated for five Caesar salads.

### **Leaven**

She leavened me like I was her only bagel dough.

### **Poach**

She poached me in her love syrup.

*Here are some more cooking terms to help you stave off that writing course another year.*

**Age:** To control a food’s aging process to improve its texture, flavor or both.

**Rot:** too much age.

**Blend:** To mix two or more ingredients together until combined.

**Blonde:** Do they have to be different?

**Bread:** To coat food with bread, cracker or other crumbs. Usually the food is dipped into a liquid (beaten eggs, milk, beer) before it is coated.

**Dead:** Not alive.

**Undead Bread:** Bread that you won't eat, but won't throw away either.

**Brown:** To cook food quickly over high heat until the surface turns brown. This method allows the juices to stay sealed in and is usually done in a broiler or on a stove top. 2 -

**Ignore:** To walk quickly past a cut of meat without buying it. This method allows the juices to stay really sealed in and is usually done in a supermarket or boucherie.

**Ignore from Home:** To stay at home, watch T.V. and order a pizza. This method also allows the juices to stay sealed in and is usually done from a couch or chair.

**Chop:** To cut food into pieces ranging from small (finely chopped) to large (coarsely chopped). See hash.

**Chopin:** Famous Northern Iranian composer noted for his liberal use of hash and love of coarsely chopped beets.

**Dash:** A small quantity measuring three drops to ¼ teaspoon.

**Baywatch:** a small quantity measuring three trollops, five dips, and an old teaspoon.

**Emulsify:** To bind together substances which under normal conditions will not mix, such as oil and water. Egg yolk is a commonly used emulsifier.



**Tulsify:** To bind together beliefs and values which under normal conditions would not make any sense.

**Grate:** To shred solid food by rubbing against the small, sharp-edged holes of a grater.

**Grate finger:** To shred solid finger by rubbing against the small, sharp-edged holes of a grater because you just had to get it all, didn't you? P.S. Go in your kitchen cabinet right now. Look at your grater. Now wash it!

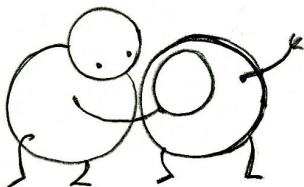
**Hash:** To chop or mince foods into very finely chopped pieces. Also the name of an American dish composed of small pieces of meat, potatoes and seasonings.

**Rehash:** To tell stories about the time you chopped that food into very small pieces.

**Purée:** To mash food until it is completely smooth, usually to make into a soup.

**Puree:** To put food in a blender and press puree.





“Big reds,” I have always said. “Barolo, Brunello, Barbaresco. White wine’s for sissies,” I have always said. Appellation contrôlée chateau de water. Then I had a mature white burgundy from one of those houses that’s so big it has to be called a firm. Now it may not have won as many Wine Speculator Advertiser’s Choice Awards as a fine Kendall-Jackson Chardonnay, but it was pretty damn good—good enough to make me re-examine my relationship with white wine going forward. It had a complex and compelling aroma (that’s wine for *we totally couldn’t figure out what it smelled like*). It had a color—yellow. And best of all, it actually tasted good (it didn’t taste like a pineapple or a piece of wood). Of course, the catch is white burgundy requires a cellar in order to achieve its sublime age-brought potential. Unfortunately, it also requires a buyer—one with, say, several large piles of cash lying around. You see, white burgundy (cheaper to just call it WB) has to be expensive in order to finance the French health care system. But this is not the case in Germany, where health care is paid for by the government-run sausage industry.

Yes, German wines have it all, from the off-dry (okay, very off-dry) Kabinett to the sweet Auslese. There’s even a spätlese in between. And if you’re looking for something to really notbeabletoafford, there’s always the super-nec made from the victims of noble rot, Trockenbeerenauslese. Say that five times and call me in the morning. But that was fun to say, wasn’t it? You know the main reason you got into wine is because you get to say things like Barbaresco, Ribera del Duero, Tierra del Fuego. Has anyone ever actually been to Tierra del Fuego other than Michael Palin? Think about it, the only reason you’ve even heard of it is because people get a small thrill from saying it. And who could forget the dreaded super-Tuscan. It’s a bird. It’s a plane. It’s overpriced. Or is it? But doesn’t this wine just sound like it could make the pond and back faster than you can say “my first oenologist”? Oh, she’s fast enough for you, old man.

But any serious discussion about great wine names must include German Rieslings. You can’t find one that doesn’t have a great name. No, seriously. And they’re all real places, too! Show me a map with Silver Fox Frog Jumpsville on it, and I’ll personally hand Judy Groth fifty bucks. For pure phonetical pleasure, we start with Urziger Wurzgarten and Freinsheimer Goldberg Scheurebe.<sup>3</sup>—And who could forget

the Randersacker Marsberg or the Forster Kirchenstuck (named for a famous logging accident)? Or maybe you got a bad case of the Flemlinger Vogelsprung this winter? And then there's the real abbreviation fodder, Braunenberger Juffer Sonnenuhr. Don't even get me started on the individual producers. What makes you sound more dangerous? Packing an air-cooled Rudesheimer Berg Rottland from Gebruder Grimm? Or a cabaret from Robert Mondavi? You can hold an entire dinner party at bay by threatening to uncork an Oppenheimer Kreuz. Now try *that* with a petite syrah.

German Rieslings are great and practically every other vintage is the best one of the last two years. These wines are delicious and crisp for drinking now, and many can develop into quite complex petrochemicals. Forget about cheap Chardonnay and other crimes against humanity. German wines are also less alcoholic, so you can have a glass and still be able to think about something other than sex afterwards.<sup>4</sup>—And they go great with Asian food because they were roommates with Mao Tze Tung their freshman year of college. What more do you need to know? Now get out there and start drinking German wine.

Hotmail Daemon: 1 person wants to exchange instant messages with you—  
download MSN Messenger

*Well, let me know when that number gets to about 6.*

Success in a free-market system depends on good things like intelligence and motivation and not icky things like nobility and class. That's why America is better than Britain. But if Americans are so damn smart, then why can't they make good cheese? Simple, because they don't have to. When the Europeans stop making cheese, then you'll soon see just how serious Americans can get about cheese making. We can do it. I know we can. We did it with pretzels.<sup>5</sup>—

Other ongoing questions: “Do Americans really have worse taste than Europeans?” Well, if you're talking about car steering wheels, then yes. And I don't know who has better fashion sense, but it sure can't be the Japanese.<sup>6</sup>—Not unless you're into clothes that are more neon than your child's lunch box. And I'm not saying I'm not. But the cheese question continues to ferment. Why is mass-produced cheese so popular over here? Does it sell in Europe or do they all eat Roquefort and Gorgonzola for lunch every day? Well, actually they do. But I did see a commercial on Italian television for Philadelphia cream cheese. At first I thought less of them for it, but then I totally changed my mind.

## Poison Control

“Hello, you have reached—”

“Is this the Colgate hotline?”

“Yes, how can we help you today?”

“I just swallowed an entire tube of your baking soda and peroxide toothpaste.”

“Fresh mint or clean mint?”

“Am I going to die?”





Join Live Chat! (1 people chatting)

connected: ezChat version 0.54

ColdBacon: come on babies?

ColdBacon: i'm her

ColdBacon: e

ColdBacon: and i'm totally wasted

ColdBacon: one person in room

ColdBacon: i'm running out of

ColdBacon: fuck

ColdBacon: parmigiano

ColdBacon: hello

(saint and joined)

saint and: ah, it's you

ColdBacon: what's that you say?

saint and: don't let me interrupt you talking shit about me

ColdBacon: oh i was.

saint and: why are you so lucky to be drinking on a friday

ColdBacon: at 11 am?

ColdBacon: i started at 8

ColdBacon: i'm about to fall over

ColdBacon: i drink

ColdBacon: and fall over

ColdBacon: i'm done

saint and: 8! you may have beaten my record

ColdBacon: round the outside

ColdBacon: i have all my mp3's with me

saint and: what the hell is an mp3

ColdBacon: [parmigiano flying around like cow shrapnel]

ColdBacon: somehow keeps finding my mouth

ColdBacon: it's bc I'm a lightweight

ColdBacon: lately

saint and: not for lack of drinking?

ColdBacon: yes

ColdBacon: this is only the 2nd time this week

ColdBacon: [more shrapnel]  
saint and: have you ever seen Arrested Development?  
ColdBacon: communist propaganda  
ColdBacon: no  
ColdBacon: doesn't sound black enough for me  
ColdBacon: i mean have you seen my home page lately?  
(pancreatic anonymity logs in but does not enter chat room)  
ColdBacon: pancreatic twat. she totally just dissed us  
ColdBacon: she browsed for like 15 mins then left  
saint and: she's intimidated  
ColdBacon: twat  
saint and: by my beauty  
ColdBacon: so am i  
ColdBacon: but you don't—  
ColdBacon: i don't know where I'm going with this  
(3 minutes later)  
ColdBacon: shaved chicken  
saint and: ha  
saint and: pancreatic = too shy  
ColdBacon: pancreatic = twat  
saint and: so you're drinking all day then?  
ColdBacon: I'm sleeping in 5 minutes  
saint and: ok I have to go get some work done  
saint and: fuck  
(saint and left)



pancreatic anonymity: If they only knew what I think of life.

pancreatic anonymity: I want everything. I'll try everything.

pancreatic anonymity: I know plenty of others have died without managing to do that.

pancreatic anonymity: If life disappoints me, so be it.

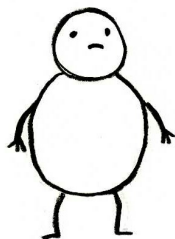
pancreatic anonymity: I will sin just for sin's sake.

That's the moment you'll find God.

From *The Guide*:

The parsnip is similar to the common carrot, but it is white in color and much more fibrous than its orange cousin. It is also far more reluctant to reveal its secrets and will do so only after being cooked (boiled or baked) for a period of at least one half of an hour. The man who chooses to eat raw parsnips almost certainly bears further investigation.





“When I go to a live performance I can hear pieces played in new ways with different emphasis—keeps it fresh.”

“Your recording will have 22% fewer errors.”

“When I go, my attention is force focused. At home I wouldn’t be able to sit through an entire piece without getting up for a snack, and without that I’d lose the greater meaning of the whole.”

“Baby, you wouldn’t know the greater meaning of the whole if it stood up and tiddled on your face.”

“When I go I’ll hear other pieces on the program, modern pieces I’ve never heard before.”

“And never will again.”

“But I can say I went. It’ll show my devotion to the piece.”

“Somehow I think the piece will manage.”

“What about the hot Asian chick sitting next to me?”

“You’re married for Chrissake.”

“So?”

“She’s married.”

“S—”

“No...and besides, you can make it much louder at home.”

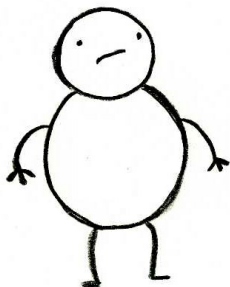
“Sit closer?”

“Costs more. Look, at home we can drink wine while we’re listening.”

“Auslese?”

“Spätlese.”

“Fine.”



Remember when you were a kid, and bugs were like, really important. Come to think of it, everything was really important when you were a kid. But bugs were definitely near the top. Scarcely a day went by you didn't think about a snake, a spider...an asp! But there were good bugs too. You used to sit in the dry dirt in the playground and watch ant lions make their little funnels, about the size of a nickel. I think the idea was for an ant to come wandering by and fall in. Oh, and remember when you would poke at a pill bug, and it would curl up into a little ball.<sup>7</sup>—And remember whenever someone would spot one of those stink bugs, the whole playground would be in a frenzy. Now, when you think of bugs, you think of roaches, mosquitoes, ants—a termite. Bad bugs. You see them as a nuisance to be either squished, sprayed or ignored. Me too, except I have to admit whenever I see one of those stink bugs, I do still pretty much run screaming.

**petrichor** \ peh-trə-kōr \ *n* [NL, fm. Gk *petros*, stone + *ichor*] (1964) **1** : the scent of rain on dry earth **a** : a pleasant and refreshing scent **b** : one of the most frequently cited “favourite smells.” **c** : the third most frequently cited “favourite smell.” **2** : a yellow organic oil which retards seed germination and early plant growth. **3** : a perfume made by collecting petrichor oil and geosmin



All attempts to synthesize petrichor in the lab have failed.

You may have noticed the web has pictures. Some have objected. How can the web think of itself as a serious literary medium with so many pictures? Ah, but does an author not paint a picture with his words? Herman Melville made some of the finest sketches of sperm whales known to man. James Joyce drafted blueprints for city planners in Dublin. Not a single detail was lacking, no manhole missing, no soft, brown liver unrewarded for a lifetime of abuse. And J.K. Rowling does bas-relief for the masses. So let the web have its pictures, in particular the little white kitty that pirouettes or the fire hydrant that wiggles. Let's see your precious "illustrations" do that. Oh, and the mailbox that opens to let in the floating letter. Sensational. Nothing wrong with animated GIF's.

And what about sounds? Perhaps the author (web artist) has carefully chosen some music to enhance the browsing experience. (Children will learn to browse at an early age.) I once saw a mostly photography exhibit by Nic Nicosia. He had lots of quality snaps on the wall, but he also had some looping videos as part of the exhibit. (Contemporary art has been making people think for at least twenty years.) The music leaking from the video installations made for effective (if accidental) soundtracks to the nearby pictures. Even now it's hard to remember those photographs without remembering that music, or at least the way it made me feel. Later, I had a similar experience at a Viktor Schreckengost exhibit at the Cleveland Museum of Fine Art. The famous Jazz Bowl (which I had never heard of) made so much more sense with Duke Ellington percolating from unseen speakers. Me, the Duke, and that bowl shared something that day, which most people cannot even imagine (unless they *click here*).

So I walked out of the exhibit to find, of all things, one Viktor Schreckengost, age ninety-four, sitting at a table with his daughter. In front of the table was a line of people who had all been waiting—a lot longer than I—to meet him. So I did what any reasonable person would have done: I bought a one-dollar post card of a Jazz Bowl and got in line. When my turn came, I pushed my card in front of him, and politely asked if he would sign it. He signed it. But then, without warning, he looked up at me and smiled, "Did you like the exhibit?" [internal scream sponsored by Warner Bros.] Oh my god! What do you say when the Pope asks you how you



liked the sermon? And you can't pretend to speak another language either, cause he'll damn well know it. It seemed to me I had two main options. "Yeah, your work is pretty good" or "oh yes, I've been your biggest fan for—at least two hours." I chose "stand there like an idiot for a few seconds" until finally, my mouth just said, "yes." And everyone seemed satisfied, or relieved, sort of like when someone asks a baseball player if he's already thinking about the next series, and then he says he's just going to "take it one game at a time"—collective sigh of relief across T.V. viewing audience. Or maybe it's "in God's hands now." Hey, can my day at work tomorrow be in God's hands? That would really take a load off. Listen, we're going to pay you five million dollars a year, and all you have to do is learn these two mind numbing phrases. And coaches—they're even worse. They not only say the shit, but then, before you can even say anything, they come out with, "Well, they may be clichés, but there's a reason for it." Dammit. Hieronymo's foiled again—by the skipper.

So now let us consider a web site put out by a wine tasting social club called the Wine Boobs. Essentially they would get together in a group of about five or six people each bringing a bottle of wine in a brown paper bag so as to conceal its identity. They would then taste the wines and reverse transcribe their evening as if into a screenplay, which you could then read.

In the early days, they were youthful and optimistic, poor and clever, and living in Philadelphia. They got downright excited to rediscover the glory of Gewürztraminer [WB #9] and grieved for the overlooked complexities of a twenty-year-old Barbaresco [WB #15]. Their fun and silliness knew no limits. Parmigiano was grated so vigorously so as to be "shrapnel" hitting people in the face, and the qualities of a wine were more than once compared to those of the opposite sex, and vice versa.

