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Letters

A REPLY TO CARL DAVIDSON

"The Etruscans, as everyone knows, were the people who occupied the middle of Italy in early Roman days and whom the Romans, in their usual neighborly fashion, wiped out entirely to make room for Rome with a very big R. They couldn't have wiped them all out, there were too many of them. But they did wipe out the Etruscan existence as a nation and a people. However, this seems to be the inevitable result of expansion with a big E, which is the sole raison d'être of people like the Romans."

D.H. Lawrence, Etruscan Places

It would seem from the debates the events of September 11 have engendered, that there is a section of the left in the U.S. that believes in the legitimacy of the status quo, and bases its analysis on the condescending morality of National Public Radio.

Carl Davidson's "Terrorism and the Present Danger: a perspective for the American Left" (Lumpen number 84) was exemplary in this trend. While believing that "Bush says all the right things on the current crisis" and agreeing that "we need to take a clear stand for the destruction of al-Quaida's terrorist network" which is supported by "millions of active fundamentalist Muslim sympathizers on every continent", he then attempts to separate himself from the Bush administration in three ways. First, Davidson declares that Bush should not have labeled the attack "an act of war" but, rather, "a crime against humanity," in which case the act should not be responded to militarily but, instead, legally, through international law. Then again, he does recognize that "in the end, al-Quaida's forces have to be seized or destroyed on the ground," thereby presumably containing collateral damage (i.e., civilian deaths) to a more civilized minimum than is the case with air bombardment. In this, he recognizes agreement with the Colin Powell faction of the administration. Finally, he places great emphasis on an ultra-idealist theory of two Americas: in response to Bush's "good America" against the "evil Other", Davidson proposes to split America into two camps – the good and the not-so-good – or the nice America (the innocent Left and your average, well-meaning, if ignorant citizen) and the nasty America (the guilty administration). Al-Quaida and its "fundamentalist Muslim" support made the mistake of not seeing this distinction. "It has declared holy war on both of them."

What exactly is "fundamentalism"? Its narrowest dictionary definition is "a belief in the literal truth of the Bible against evolution" etc., a very American credo. Where else but in America is the belief in creationism still so widely held and respected? A broader definition might be "a practical belief that is primary or essential and backed by an external and unchangeable text." This is also American. Somewhere in the National Archives in Washington, enshrined in bullet-proof, helium-filled glass cases, lie the holy books: the Constitution and The Bill of Rights. And each night, they are lowered into a reinforced concrete underground vault to protect them from nuclear attack. These seminal texts have come to embody American exceptionalism. The United States' great success in the world must prove that it is, in fact, blessed by God. For all we know, maybe God, himself, dictated the texts to Jefferson. And as the U.S. political system becomes increasingly undemocratic, the American Left responds, not by criticizing and attempting to dismantle its institutions, but by clinging fast to the "holy books" for help and inspiration. This Left is so hyper-nationalistic that instead of basing its world view on international Socialist texts, it bases it on a document written over 200 years ago by capitalists and slave owners, white

men to The Man. This is no doubt at the root of Davidson's theory of two Americas.

Davidson presents his America as "the America of popular democracy. This America seeks peace and prosperity for itself and everyone else, freedom from the restrictions of racial, sexist and class privilege, democratic participation in political life, freedom of speech and tolerance of differences in creeds and styles of life, freedom of religion and freedom from the violence and intimidation of religious zealots." Sounds like heaven. The left wing critical theorist, Susan Buck-Morss shares Davidson's beatific view. In "A Global Public Sphere?" (a talk given at a conference in London in October, 2001), she states: "There are two United States of America...the one United States, of which I am a voting citizen, is institutionally a democratic republic. It is committed by its Constitution to a balance of powers – between local and federal elected officials on the one hand, and among the executive, legislative and judicial branches on the other. It is a nation founded on principles of freedom....universal political freedoms of belief, speech, assembly, due process, and equality before the law; equality that has evolved over two hundred years of citizen struggle to mean blindness to sexual and class difference, sexual preference, racial heritage and ethnic origin, with the goal of affirming and protecting difference in all the individual and collective human senses. I am fiercely loyal to the United States of America that espouses these ideals." To an outsider, this must seem insufferably smug and arrogant, as if the USA invented the ideals of democracy. There is a kind of Pollyanna pathology at work here, in which the U.S.A. can be seen as the seeker of the grail of social perfection for themselves, and, by inference, the rest of the lamely bumbling-along world.

