

“Of course the people don't want war. But after all, it's the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it's always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it's a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to greater danger.” - Hermann Goring at the Nuremberg trials (preface)

### **GEORGE'S HOLIDAY MESSAGE (preface)**

Since this book comes out in the fall, I'd like to take advantage of this early opportunity to wish all of you an enjoyable Christmas season and a happy New Year filled with good fortune. Of course, I realize this can't happen for everyone. Some of you are going to die next year, and others will be crippled and maimed in accidents, perhaps even completely paralyzed. Still others will be stricken with diseases that can't be cured, or will be horribly scarred in fires. And let's not forget the robberies and rapes – there'll be lots of them. Therefore, many of you will not get to enjoy the happy and fortunate New Year I'm wishing for you. So just try to do the best you can.

### **EUPHEMISMS: It's a Whole New Language (6)**

Euphemistic language turns up in many areas of American life in a variety of situations. Not all euphemisms are alike, but they have one thing in common: They obscure meaning rather than enhance it; they shade the truth. But they exist for various reasons. Sometimes they simply replace a word that makes people uncomfortable. For instance, the terms *white meat*, *dark meat* and *drumstick* came into use because in Victorian times people didn't like to mention certain body parts. No one at the table really wanted to hear Uncle Herbert say, “Never mind the *thighs*, Margaret, let me have one of those nice, juicy *breasts*.” It would've made them uncomfortable.

[...] I first became aware of euphemisms when I was nine years old. I was in the living room with my mother and my aunt Lil when I mentioned that Lil had a *mole* on her face. My mother was quick to point out that Lil didn't have a mole, she had a *beauty mark*. That confused me because, looking at Lil, the beauty mark didn't seem to be working. And it confused me further, because my uncle John also had a brown thing on his face, and it was clearly not a beauty mark. And so on that day, I discovered that on some people what appeared to be moles were actually beauty marks. And as it turned out, they were same people whose *laugh lines* looked a lot like *crow's feet*.

### **HAND ME MY PURSE (9)**

Boxing is an activity in which each of two men, by delivering a series of repeated, sharp blows to the head, attempts to render the other senseless, leaving him lying on the floor, unable to act rationally, defend himself or even stand up. If one of the two men is knocked down and beaten into an only partially blank and helpless mental state, the other is made to stand aside and the contest is halted momentarily, while the damaged man regains just enough strength to stand up and have the beating continue – to the point where he is again lying on the floor, this time completely immobile and functionless. Afterward, the two men embrace in a display of good sportsmanship.

## **THE CAME FROM OUT OF THE SKY (12)**

I find it discouraging – and a bit depressing – when I notice the unequal treatment afforded by the media to UFO believers on the one hand, and on the other, to those who believe in a invisible supreme being who inhabits the sky. Especially as the latter belief applies to the whole Jesus-Messiah-Son-of-God fable. [...] Granted, the world of UFO-belief has its share of kooks, nuts and fringe people, but have you ever listened to some of these religious true-believers? Have you ever heard of any extreme, bizarre behavior and outlandish claims associated with religious zealots? Could any of them be considered kooks, nuts or dingbats? A fair person would have to say yes. [...] I offer one version of a typical television news story heard each year on the final Friday of Lent: [...]

“Today is Good Friday, observed worldwide by Jesus buffs as the day on which the popular, bearded cultural figure, sometimes referred to as *The Messiah*, was allegedly crucified and – according to the legend – died for mankind's so-called sins. Today kicks off a 'holy' weekend that culminates on Easter Sunday, when, it is widely believed, this dead 'savior' – who also, by the way, claimed to be the son of a sky-dwelling, invisible being known as God – mysteriously 'rose from the dead.'

“According to the legend, by volunteering to be killed and actually going through with it, Jesus saved every person who has ever lived – and every person who ever *will* live – from an eternity of suffering in a fiery region popularly known as hell, providing – so the story goes – that the person to be 'saved' firmly believes this rather fanciful tale.”

That would be an example of unbiased news reporting. Don't wait around for it to happen. The aliens will land first.

## **THE TWO COMMANDMENTS (14)**

I have a problem with the Ten Commandments. Here it is: Why are there ten? We don't need that many. I think the list of commandments was deliberately and artificially inflated to get it up to ten. It's clearly a padded list. [...]

I'm going to show you how you can reduce the number of commandments and come up with a list that's a bit more logical and realistic. We'll start with the first three, and I'll use the Roman Catholic version because those are the ones I was fed as a little boy.