Now for the most part, the Boobs had never flirted with pictures or sounds, instead using only the Roman alphabet (God's alphabet) to convey their wisdom and humor. In fact, they even once described the music their protagonists heard during the tasting, but of course, no real sound. Yet this time, without warning, they used a picture. I mean, they *really* used a picture. And I thought to myself, "Why the hell not? Just why the hell not?" And would it have been the same had they just written

[screen fills up with giant picture of blue sun—and it's magnificent]?

But in this final essay [WB #23], the first after a very long hiatus, one senses the post-power chord disenchantment of a rock band who've accidentally peaked, and it's far too soon. And now we've finally had the fifty-year-old Bordeaux and the thirty year old Burgundy and the Sauternes we were saving for some other narrative. It's over, and nothing is changed. The meal is ended, she is bored and tired. Not even another cigarette can help. Should we try to regain that sense of anticipation we had in the beginning, when we only dreamed of having the great wine? Can we ever again be satisfied with twelve-dollar Gewürz because "it has so much going on"? And worst of all, as hinted at by the image of "the big blue sun," could there be something more important than our wines? Than ourselves? Our bitches? Where do we go from here? Where go? Where? Wallala leialala. Dalran. Damyata. Syrah?



Hermann Hospital

Texas Medical Center / Houston, Texas 77030-1501  
Phone 704-4000



Addressograph

Patient:

Name:

Date:

1/19/00

Address:

LABEL WITH NAME AND STRENGTH OF DRUG

R

CRACK ROCK

1 rock initiated 9/1

Disp: 1 crack pipe & 10 rocks

Refill

3

Times

In

Months

Dispense As Written

Product Selection Permitted

DEA NUMBER

430377 (9 / 89)

Dear Microsoft,

I am writing to inquire about the possibility of giving your company \$100 as a token of appreciation for all you have done for me, and for the world of computing. It is my hope and firm belief that this money will be put to good use in the creation and development of new technologies.

Yours Sincerely,  
P. Diddy

From a Review of Monitors on ZDNet.

“The only problem we encountered was when we had the c910 sitting about two inches away from a 14-inch television. The pair was connected to a Matrox Marvel G400-TV card, and the c910 suffered some noticeable waving when the television was running. Moving them about 8-inches apart cured the problem.”

*Ah, how could I forget the all-important, “what happens when I shove my television two inches away from the computer monitor” test.*



*Hint from the future: this will not be the last time you see this picture.*

## Bowling For Columbine (2002)

### Michael Moore

Guns are bad. According to Michael Moore, bullets are even worse. The main premise of *Bowling for Columbine* is that if we could take all the bullets and turn them into little chocolates and give them to Michael Moore, then he would be happy. But we don't because we're a bunch of assholes who want to hoard all the chocolate for ourselves. There are about 11,000 gun deaths annually in the United States (five involving disputes of or relating to chocolate). This compares to roughly one hundred (two chocolate) in each of the major European countries (not counting Belgium). Okay, wow. So gun violence is a huge problem in this country, second only to Michael Moore and candlepin bowling. *Bowling For Concubine* uses the power of documentary to make you sympathize with the characters it wants you to and despise those whom Moore thinks stole his Godiva four-pack. Somebody stole it. They had to have. It's gone, isn't it?

From a stylistic point of view, Moore's attacks often seem mean-spirited and out of touch. When he goes after the Kmart employees, it's like he's attacking Peggy from *King of the Hill*. I mean come on, she just works there. You end up feeling as sorry for Kmart as anyone else. Although I must say it was inspiring to see Kmart promise to stop selling ammunition to nine-year-olds by 2027.

The film goes to some trouble to prove once and for all Charlton Heston is a gun-toting racist. Thank God we finally cleared that one up. But Moore cheapens his victory by running up the score on an opponent who obviously suffers from Alzheimer's. The greatest threat Charlton Heston currently poses is to the world of interior design. My Lord, that awful ranch house with those sliding glass doors and faux rock walls. I wonder where he keeps all his guns. I didn't see any. Did you see any? Moore should realize a good case will make itself without having to resort to

cheap tricks like those subliminal images of nuns being spanked by men that looked just like—oh my—wait a minute. Is there nothing Limbaugh won't try?

As a persuasion film, *Bowling* suffers from some very shaky analysis. The film seems bewildered as to how Canadians could have as many guns as we do but no murder. Hello. They have no crime. They have no people! If we had two acres a person, I seriously doubt we would have any crime either. In order to kill someone, you first have to be able to find someone. They'd have to take a two-day dog sled, and by the time they got there, they'd be too damn cold to remember why the hell they were going there in the first place. The intended victim would offer them a shot of warm whiskey and a nice slab of elk meat. Then they'd agree to do it again next year. Murder rate zero. Temperature zero. Michael Moore overrated. The film should have given us the statistics for violent crimes in general, and you would probably see that Americans have killed more Canadians than the current total living there today.

*Bowling For Columbine* is also meandering and incoherent. It opens one conspirist thread after another without following any of them to their semi-logical conclusions. Moore is like a small child trying to get what he wants. If one approach isn't working, try another, then another. Just keep trying. It's the NRA's fault. Well then it's the government's fault. Okay, it's Kmart's fault. Fine. Dick Clark is obviously behind everything.

But Moore does offer many great insights of the kind only film can provide. For example, I now know our government always supports the wrong side in 'those war-torn countries' as conclusively proven by video montage. While I have no trouble trusting politicians to screw up even the simplest of tasks—installing the right dictators, bombing pharmaceutical plants, vinyl siding—I seriously doubt that is why Dylan Harris and James Klebold shot a bunch of their classmates. They shot them because they were two very disturbed people—oh, and because of Grand Theft Auto. But disturbed children is hardly a new occurrence. How they were able to get the guns so easily is definitely *the* good question. But the NRA is what it is, and everyone knows it. Exposing the NRA is about as enlightening as a speech on the evils of terrorism. A perhaps fresher target would be Capitol Hill. Obviously, any legislator who votes in favor of assault weapons is a complete assrack. Clark,



Heston and, for that matter, Kmart are simply playing by the rules which weaker men have created. Moore should have found those men and questioned them individually—each and every one.

In the final segment, Moore does well to point out that the reason a six-year-old was able to get a gun and bring it to school and shoot another six-year-old is because his home life was screwed up. His mother had been evicted and the two of them were staying with the boy's uncle. The uncle was irresponsible to leave a gun lying around the house. The gun, however, was not an AK-47. Canadians, even at this very moment, are leaving their doors unlocked. The last time the uncle left his door unlocked, his T.V. and \$400 were stolen. \$400 is how much the uncle makes in a week. He doesn't give a damn about the NRA. He just doesn't want his T.V. stolen again, or at least he wants to shoot someone for trying. He was stupid to leave the gun unlocked with the child at home. But wait. Why are we leaving a six-year-old alone at all?

The film seems to want to blame the child's problems on the fact that his mother was enrolled in Welfare to Work programs. Moore even tries to blame Dick Clark because his business associate happened to be involved with Welfare to Work. Now I enjoy seeing Dick Clark made uncomfortable as much as the next guy, but welfare policies are no more to blame than Hollywood or my indiscriminate sexual binges for the tragic number of single-parent families living in poverty. Perhaps the next time the mother is evicted, she can stay at Michael Moore's house, where the fridge is well stocked, laughs come by the barrel, and the guns are safely in the hands of Moore's bodyguards.

I do not have a problem with Michael Moore holding strong political views and expressing them through film. I do have a problem with Moore hijacking the documentary film style to gain instant trust, and then steering it to a place where logic and fair play are nowhere to be found. At least Oliver Stone bothers to craft his fantasies into a bad narrative.

**glib** \ 'glib \ *adj* **glib-ber**; **glib-best** [prob. modif. of LG *glibberig* slippery] (1599) **1** *archaic* : SMOOTH, SLIPPERY **2 a** : marked by ease and informality : NONCHALANT **b** : showing little forethought or preparation : OFFHAND < ~ answers > **c** : lacking depth and substance : SUPERFICIAL, PAT < mouthing ~ solutions to knotty problems > **3** : marked by ease and fluency in speaking or writing often to the point of being insincere or deceitful - **glib-ly** *adv* - **glib-ness** *n*

## Happiness (1997)

### Todd Solondz

Before I begin this review, let me preface it by saying I have since been instructed that *Happiness* was not as bad as I had originally thought and that my feeling sick must have been for some other reason, and not because of this film. I have been made to understand that the movie was actually very thoughtful and may have even won an award at a very prominent film festival, or something.

*Happiness* is a multi-plot story about several degenerates with few redeeming traits. (Note: I have since learned that redeeming traits are an unnecessary plot convention employed mainly by bad American film directors.) Is this bold and frank portrayal of normally un-portrayed subject matter like pedophilia and male ejaculation? Or is this shock for shock's sake? (Note: I have since learned that it was the former.) Although the film does broaden your awareness of these issues, this is not why I go to the movies. (Note: This should, in fact, be why I go to the movies.)

Moreover, I question the accuracy of these portrayals. My experience as a dysfunctional individual has been nothing like this movie. In fact, I would rather sit through the entire *English Patient* than watch fifteen minutes of this movie. At least *The English Patient* had beautiful computer-generated scenery and land mines. In fact, I would even watch half an hour of college sexual harassment prevention videos instead of this movie. (Note: There is nothing funny about college.) The funniest thing I remember about this movie is when that Russian woman comes in and says, "You teach Vlad?" and then slaps that brunette in the face. That was great. No, but seriously, this is an effectful film, I just don't want Todd Solondz to make any more of them.

## Personal Velocity (2003)

### Rebecca Miller

*Personal Velocity* provides us with an opportunity to discuss the difference between film directors who are strictly film school and writers who take to directing because they want a new audience. Of course, I don't officially *know* why Rebecca Miller has decided to get into films, but clearly she is a writer first, or at least, she writes things. But we'll get back to this.

*Personal Velocity*, a film by Rebecca Miller, is divided into three separate stories, which don't seem at all integrated. And if they are, I didn't get it. Having three small films instead of one big one prevents Miller from using the full hour and a half to develop a set of characters and build on contiguous themes. Because of this, there can be no unearthly payoff at the end like *Andrei Rublev*. But *Rublev* is three fucking hours long!?! My God man! You'd need an ass of steel! And hold on, there's plenty of very short films with great momentum, great payoffs. *Whacked!* by Rolf Gibbs, for example, is only five minutes—five minutes to total filmgasm.

So maybe length really isn't the problem. Maybe it's how you use that time to tell the story. Miller, for her part, tries to cram too much of her precious story into each little featurette, which makes it seem forced. And there are times when the writing is painfully self-satisfied and self-aware.<sup>8</sup>—A screenplay (especially voice-over narrative) should not call attention to itself in a way that makes what's actually happening on the screen seem only secondary. And it probably shouldn't be supremely literary either. Some of the best lines of all time are from the most over-the-top films like *Dune*, *Once Upon A Time in The West* and *Blade Runner*. Most if not all of the lines in *Dune* would be laughable if they weren't frigging great. But they *are* great. With the music playing, David Bowie lyrics blow Billy Collins away. Turn off the music, and Eliot moves out in front. The only person who can get away with building a movie around purely self-absorbed cleverness is Woody Allen, and even then, not everyone agrees (talk about your *Consenting Adults*). Perhaps the best explanation comes from an email a friend sent me on the subject of using

pictures to illustrate a text.

“So you can do that. Do it! Did I say you shouldn't? But in contemporary art (many paintings use words, or fragments: Basquiat, Twombly are two names that come to mind immediately) the words are used almost as brush strokes (same with Edo art, to a degree) in that they're integrated into a larger whole. I \_don't think it works to have a painting or drawing which somehow illustrates what the words do — as if the words were the whole and the painting were a part. This makes the painting (or whatever) into words, and that somehow seems to be going in the wrong direction.” — T Lake

That said, *Personal Velocity* is worth seeing and not just because of my review of it. The stories are cliché and contrived, but they're good cliché and contrived. And in spite of what *some* unforgiving critics are saying, Miller is actually not a horrible directrix. She's innovative and has a delicate, misty touch. In fact, I would actually like to see her quit writing and pursue only films. And then I would like to date her. <sup>9</sup>

## Interview with Wes Anderson (2000)

Onion: What's your approach to integrating songs into your films? They play a key role in both *Bottle Rocket* and *Rushmore*.

WA: The songs are always a part of... That's just always key stuff for me. Some of the ideas are kind of inspired by the songs, and I always want to use music to tell the story and give the movie a certain kind of mood. That's always essential to me.

O: Do you ever hear a song and think, "I have to have that in a movie?"

WA: Yeah, I do all the time.

O: What's an example of that, a case where a song actually made it in?

WA: Every single song that's in *Rushmore*.

O: Really?

WA: Yeah. They're all songs where... With *Rushmore*, I originally had songs I said I wanted to use in the movie, and then I did research in this certain area of music, British Invasion music. I would just listen to songs and I'd know what should go in there. There's a song by the Stones called "I Am Waiting," which I was listening to a lot when I was driving around, and suddenly I realized a certain part of the story... That whole part of the story evolved out of the feeling that that song has. It's like it was right for a certain part of the story.

CB: So it was right for a certain part of the story?

O: Ignore him. So what drew you to the British Invasion in particular? Was it the school uniforms?

WA: Um, yeah. Sort of that feeling. That combined with the teenage-angst stuff.

CB: What about Coldplay? How come you didn't use Coldplay in *Rushmore*? *Igby Goes Down* had Coldplay. They're really popular.

WA:

CB: Songs played a key role in both *Bottle Rocket* and *Rushmore*.

O: Some people would say that video is providing that.

CB: What are we talking about?

O: But I think *Bottle Rocket* is fairly rare as a movie that truly has found a second life on video.

WA: Video definitely provides that.

CB: Wait, what happened to *Bottle Rocket*?

WA: The sad thing is that watching a movie on video is not the same. And also, when something is discovered by people in movie theaters, it's discovered by people who are all together, and there's a sort of feeling of an event about it. And when it's on video, it's like something is being discovered in the library or something. It's like having a second life in public libraries. It's just like individuals, and it's less of a... We can't participate in it the same way.

CB: And this is especially interesting because did you know that two years from now, Landmark is going to show *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, which is one of your favorite movies, on the big screen, at midnight? It's going to kick ass.

O: Listen—

CB: So hey, back in high school did you ever used to sneak out of class and hit Andre's Tea Room right next to that Baskin Robbins? That place kicked ass. I think the Baskin Robbins is gone, though. I think it's a Krispy Kreme or something now.

WA: Umm.

CB: Are you saying umm or mmm?

WA:

O: Does it bother you to be potentially pegged as the head of a new movement? I know there's a *Film Comment* article that mentions you as part of something called "the new sincerity." Do you pay attention to any of that?

WA: Well, I don't know. Who else is in "the new sincerity"?

O: I don't know. I think it's just you at this point, and they're waiting for people to line up behind you.

WA: Oh, well, I'm not waiting for that line to form, and I don't expect it to. I don't know if there's ever going to be much of a movement in that direction. It sounds like one that could be boring for a lot of people.

O: Why is that?

WA: I don't know. That's probably just some glib answer. Movement? I would be into a movement. But I'm really not aware of any movement.

O: So you don't plan to draft a Dogme 95-style statement.

WA: It sounds like fun, but it also sounds like something I would be more likely to do when I was 14 years old.

CB: Are you saying Dogme 95 sucks? Because I've never heard of it. I did see *Dogma*, though, with Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. That sucked, didn't it? Would you say you could have made a better movie when you 14?

CB: Cool.



## **The Fast Runner Atanarjuat (2002)**

**Inuit Indian Director** (need to actually put guy's name here)

Finally, the Inuit Indians have gotten off their asses and given us the great film we deserve. It's definitely worth seeing. It's epic for the most part, but with a sense of intimacy, which is no doubt helped along by the up-close, hand-held filming methods. It's compelling, and if you take a big wizz before starting, you won't even notice that it's roughly—it's three frigging hours long! This movie boasts a number of items not commonly seen in Los Angeles including seal oil, genuine walrus tusks, and people snarfing raw caribou meat. Well...I *said* commonly.

## **Mystic Masseur (2002)**

It's a nice little story.