So what is the other America? Davidson describes it as "the America of Empire. It seeks security for its sources of energy, stability for its markets, reliable and expanding returns of its investments, fear and respect of its military power and hegemony for its politics and culture" This is also the one that Susan Buck-Morss calls "The National Security State" over which she (and surely all other "good" Americans) have no control. "The paradox" she says, "is that this undemocratic state claims absolute power over the citizens of a free and democratic nation." But how can this be? How can "the world's oldest and greatest political democracy" be at the same time a dictatorship run by an oligarchy over which its citizens have no control? This "paradox" is really an absolute contradiction in terms. If, in fact, nothing in this "democracy" can be changed to allow such a basically peaceful people to move forward in history as a partner in the world and to shed its devastatingly aggressive imperialist designs and allow its own people and others to fulfill their lives in a human way and create a decent future for all, then we had better find out immediately why that is. Or do the rave reviews for the U.S. "way of life" by writers on the Left merely hide a fear for their own skin? I suppose one could trot out clippings that point to one's deferential and, yes, reverent announcements in print of one's loyalty, love, etc., when the shit hits the fan. The result of this patriotic adoration on the Left, coupled with the intransigence of the system, is that we have no class consciousness, no political parties to speak of (certainly no party of the working class), and therefore no political debate worth talking about. The Senate is unrepresentative; the President can abuse power; the Congress is ineffectual, its debates are a sham, all the decisions are made in subcommittees, and powerful and wealthy lobbies see to it that their positions are defended against the public good. And finally, the judiciary – those nine life-time appointed judges – make unappealable

final decisions by interpreting the holy texts according to their own prejudices. Remember the last "election." Democracy is defined as a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people collectively. We live in a "democracy" where the power is held by an oligarchy in full control of all government institutions. To point this out is no doubt un-American. No less true.

Is it fear or is it brainwashing that leads Carl Davidson in his proposals to resort to holy writ? In order to oppose the attacks on civil liberties, he proposes we "respect the U.S. Bill of Rights at home and the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights abroad." As to the United Nations, the United States shows indifference if not obvious contempt for any ruling that inhibits its desires. And who will enforce rulings against the U.S.? For instance, who enforced the World Court's ruling against the U.S. in the case of Nicaragua?

And is it fear or brainwashing that leads Davidson to believe and repeat everything he hears on the news? Who is a terrorist and who is a freedom fighter? I think the real purpose of Davidson's essay is to tell the Left in the peace movement that this time the West has the just cause because "bin Laden's terrorism opposes our democratic values." And "Al-Quaida is more like a network of drug cartels or a politicized mafia . . . united around a feudal-theocratic-fascist ideology anchored in thousands of cult training schools." And how did he come to this critically thought-out opinion? The New York Times? If Davidson thinks back he may remember an identical characterization of "terrorists" during Reagan's War on International Terrorism in the 1980s. The only difference being that in those days the "terrorists" were socialists or Marxists as well as being nationalists. Now, anti-imperialists fight in the name of Allah because the older socialist organizations were either bought off or destroyed. The ubiquitous CIA. During the I.R.A. bombings in England in the 1970s and 1980s, sections of the Brit Left often repeated the Brit media line that the I.R.A. were mafia members, drug runners, criminals and fascists. Not real socialists like...well, the Brit Left!

The attacks of September 11 weren't done for the hell of it, for maniacal hatred of "western civilization" or for mere resentment of U.S. wealth. They were, in fact, a continuation and escalation of a war that has been ongoing in the middle east since World War II between the people of those states and the U.S. and its client settler state, Israel. There was Suez, the Six Day War, the Yom Kippur War, the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War of 1991, the bombing of Iraq (that has continued ever since), the two Palestinian intifadas, and the always ongoing drive of the Israelis to wipe out the Palestinian existence as a people or a nation. The U.S. has been waging war for the last half century, not only in the middle east, but in southeast Asia and Latin America. For all that time we have lived with wartime propaganda. The result of this is that the people of the U.S. can respond to the deaths at the World Trade Center with mass hysteria and emotional outpourings, but for those thousands who have died as a result of U.S. aggression around the world, they have only indifference. The enemy is always dehumanized; only "our people" are flesh and blood, with families, lives. And of course, only "our civilians" are innocent. Then it must follow that the people in Kabul, Belgrade, Baghdad or for that matter Hiroshima, were guilty. But terrorizing civilians is the way wars are now fought. At the beginning of the 20th Century, only 10 % of casualties were civilian. At the end of the century, 90% of casualties were civilian.

To return to where I began with the Etruscans, apparently they were vicious. We know this because their enemies and exterminators, the Romans, said so. "However, wrote D.H. Lawrence, "these pure clean-living, sweet-souled Romans, who smashed nation after nation and crushed the free soul in people after people, they said the Etruscans were vicious. . . . The only vicious people on the face of the earth presumably. You and I, dear reader, we are two unsullied snowflakes, aren't we? We have every right to judge.