- I AM THE LORD THY GOD, THOU SHALT NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME
- THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN
- THOU SHALT KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH

Okay, right off the bat, the first three commandments – pure bull\*\*\*\*. “Sabbath day”, “Lord's name,” “strange gods.” Spooky language, Spooky language designed to scare and control primitive people. In no way does superstitious mumbo jumbo like this apply to the lives of intelligent, civilized humans in the twenty-first century. You throw out the first three commandments, and you're down to seven.

- HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

This commandment is about obedience and respect for authority; in other words it's simply a device for controlling people. The truth is obedience and respect should not be granted automatically. They should be earned. They should be based on the parents' (or the authority figure's) performance. Some parents deserve respect. Most of them don't. Period. We're down to six.

Now, in the interest of logic – something religion has a really hard time with – I'm going to skip around the list a little bit:

- THOU SHALT NOT STEAL
- THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS

Stealing and lying. Actually, when you think about it, these two commandments cover

the same sort of behavior: dishonesty. Stealing and lying. So we don't need two of them. Instead, we combine these two and call it "Thou shalt not be dishonest." Suddenly we're down to five.

And as long as we're combining commandments I have two others that belong together:

- THOUGH SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY
- THOUGH SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE

Once again, these two prohibit the same sort of behavior; in this case, marital infidelity. The difference between them is that coveting takes place in the mind. And I don't think you should outlaw fantasizing about someone else's wife, otherwise what's a guy gonna think about when he's flogging his dong?

But marital fidelity is a good idea, so I suggest we keep the idea and call this commandment "Thou shalt not be unfaithful." Suddenly we're down to four.

And when you think about it further, honesty and fidelity are actually parts of the same overall value. So, in truth, we could combine the two honesty commandments with the fidelity commandments, and, using positive language instead of negative, call the whole thing "Thou shalt always be honest and faithful." And now we're down to three.

- THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

This one is just plain stupid. Coveting your neighbor's goods is what keeps the economy going: Your neighbor gets a vibrator that plays "O Come All Ye Faithful," you want to get one, too. Covering creates jobs. Leave it alone.

You throw out coveting and you're down to two now: the big, combined honesty/fidelity commandment, and the one we haven't mentioned yet:

- THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Murder. The Fifth Commandment. But, if you give it a little thought, you realize that religion has never really had a problem with murder. Not really. More people have been killed in the name of God than for any other reason.

To cite a few examples, just think about Irish history, the Middle East, The Crusades, the Inquisition, our own abortion-doctor killings and, yes, the World Trade Center to see how seriously religious people take Thou Shalt Not Kill. Apparently, to religious folks – especially the truly devout – murder is negotiable. It just depends on who's doing the killing and who's getting killed.

And so, with all of this in mind, folks, I offer you my revised list of the Two Commandments:

First:

- THOU SHALT ALWAYS BE HONEST AND FAITHFUL, ESPECIALLY TO THE PROVIDER OF THY NOOKIE.

And second:

- THOU SHALT TRY REAL HARD NOT TO KILL ANYONE, UNLESS, OF COURSE, THEY PRAY TO A DIFFERENT INVISIBLE AVENGER THAN THE ONE YOU PRAY TO.

Two is all you need, folks. Moses could have carried them down the hill in his pocket. And if we had a list like that, I wouldn't mind that brilliant judge in Alabama displaying it prominently in his courthouse lobby. As long as he included one additional commandment:

- THOU SHALT KEEP THY RELIGION TO THYSELF!!!

## **GUYS & DOLLS:PART 1**

### **Ladies First (22)**

Here's all you need to know about men and women: Women are crazy, men are stupid. And the main reason women are crazy is that men are stupid. It's not the only reason, but it's a big one. And by the way, if you don't think men are stupid, check the

newspaper. Ninety-nine percent of all the truly horrifying s\*\*\* going on in this world was initiated, established, perpetrated, enabled or continued by men. And that includes the wave and the high five, two of history's truly low points. [...]

To begin with, [women] are smaller and weaker, so they get slapped, punched, raped, abused and, in general, get the s\*\*\* beaten out of them on a rather regular basis. By men, of course, who are stronger. If women were stronger, this wouldn't be happening. Men would not raise a hand if they thought the balance was more equal: they would back down quickly. Then again, if women were stronger, they would probably be beating the s\*\*\* out of men just for the fun of it. It's only fair.