**Parrot:** That's it? That's your review?

Uh.

**Parrot:** Come on. You've got to be kidding. I mean you must have something more than that?

Nice colors.

**Parrot:** Oh, please.

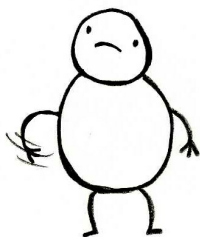
Well shot?

**Parrot:** I'm outta here.

## **Dogma** (1999)

This little film defines mediocrity. I only review it because you liked it. Chris Rock and Jay and Silent Bob are entertaining as usual, but they are better appreciated in their own context (e.g. *Clerks*, or in the case of Mr. Rock, standup comedy). Alan Rickman is always good, but his part is minimal. Linda Fiorentino is hot, but this isn't porn, so who cares. Matt Damon has an abundance of boyish charm, but his screen presence is consistently marred by Ben Affleck, who cannot even be discussed seriously as a person, let alone an actor.





## **Blackhawk Down** (2001)

### **Ridley Scott**

I don't have to tell you why I see certain movies. However, I will describe my reaction to Black Hawk Down from a purely military perspective. Now, you must realize my military background is sweeping. I have logged over one hundred hours on CNN spanning two Gulf Wars and that time Donald Rumsfeld actually changed his mind—about which flavor gelato he liked best. I have also had extensive experience with Risk and Stratego growing up, and I once even read the entire back of the jewel case for the DVD of Patton. So I am obviously more than qualified to comment on whether Black Hawk Down was realistic. Yes, I think it seemed pretty realistic, didn't you? And it didn't preach like it might have, thank God. The production value was high, and the actors were all convincing. The sense of chaos and desperation was well done. But if you really want to see some carnage, try watching an uncensored session of the Singapore parliament. I'm serious. There's chair throwing, kicking, scratching, biting and spitting (and spitting's not even legal!). In summary, Somalia sucked. Let's not do that again.

## Lost In Translation (2003)

### Sofia Coppola

Sofia Coppola's new film *Lost In Translation* has a lot going for it. It has Bill Murray, Scarlett Johansson,<sup>[10](#)</sup> and more quirky Japanese people than you can shake a Tokyo ball at. LIT offers American audiences a fresh and unparalleled look into modern Japanese culture. Where else can you hang with young Asian chicks in Cossack hats besides...um...Budweiser ads? Then there's the not-young Asian chicks not in Cossack hats. I for one was fascinated to learn that Japanese prostitutes dress exactly the same as Japanese women execs, who are mainly used for reception lines and holding clipboards. Amazing! Of course Peter Greenaway's *Eight And A Half Women* already broke this story, including the deal with loneliness, pre and post mid-life crisis, and especially the deal with pachinko. But that's okay because Greenaway's a complete nut job, and besides, he left out the Simon and Garfunkel-tinged hotel bars, positive karaoke, Japanese T.V. ad directors (oh, they have 'em), the So Johnny Carson of Japan (see *Telemundo*), busy intersections, oversections and tiny green cabs. At least Sofia Coppola still has her sanity. And that is something.

Wait—we could start over. *Lost In Translation*: It's a decent film, and it doesn't reek like *Personal Velocity*. Astute audiences will note the film takes place in modern day Tokyo (formerly Edo, established 16c). Cultural nuances well shown if at times with no clear purpose. Twenty seconds hopping on steps at the Daitoku-ji: four thousand dollars. Thirty seconds of flower arranging footage: six thousand dollars. Fifteen seconds at the Saiho-ji: two thousand dollars. Not having to use your brain while watching a nice little movie about nothing: priceless. I would like to simply accuse LIT of creeping Orientalism and be done with it. But the thing is Coppola truly has nothing against Japan. Her superficiality extends pleasantly to all she touches. The relationship between our little blonde girl and her photographer (was he even an actor?) husband was as real and credible as—nothing, or at least not much. Maybe if Coppola had actually inserted the beginning of *Contempt*, instead of just copying it, we could have cared about her troubled marriage.

Or perhaps if Coppola didn't see herself in young Scarlett Johansson, she would have cast a less dreamy, but more engaging actress. Hollywood seems to think Johansson is the thing next to butter, but I just don't see it. I put her acting somewhere between Klonopin and trazadone. On the other hand, Bill Murray is acting even when he's not, just like Al Pacino always tells the truth even when he lies. That's because he's old and has dark hair. Johansson is not old and has blonde hair. She has no scar. She doesn't even have an ass yet. So who cares about her pink underwear? Don't get me wrong. Johansson is very pretty, but I can't decide if I want to sleep with her or give her some energy bars. And then sleep with her.

As for the story itself, well, it really is quite phony, isn't it? Of course it's Coppola's reaction to growing up and being hit on—or perhaps not being hit on enough—by her father's Hollywood friends. Let's not even mention the atrocious phone conversations between Bob and his stale stateside wife. If the goal was to show us why Bob would consider leaving his wife, shouldn't it also have shown us why he might not? Instead, we're given a cold caricature whom *this* man would never have married in the first place. Or maybe he just couldn't bring himself to leave his family? Okay, fine. He still could have slept with Charlotte though—and her foot. But we're obviously supposed to be heartwarmed that Bob wants to do the right thing. But who said not sleeping with Charlotte is the right thing? I did not say that. Or maybe it has nothing to do with any of that. Maybe he has ED? Or VD? Maybe that's what he whispered in her ear that made her smile. "I was born, but..." The point is the whole thing just doesn't add up. None of the characters had any inner struggle to explain their decisions or make us care about them as humans being or make us even think at all. Being half asleep from jet lag does not count as inner struggle.

You're welcome to disagree, but it really is quite impossible to develop an internally consistent response to the film's characters. Bob is annoyed at the antics of the "Johnny Carson of Japan" show. But he signed up for it! He went to Japan, for money. He placed himself in the situation like a reviewer who knowingly goes to a dumb film and then whines about it.

"What are you laughing at? They're your clothes, motherfucker!" Sure Bob's clever



and amusing, but he's also a jerk. As such we cannot fully sympathize with him. But then this conflicts with the earlier scene where we are entirely on his side as he talks to his weenie of a wife? It's the same with Charlotte. One minute we're supposed to sympathize with her (phone conversation with her disinterested friend, her neglecting husband, the world is conspiring to make her bored). The next minute she's waxing sour about some blonde actress friend of hers and basically just being an all-around wet blanket. The net result is we stop giving a shit.

Stylistically, the film's selling point is its serious jet lag melancholy and ennui pacing. The restaurant scene after Bill's indiscretion was slow and sweet like a Maggie Cheung Tony Leung longing contest. And it definitely captured the "morning after" "what else is there to say?" "Sunday homework" feeling. Sunday homework—ugh. But all of this languidity and missed romance is just a shadow of Wong Kar-Wai and Jia Zhangke, who are both real directors.

So what about the humor? Murray is exactly as charming and witty as you thought he was, just like he'd be if I filmed him right now in his bathtub in Brentwood with my camcorder. Whatever. It has little in particular to do with Sofia Coppola's screenplay. There's even a cameo by Not Cameron Diaz presumably to allow for some hot Hollywood satire. But please make it funny. *Lost's* satire is unfortunately the fill-up-the-screen-waste-my-time variety—far from the maddening *Being John Malkovich* and nowhere near as punishing as the low blows of *Ghost World*. "We both have dogs. We both live in L.A." Yes. Try watching Paris Hilton for ten seconds.

Here's an example of Coppola's failure to actuate the signal. We're supposed to think our girl is smart while Not Cameron Diaz is *Charlie's Angels* dumb because she's going under the name Evelyn Waugh, who was actually a male author using a female pen name. But I actually thought that was clever of her. Either way, it just seemed like an excuse for Coppola to show off her mad literary skillz. Here, Sofia and Co. have simply made an honest miscalculation. This sort of thing has cropped up before and it's always been due to human error. I prescribe *Spirited Away*.

October 30, 2003

My therapist says I should consider why I exhibit such hostility toward young female movie starlets. I think he's just jealous. He must be because he doesn't prescribe me nearly enough medication.

My girlfriend bought me a new pair of pants. She said I needed them. I needed six of them she said, but she bought me just one. I asked my therapist what he thought of my girlfriend's actions. He said she had excellent taste, in pants. I told him it's because her therapist gives her more medications than I get. He said he would think about it.

My girlfriend thinks it would be better for our relationship if she cheated on me. I asked my therapist what he would do about that. He said he would think about it.

My girlfriend says I should grow a beard, and move to Alaska. I said what if I just didn't shave for two days and slept in the bathroom. She said that would be fine.

My dad says all my movie reviews are bad. "Mean?" I said. "No, bad," he said. My dad's never been to a therapist.

My mom wants to know what she did wrong. So does my therapist. I told her I'd give him her number.

My editor wants to know why I keep making up words in my reviews. He says I'm making his life miserable. I said he's not the only one.

I got a call the other day from Francis Ford Coppola's lawyer. Apparently, Alaska's not so bad if I go right now. I told my girlfriend where she could reach me in Alaska. "Oh honey, you shouldn't have."

Yours Truthfully,  
Cold Bacon (Juneau)

Someone has joined your mailing list!

Someone has left your mailing list!

I have made new and lasting friendships with someone I met on the internet

1. Many times.
2. A few times.
3. One or two times.
4. I have, but the Lord keeps taking them away.
5. Never.

Your Vote Is Important

If YES, then

1. It was on purpose, because I'm in control.
2. It was by chance. Perhaps I was on some forum or something.
3. It was work-related. Yes, work-related.
4. It was because they had a website or I had a website.
5. More than one answer (see next question).

Your Vote Is Important

If you chose 5 above, it was

1. 1 and 2.
2. 1 and 3.
3. How could it not be 1 if it's 4?
4. 1 or 2 and 4 but not 3.
5. My brain is swelling, someone needs to drill a hole in it.

Your Vote Is Important

I have actually hung out with someone I met on the internet

1. Many times.
2. A few times.
3. One or two times.
4. Never, but I totally would.
5. Never.

Your Vote Is Important

If No, then it's because

1. Meeting people on the internet is cheesy.
2. Meeting people on the internet is dangerous.
3. I just don't spend enough time online.
4. My wife/girlfriend would divorce/spit on me.
5. I'm too shy, ugly, tired, happy, etc.

Your Vote Is Important

Meeting people on the internet allows you to make friends who have more in common.

1. So true.
2. True, but to deny the importance of physical chemistry is folly.
3. What he said.
4. True, but I can't afford the ticket.
5. The only person I want to meet is Ben Affleck.

Your Vote Is Important

Because of email, the number of friends I keep in touch with is

1. A ton more.
2. A lot more.
3. A little more.
4. The same.
5. Many fewer, what is my problem?

Your Vote Is Important

I have had major miscommunications with friends on email

1. Frequently because I can't express myself for shit; can you help me?
2. Frequently. I express myself fine; my friends are just dumb.
3. Frequently, but that's okay.
4. Would have happened anyway. Some people need to misunderstand.
5. Never.

Your Vote Is Important

**Akira (1988) Entertaining. Action packed. Deep.**

## **Katsuhiro Ôtomo**

Part of what makes a great action movie is not knowing what the hell is going to happen. Unfortunately, most American action films fall into one of a limited number of plot patterns, of which there are about five or six. The good guy has to live. Has to get the girl. The world must be saved before bedtime. And so forth. Good films overcome this predictability by sheer quality, by making you forget you're watching a movie. You've seen *Star Wars* twenty times, but your heart still beats a little faster when Darth Vader comes up on Luke in his supercharged tie fighter. You get so caught up with the action you forget you already know what's going to happen. That's all for American films. Japanese films never signed this treaty. In fact, Japanese films do just about whatever the fuck they want. Enter *Akira*. The beauty of watching *Akira*, at least, for me, as a dumb American, is I really have absolutely no idea what's going to happen. And this is *after* seeing it ten or so times. The story is just that whack. One, therefore, wonders if watching more Japanese animation would dampen or enhance my excitement over *Akira*. And one does not know the answer, yet.

What I can say is that compared to the more recent Japanese hit, *Spirited Away*, *Akira* seems to have the more meditative soul with rich musical panaways and a more intense portrayal of character motivation. People die in this movie! And the flashback sequences regarding the relationship between the children are as exquisite.

Akira! // Hanada!



From: Sarita

Date: Thursday, July 17, 2003 5:42 AM

Subject: Re: Re:

i just listened to the stereolab cds you sent and one of them is non stereolab absolute shite until around track 6. on the other cd you glued two songs together - not sure if theyre like that on the original but no matter, your flippant attitude towards music sharing is hardly appreciated.

## Alice in Wonderland (1951)

### Walt Disney

I haven't seen all the other *old* Disney films, but if this movie is any indication, I need to seriously think about it. This movie is in a galaxy far far away from the *Lion King's* and *Little Mermaid's* of today. Not that those movies aren't great for children and adults who are like children, but this *Alice* movie is really something else. Packed with memorable scenes and a totally off-the-wall script. The last time a cartoon had near this level of animatory wit and flare would be the great cartoons from Warner Brothers in the Chuck Jones/Michael Maltese period. For those of you who've been living under a rock, that means Pepe Le Peu, Road Runner, Foghorn Leghorn and, not least, some choice incarnations of Bugs and Daffy. Of course, everyone knows good cartoons are made for adults, particularly the perceptive ones, who collectively enable certain films to become classics. *Dude, Where's My Car* has not yet achieved this status, but these things take time. If you haven't seen *Alice In Wonderland* and expect to see *The Prince of Egypt* only with Diana Ross instead of Whitney Houston on the soundtrack, think again.

hello there fellow webmaster!

I enjoyed your hemingway bits. you are pretty clever. what are you, a grad student or something? i knew a grad student once. he was pretty smart. i thought your review of gladiator sucked. obviously you don't know anything about roman times. all the fighting was close up - nobody fought at medium range, so there couldn't be any medium range shots. i didn't think that dog did a very good job acting either. i have a dog. he's real smart. when he's hungry, he barks my name - jack! jack! Jack!

jack

ps - i'm not insane. i'm only 10 years old.

## **Children of Paradise (Les Enfants du Paradis) (1945)**

~~Steven Spielberg~~ **Marcel Carné**

One of a kind. Sensational. Best not say more until I've had more time to think about it. For now I should like to concur with Terry Gilliam that the film has a magical quality to the lighting and to its entire atmosphere, which is truly not seen in any other film before or since. I know because I have seen every film ever made. One small point. Remember the scene when Lacenaire tells that other guy to run away to the country, and the guy backs out of the room with that look of fear. It's just like in *A Clockwork Orange*, when Alex cuts what wasn't one of Dim's main cables, and Pete (other droog) gives that terrified look as he backs out of the frame. Awesome! If you liked *C of P*, you should probably definitely see *The Rules of the Game*.

From: Stump7350@aol.com

Date: Wednesday, July 04, 2001 10:39 AM

To: Cold Bacon

Subject: (no subject)

I am writing in reference to the lightly carbonated juice beverage called Wild Fruitz. I am a distributor in upstate N.Y. and am curious to know if you have ever had the pleasure of trying Wild Fruitz? Info on the product can be found at [www.WildFruitz.com](http://www.WildFruitz.com). Thank you for your time, and if you have not had the product I would be more than happy to send some to you.

Thank you,

E.C. Stumpf

ECS, Inc.

## Andrei Rublev (1966)

### Andrei Tarkovsky

*Andrei Rublev* isn't great just because Criterion says it is. *Rublev* has to succeed on the same level as any film. And that includes character development and acting performances. I point you to the chapter on the sacking of Vladimir. The Tatar leader is magnificent. His Mongol face and long, thick Mongol hair. Black of course. And above all, his personality. Here you have a guy, a blood thirsty warlord, whose main hobby consists of raping and pillaging a defenseless village. Rape is a crime of violence. This guy would see that and raise you ten. And yet consider his conversation with the prince:

Tatar: "Strong is your love for your brother. When were you last reconciled with him?"

Prince: "The Metropolitan summoned us to kiss the cross."

Tatar: "When?"