### **IT'S A FEMALE PROBLEM (28)**

Beside a dusty road, in the open air, a physically repulsive man dressed in filthy doctor clothes stands at a rusted out examination table wearing a coal miner's hat and heavy work gloves. A woman lies in front of him on the examination table, her legs extending out from under a torn sheet, the ankles resting in stirrups. Nearby, an unattractive "nurse" sits at a desk picking her nose and wiping it on a lamp. Women squat nearby on tree stumps, reading magazines, waiting their turns. Just above this tableau is a large sign reading DISCOUNT ROADSIDE GYNECOLOGY.

### **IF LOOKS COULD KILL (30)**

I don't think it's right that ugly women should be allowed to get plastic surgery and get fixed up to look real nice. I think if you're born ugly you ought to stay that way. That should be it. It's not right to let people get fixed up. It's creepy to think that you could possibly find yourself f\*\*\*\*\* some woman you picked up because you thought she was great-looking, but underneath she's really ugly. She got her nose fixed, her lips, her eyes; she got nipped and tucked and liposuctioned, and the surgeon did a good job – he didn't overdo it – and now she looks really great. But underneath it all, she's horrible-looking and you're actually f\*\*\*\*\* a pig; someone you wouldn't even ask for change of a dollar if you could see her real face. It's not right. Ugliness should be a permanent condition.

### **THE CONTINUING STORY OF MARY & JOSEPH: "IT'S A BOY" (31)**

MARY: Joe, we're gonna have a baby.

JOE: What? That's impossible. All I ever do is put it between your thighs.

MARY: Well, I don't know. Something must've gone wrong.

JOE: Who says you're pregnant?

MARY: An angel appeared to me in the backyard and said so.

JOE: An angel?

MARY: An angel of God. His name was Gabriel. He had a trumpet and he appeared to me in the backyard.

JOE: He what?

MARY: He appeared to me.

JOE: Was he naked?

MARY: No. I think he had on a raincoat. I don't really know. He was glowing so brightly.

JOE: Mary, you're under a lot of stress. Why don't you take a few days off from the shop. The accounts can wait.

MARY: I'm telling you, Joe. This Angel Gabriel said that God wanted me to have his baby.

JOE: Did you ask for some sort of sigh?

MARY: Of course I did. he said tomorrow morning I'd start getting sick.

JOE: But why should God want a kid?

MARY: Well, Gabriel said that according to Luke it's kind of an ego thing. Plus, he promised the Jews a long time ago, it's just that he never got around to it. But now that he feels *ready* for children he doesn't want to just make them out of clay or dust. He wants to get humans involved.

JOE: Well, is he going to help toward raising the kid? God knows we can't do it alone. I could use a bigger shop, and maybe he could throw a couple of those nice crucifix contracts my way. The Romans are nailin' up everything that walks.

MARY: Honey, Gabriel said not to worry. The kid would be a real winner. A public speaker and good with miracles.

JOE: Well, that's a relief. Anyway, I guess now that you're officially pregnant I can start puttin' it inside you.

MARY: I'm sorry, honey. God wants it to be strictly virgin birth.

JOE: I don't get it.

MARY: That's right, Joe.

JOE: Don't I get to do anything?

MARY: He wants you to come up with a name for the kid.

JOE: Jesus Christ!

MARY: Joe, you're so heavy.

## **GUYS & DOLLS, PART 2**

### **Man, Oh Man! (33)**

To my way of thinking, men have only one real problem: other men. That's where all the trouble starts. A long time ago, men gave away their power. To other men: princes, kings, wizards, generals and high priests. They gave it away, because they believed what these other men told them. They bought the okeydoke. The bull\*\*\*\*. Men always buy the okeydoke when it comes from other men. [...]

There are five deadly male subcultures and they all overlap: the car and machinery culture, the police and military culture, the outdoors and gun culture, the sports and competition culture and the drug and alcohol culture. And, as a bonus, I'm gonna throw in one more: the "Let's go get some pussy and beat the s\*\*\* outta queers" culture. As I say, they all overlap. Many men belong to all six.

This male universe is, of course, detectable by analyzing its combustible chemical formula: gasoline, gunpowder, alcohol and adrenaline. A chemistry rendered even more lethal by that ever-present, ever-delightful accelerant; testosterone. Talk about substance abuse! If it's chemical dependency you're interested in, you might want to look into testosterone. TESS-TAHSS-TER-OWN!! - the most lethal substance on earth. And it does not come from a laboratory, it comes from the scrotum; a scrotum located, interestingly enough, not far from the a\*\*hole. How fitting. [...]

And so, excluded as they are from reproduction, men must find other ways to feel useful and worthwhile. As a result, they measure themselves by the size of their guns, the size of their cars, the size of their d\*\*\*\* and the size of their wallets. All contests that no man can win consistently. [...]

By the way, I'm not letting women completely off the hook. After all, the one part of the lower anatomy that is the same in both sexes is the a\*\*hole. But women who are a\*\*holes aren't called that. They're called c\*\*\*\*. Isn't it nice that c\*\*\*\* and a\*\*holes are next-door neighbors?

### **JACKO BEATS THEM ALL (42)**

I don't care if Michael Jackson freaked off with little boys or not. it doesn't bother me. F\*\*\* those kids. And f\*\*\* their greedy parents too. What's important to me is that

Michael is the greatest entertainer who ever lived. Bar none. Watch him dance; pay attention to the showmanship. No one ever came close.

Elvis was a bogus white guy with sex appeal and good looks who ripped off a lot of great black music, watered it down, and made it safe for lame whites who couldn't handle the experience of raw, emotional black music. Never grew as an artist; remained an entertainer. F\*\*\* Elvis.

Sammy Davis Jr.? Nice try. Ordinary dancer, ordinary singer, second-rate impressionist. I also didn't like the insincere sincerity. But he was a nice man, personally; I give him credit for that.

Frank Sinatra? Great singer of songs, among the best. Superb musician. Grew as an artist. No showmanship, though. Arrogant, too. And mean to ordinary people. F\*\*\* him.

Michael Jackson buries them all. I say give him a bunch of kids and let him dance.

### **LET'S GET REAL, HERE. (42)**

I've decided to cash in on TV's reality-show trend. I have several ideas, but they may need some work before I approach the networks. Here's what I'm working on:

#### *GETTIN' HIGH AND HAVIN' FUN*

*Maniac on Drugs.* Each week you put a different homicidal maniac in a van filled with assault rifles and you provide him with large amounts of speed, crack, acid and PCP. Then you let him drive around New York City for several days, and you videotape everything he does. Naturally, you clear all this with the police, so they don't interfere with the smooth flow of the show. At the end of thirteen weeks, you take all the psychos, give them a fresh supply of drugs and turn them loose at Disney World with rocket-propelled grenades. Actually, now that I think about it, this idea is too good for the networks; I'm gonna put it on pay-per-view.

Here's a variation for the finale, in case the Disney people get squeamish. You give the maniacs the same drugs, but instead of grenade launchers, you go back to the assault rifles. Everything's the same, but this time you put them on an ordinary, nonstop passenger train from New York to Los Angeles. You strap video cameras to their heads and let them run loose on the train, allowing them to befriend the other passengers. Remember, it's nonstop, no one can get off. I guarantee you'd get some really great footage. By the way, to save a little money, this could also be done on a Greyhound bus. But you'd need a really good driver who isn't easily distracted.

### **KEEP AMERICA CLEAN (47)**

As a public service, next weekend Boy Scouts will be picking up litter and trash from America's highways and dumping it in America's rivers. If you'd like to pitch in and help the Boy Scouts, bring some of your own trash from home and throw it out the window of your car as you drive along your favorite road. You'll be doing your part to keep the highways clean. By the way, if you have any ideas about cleaning up the rivers, let us know.

### **POLITICIAN TALK #2**

#### **Trouble on the Hill (79)**

I think one of the problems in this country is that too many people are screwing this up, committing crimes and then getting on with their lives. What is really needed for public officials who shame themselves is ritual suicide. Hara-kiri. Like those Japanese business executives who mismanage corporations into bankruptcy. Never mind the lawyers and the public relations and the press conferences, get that big knife out of the kitchen drawer and do the right thing.

## **POLITICIAN TALK #2**

### **Senator Patriot Speaks (81)**

Here are some more jingoistic variations you need to be on the lookout for: *The greatest nation on Earth; the greatest nation in the history of the world; and the most powerful nation on the face of the Earth*. That last one is usually thrown in just before we bomb a bunch of brown people. Which is every couple of years. And bombing brings me to the language used by politicians when referring to our armed forces. [...]

Here's another way politicians express their racist geographic chauvinism: *young men and women stationed in places the average American can't find on a map*. I've always thought it was amusing – and a bit out of character – for a politician to go out of his way to point out the limited amount of intelligence possessed by the American people. Especially since his job security depends on that very same limitation. It would also appear to contradict that other well-traveled and inaccurate standby: *The American people are a lot smarter than they're given credit for*.