His interest in his companion's story plays very genuine on the screen. Makes him seem more human than the going average. (It's more follow-up than I would have offered.) And this is not some filmic contrivance either—some cleverly inserted bit of dialogue in order to set us up the flashback to the reconciliation scene. No. This guy is the real deal. "It's that Jungian thing." Terrifying, captivating and (you'll see) beautiful. Dennis Hopper may be two of those, but he sure ain't all three. This was five minutes. There are 175 others just as good.

5/27/01 'Pearl Harbor' misses records. (Yahoo)

## **L'Avventura (1961)**

### **Michelangelo Antonioni**

I cannot forget the time I was on a train winding through the low, old mountains between F and S—the dark, green carpet passing slowly by when out of nowhere, down below, almost within reach, was some kind of ruin—and now I can see what used to be a swimming pool. The pool had long since dried up. An empty square. Dusty white stone. Victorious jungle into all the four sides. It was only a matter of time. The last remnant of what must have been. A once great mansion, now left behind.

Oh, but to imagine the days. And nights. The parties. What must have been. Like F. Scott Fitzgerald. The dried-up swimming pool had and always has a particularly strange quality, which along with its remote isolation, evoked in me a kind of melancholy and sense of time lost, which I do not claim to understand. Did you know in the palace in Monaco, they used to have lions and tigers just wandering around the royal garden? Can you imagine?

But this wasn't the only time. A while ago a girlfriend of mine and I went to this tiny old town in actual Mexico. We found this big hotel, which was clearly much larger than it had needed to be for who knows how long. And that's just it. There were entire floors, whose only reason for being there now was that they were there before. There was even a giant, mirrored ballroom with a huge carpet rolled up against the wall covered in dust. On the top level, there was this room with sliding glass doors to a patio balcony all around. The room was the size for one bar, but there were two, separate bars. Underneath cabinet doors flayed open, each with a tangle of pipes and metal like the inside of an exploded tank. There was so much dust.

What I had felt on both these occasions was the spirit of “what once was.” It most often visits us through architecture, but it could also come as just a word or thought, a certain lost gesture—a stamp even. Some call it “The Gold Room” as in “Hi, Lloyd. Been away but now I'm back.” It is in *Scarface* when they visit the palatial



estate in the mountains of C. It's in *The Godfather* whenever they return to S, and there is the little burro, the old ways, which bring such killing power, such hold over our imagination. There is the scene in *Blade Runner* when she says, "We're stupid and we'll die," and Rutger Hauer smiles and says, "No we won't." How big the room, and so baroque with ornate wood and blue light piercing through vaporous haze. So full of toys now left behind. Relics of happiness reminding of what once was and may never be again.

And ruins, of New York, in so many films both made and yet to be made. Any and all ruins. The scene at the end of *In the Mood for Love* when they drop visit Cambodia. Angkor Wat. This picture of Carthage I took on a throw-away camera, which she made us buy. I don't buy those stupid things, though I'm glad we did. And by the way, Carthage was once "all that." And Cuba. The men, their cars, labor of love, colored laundry in the streets, the slow draw of tight tobacco. There, "The Gold Room" is hopping with little nine-year old ballerinas and beautiful Ruben Gonzales, the white hairs on the back of his brown, leathery neck, quick fingers dancing over the black and whites, never staying—all of this in true color.

But *L'Avventura* perhaps the most of all embodies the feeling of what once was. It makes you ask if it is really like this, Southern Italy, could it possibly be this—yes, yes it can. Emptied now but it wasn't always. Once-great city-states and the buildings they left behind. When Sandro is a "tourist" in minute ninety-seven, in the town whose last tourists were a French couple one year before. That town, those heavy buildings, that expansive facade on what must have been some kind of palace. That is exactly how it is. Go there. You'll see.

And then there is the scene where Sandro knocks over the bottle of ink, and the two men are near to fighting, when suddenly, from out of the huge, gray building in which we *know* there is nothing for five hundred years, bubbles forth a stream of small school children, dressed in black. Wha—? Who would have—? And so as it is an epiphany, which stops men from fighting, so too it releases us from our mental stagnation.

There is the jungle-tucked castle of her rich friends with its chessboard marble floors and overhanging passageways like tunnels linking different gerbil cages. The

wide shot of the intricate inner wall in the ancient villa turned police station. The officer asks if its creator could ever have dreamed it would come to this. Antonioni is to be commended, but of course, the preparation had been going on for six hundred years.

When they drive to that old, deserted church and he wonders why it was even built. And even as they are leaving, are gone, the camera just sort of stays and lingers in the alley between the old buildings, the shadow casters. Is Anna there? Could she have just jumped off it all and become a part of a lost little town like this? Likewise, could Sandro ever settle down in marriage? There's no certain activity to suggest any reason for this lingering. Perhaps it is the pull of the woods, like the ocean which may have tempted Anna, "lovely, dark and deep."

To the uninitiated, the first half hour can seem slow, slow, and slow, and even then, there are these beautiful shots, of rocks and water, boats and shacks, doorways, wigs, and even a pescecane.<sup>11</sup>—But truly, this lengthy segment is essential to hypnotize the viewer out of whatever frame he is in and into the right one, which is contemplative and sponge-like. Without this, and there is no way to shortcut it, the viewer would be unable to fully absorb the coming journey. In this way, the film is not unlike other great films. The difference is that Antonioni does a lot of the hypnotizing up front *en bloc* whereas Fellini does it in multiple discrete packets or jump points (a day dream or the arrival of a fantastic character). Tarkovsky uses long meditative segments (the car ride in *Solaris* or the push cart in *Stalker*) to soften the viewer, but then, of course, it never really stops, does it? It just keeps going with every frame. It's weird. No, really.

People have criticized the way Antonioni has characters move into and out of scenes rarely giving them his undivided attention. This is supposed to somehow reflect his ambivalence toward them. And this apparently is the wrong way to feel about your characters. Or what if the buildings, the archways and alleys have themselves become characters? Then why shouldn't the lens stay on them? And will they not still be there long after the film has ended? No reasonable person who is honest with himself can seriously doubt *L'Avventura*.

From: Al Shehorn

To: Cold Bacon

Van Camp beans are half liquid, They are a real disappointment. We have always bought them but I feel after today we will change.

Al

## Manhattan (1979)

### Mr. Allen

This film is great because it floats like a fairy tale but underneath is utterly perverse and yet so insightful it stings. The film covers relationships in the big city well enough that it makes movies like *Your Friends and Neighbors* and shows like *Sex in the City* seem superfluous. Furthermore, *Manhattan* contains two of the most genuinely humorous lines in all of film. Should I tell you them? Should I? I'm going to. I have to. Here I go. They are "I can hardly keep my eye on the meter" and "I'd have said no, but you'd have felt honest." Wow. Now *that's* humor. Oh, you'll see. In any case, I recommend you rent this film some evening and then for a nightcap, follow it up with the six minute Chuck Jones short "High Note" (1960, currently not in print).

For a literature or film class:

1. Discuss the use of melancholy and cynicism in depicting the relationships in *Manhattan* as compared to *Carnal Knowledge* starring Jack Nicholson.
2. Compare the relationship between Isaac and Tracy with that of Humbert Humbert and Lolita in Stanley Kubrick's *Lolita*.
3. Both *Lolita* and *Manhattan* often use light background scores to highlight ironically the perverse behavior of their characters. Recall the happy tune as Humbert Humbert sits in the tub delighted over the accidental death of his wife. Would you consider having intimate relations with a college professor?

6/23/60 Italian Film Crew Distracted by Incredibly Thin Slice of Prosciutto. (AP)

## Kwaidan (1965)

### Masaki Kobayashi

*Kwaidan* is one of the finest assemblages of love, longing, terror and regret I have ever seen. Break it down:

**Story One** (Black Hair): Great story. Compelling. The immediate decision of the samurai to leave his young wife seemed a bit rash. But isn't that always the way?

Eerie-ness: permeating

Sound Suspense: tick tock it doesn't stop

Color: natural

Loss and Longing: unparalleled

Applicability: wide

**Story Two** (The Woman in the Snow): Something is done to a man for no apparent reason. In George Sluizer's *The Vanishing*, a loved one is taken away. In "The Woman in the Snow," a strange secret must be kept, or rather honored. In both films, the man has a choice. He can either let it go, or he can let it torture him to madness. In *The Vanishing*, Rex would have done better to have gotten over his obsession. In *Kwaidan* the man is punished for doing just that. Taken together, the combined lesson is "damned if you do, damned if you don't."

Eerie-ness: sporadic

Sound Suspense: the melody haunts my reverie

Color: epic, blue and amber like jewels in the desert

Loss and Longing: like the body of *Solaris*

Applicability: ghost women are hot as shit

**Story Three** (Hoichi: The Earless): It is interesting to see the gentle delicacy with which the two paternal monks approach the young monk's strange behavior. Quite a contrast to the stereotype of rigid Japanese discipline. Perhaps the message here is

“spare the rod, the child will turn a sort of blueish-gray color.” Whether you believe Hoichi is touched by evil or just led astray, the guy’s certainly on a mission. And it makes things like rain, and even a lack of sight, irrelevant. The two bumbling idiots hired to spy after him (terrified of rain, noises, everything) recall the two peasants in Akira Kurosawa’s *Hidden Fortress* (also known as R2D2 and C3PO). Question: Why do the Heike clan ghosts want to keep hearing the story of their own demise again and again? Look, they lost. They’re dead. They need to get over it. And I wonder if this didn’t inform Miyazaki’s idea for *Spirited Away*, in which the dead spirits are drawn to the bath house night after night in what amounts to a sort of ritualistic celebration of their own deadness. Like I said, get over it, or get scrubbed down nightly by some pre-pubescent hot Japanese chicks—wait—

Eerieness: solid

Biwa Playing: beyond reproach

Color: blue turning gray over you

Mural Scrolling: Andrei Rublific

Applicability: Um, yeah

**Story Four** (In a Cup of Tea): Orange, blue and green. The spiral into madness makes my heart flutter.

Eerieness: delayed

Biwa Playing: choreographic

Color: retained

Mad Laughter: plenty

Applicability: *Ringu*, I love you yeah, yeah, yeah

As you watch each story in *Kwaidan*, you learn certain things. For example, the more attractive the girl, the more likely she is to be from another world. Also, eerie sounds are bad. Storms? Bad. Doors swinging open on their own—you guessed it, bad. And so the way it works is you learn these rules, which the film then uses to build suspense and terror. Almost paradoxically, therefore, the more you know, the more control the film has over you. All horror films do this, only the Japanese do it better.

“What, this? Babies aren’t scared of this! Bring me a baby. I’ll prove it.”

– Master Shake, *Law and Order, Criminal Intent*



## Exit Interview for Kwaidan:

Q: The outdoor sets remind me of the second act in *Full Metal Jacket*. Is that okay?

A: Yes.

Q: I don't get it. How are the four stories interrelated? I thought you—

A: Yes.

Dear Jon,

You know I love you. You know I love the Criterion Collection. If you visited the links segment of my movie site, you would see a virtual declaration of love for Criterion. There is nothing, nothing! I would not do for the dream that is Criterion. But why? Why on God's green earth are *Traffic* and *Chasing Amy* in the collection?

You and I, Jon, we are friends. We go back. Way back. We're practically of one and the same egg. Of course, there is no question you know more about films than I, which is why I'm sure you too are just as gnawed at, probably more gnawed at, by the presence of these bubos. I hope my letter will not seem as insincere as it is unsolicited. If there is anything I can do to help, please! do not hesitate. I place myself fully at your disposal.

Your True and Humble Servant,

*Cold Bacon*

/cb

00:22:48:Arthur sent you?

00:22:50:I came of my own accord.

00:22:53: You honor me.

# Barry Lyndon (1975)

Stanley Kubrick

*Barry Lyndon* is one of the greatest films of all time, and anyone who says otherwise is a deadbeat. Often, the first thing people complain about is the music. They, deadbeats, say it's not really top notch classical music. I couldn't agree more. The song that runs through the Barry meets Lady Lyndon scene reminds me of a slowed-down, heavy-handed outtake from Beethoven's much maligned Triple Concerto. Meanwhile, the music in the bandaged child scene is like a watered-down version of the momentous adagio in Beethoven's Seventh. And this is precisely Kubrick's genius. By using only the heavy outlines of great music—but without the complexity and nuance of the real thing—Stanley he is able to harness the emotional power of it without actually competing for your intellect.<sup>12</sup>—For example, if Kubrick *had* used Beethoven's Emperor Concerto, with its gentle curves and quietly sublime melody, the film would have simply to stop every few minutes and let the girl pass. Likewise, if he had used the not merely emphatic and shallow, but the truly furious, say Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup>, it would have been a mismatch—a huge white Hermitage with soft, raw oysters, a delicate Mosel with confit d'oie. Tragedy—avoided. For the record, I suspect Kubrick is really more of an oysters Bienville;<sup>13</sup>—there is little danger of his flavor being overpowered—by much.

One of Kubrick's themes (yes, only Kubrick has ever done this) is the juxtaposition of social courtesy with underlying ill-will. The card game wherein the Prince of Tübingen's harmful accusations are given with the utmost eloquence and restraint. How he still tips the valet on his way out. Terrific! When Barry is waylaid by the highwayman, Captain Feeney, whose apologies and peculiar manner of speak are utterly delightful. “And now I'm afraid we must get on to the more regrettable stage of our brief acquaintance.”<sup>14</sup>—

Then there is the morality issue of what happens when soldiers go to war and leave their wives and children behind. “And where might Peter's father be? And how long has he been gone?” Compare this with Renoir's *Grand Illusion* where Marechal

finds *his* Austrian lady. Kubrick's treatment is different in that his war widow is not necessarily a widow. This creates a more emotionally challenging scene. So one thing I've been wondering about these farmhouse stopovers is how they ever determine when it's time to move on? I mean, if someone said, "Do you want to stay here and sleep with this hot blonde for a few more days, or would you rather go back out there and be shot?" Well, anyway, moving on—[15](#)—

Characters. People love to complain about Ryan O'Neal being so lame. Yes, he should be. Here, same argument as the music. O'Neal is as eminently not overpowering as Ms. Barenson is beautiful. But it's not as if O'Neal's character goes undeveloped. Recall the pre-boxing jab between Barry and the big red headed guy. Note how Barry takes the line fed him by his comrade, "If you want to vex him, ask him why he wouldn't see her yesterday when she came to the camp" and comes up with "Mr. Tool, why did you hide so when Mrs. Tool came to visit you? You afraid of getting your ears boxed?" And this goes on for several more rounds. Friends, this is character development (or furtherance). Although I will admit O'Neal could have been a bit more likeable.

Other memorable characters include the cowardly Captain Quinn and the Count of Lyndon, whose pig-like squeal is one of the high-pitched-points in the history of cinema. Oh God, those pills spilling all over the table! Finally, Lord Bullingdon could not possibly have been cast or played better. That scene when he crashes the music performance and publicly chastises his father. The awkwardness is exquisite. When Barry grabs Bullingdon by the slack in that glorious green coat and throws him across the room. How time seems to slow down like it must for a big whale in its death thrashes.

Bryan (five years old): "Were you allowed to keep the heads?"

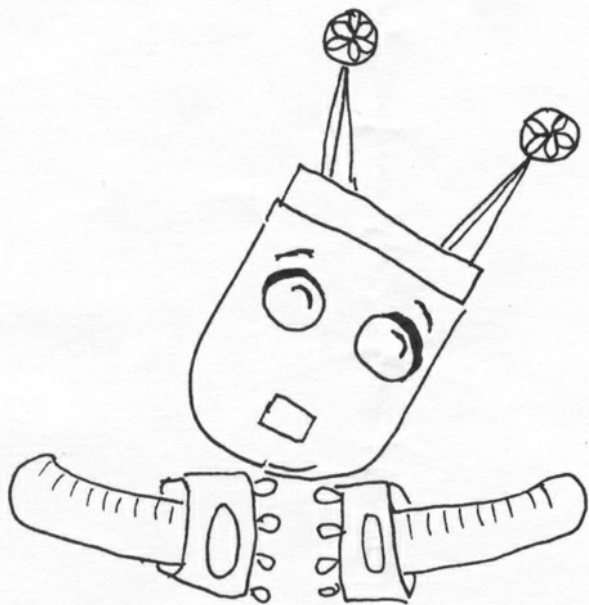
Barry: "No, the heads always become the property of the King."