Amazingly, politicians have mastered the art of uttering those words with a perfect straight face, even though the proposition is stated precisely backward. Judging from the results of focus groups, polls and election returns that I've seen, and watching the advertising directed at Americans, I'd say the American people are a lot *dumber* than they're given credit for. As one example, just look at the individuals they keep sending to their statehouses and to Washington to represent them. Look also at what they're done to their once-beautiful country and its landscape.

### **ZERO TOLERANCE (84)**

I get weary of this zero tolerance bull\*\*\*\*. It's annoying. To begin with, it's a fascist concept; it's what Hitler and Stalin practiced. It allows for no exceptions or compassion of any kind. All is black and white – no graduations. But even more important, it doesn't solve anything. The use of such a slogan simply allows whichever company, school or municipality is using it to claim they're doing something about a problem when, in fact, nothing is being done at all and the problem is being ignored. It's a cosmetic non-solution designed to impress simpletons. Whenever you hear the phrase zero tolerance, remember, someone is bull\*\*\*\*ing you.

### **LET'S KILL A TREE FOR THE KIDS (88)**

Regarding public Christmas displays: At some point, someone who worked at Rockefeller Center must have said, "Boys, I have a great idea for Christmas. Let's kill a beautiful tree that's been alive for seventy-five years and bring it to New York City. We'll stand it up in Rockefeller Plaza and conceal its natural beauty by hanging shiny, repulsive, man-made objects on it, and let it stand there slowly dying for several weeks while simpleminded children stare at it and people from Des Moines take pictures of it. That way, perhaps we can add our own special, obscene imprint to Christmas in Midtown."

### **AMERICA'S LOST INNOCENCE (133)**

I keep hearing that America lost its innocence on 9/11. I thought that happened when JFK was shot. Or was it Vietnam? Pearl Harbor? How many times can America lose its innocence? Maybe we keep finding it again. Doubtful. Because, actually, if you look at the record, you'll find that America has had very little innocence from the beginning.

### **THE FANATICS WILL WIN (134)**

I hope you good, loyal Americans understand that in the long run the Islamist extremists are going to win. Because you can't beat numbers, and you can't beat fanaticism – the

willingness to die for an idea.

A country like ours, preoccupied with Jet Skis, off-road vehicles, snow boards, Jacuzzis, microwave ovens, pornography, lap dances, massage parlors, escort services, panty liners, penis enhancement, tummy tucks, thongs and Odor Eaters doesn't have a prayer – not even a good, old-fashioned Christian prayer – against a billion fanatics who hate our country, detest its materialism and have nothing really to lose. Maybe fifty years ago, but not today when germs and chemicals and nuclear materials are for sale everywhere. People who don't give a s\*\*\* and have nothing to lose will always prevail over people who are fighting for some vague sentiment scrawled on a piece of parchment. Folks, they're gonna getcha; and it ain't gonna be pleasant.

We can't drop a five-thousand-pound bomb on every one of them. They will either run all over us or, in trying, they will turn us into even bigger monsters than we already are.

And don't get all excited about this goofy idea, "the spread of democracy." No matter who the United States puts in charge to bring peace and order in Iraq or Palestine or anywhere else, those people will be killed. It's that simple. Anyone who supports the United States will be killed. Peace and order will not be tolerated. Start saving your cash for the black market, folks, you're gonna need it.

### **GOD REST HIS SOUL (142)**

This idea could spread. It might even inspire young men to make more realistic marriage proposals: "Honey, let's get married. I realize I'm asking you to take a chance on a proven loser – I don't have any money or stuff like that – but maybe – hear me out – maybe we could find a cheap, unclean apartment in a dangerous neighborhood and have more kids than we can afford. If we're lucky, maybe a few of them won't be born sickly and disfigured, in spite of our genetic histories. Meanwhile, I could find a dehumanizing, low-paying, dead-end job with no benefits, while you stay home watching TV and gaining weight.

"And if things get bad – like if I get paralyzed, and you get raped by Mexican sailors and lose your mind and start crying all the time – we can always move in with my parents. They love kids, and their incest counseling is almost complete. And I've noticed Dad's 'episodes' are starting to result in far less property damage than before. What do you say, honey? You want to give it a shot? Maybe our second set of HIV tests will turn up negative."

### **COWARDS (179)**

Bush calls the al-Qaeda people cowards, and says, "They like to hide." Well, isn't that what the American Continental Army did during the American Revolution? Our beloved patriots? They hid. They hid behind trees. Then they came out, killed some British soldiers, and ran away. Just like al-Qaeda. That's what you do when you're outnumbered and have less firepower than the enemy. It's called "trying to win." It's not cowardly.

Bill Maher may have stretched the point a bit when he said that air force pilots who release their bombs from hundreds of miles away are cowards; flying combat jets doesn't attract many cowards. But it's not nearly as courageous an act as deliberately strapping a bomb to your chest and heading for the disco with no intention of dancing.

I will say this. Getting out of the Vietnam war through Daddy's connections and then not living up to your end of the bargain is probably a form of cowardice.

### **KEEPIN' IT REAL IN THE RING (224)**

Another area of speech that could benefit from a bit more realism would be those announcements that are made just before a boxing match:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the main event of the evening: twelve rounds of heavyweight boxing. In this corner, from "Cornhole, Mississippi, weighing two hundred pounds and wearing soiled white trunks, an utter and complete loser who is wanted in his states for crimes against the animal kingdom. Considered a complete scumbag by his family, he once f\*\*\*\*\* his sister at a church picnic and forced her to walk home alone. Also, on at least four occasions he has taken out his d\*\*\* at the circus and waved it at the trapeze lady. Here is, He-e-e-n-r-y-y Gonz-a-a-a-lez!

"In the other corner, wearing a pair of lame, out-of-style zebra-skin shorts that he found on the street, from Sweatband, Arkansas, an unattractive and disturbed young man who, by court order, is not permitted to be alone for more than two minutes at a time. In and out of sixteen mental institutions over the years, he is a dangerous sociopath who once killed a nun for blocking his view. He has been legally barred from more than fifteen hundred bars in the New York City area, and recently, while visiting a supermarket, he forced a fat woman to blow him in the meat section. Here he is, Ma-a-a-tty Mu-u-u-urphy-y-y!"

The fighters move out to the center of the ring to have the boxing rules recited to them.

"All right, boys, you know the rules: No biting, scratching, clawing or tripping. No yanking d\*\*\*\*. No grabbing the other guy's testicles and snapping them up and down. No using a small screwdriver to punch holes in the other guy's neck during clinches. And if you're gonna call the other guy's mother a diseased, two-dollar w\*\*\*\*, please, in the interest of accuracy, use her full name."

### **PROUD PARENT OF ANOTHER DRONE (244)**

Here's another segment of the bumper-sticker population that ought to be locked into portable toilets and set on fire. The ones who want us to know how well their kids are doing in school. Doing well, that is, according to today's lowered standards:

"We are the proud parents of an honors student at the Franklin School." Or the Midvale Academy. Or whatever other innocent-sounding name has been assigned to the indoctrination center where their child has been sent to be stripped of his individuality and turned into an obedient, soul-dead, conformist member of the American consumer culture.

What kind of empty people need to validate themselves through the achievements of a child? How would you like to live with a couple of these blockheads? "Say, Justin. How's that science project coming along?" "F\*\*\* you, Dad, you simpleminded p\*\*\*\*\*! Mind your own business and pass the Fruit Loops. F\*\*\*\*\* c\*\*\* dork."

Here are a few parental bumper stickers I'd like to see:

"We are the proud parents of a child whose self-esteem is sufficient that he doesn't need us promoting his minor scholastic achievements on the back of our car." That would be refreshing.

"We are the proud parents of a child who has resisted his teacher's attempts to break his spirit and bend him to the will of his corporate masters." A little Marxist, but what's wrong with that?

Here's something realistic: "We have a daughter in public school who hasn't been knocked up yet." And, for the boy: "We have a son in public school who hasn't shot any of his classmates yet. But he does sell drugs to your honors students. Plus, he knocked up your daughter."

And what about those parents who aren't too proud of their children? "We are the embarrassed parents of a cross-eyed, drooling little nitwit, who, at the age of ten, not only continues to wet the bed, but also s\*\*\*\* on the school bus." Something like that on the back of the car might give the child a little more incentive. Get him to try a little

harder next semester.

### **OUR LADY OF THE TV (258)**

"Hi. I'm Our Lady of the TV. I'm here to say hello, and to make sure everyone prays real hard for peace. Also, the last time I was here I forgot my sunglasses. Has anyone seen my sunglasses?"

(Stagehand hands her the glasses.)

"Thank you. Hold my purse, would you?"

(She hands him her purse and puts on the sunglasses.)

"I know that many of you lead a pointless existence. You have dead-end jobs, bad marriages and children who hate you because you've ruined their lives. I also know you look to symbols like me to provide solace and hope. Well, here's the deal: I have no solace to offer, and, frankly, there is no hope. I'm just an illusion; an illusion that means nothing. So work it out for yourselves; if you ask me, you're not trying hard enough. Thank you. I'll be back in a few years. And please stop bothering my son with stupid requests like winning the lottery."