The film has several "Oh my god, is that what it really was like?" moments. First, there is the battle which "was not recorded in any history books" but which "was memorable enough for those who took part." Here, we have the true sound of rifle fire, more like cracking than popping.[16](#)—And *real death* in the bushes. Whole films

have been spent trying to get across what this scene accomplishes in three minutes.

And it's just as gut sinking to watch Barry's wife suffer his infidelities. How could a man's film make jealousy and betrayal any more real? Equally hard to stomach is the embarrassment and shame Barry will endure in the latter half of the film. Again, critics will say they don't feel anything because he deserves his fate, and because Ryan O'Neal is a bad actor. Don't listen to those people, they never feel anything. "If you want to vex them, ask them if they've ever felt anything."

I liken all attacks on *Barry Lyndon* to the scene when the Austrian magistrate asks, "Was the prince cheated?" It's like, we just saw one of the most eloquent speeches in all of film, and all you care about is if the prince was cheated? Of course he was frigging cheated! That's not the point, man. Pay attention. This film has everything. The traditional Irish music heard early on couldn't have been better were it played by the Chieftains. It was played by the Chieftains. The film even has a botched suicide.



From: Georg Friedrich Handel  
To: Cold Bacon  
Date: Monday, February 23, 2007  
Subject:

Dear Sir,

Fuck you.

- gfh



00:22:54:I think things are best left as they are.

00:22:57:What do you want?

God I love what Syrah can do. Parker gave this wine 86 points and a sympathetic pat on the back, saying, “Sorry little guy, maybe next time, but probably not.” So now it’s 10 years later, and let’s see if Parker was right, or what he was smoking.

It is the year of Our Lord 2005, and a bottle of St. Joseph is opened. The initial attack is indeed an ordinary mouthful of tannin, twig, and an impression of a little wine, which is already on the fade. But wait. Wait. Gurggle. Couple more sips. Let it get to the back of your tongue, the sides of your tongue, your throat as it goes down. Wait. Now! There! *There* is Syrah! Coming through. Never mind the inauspicious start. Never mind the front of your mouth. Concentrate on that deeply non-Australian Syrah flavor as it swells and grows, all and only deep in the back row. Stay in the back row. *There* is Syrah.

So is this St. Joseph that great? I don’t know. I would say it must be 89-90 pts by rights. It’s true, the initial flavor is “mediocre.” The wine is out of balance and will probably always be. But my God, if you drink it right—that is, if you waited 10 years, and if you let it get where it needs to go—to the back row—you could taste real Syrah at its dirty violet best. Wine wasn’t meant to be swashed and spat. And how should I presume?

## **Ran** (1985)

### **Akira Kurosawa**

Should have been called *Run*. I mean, it's like everyone is always running everywhere. This way. That way. I never knew Japan had so many directions. And always with those funny little flag poles sticking out of their shorts, with the colorful banners. In any case, this is one bad-ass epic. It has all the horse riding and frenetic energy of *Seven Samurai*. Add color, take away humor. Other films (I can think of) which are totally devoid of humor and yet still masterpieces include *Raging Bull*, any Bresson, and one or two Bergman films. Shit, even *Wild Strawbs* had a couple of funny lines.

## **Hellraiser (1987)**

### **Clive Barker**

Perhaps the most important philosophical point ever to emerge from the modern horror genre: “It’s not hands that call us. It’s desire.” I mean, how true is that?

## Starship Troopers (1997)

### Paul Verhoeven

I first saw *Starship Troopers* in college, and I thought it was great because it was so over the top. Well, I just saw it again the other day. And this film isn't just over the top. Brother, it *is* the top. *Starship Troopers* is hands down one of the best action/science fiction movies ever. Paul Verhoeven's visual composition, in particular his penchant for color, landscape and object motion is simply uncanny.

Verhoeven (along with writer Ed Neumeier) also has a characteristic way of portraying fascism and violence, which rivals Terry Gilliam at making you feel as though your own guts are being ripped out. Recall the scene in *Robocop* when the "new model" comes into the board meeting and malfunctions. When you realize it's going to kill that guy, and no one can do anything to stop it. Whoa. Now that's a scene that stays with you. In conclusion, *Starship Troopers* rocks, *Rolling Stone Magazine* sucks, and the Academy Awards can kiss my Best Visual After Effects.

Soundtrack by Basil Prokofiev Poledouris (*Conan*).[17](#) -

A.I. (2001)

## Steven Spielberg

It's like a G-rated version of *Blade Runner* with more emphasis on parent-child relationships and an ending that's awfully similar to both *2001* and *Contact*. The movie had some cool stuff in it to be sure, like the seamless and frequent transitions between time (time) and space (specifically air and water). Plus, I'll take any chance I can get to see New York City under 500 feet of water. (Yeah, I said it.) And then there was the whole Dr. Know sequence, which although it was so *Jumanji*, was still pretty cool, at least until they explained it, reminding me of the explanation of the force we got in *Phantom Menace*, which was, of course, wonderful.

The whole thing with "Joe the Gigolo" was cool, and the head music thing was funny the first two or three times. The "Flesh Fair" was nearly cool even if it was so *Running Man*. The teddy bear was ten times more Toblerone than Jar Jar Binks as a sidekick.

All in all, it had lots of cool stuff (the movie just looks great), was emotionally very gripping, and kept you interested most of the time. I just think Kubrick would have done more with it. And as someone else pointed out to me, the ending might have been better if they had just left him there under water. Instead, Spielberg went *Contact* on us. Hopelessly benign aliens are one thing, but hopelessly benign machines? Schwarzenegger would turn over in his grave. Talk about *Sleeping with the Enemy*. "Just give us a piece of bone, a bra, anything, we can rebuild her—and make a Tyrannosaurus rex too, free of charge." That said, it has to be better than *Pearl Harbor*, *Titanic Reloaded* and whatever other fifty million dollar turds are floating around out there now. So you might as well go see it.

From: PaGaLiDeEwAnI4ya\*at\*aol.com

To: cold bacon

Subject: hey

do u think that u have a essay on ciena paradiso... let me knwo asap  
thankssssssssss

Eprops were a way to give “props” to another member. It was really just a way to let someone know you enjoyed their post. A few notes on how eprops worked:

You could give up to two eprops for each post.

There was no limit to the number of eprops you could give out.

You couldn't give yourself eprops.



## Mirror (1974)

### Andrei Tarkovsky

Most films inspire some lengthy explanation of what I saw or what they wanted me to see or what you thought you saw and how your interpretation is indeed valid, though not quite as valid as mine. Well, none of this is possible with *Mirror*. Instead, I will simply catalog some of my reactions to certain things in the film.

1. Hhh....hhh....hhh....hhh-karkhov.
2. Notice how the fence bobs up and down a little under her weight. Foreshadowing of little excitements to come.
3. How the well-bucket also bobs up and down on the rope and how real is the water splashing on the already saturated ground.
4. The juxtaposition of the burning barn and “just rained” as well as the apartment which is both flooding and on fire. Obvious but no less effective for it.
5. The way individual hair fibers become visible in between thicker clumps as they’re pulled apart. This is what is meant by “description of truth.” This is Nabokov’s “square echo” of a car door slamming.
6. The Spanish music as she dances. How it is taken away from us suddenly, painfully, as if by some misanthropic disc jockey (33:33 *Masculin, Féminin*), and then given back to us—in spades.
7. The montage scenes, whether you support the technique or no, are immensely moving to watch.
8. The child of the Stalingrad blockade—the entire scene.
9. Ooops—going back—the reflection of light off the brown wood floor in his Moscow apartment. The plastered walls, deep set window embrasures and curtains hung by a simple metal bar.
10. The visual of the superbright streetlight in the already brightly lit “running

through the street” scene. And also inside the print factory.

And this is just the first thirty minutes. When people say the first thirty minutes are some of the most beautiful filmmaking ever, what they’re really saying is they’ve only seen the first thirty minutes.

From: schrader@bevcomm.net

To: cold bacon

Date: monday, october 08, 2001 1:56 PM

Subject:

Your site is outlandish and you really should wake up and see that Ray Lewis was proven innocent in a court of law.

mission accomplished.

although it was somewhat awkward. let me recreate. you= fly on wall watching girl walk up to counter.

girl: umm... so i have an unusual question to ask. my friend has a book that he told me to pick up here that the copies were not sold.

man: what's the name of the book?

girl: cold bacon or it's by cold bacon or something like that.

man: let's look together. here it is. (picks up 3 copies)

girl: umm... so he told me to take just one. others will be here for the others.

brief discussion amongst employees. yes it's ok to take the book as long as a note is written to other employee that it was taken not bought.

other employee: so he or she told you that it's ok to take the book?

girl: umm yeah. he – i think it's a he – said it was ok to take the book. really we've just been writing on the internet so i don't really know who cold bacon is. ummm yeah. (girl thinks that store employees think she is crazy bc most people don't admit to having conversations with unknown internet friends.)

Tupac Shakur collapsed suddenly and died this morning upon deboarding the red eye special from New York City to Los Angeles. Experts say it was from a blood clot, which must have formed during the over five-hour flight. Considered by many to be one of the most talented rap actors of his time, others felt that he was just very talented. Shakur's films included Above The Rim, Bullet and Gang Related. Born in New York City, raised in Oakland, loved everywhere, by some. Tupac was 33 years old.

## Unknown Pleasures (2004)

### Jia Zhangke

This review is only for people who've seen the film. If you haven't seen the film, stop reading and please see it now. *Unknown Pleasures* is a remarkable film by talented young filmmaker Jia Zhangke. Blah blah Lincoln Center.

The film contains several open tributes to Wong Kar-Wai as well as references to Godard and *Pulp Fiction*, although the actual style has more in common with Antonioni than it does Tarantino or Wong Kar-Wai. The long blue shot of the open lot where Bowl Hair and lead female meet at the bus stop was very similar in composition to the scene in *L'Avventura* when the two men are about to fight over a tiny bottle of ink. In that scene, there's a long shot over an open courtyard. Here it's the proverbial second-world construction pit. In *L'Avventura* there is the telling detail of the little horse and cart in the background showing working people going about their business. Here, it's a small group of people carrying their ladder behind a partition in the far background. China.

Jia also possesses Antonioni's gift of visual framing and reframing as a scene develops in order to create new feelings/impressions for the viewer. Take the scene where skinny-face gives his girlfriend the cell phone. Notice how Jia starts by isolating the two of them against the entirely sparse and abstract plaster cement wall. Like a dull-tone Rothko, there are just the right visual elements to create a feeling of muted desolation, which is, of course, the damn theme of the film. So it's a café, right? Then he pans back to let the left side of the room look like a tunnel which goes somewhere (away from Datong), like a subway station or something. Then he pans back again and at the same time, we find out both visually and by the screenplay, it is in fact, a little old run-down bus station/billiard hall. Wait, isn't this where we started?

Another of the film's strengths is the major mega-realism from hepatitis, to hospitals, to hookers, Coca-Cola, bombs, motorcycle exhaust and puny pensions. And this

realism will not stand down, but neither does it draw too much attention to itself. One could argue that Jia is a little heavy-handed in his attempt to include cultural gravitas, particularly the announcement of the Olympics to be held in Beijing (the factory explosion in *The World*). Excuse me, but Tarkovsky does the exact same thing in *Mirror* with the Spanish Civil War, the Chinese-Russian border dispute and the balloon ride to the stratosphere. The fact that we don't complain about it in *Mirror* may simply reflect a more skillful integration of said exogenous gravitas into the body of the main narrative. Of course, this would be nitpicking. And anyone who can even be discussed in the same review as Tarkovsky should be flagged in your inbox.

Jia also exploits repetition very nicely. "Are you having fun?" [slap] "Are you having fun?" [slap] And so on. I'm having fun. The repeated pushing of lead female down by her agent/boyfriend in the bus also tests us but ultimately is meaningful and rewarding.

The part where Bowl Hair stubbornly refuses to walk his motorcycle up ten feet of rubble, instead determined to motor it, is a bit much. But that's okay. The part where the two talk over the table as the camera jerk swivels side to side to the conversation must be a nod to the familiar Godard technique (*Alphaville*, *Contempt*). But could somebody please tell Elvis Mitchell the difference between clever tribute and actual appropriation of style.

The final scene is a knowing (or unknowing) reference to the prologue in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*. We have a young boy under the complete control of an older authority figure. Here, it is the cop. In *Mirror*, it's the lady who is going to cure the boy of his stutter. "Boysha. Boysha. Periodt!" Then there is the exquisite tension while we wait to see what happens, if he sings, or what will happen if he does not.

Jia Zhangke is poised and ready to become (one of) the most important film director(s) of his decade. Never mind the comparisons. No sixth (seventh?) generation. No nouvelle vague North China. Just Jia. I would give anything to know what Tadao Ando thinks of this film.

hi.

i'm a reporter at the baltimore sun and would love to chat with you about the powerpuff girls and their fans. can we talk? you have an impressive knowledge of the program.

i can be reached at 1-800-829-8000. then hit 1, and my extension - 6164. or you can avoid the hassle and call me directly at 1-410-332-6164.

thanks,

peter



## **Days of Being Wild** (1990) *It Was, A Minute Past*

### **Wong Kar-Wai**

I never knew Hong Kong only had four people in it in the fifties, but hey that's cool. Wong Kar-Wai's *Days of Being Wild* is basically what would happen if someone let Leslie Cheung loose on Southeast Asia with some money and a car.

I like it. It seems subtler, or maybe just slower than his other films. If that's possible. Or maybe it just has more green? In any case, it definitely has all the Wong Kar-Wai elements. The camera movement. The haunting music. The hot-as-shit pouty women. The mood sequences—some of the most addictive ever put on screen—built from slow-mo music timed to characters moving through space—or just emotionally destroying each other, in the rain, for what seem to be predestined reasons.

I think there's a tendency on the part of many film critics to politely ignore Wong Kar-Wai. The reason for this could be simple. In his films, there's plenty of music, slow-motion footage and something has been lost, or perhaps just not found. But how does one wax analytical about that? Instead, one just says one likes him, but writes about something else.

Some crazy intellectuals have even gone so far as to describe his films as self-indulgent, an ode to themselves, little more than extended music videos. Sure, but can you really remember the last time you saw a music video like this? I'm thinking of the train moving like liquid through the green Filipino jungle, hypnotic music and trademark WKW soliloquy withstanding. And when was the last time someone rounded out a conversation with a guy who's been shot but is just sort of ignoring it for now (besides *Once Upon A Time In The West*)? There's another time when Leslie holds the girl's hand for the length of a minute. Godard did this in *Band of Outsiders* when the kids in the café propose to simply not talk for an entire minute, and they, with Godard's hand on their shoulders, actually go through with it. Let them say what they want, but Wong Kar-Wai is one of the few directors out there

who is going through with it.

From: Sarah Gordon

Subject:

i looked at your page again to find the picture, you are a much bigger nerd than anyone i know. your webpage seems infinite, however, i noticed that you put links to red meat and the damned jbm inc up...no one gives me any credit...." french, on the other hand, i have a big problem with. i love the language and the art and lit but i have yet to meet a french person who i do not despise.

## The Rules of the Game (1939)

### Jean Renoir

Now it doesn't make me cry. And it doesn't make my stomach turn. It isn't in color. And it barely has music. It doesn't even make me want to watch it again right away. There is, however, something I must tell you about *The Rules of the Game*, and that is that it's perfect.