(To the stagehand) "Gimme the purse."

### **GUYS WILL BE GUYS (269)**

I don't know why people got all excited about that guy Jeffrey Dahmer. Because he broke a few laws? So what? There's nothing wrong with killing twelve people, having sex with their corpses, masturbating on them, eating their flesh and then saving the heads in the refrigerator. What's wrong with that? Nothing. So far, nobody has been able to explain to me what it was Jeffrey Dahmer did that was so wrong.

First of all, let's remember, *wrong* is a relative term. Who's to say what's wrong? Who are we to judge? Put yourself in the other man's shoes. Who among you, under certain circumstance, might not kill twelve people, have sex with their corpses, masturbate on them, eat their flesh and then save the heads in the refrigerator? Not one of you, I suspect. So cut the guy a little slack. Always remember, there, but for the grace of God ...

### **I'VE GOT A TRAIN TO CATCH (276)**

This item demonstrates how stupid the average American is. Every ninety minutes someone in this country is hit by a train. A train, okay? Trains are on tracks; they can't come and get you. They can't surprise you when you step off a curb. You have to go to them. Got that?

There are five thousand highway/rail-crossing accidents annually. To counter this problem, the Department of Transportation issued the following rules for people to follow at railroad crossings:

- Don't drive around lowered gates. "Okay, got it."
- Don't cross in front of a train. "Never thought of that."
- Don't walk on the tracks. "Check"
- Be aware that trains can't stop quickly. "Good to know."
- Always expect a train "This one would probably be tied in to the fact that these are railroad tracks, is that right? Correct me if I'm wrong on this."
- Look for more than one train. "Frankly, this is one I never thought of. Maybe if I remember the others, this one will take care of itself."

### **GET DOWN! (277)**

Here's something to think about: In the course of history's wars, many battles took place

in the woods and the countryside. So, sometimes I picture a soldier waking up on a spring morning, wildflowers growing around his tent, birds singing in the trees, perhaps the comforting sound of a brook trickling by in the near distance. And then a ten-pound cannonball hits him in the face. It's an interesting thought, don't you think?

### **ON MY HONOR (277)**

I wanted to be a Boy Scout, but I had all the wrong traits. Apparently, they were looking for kids who were trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent. Unfortunately, at that time, I was devious, fickle, obstructive, hostile, rude, mean, defiant, glum, extravagant, cowardly, dirty and sacrilegious. So I waited a few years and joined the army.

### **PASS THE MUSTARD (277)**

In New York State, the law says that the ingredients of hot dogs can legally include a certain amount or percentage of insect parts and rat droppings. It's permissible by law. So, in New York, when you eat a hot dog, you more or less have to hope that the hot dog you're eating contains only the most nutritious parts of the insect (not just legs and antennae) and that the rats whose feces you're eating were on good, heart-healthy diets.

### **DEAR MA (280)**

*Dear Ma,*

*Even though you're dead, I wanted you to know I'm doing real well. NO thanks to you, I might add. I now have my own TV show and it's getting very high ratings. I play the part of a guy whose mother dies but it doesn't really bother him. I know they don't have good reception where you are, so I'm going to send you a tape. Do you think a tape will be okay in the intense heat?*

*Love, Dirk*

### **TEAM SUCK! (280)**

I don't like ass kissers, flag wavers or team players. I like people who buck the system. Individualists. I often warn kids: "Somewhere along the way, someone is going to tell you, 'There is no "I" in team.' What you should tell them is, 'Maybe not. But there *is* an "I" in independence, individuality and integrity.'"

Avoid teams at all costs. Keep your circle small. Never join a group that has a name. If they say, "We're the so-and-Sos," take a walk. And if, somehow, you must join, if it's unavoidable, such as a union or a trade association, go ahead and join. But don't participate; it will be your death. And if they tell you you're not a team player, just congratulate them on being so observant.

### **IN THE GROOVE (281)**

You ever run over a guy with your car? And you kind of panic? So you back up? And run over him a second time? And then you realize you have to get the f\*\*\* outta there before the police show up? So you put it in drive again and run over him a third time? What the f\*\*\* - might as well. What else you gonna do at that point, drive around him? Anyway, as you drive away, did you ever reflect on the fact that each time you ran over him the crunching sound got fainter and fainter? That's because he already had two good, deep grooves pressed into him that you kept driving through.