*The Rules of the Game* possesses a level of frenetic energy and cine-stage choreography, which is in a league by itself except perhaps Clouzot on a good day. The play scene with the skeleton costume dancers—how Renoir is able to cold start the momentum with the “play within play” and then seamlessly transition from that eerie performance (black magic/religious trance/alcohol, prob. rum) into a scene of multiple undressings (the way she yanks off his belt in a whip-like motion as though it were a giant snake, as well as the *Citizen Kane*-like perspective of the shot of the table from across the room) and scurrings off by the revelers into the various mouse holes (a repeat of the earlier scene where everyone darts and dashes off to their rooms at evening's close the night before). Only this time it's no dress rehearsal—someone is going to die—we can sense it.

Octave running around frantically trying to get anyone to help him out of his bear costume—and how everyone is unwilling or too preoccupied to lift a finger verges on Buñuelian tactics à la *Exterminating Angel*. Proving once and for all that every great satire of the idle rich must have a brown bear somewhere loose in the house.

The film even has goddamn physical comedy, from Renoir himself (as Octave), climbing on the bed, throwing pillows around, and struggling to get off his bear suit. (Did I mention the bear suit?) Sometimes I wonder exactly how much all this physical comedy adds to the big concepts, but I don't see how it detracts either.

Kris: “Do you know yourself?”

Hari: “As much as anybody does.”

And what about that opening scene where the young aviator returns to a hero's welcome, and with an entire nation watching, all he can do is sputter nonpoetic about his own personal problems? Such an acceptable theme—brash egotism, foolish romantic obsession—something we can all instantly grasp the meaning of. And yet, here, on the screen, when it happens, as it happens, it's downright shocking. What an epiphany opener. This is the shock and awe we kept hearing about.

At the film's conclusion, Renoir poses the question of whether and how justice should be applied in the punishment of a crime. Should legal justice be pursued, or is there another, perhaps higher form of morality? And it would seem as though Renoir is pretty clearly saying yes, to the latter. All's well that ends well. And twenty-five years later, Buñuel would say no, with his *Diary of a Chambermaid*, all is not well that ends well. All is not well.

Because of email, the amount of time I spend hanging out with friends is

1. More.
2. Same.
3. Less.
4. Less is more.
5. Not sure of anything ever since I moved to Alaska.

- Your Vote Is Important

Late Buñuel films (*Discreet Charm*, *Phantom of Liberty*, *That Obscure Object*) have a momentum, which is every bit as forward moving as a *Speed* or a *Matrix*, if not more so. The scenes just fly, and yet, what is happening? If I told you there was a scene where a lady walks into a hotel, stands by the fire, makes some polite conversation with some monks from the local monastery, then checks into her room, you would probably not be on the edge of excitement.

But watch what I just described shot from the Buñuel cannon, and the high-grade choreography and emotional content of these interactions will command all of your attentions. Every word that is uttered, every step that is taken has a kind of edgy tension. This is helped, of course, by a liberal dose of the surreal.

A lady driving to Argento is halted by a tank crew looking for foxes. Surreal. But then some polite conversation ensues and before you know it, it all seems very normal. Taking the absurd and putting a normal twist on it. Now that's fun. Some children are shown playing in a park. Of course, something bad is going to happen, right?

A young man leaves his aunt's room to go get something to drink. He is met by another man who takes him by the arm and leads him to his own room. A woman then knocks on the door to ask for some matches. At this moment, another, different man learns yet another woman has four guests in her room somewhere else and becomes ecstatic over the prospects of adding them to his own growing party. A power struggle emerges as various groups of people try to "possess" each other's company as if it were a commodity. It's just so painfully accurate. Like one of those great authorly insights that you instantly grasp and then are lit up

by because it's so true and was always right there. And the *really* amazing part is, the scene's not even near done. Oh there's more alright.



Courtney Love passed away this weekend at Faith Presbyterian Hospital in Albany, NY from overdoses of heroine, methadone, barbital and a tricyclic antidepressant. She is survived by her husband Rick and her three teenage daughters. The world will remember her for her countless run-ins with the law and her problems with drugs and rock and roll, but to her friends and family, she will always be remembered as a loving wife and mother of three. Love was 42 years old.

Salut,

I recently visited your site and sorry to say this so abruptly but, your site is very bland looking. I actually wrote to you to offer my services in the form of website design, totally free of charge, sorry, i just can't stand seeing a site that someone's obviously put time, effort, and money into that comes out looking really boring. I mean no offence by this email, please consider my offer and let me know if you want to take me up on it. Thanks very much.

M. Swann

00:24:16:So I went to him unarmed.

00:24:20:He could be struck.

00:24:22:No, self-control is a strength.

From: Michael S. Tilley  
To: Cold Bacon  
Sent: Sat, 19 Jan 2002 14:24:57 -0500  
Subject: Feedback

The images on your page are ridiculously huge.

Don't you know that when you specify an image size in HTML it just affects the size as rendered on the screen? The poor user still winds up downloading the whole bloated thing.

Do you have any idea how long this takes to download over a modem? Would you care if you did?

Please get some profesional help.

Mike

00:24:24:Easily taken as weakness.

00:24:26:He'll say you backed down, as though guilty.

00:24:30:Guilty of what?

Anthony Lane's essay, "The Maria Problem" (sous-titled "Going Wild for *The Sound of Music*") is okay, but it has problems. I will explain them. It starts off like this:

"Let's start at the very beginning (it's a very good place to start.) Maria Augusta Kutschera was born in 1905."

This is the best reference to *The Sound of Music* in the history of writing. (It's a very good reference to start.) This beginning reminds me of the time David Lynch's *Dune*, which may or may not be a bad film, kicked off with the Padishaw Emperor's daughter: "The beginning is a delicate time. Know then that it is the year ten something." But I digress. So Maria Augusta Kutschera was born in 1905. My childhood friend and arch-nemesis T seems to think Anthony Lane is the greatest film critic since Von Kesselstat, and *The New Yorker* can and has done nothing wrong, ever. Yes, well.

Herr Lane then goes on to spend the next eight pages of my life establishing context. Using def journalistic skillz and his usual divine inspiration, he describes the phenomenon wherein a bunch of dedicated fanatics dress up in various *Sound of Music*-inspired costumes and participate in ritualistic beatings. This all happens at the Prince Charles Cinema.

The problem here is if you know what the hell he's talking about, then you don't really need this explanation, or at least, you don't need this *much* explanation. If you've ever been to one of these cult-audience participation things, like church, you'd know that being there is at least twice as good as watching it on DVD and eight times better than reading about it in *The New Yorker*. In fact, the only reason to read the first eight pages is to be reminded that Mr. Lane lives in London, and you don't. And he knows a lot about movies. Why won't he write about them? If he wanted he could use his vast knowledge of film to draw connections, to explain, to teach, to challenge. If he wanted. Or perhaps you are reading him in hopes of scoring some cut-rate cultural insight. After all, there was that one time where he pointed out:

“Nominally a reserved people, the British like to bottle up their exhibitionist tendencies and then, at opportune moments, let them flood out in a rush.”

Rather...except for they're not exactly "opportune" moments. It's more like, whenever the dam breaks, you'd better be ready for fun or to run—and v. fast. The British are coming. The British are coming, and they're totally pissed. But then you would have had also to read this point:

“I tend to be embarrassed by subtitles; their audacious efforts to snatch at foreign vernaculars end up stressing, rather than allaying, the alien qualities of the setting.”

I'm not sure what movies he's talking about here. If he means really bad subtitles for really bad movies then that would probably be bad. “You think she's pregnant?” “No! She's just embarrassed.” [pause] “Matadōr!” I completely agree no one should be snatching at foreign vernaculars. But the idea that subtitles should “allay the alien qualities of the setting” is about the dumbest thing I've ever read, at least since that time I stubbed my toe and accidentally read one of David Denby's reviews. Indeed, much of the beauty of foreign films is exactly that “alien quality,” that strange way of phrasing, that alternate form of communicating human thoughts, which is unavoidably produced as we move from one language to another. Translation, in general, is a very tricky thing. It deserves three paragraphs.

# Maque Choux

When it comes to translation, there are choices. One can simply go word for word, including idioms, and let the viewer fend for himself. Engarde! Café au lait! Crème brûlée. Etc. Etc. Or one can find suitable alternatives. (I'm still looking for an alternative to "Sussusudio.") Or one can do whatever the Bjork one wants making a sort of stylized version. "Mille fois merde." Literally, "a thousand times shit." De-idiomized, it becomes the commonly observed "holy shit" or just "fuck." Stylized, it becomes "fiznatch." Left to evolve over thousands of years, it becomes "each actuation delivers 55 mcg triamcinolone acetonide from the nasal actuator." I think every important film should suffer a choice of subtitles even within each language. No method is wrong, except perhaps the stylized one. That one is probably wrong. Shakespeare in the motherfuckin' house just stoopid. But between the *literal* and *common language* one, it's really a toss up, a lob up, throw up, shake it up. Heave ho. Ain't nuttin' but a fling.

Why? Because if you think about it, the literal translation may not be any more in sync with the actual perception of the native speaker. When someone says "a thousand times shit," it creates a weird, poetic wording which becomes its own distinct experience. Its peculiarity could even be seen as a distraction. Whereas just saying "holy shit" wouldn't make you think twice. A Frenchman doesn't think twice when he hears "mille fois merde." Why should you?

But again, doesn't it seem there is something special about the literal transformation? One wants to believe it offers a glimpse into the workings of another language, another people, who put mustard on French fries. Crazy people. Of course, there are idioms that are so random that a literal translation would make not one drop of honey in a thousand summers. Those are usually from Italy. They could probably be neutered without losing too much. Whereas others are sort of interpretable within the context. They're really not so bad once you get to know them. Ta geuele. "Shut up" or "shut your dog mouth." My movie, my choice.

"Now, we all of us like to believe that we understand our own poets better than any foreigner can do; but I think we should be prepared to entertain the possibility that these Frenchmen have seen something in Poe that English-



speaking readers have missed”

“It is certainly possible, in reading something in a language imperfectly understood, for the reader to find what is not there; and when the reader is himself a man of genius, the foreign poem read may, by happy accident, elicit something important from the depths of his own mind, which he attributes to what he reads.”

– T.S. Eliot, “From Poe To Valery”

Finally, we have his actual argument, which is that people watch these cult films because—oh I don’t know. I can’t remember his actual argument. And I’m not reading it again. I think it went something like “People like *The Sound of Music*, but it’s a bad film. *Chinatown* is a good film. My name is Anthony Lane.” I’m not saying Lane doesn’t know movies. But I do not think this should be a discussion about film at all. I think it should be about religion, or cereal, cannibalism, saw palmetto—anything, but not film. I think it’s just that these people like to come together and behave badly as a team. Sort of like rugby, or drunk bird watching. In America, people fill huge arenas to watch people called “The Rock” whoop up on people called “Tiny Testicles, Me Too!” Meanwhile, the alt-whack crowd packs in art-house theatres to *Rocky Horror Picture this*, which although not in the same category as *The Sound of Music*, is clearly not a serious fnilm. It’s all the same. The fact is, as Lane knows perfectly well, it has nothing to do with the movie itself, nothing nothing nothing. Or maybe something—

Recently, I was visiting my childhood home, when an old school chum of mine invited me to a midnight showing of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Tiny probing, municipal robots had just discovered an original reel buried deep within the old City Hall. In a secret chamber in the tomb of former mayor-god Lanier. He was clutching it. But the robots were tough. And now they were showing it. In fifteen minutes.

Hurry up please it’s almost time! You know how it is when you only have fifteen minutes. You suddenly get old and start saying things like, “I say, but isn’t it too late to be going out” and “Aw, but we have work tomorrow, wot.” Fortunately, that logic

got horse-whipped. I put on my special *Raiders* costume consisting of pants and a shirt. And thank God I did, because damn there were a lot of people there. Let me tell you, it was an ass a seat. And when Harrison Ford's face emerged from the shadows of deep Peruvian jungle, man, the place erupted. I mean "start the engine" erupted. And is this because we were just a wad of thirty-year-olds who had seen the film as kids and harbored some pathological reverence for it? Who you calling thirty? The answer is absolutely not. The crowd spanned all ages because why? Because the film kicks ass, and real people know it. But Lane, if that is his real name, may be right about the idea of memory as you make it and that the *SOM* crowd is definitely making it. I don't know. I wasn't there (you know, in London). But I *can* speak about *RHPS* crowds. There, it has nothing to do with any reliving of collective memory or retreat back to childhood (they still are children for crying out loud, most of them). It has nothing to do with anything. It's just a cult, a plain and simple cult. It could be a bunch of tards getting together and playing "Magic The Gathering," of tards. We'll come back to this.

So if it's about memories and regression, then why don't we all come to parties dressed as Bugs Bunny and Wile E Coyote? Surely, we spent more Saturday morning time with Looney Tunes than we ever did with "X-Men" and "PPG." Yet college girls who can, dress up as Aeon Flux and make boys hurt. Why? Because Looney Tunes have *too much* personality. They are too real, too good. You don't dress up as Daffy Duck and go around schmoozing the women. If you dress up as Daffy Duck, you had better be saying things like "suffering succotash" and "Aha, got the drop on you with *MY* disintegrating pistol," or you're just not going to be very convincing. On the other hand, Fred with the white shirt and ~~red~~ orange scarf had no personality whatsoever, and anything you can bring would be a major improvement. It's a no-brainer. Zed's dead. Go as Fred.

A really good film has too much of its own identity and is not easily manipulated, or for that matter viewed, with one eye on the nearest breast. For the record, I'm not saying anyone would ever notice a breast in church. But dress-up movies are by necessity B-movies in order to let the light shine on you. Yes, there were cheers when Harrison Ford did anything, and perhaps people did start exhibiting seizure-like activity during the scene when he shoots the Arab swordsman.<sup>18</sup> But dude, once the film got going, people sort of forgot themselves and were sucked in. It wasn't about the audience. It was about the film. The fact that *SOM* is a worse movie than

*RHPS* is a worse movie than *Caddyshack* is all less important than breasts. Hence, Anthony Lane's popularity. If you take one of Anthony Lane's essays and hold it upside down in front of a mirror, breasts.

Now Lane's Jack Nicholson-versus-Steve McQueen comment is just not true. "...but the sight of a weary, begrimed Steve McQueen emerging from the tower is burned into my mind with a fierceness that Jack Nicholson, with his nicked nostril, can never match." He's talking about Nicholson in *Chinatown*, but I choose to read this as a direct attack on *The Shining*. Jack Nicholson in *The Shining* is so riveting you could not possibly name a more riveting performance. And neither can Anthony Lane. And he knows it. I submit he is lying. For flow. Something which apparently gets the blind eye over at *The New Yorker*.

Now I didn't see *The Shining* as a 3T (teddy-toting toddler) thus developing some sort of needful, regressive relationship with the film. I first saw it at the non-tender age of (thinking/guessing/would I lie to you) twenty-four. But over many viewings (I call them mini-screenings), I've come to appreciate the Jack Nicholson moments in full. "Who is the caretaker?" "Yes, and What is the gardener." "Who?" "No, What." "What is the gardener?" "Precisely." "Well then what about the ghost?" "I don't know." "You don't know?" "No, I don't know." "What?" "No, he's the gardener." "Well who directed the film then?" "No, he's the caretaker." "Ahh!" There is no film that I saw as a child which invokes more awe and terror than *The Shining*. I have thought about this. I have run down a short list of films that were a big deal way back when. *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*, *Godzilla Versus Mothra*, *Godzilla Versus Fractalgodzilla*. Sure I have nostalgic feelings for them, but I now realize how silly those first two were. My first girlfriend, however, was not silly. She was hot. I was a fool. I was fourteen. Okay, I was fifteen. My second girlfriend was also hot and probably still is even though someone just told me she's pregnant now (and married). I had stupidly traded her in for a life of crime. "Hello, my name is Bacon. I am sixteen years old, and I'm a fool."

You really should be able to develop new and powerful emotional responses, while most of your childhood memories should fade further and further away—not to be let go or forgotten—nothing and no one is to be forgotten—but not at the cost of laying down new tracks. But Lane's psychological ex-lap-dressed-up-as-film-review goes on to explore the notion of tastes changing over time.

“What we feel about a movie—or, indeed, about any work of art, high or low—matters less than the rise and fall of our feelings over time. The *King Lear* that we see as sons and daughters (of Cordelia’s age, say) can never be the same play that we attend as parents; the sound of paternal fury, and of the mortal fears that echo beyond it, will knock ever more insistently at our hearts. Weekly critics cannot do justice to that process; when we are asked to nominate favorite films, all we can say is ‘Well, just now I quite like *Citizen Kane* or *Police Academy 4*, but ask me again next year.’”

– Anthony Lane

This idea that Lane parrots, like any pithy point, is as much not true as it is true. Yes, we do see things through different eyes. As we grow old, the lens becomes more squishy. And yes, it’s true tastes change over time. Some cheeses become more and less rewarding as taste buds rearrange according to God’s plan. But friends, I solemnly swear by all that is living I will never say *Police Academy 4* is my favorite movie. And I’m still waiting with childlike curiosity for that day to come when I no longer think Eliot is a great poet and Kubrick is more than just some overfed photographer.

So, on the surface, there does seem to be an inconsistency between the idea that taste is always changing, yet at the same time we are fixed in love and appreciation of bad movies we saw as children. However, these two seemingly disparate notions can be taken together as evidence of Lane’s supremely disempowering MO to have us as mere passive witness to our biological trends. *I no longer eat spicy food, but by God I still love* The Sound of Music. Is Anthony Lane the only person capable of willfully cultivating an evolving critical approach only to throw it all away in an heroic act of faux humanism? While the rest of us are merely along for the ride? I don’t know. Let’s wait and see.

From: Carrie McLaren@stayfree.org  
Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2000 9:36 PM  
Subject: my logo

Hello, I'm sorry for being a killjoy, but would you mind removing my STAYFREE logo from your web page? (/news/gonzales.html) It's the logo to my magazine....obviously you should feel free to use the words stay free if you want - i certainly don't own them — but using it as the logo like this makes it look like the elian channel is part of stay free.

Best,  
carrie

00:29:17:I know all is ended between us and that this must be.

00:29:23:It must.

00:29:26:I wanted to see you once more and then part.

The author invites you to take an active interest in this essay, although he doesn't want you to know exactly what it will be about, because that would take the fun away. He doesn't want to take the fun away. And if by now you do not already sense the unmistakable parallel between this story and your own life, the author grants you the freedom to bend, ever so slightly, the meaning of his words so that you can wrap yourself in them, tightly, and be succored.

The author feels you should now be acquainted with the main subject. But first you must adopt a suitable looking device through which to examine the text properly—something that will enhance and bring out its true meaning, and protect you from the gross injustices of the naked eye. It's said the best way to get at the truth is to get as far away as possible. For this, he recommends the fully collapsible Sony XL50 two-mirrored long range telescope. Versions of this essay can be viewed on Mars, Neptune, and beyond. Others would argue for an up-close approach. Here, most critics would focus on the Nikon Eclipse ME600L, which comes with replaceable triple filter turrets, or the Olympus OME-8000, which has more versatility than you need. A handful of serious American readers say they'd rather die than use anything less than a Hitachi scanning electron beam. Perhaps a more moderate perspective is in order. Leaders of the Women's Liberation Movement favor the Mamiya 645 E, while the NAACP has unequivocally backed the Ebony SV45. Many Slavs in the know swear by the Linhof Technika 45, while a splinter fraction of Lithuanian scholars remain loyal to the Kiev 88. German scholars still in Germany rely on their Spandau double filter Mark 14's, while most of the French literati / know are always falling back on their Arca Swiss F-line. Meanwhile, Thomas Edison's great-great-great grandson has written several not unwitty position papers in support of the monocle.

At this time, the author feels it would now be appropriate to reveal a very important word—knoogle. He realizes that many of you will not understand the word, and for this he is willing to forgive you. Because he knows you will now rededicate yourselves to broader learning. Still, he fears some readers may remain unconvinced of his authority on the subject. He recommends they reread the first two paragraphs. And for those who may be feeling a bit, shall we say, insignificant? and wondering if they are deserving even of reading any further, he would like me to

reassure them they are not alone. He has therefore instructed me to relay the following account of Norse gods who have also been impressed with his work:

Odin, Thor and Freya were all in agreement as were Alvis, Amma and Arnamentia. Loki and Angerboda were impressed enough to dedicate one of their better schemes in *his* honor. Also awed were Kied Kie Jubmel, flamboyant and misunderstood running back for the Valhalla Volts and gentle Marjatta, who conceived a son after swallowing a cranberry. One must watch out for that. Then there was Berserker who was so moved he suspended his raging just long enough to catch *his* latest column in *The Asgard Times*. Why even Snotra, goddess of fragrant literary magazine editors, had nothing but the highest praise. Kornjunfur, goddess of corn, purchased the complete collection on Amazon. She lent them to Jarnsaxa, who was the wife of Thor—and wouldn't that be enough? In fact, so pleased were all the gods with his writing they decided to give Ragnarok a miss again this year. Frigg.

Not concerned in the slightest for his own reputation, the author has charged me to convince you that he is complex; that he is an enigma, who, in addition to his justifiably arrogant manner, can at times be more self-deprecating than Woody Allen, more self-knowing than Lenny Bruce and more coked up than two John Belushis, three Robin Williamses and a doctor. He would like all of you to know he is aging just like the rest of you, but to save time, he will not elaborate on how his children are more technologically advanced than himself, or how he is secretly not bothered by this.

The author would like now to smudge you with his human side. He begs me to relate to you a very touching story about the time he saved that old lady from drowning in two feet of water. He didn't even know her name. Real heroes don't ask questions. He was like Humphrey Bogart in *Casablanca*. No, he was like Robert De Niro in *Taxi Driver*. No, he was like Kirk Douglas in *Paths of Glory*, minute eighty-seven. Of course, he would like to provide another example from his own personal history, but because of copyright and other intellectual property concerns, including online rights and current negotiations with several third parties, he cannot.



Of course, a writer of his abilities—in fact, possibly unparalleled abilities—knows there are two sides to every thing, and that a real author should never take sides. And so he asked me if there is any chance some of you might misread his account as, well, a bit biased. I told him there was this chance. Thereupon he beseeched me to include some lines of my own on his behalf, you know, in case someone of you mistook his pointed barbs for      pointed barbs. Let me assure you that he would never be so mean. If only you knew of the countless times I've heard him walk about the palace tormented, saying that for every invective, there is self-hate, for every shout, there is self-doubt and that true love conquers all.

you know exactly what i'm asking and what I'm talking about. How could you not? Oh, or did you forget that we've been emailing quite personally for about a year...lol, not that you would beleive me if I said I didn't care anymore but PLEASE. Quit pretending and avoiding your wished-for self and reality. With responses like that you don't even deserve my little lecture. But I will give it to you anyway becасue I happen to be a person who engages people with authenticity. You on the other hand, and in a conveniently existential manner, feel compelled to insult me with your complete absense of acknowledgement that at some point I realized that what I thought was a "special" thing between us was really just some experieiment. So excuse me for inquiring if that mattered to you. Asshole. I hope you use this to support more of your quasi-social experiment shit art that you've used me for. You present yourself much smarter than that but you know what...you are SUCH a typical guy. Really. And the way you pretend not to know how to respond whenever I ask you a personal question (whether you do this unconsciously or not) is such what a typical guy does. A true artist wouldn't be so typical. Picasso at least was brutal. You are wayyyy to calculated and robotic in your emotional responses to people to ever be an artist. good luck.

KD

### **Water Fountain**

There is a water fountain where the stream is just out of reach from the little lever. If you want a drink, you must ask someone for help.

### **Toilet Arrangement**

There are two urinals arranged back to back. There is only one handle, which flushes both urinals. It is customary to wait for the other person to finish.

### **Restaurant**

There is a restaurant where you are seated directly across from the person with whom you arrived. Only the table is very large, so you cannot hear what your recent companion is saying. They will be sitting next to other people who were also parts of groups.

### **Toll Booth**

There is a toll booth where you pay not for yourself but for the next car to come after you.

00:35:52:Lionel and I were defending you; now I look ridiculous.

You can find your childhood home. You just can't go in it.

It's not the size of the stamp. It's the number on it.

Artists are just failed critics.

Critics are just failed people.

Contemporary art means the artist gets another chance to explain what he was trying to say.

I like to preserve the ambiguity. So I drive really fast.

I stood in front of a mirror, but I didn't have time to reflect.

Ever notice how the people getting off the plane are never the same ones you saw getting on? Me neither.

My personality speaks for itself. Then I fill in the rest.

I would have sex with [long pause] anyone. (note: requires special relationship between performer and audience)

I was wondering, "Can a refugee be hot?"

What about a dictator? Megahottie Sukarnoputri. I'm sorry. [19](#) -

Gatten's ingenious charting of cinematic technique parallels his uncovering of the Byrd family history. Over the course of the cycle, Evelyn, William's heartbroken daughter, becomes more prominent, and her forbidden and ultimately tragic romance will continue to thread through the remaining five films. Her suffering contrasts sharply with William's secret diary, an unemo-

tional record, written in a coded script, of gentlemanly

From: babiewitch@aol.com

Date: wednesday, august 10, 2005 2:47 AM

To: cold bacon

Subject:

okay. this is super important. i havn't been able to find these poems and i need them for tommorrow. if you have these, please email me at chinu87ba4ever@aol.com!

thanx

From: Grahame Deane  
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2000 3:53 AM  
To: Cold Bacon  
Subject: Influences on Poetry Written By T.S.Elliot

I am doing a Year 11 Assessment Task and which requires me to write a radio interview with T.S.Elliott. For this interview, I need to know about the events and experiences in his life and how these influenced his writings, as in reference to three of his poems - "Preludes", "Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock" and "Journey of the Magi". Any help you could offer me would be greatly appreciated, and if possible, could I please have any information you have before August 24nd.

Thankyou,  
Joanna Deane



New Chapter – The Palace at 4 a.m.

## my romantic plea (to a girl who's gone far away)

we danced the circulette movements through the intestines of the tall ice keep.  
toward little corners, and stone had given way toward warmer woon, of teachers'  
offices, nooks and that. i imagined deep delight. it was all i could do to keep to  
myself.

remember someone had left three quarters on a cheap gargoyle. you said you  
needed laundry money. remember i stopped you. i grabbed your arm.

but i was so much wiser then. i thought there were rules. a moment of prudence,  
which an age of daring could never retract. and now there is only the sound of  
water.

oy, it's foaming with peanuts, being shelled and spat, multidirectional for little  
elephants, who've gathered round. in a circle.

stomping and beating we know we know. they know.

so how does a guy? how do i? get you back. a little flipyo back.

just tell me how long. i clear the bed.

## My Cake

I want to catch fifty different kinds of sushi  
In a little stream out back.

I want to see hot people  
Then blink and make them disappear.

I want to live in an ice-cold igloo  
with DSL.

I want to live on mountain edges  
where pizzas are delivered.

I want to hear tiny birds outside my window,  
But not at 4 a.m.

*What is this fucking poetry corner? Jesus. Come on. Focus.*



your head look so pretty

**[Most Recent Entries] [Calendar View] [Friends]**

Below are the 9 most recent journal entries recorded in Cold Bacon's LiveJournal:

**Monday, October 14th, 2002**

*8:45 pm A Great Day For Our Tribe*

Today was wonderful day for tribe. We battle with other tribe (name cannot say because of pending court case) across river. We win big victory. It take long time but we win. I take three heads. One great warrior. One very good warrior. One good warrior. Okay, maybe not good warrior. Okay, maybe small boy. But he holding stick. Anyway. Does not matter. Have three head for great ceremony this weekend. Have all necessary thing to making three beautiful new tiny head for collection. Anyway. Very tired from much fighting today. Need to getting rest. Will trying write again tomorrow.

**Current Mood:** *accomplished*

**Current Music:** *Queen We Are The Champions*

(Comment on this)

**Saturday, November 15th, 2003**

**2:20 pm *I back now again***

Dear friend. It been long time since write in journal. Big fire destroy our village last summer. No internet connection is making very isolated. Second cable guy taking forever find village (first one eat by panther, swear). When find us, he goddamn dumb. He wait outside somebody else hut for two hour then leave. Week later I getting message from cable company, "Why I wasn't home for man?" I putting own message on floating piece of wood in stream. "Fuck you." I using neighbor DSL now. Will write again soon. Tell what going on here in new village, which is maybe one mile from old village.

**Current Mood:**



*optimistic*

**Current Music:** *Pixies River Euphrates*

(Comment on this)

**Saturday, November 22nd, 2003**

**4:38 pm *another day, another party***

Not much happen today. Went to neighbor hut for lunch. His hut maybe fifty feet from my hut. Not far. We having yuca soup he make. Cholo say he using fresh araña caspi but I think he full of shit. I think he get from can. I don't say anything. Besides it taste good. Some people in other village having big party. Festival for one of their stupid spirit. Supposed to be many women though. Some no husband. Think I going later. Maybe wear favorite head. Little Pietro I call him. Pietro bring me good luck many time. Sometimes I not even need to be using semayuka on them. I writing more soon. Wish me luck at party. But I don't need it anyway.

**Current Mood:**



*thirsty*

**Current Music:** *Roberta Flack Killing Me Softly*

**(2 Comments** | [Comment on this](#))

**Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

*10:17 pm Calgon take me away - and leave me there*

Not writing for long time. Because I feeling very sad last few months—no girlfriend, no talk to god, no magic dirt in many weeks. Thought I find some ayahuasca paste in friend hut but it just spear polish. Worse thing at all no fighting last two months. Things so bad I even go to see local uwishin for discussing many problems. He say best solution is kill someone from nearby tribe. He say if that not working, best thing is maybe throw self from Rocks of Baeza-Tena. Would be spectacular death him say. Rocks of Baeza-Tena about seven miles from my hut.

**Current Mood:**



*gloomy*

**Current Music:** *Magnetic Fields Yeah! Oh, yeah!*

**(7 Comments** | [Comment on this](#))

**Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

*3:59 pm Little Pietro stolen!!!*

Holy manioc beer. Little Pietro missing!!! I think somebody take him. I at party like three miles from Cholo hut. Great party. Anyway, I going outside to making pee pee with Cholo. I gone like maybe five minutes. I come back and look in thatchpack, and God damn if he not gone! This bullshit. Can't believe somebody steal Little Pietro. He my enemy not they. He not giving *them* any special power that for sure. Assholes. I catch who did this I make head so small fit in cup. I make new home for his whole family. Is called box.

**Current Mood:**



*infuriated*



**Current Music:** *Mission of Burma Revolver*

**(8 Comments** | [Comment on this](#))

**Monday, January 17th, 2005**

*1:01 pm So Excited!!*

Tomorrow night is big moth concert at Chu Chu's. I so excited. My friend get us tickets. Okay, we tell Chu Chu we eat his pig he not letting us in free. I so excited for show. I never hear moth sing before. I hear song of cicada couple time. I hear macaw. God like every day. Macaw. Macaw. Macaw. Shut up. Give me my break. Oh, you ever hear a bunch of toco toucan when they scare? Now that real rock concert. And, of course, nobody forgetting Chaco Chachalaca. They don't let you. Friend, I hear many things in this life, but never moth.

**Current Mood:**



*anxious*

**Current Music:** *Pinback The Yellow Ones*

**(12 Comments** | [Comment on this](#))

**Tuesday, January 18th, 2005**

*11:25 am Holy manioc beer!*

Concert last night so awesome. Was Xunaxtzchititi's famous traveling six moth band. Cannot even beginning to describe you. Can't remember. Too many drug. Must have been so good. Remember come in. Remember hand mark with some huituc. Manioc beer for everybody. Some other kind of drink, tasting like yage. Okay, was yage. Remember everybody say how great moth sound. Backup beatles really good too everyone say. Awesome. My friend say Xunaxtzchititi coming back to Casa Pepe in Babahoyo next month. Babahoyo like ten mile away. I think maybe we go having friendly talk with Pepe.