### **I'M IN THE MORAL MINORITY (282)**

I don't think there's really such a thing as morality. I think it's a human construct

designed to facilitate the control of people. Values, ethics, legal standards – all of these things are human-generated, and they're lumped under some vague idea called morality. But suppose humans got it wrong? Suppose there's no actual, objective morality? Suppose there's just a natural, worldly, secular, common-sense standard of behavior whose purpose is what's best for getting along and what's best for survival? That would be a good system. Why should a system like that be overlaid with a sense of spooky, mystical, judgmental oversight?

### **TRUE STUFF (283)**

You know those broken white lines that separate the lanes on a highway? Have you ever counted them? If you do, you'll find that there are a hundred of them every mile. It's true. Each line is a hundredth of a mile from the next one. Count them for yourself as you track your distance on the odometer. Just count how many there are each tenth of a mile; there should be ten. But while you're counting, don't forget to keep an eye out for that big eighteen-wheeler up ahead, parked sideways in the middle of the road.

### **BITS AND PIECES**

- You know what would have been a smart thing to do in these developing countries that need electricity? To have tried large-scale experiments with alternative energy sources: solar, wind, geothermal, etc. We could have tested and tried to perfect these technologies on a large scale in places that need it. That would have been smart. That's why we didn't do it. (54)
- All patriarchal societies are either preparing for war, at war, or recovering from war (111)
- Regarding creationists: Aren't these the same people who gave us alchemy and astrology, and who told us the earth, besides being flat, was at the center of the universe? Why don't we just kill these f\*\*\*\*\* people? (112)
- You know what would be fun? To have a set of twins, name them Dumbo and Goofy and then just sit back and see how their personalities develop. I'll bet they'd really enjoy going to school every day. (154)
- I'd like to point out that during the twentieth century, white, God-fearing, predominately Christian Europe produced Lenin, Stalin, Franco, Hitler and Mussolini. (154)
- I've noticed that a Jew will sometimes use a little paper clip to hold on his yarmulke. Shouldn't that be God's responsibility? I mean, you did your part, you put the thing on. Shouldn't it be God's job to keep it there? Or why don't Jews just wear larger yarmulkes that grip the head better? Maybe with an elastic strap that could go under the chin. By the way, I know a hip-hop Jew who wears his yarmulke backward. It's hard to detect, but I think it looks great. (155)
- In this country, alcohol is hardly ever seen as a drug problem. Instead, we think of it as more of a driving problem. (158)
- The best thing about visiting a hospital is that you see a lot of people who are much sicker than you, and it kind of makes you feel good. (206)
- They're always talking about what separates the men from the boys. Well, I'm gonna tell you what separates the men from the boys. The sodomy law. (206)
- Good news for senior citizens: Death is near! (209)
- During one of those patriotic orgies of self-congratulation that followed the first Gulf War, as General Schwarzkopf was bragging about dropping fire on women and babies, a protester interrupted his speech. The man who had killed a few hundred thousand civilians continued to speak. The protester was charged with

disturbing the peace. (209)

- When it comes to God's existence, I'm not an atheist and I'm not an agnostic. I'm an acrostic. The whole thing puzzles me. (261)
- Colin Powell spent his entire adult life as a soldier, trying to devise the most efficient ways of killing foreigners for his country. Then he became a diplomat, trying to devise the most efficient ways of getting foreigners to cooperate with his country. Tough sell. (261)
- A female teacher seduced a fourteen-year old boy and he turned her in to the police. What was this kid thinking? Was he f\*\*\*\*\* crazy? Or gay? I would have kept that kind of thing real quiet. At least until I graduated. (262)
- Cigarette companies market heavily to young people. They need young customers because their product kills the older one. It is the only product that, if used as intended, kills the customer. (262)
- When I'm in someone's house and I see something I want that's small and easy to conceal, I steal it. It's my belief that property belongs to the person who wants it most. (263)
- **Regarding astrology:** An obstetrician or a maternity nurse who weighs between one hundred and two hundred pounds actually exerts a greater gravitational force on a baby at the time of its birth than do any of the distant planets that are said to influence a person's personality and destiny. Why aren't these bulky, proximate objects factored into the astrological charts that are so carefully laid out? (264)
- You know something you don't see anymore? The sacking of a city. Rome and Constantinople were good examples. Next time we win a war, we ought to sack the capital of the country we defeat. "U.S. TROOPS SACK BAGHDAD." Wouldn't that be good? I guess we do our sacking in subtler ways. Through the business community. (265)
- Here's a tip from the power and light company on saving energy: If you have elderly people living with you, cut back on their heat and light. Old people often exaggerate how cold they feel. (266)