**Current Mood:**



*satisfied*

**Current Music:** *Animal Collective Alvin Row*

(427 Comments | [Comment on this](#))

**Saturday, January 22nd, 2005**

2:02 pm “...seeks *big fat documentary film makers...*”

Oh my what glorious day! All start off these white men suddenly showing up in village. Say from some place call New York. They want to taking pictures of everything in village. Say is for good cause. So we eat them. Oh my god delicious. Really nothing taste like white man wrap in banana leaf, slow cook in Maya pib. Okay, maybe Chu Chu little pig pretty good too. In Aji Costeño sauce. Yes. But still that really good idea Tio have. I never hear of Craig List before but god damn it work. We just putting some stupid drawing of village Tio kid make for school, some direction how to find us. Then we wait. God white people stupid.

**Current Mood:**



*amused*

**Current Music:** *Blonde Redhead Melody*

(2 Comments | [Comment on this](#))

**Sunday, April 17th, 2005**

*4:41 pm Got new girlfriend!*

Okay, I steal from other village. Her husband so stupid. He going long hunting trip all way to Riobamba. Leaving wife alone whole time. Stupid spear for brain. I just go there say, hey, "Your husband dead." God and she cry—forever—like twenty minutes. I tell her going see her aunt in other village. But I just take to my village. I give her some natema until she forget husband name. Then I giving her more natema. She now she don't remember her name too. Or me. Or anything. Okay, maybe too much natema. Okay though, this much better when time for breaking up. But now is time for fun.

**Current Mood:**



*mischievous*

**Current Music:** *Belle and Sebastian Dirty Dream #2*

(Comment on this)

It is with great pleasure and necessity that I write Chuck Jones tribute essay one jillion and one. I didn't know it then, but I was lucky as hell to be born when I was, and not two or three years later. For I had grown up in sort of a golden portion of the 80s, before ABC Saturday morning became the all-pimple channel and the NBA pre-game show had to begin at 5 am in order to cover adequately Shaq's myriad interests. Now this may be hard to imagine, but they actually used to show Looney Tunes every Saturday morning on ABC, and we would watch them.

By high school I had somehow turned my attentions away from cartoons. Apparently there were other things. In college I quickly discovered two more of them—drinking and regret. [20](#)—Still no cartoons. Hmm. But then summer came, and I went home to discover my parents hadn't stopped paying for cable. Now cable means two things: supporting tyranny and an unlimited supply of cartoons, some loonier than others. And now I was smart. It didn't take long before I recognized the rightful place of the cartoon short in the pantheon of higher art. So I watched. And I watched. And I taped. And soon I had compiled enough tapes to fill a small sink if I wanted. I noticed I was gravitating mainly toward two things: the insane joy of the early Daffy Duck character and anything done by a guy called Chuck Jones. Here, it was the entire product—from the animation to the story, from the backgrounds to the spills, between the desire and the timing, and basically damn near close to perfection of it all.

So I saved some money and bought a bunch of Chuck Jones cartoons on laser disc. It was all you could do at the time since they weren't on DVD. I didn't even have a laser disc player. But if the great flood did come for any reason, I wanted to at least have something to hold up and say, "Hey, don't look at me." But you know I did end up finding a laser disc player, at R University near where I lived, in a special section of the main library called the Brown Fine Arts Library, or as I called it, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. I would bring my discs in a little canvas bag and make a time of it. And it's actually good to watch them like this, when you've committed to be with them and only them. No snack breaks (this ain't no damn movie theatre). No steady stream of commercials to distract your bones. Like listening to your favorite music on some good tight headphones. It's better.

Dear Mr. Jones,

Whenever I look for a standard—a guide—I look to your work. But it's more than just that. It's a way of living, of moving, physically I mean. The other day, I found myself, in the shower, soaping and singing in time with Rossini, "Welcome to my shop, let me cut your mop...daintily...daintily." I believe from watching so many of your cartoons I have actually absorbed your rhythm and timing into my being. And for this I am saved.

When I think about my life, about retiring—I am so young—I think about the day I can finally take the time to read some books—not just pages of books—and watch the movies and cartoons I still haven't seen enough times (fifty or sixty being scarcely sufficient for something like "Rabbit of Seville" or "What's Opera Doc?"). Whenever I meet someone I think is really cool, I show them your cartoons. Not so much as a litmus test, but when I get excited about someone, I want to share with them the best things I know. And I know what they are.

I wrote you a letter in my last year of college when I had finally figured it out. To not hear back from you was at first a cause of some distress. But then I realized you must not have gotten my letter. But now I hear about a Chuck Jones tribute project going on. To cheer you up! At first, I was going to just send a copy of my old letter. But then I couldn't find it, so I had to write this instead. *Not part of letter, I guess. Just wondering aloud.*

Most of this I wrote on the construction site for this new house going up down the street from where I live. The fence was only a gesture, knocked down in parts, which I walked over. I carried the blueprint of my letter into the structure and quickly made the second floor. There was a third floor, but the second was good enough. Naked 2x2's, 4x4's, jacks, tens, concrete wells, stairs without rails, sockets, sprockets and dangly things, crumpled cigarette boxes bought by the carton, washers, nails, would-be splinters, big open frames—almost like windows. Good

enough.

I sat in the future second-story window watching people push their way down the street. Chuck Jones? Wasn't he the thirty-second president? I spit out the future window for no good reason. It was Sunday, but today was Saturday. Some day a couple paying nine-hundred dollars a month, good rent, will have their spat in this very room, while a tender four-year old plays quietly on the carpeted floor. This child will have the benefit of knowing what it's like to be Allen Iverson, to be lost and then found, and all in 3D Slam Vision.

I dreamed this construction site was the set for some new Bugs Bunny cartoon. They were planning the big pie throwing sequence right here, and just through that hole, there—the stick of dynamite would be handed, wrapped up like a gift for Troy. And I was there alone, way before the man said, “Action!” It was cool. These cardboard boxes are popping up everywhere. The tenants prize their walls painted gray, giving the impression of real stone, which makes a wonderful sound of hollow plywood when you knock it. This is my favorite architectural style—American throw-up. Gee Pa, they sure don't make 'em like they used to. Said the little sign on the chain link fence, “Keep out,” but I didn't. “Don't doubt,” but I do. At first, I was going to send a copy of my old letter, but I couldn't find it, and had to write this instead.

Your Friend,  
Pablo Bacon (61)

The following letters were found in a small, metal lock-box recovered from what is believed to have once been a ranch in a place called Texas. In the box there was also a small axe, a machete and what appears to be, for lack of a better description, face paint. We may never know the true purpose of the letters or the other mysterious items, but most experts agree they must have been placed in the box in order to protect the nearby inhabitants from their effects. This is one of only a few surviving artifacts from that era.

Day 9

Dear Laura,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. It's been seven days since I last saw you, and still I have no new heads to promise you. We almost had a battle yesterday at Jake's BBQ, but to my great disappointment, it turned out to be only a mere misunderstanding. Apparently there is more than one kind of rhubarb. I know Jenna and Laura, Jr. must be getting anxious for something new to play with, but I'm sure it won't be long now. Take care my love. I will write again as soon as I am able.

Day 10

Dear Laura,

Another day has passed and still no heads. I told the man at the gas station his prices were unreasonable and that he didn't deserve to have a family. He just laughed and said he didn't want one. I am trying my love. I will try harder.

Day 20

Dear Laura,

Perhaps I am trying too hard. Perhaps I've been under too much stress. Maybe I just need to relax and let things happen. I will do this, for us.

Day 32

Dear Laura,

My therapist says if I follow his instructions, I will be healthy in no time. He has given me some pills to take. He says a lot of people have my problem and that pills can help. Please give my love to Jenna and Laura, Jr. I know I will be home soon.

Day 224

Dear Laura,

Tahiti is beyond all expectations. I promise I will send for you and the children as soon as the dry season is over.





## Point

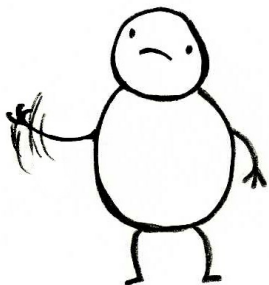
Lately, I've noticed a large number of people are going around saying you can find something worthwhile in everyone you meet. They are crazy. The truth is most people you meet will range from pretty dumb to awfully dumb. No offense, those of you reading this who are awfully dumb. But that's why the rest of you should be talking to dead people—specifically, dead authors. Granted, the conversation is fairly one-sided, but it's not as if you would have said anything important. And the fact is, you'll learn a hell of a lot more from a good book than from hearing your future ex-roommate persevere on the latest self-inflicted catastrophe in his or her life, which it turns out, has been carefully planned by CBS since the age of thirteen. Your roommate and any other would-be writers of television are all so very less insightful than the great authors who have died. White, black, lesbian—doesn't matter, long as they're dead. And why *should* you settle for someone just because they're—alive? Now, I'm not saying not to have friends or that polite conversation cannot be a beautiful thing (within reason). But don't feel like you need to be friends with everyone and don't be afraid to fire the bad ones. Tell them it's the new economy.

## Counterpoint

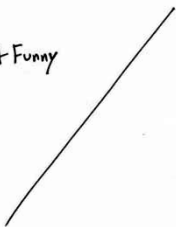
Wait a minute, Hoss. Don't think of it as everyone having something to offer. Think of it as you always having something to learn. What *you* need is some real human reactions to real human situations. And this means you're going to have to talk to other people. You may be the cream, but the fact is you're still just one person with one perspective and certain deficiencies, which are going to need outside assistance. Take me, for example. I am deficient in the quality of reality. I drink way too much coffee and tend to get carried away. I start getting this crazy idea that I can do anything if I put my mind to it. So I need other people to remind me this is not true. Then at night, I take these little white pills to help me sleep. Thirty minutes later, I start thinking everything is going to turn out alright. At forty minutes, I still think everything is going to turn out alright, just a lot slower. At fifty, things can turn out however they want. And in the morning, they're back again, the fox, the bat, the wise old hen.

But as for reading, while the insights of great writers are as real as the sins they've committed (and my god that's enough), the truth is, even if you did have time to read everything, you couldn't possibly find adequate copy for every conceivable situation. Not only that, but the writer must have experienced it himself. Hemingway may have lived life so you don't have to, but most of your *authors* are merely reheating someone else's experience. And once it's cooked, it ain't raw anymore, and that's tempura. I learned that in a seven-hundred-page novelette *Memoirs of an American Poet in Japan's Wife*.

Face it, you're going to have to get some of your knowledge from other people, ordinary, everyday people. That said, you mustn't overdo it. If you overdo it, your inbox just gets cluttered. Fortunately, Hotmail will start deleting messages for you.



Not Funny



Funny



Why is it that nothing ever seems as good when you show it to someone else as it did when you were alone? There may, in fact, be several answers to this overwhelming question. But perhaps it has something to do with tone. You see, really to get the most out of a piece of art, you've got to match your tone with that of the work as you perceive it—be one with it as it were. When you're alone, your emotions are supple, and ready to adjust and be adjusted.

The artist is hurting? I remember when I was hurting. The artist is bitter? No problem. This is why people come out of an art exhibit saying they're one way or another. If you come out of a show saying you're confused, probably so was the artist.

But when you're with other people, some portion of your attention must go toward them, wondering what they are thinking, knowing their experience is in part your responsibility—or perhaps it is even worse than that—you dirty dog. Anyway, with all this excitement going off in your head, it's no wonder your favorite song has come up a bit...limp?

That's why we always tend to make new discoveries in works of art when we're alone. And God punishes us by making us instantly want to share them with someone else.

From: Kirsty

Date: Thursday, March 30, 2000 8:37 PM

although i enjoy your site you fucking suck!!! i can't believe you devote so much time to such crap, you must be a complete loser all your crap is a crock of shit go to hell

kirsty

p.s. i love you

I would like to congratulate the following people for being able to contribute in some way or other to this book. Scott and Stuart Shell for making me actually do it. Erin Casey for her gentle criticism. Kate Kudirka for her the-opposite-of-gentle criticism and memorable personal attacks. Allison Adair for her good looks and charm. Tim Lake for a fundamental influence that can hardly be explained. Dorothy Lam (robots). Jess Fuchs of dustyartwork.com (round bubble love). Paul Boerner (pigeon taking dump on statue). James Strickland (crack rock). The Shuar Tribe (may none of them find and kill me). Marie Glancy. Phillip Lopate (who actually *can* write about film and whose work I could have just stolen, if he weren't still around). Peter Hornsby (for liking B. Kliban as much as I do and for many lessons learned). Jon Kowallis (for setting up all those personal meetings with Lu Xun). Babette Hale and Christian Manuel (for different reasons). Ian Garthwait, Sarvi Sheybany. And anyone else out there who may have willingly or unwillingly participated. And then there is Tyler Sage.

Hi Bacon,

Sure, we'd be able to put that on an oval for you. I'd be happy to put in an order for just 1 for you. Should I use your billing/shipping CC info from your last order?



1. Rule One: Never give away your sources. You thought of it out of the blue because you're fucking brilliant, and nobody can prove otherwise. It has nothing to do with the fact that you just watched *Ran* last night followed by *Iron Chef* and then just read a couple pages of Thomas Hardy ten minutes ago while drinking a double espresso, which, incidentally, is the one drink that takes the fundamental question of why bother around the back of the shed and beats the shit out of it.
2. Not by itself, but because it allows/encourages you to not overcook.
3. I've since been informed this is actually a grape, Scheurebe, and not a place. Anyway, other German words worth saying aloud include gegenhalten, doppelgänger, metterschmerz, glockenspiel.
4. Concept still investigational.
5. An obvious reference to the lesser known Nietzschean line, "They did it with pretzels."
6. Notwithstanding the fact that a recent *USA Today* poll found Tokyo edging out New York as the world's capital of street fashion. Apparently, black is not an actual fashion.
7. Pill bugs also known as sow bugs, rollie-pollies and often mistakenly called doodlebugs, which is the name reserved for immature ant lions. And besides, I don't even think they do that curling-up thing anymore. Nowadays they just keep going.
8. Um, yes well, ahem.
9. "Is this not what you wanted?"
10. Formerly known as the other chick from *Ghost World*, now known as the actress who has excited more pedophilic corpuscles than I even knew I had.
11. Literally, it translates into dog fish, but surely, it must mean shark.
12. That all said, that synthesizer crap in *A Clockwork Orange* really is pretty damn for your driving pleasure. In fact, some German synthpop group should probably make that into a song.
13. Sometimes called the "Father of Louisiana," Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, was chosen to command the expedition for Louis XIV to found a colony in Louisiana. Responsible for founding the settlement of New Orleans, Jean Baptiste became an early governor of Louisiana. This succulent dish named in his honor was originally created at Antoine's by Chef

Auguste Michel. However, it became known as Arnaud's dish after Arnaud Cazanave, proprietor of Arnaud's Restaurant, tasted Michel's concoction and began serving it in his restaurant.

14. Remember in *Tampopo*, when you are told to apologize to the pork you are about to eat, offering the cosmic consolation that you'll soon be joining him. I know. It's not the same thing. But isn't *Tampopo* great?
15. Or not. For another take on this theme, try Jacques Becker's *Casque d'Or*. That farmhouse with the old lady and the bread? Why couldn't they just run away together? Dammit.
16. Shopper Raymond Massas said he "heard one shot. Not very loud, like a snap. After that I heard people start panicking." 10/02 (Reuters)
17. Do you wanna make movies forever?
18. *Raiders: SE* (special edition) has the same scene, only the Arab unprovokedly throws his sword at Harrison Ford and then steps on a baby seal just before Ford, still married to his original wife and family, pulls out his gun and, after several sincere attempts at negotiation (during which time Ford does *NOT* flush any Qurans down the toilet) have failed, the Arab accidentally detonates himself, and Jones ~~cries~~ weeps.
19. Some Indonesian sources spell her name Soekarnoputri. Note that Sukarnoputri means "daughter of Sukarno" and it is not the President's surname: Javanese do not have surnames. She should simply be referred to as Megawati or Mega.

Her name is derived from Sanskrit meghavatī = "she who has a cloud," i.e. a rain cloud, as rain is needed to make food crops grow, and it was raining when she was born.

20. Usually in that sequence. Only later has the reverse come more into play.