"Myself, however, if the Etruscans were vicious, I'm glad they were. To the puritan, all things are impure as somebody said. And those bad neighbors of the Romans at least escaped being puritans."

Yours,
Charlotte Corday.

9.11 DIALECTIC

1. Thesis and 2. Antithesis below illustrate which American citizen you are.
3. Synthesis: whose side are *you* on? . . .

1. THESIS:

Americans who accept the official, corporate-media-sponsored explanation of what happened on September 11--that an organization(s?) of Islamic militant guerillas piloted commercial airliners into the WTC and Pentagon, and that the current "War on Terror" and FBI/international investigations are attempts to quell, hunt down, and destroy those organization(s).
[This category currently includes many leftist, grassroots, anti-corporate, human rights, social justice, environmental and anti-war activists and labor unionists.]

2. ANTITHESIS:

That corporate and oil-funded members of the Bush administration's cabinet are fully implicated accessories with foreknowledge of the September 11 incidents, and have willfully used these events as a pretext to accomplish their domestic and foreign policy goals (plus personal stock portfolio boosts from war profiteering), which they continue to spout from the pulpits of the White House, Pentagon, and Justice Department.
[strong evidence with documentation exists in worldwide media and internet, but is most heavily suppressed in US--gathering & distribution is the exposure task mentioned in 3. below]

3. SYNTHESIS:

Given Bush's "State of the War" speech last week, along their plans (Cheney and Rumsfeld have each served in previous administrations as Secretary of Defense) to double defense spending and extend the conflict for decades, the only way to effectively unify opposition to this administration's direction is for true leftists and freedom fighters--who obviously oppose this administration in every other conceivable way--NOT TO ACCEPT the official explanation of September 11, 2001 events, and actively EXPOSE its falsehood, in order to prevent further raging atrocities against Afghanistan, Colombia, _____?

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The following is an edited version of Our Dear Leader Bush's State of the Union address:

Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, fellow citizens, as we gather tonight, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our union has never been stronger.

When I called our troops into action, I did so with complete confidence in their courage and skill. And tonight, thanks to them, we are winning the war on terror.

Thanks to the work of our law enforcement officials and coalition partners, hundreds of terrorists have been arrested, yet tens of thousands of trained terrorists are still at large. These enemies view the entire world as a battlefield, and we must pursue them wherever they are. So long as training camps operate, so long as nations harbor terrorists, freedom is at risk and America and our allies must not, and will not, allow it.

Our military has put the terror training camps of Afghanistan out of business, yet camps still exist in at least a dozen countries. A terrorist underworld -- including groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Jaish-i-Mohammed -- operates in remote jungles and deserts, and hides in the centers of large cities.

Many nations are acting forcefully. Pakistan is now cracking down on terror, and I admire the strong leadership of President Musharraf. But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, America will. Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction.

Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September 11, but we know their true nature. North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.

Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax and nerve gas and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens, leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic. We will work closely with our coalition to deny terrorists and their state sponsors the materials, technology and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. We will develop and deploy effective missile defenses to protect America and our allies from sudden attack.

And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security.

We'll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events while dangers gather. I will not stand by as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.

Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not

be finished on our watch, yet it must be and it will be waged on our watch.

We can't stop short. If we stopped now, leaving terror camps intact and terror states unchecked, our sense of security would be false and temporary. History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight.

Homeland security will make America not only stronger but in many ways better. Knowledge gained from bioterrorism research will improve public health. Stronger police and fire departments will mean safer neighborhoods. Stricter border enforcement will help combat illegal drugs.

For too long our culture has said, "If it feels good, do it." Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: "Let's roll." In the sacrifice of soldiers, the fierce brotherhood of firefighters, and the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens, we have glimpsed what a new culture of responsibility could look like. We want to be a Nation that serves goals larger than self. We have been offered a unique opportunity, and we must not let this moment pass.

In this moment of opportunity, a common danger is erasing old rivalries. America is working with Russia, China, and India in ways we never have before to achieve peace and prosperity. In every region, free markets and free trade and free societies are proving their power to lift lives. Together with friends and allies from Europe to Asia, from Africa to Latin America, we will demonstrate that the forces of terror cannot stop the momentum of freedom.

The last time I spoke here, I expressed the hope that life would return to normal. In some ways, it has. In others, it never will. Those of us who have lived through these challenging times have been changed by them. We've come to know truths that we will never question: Evil is real, and it must be opposed.

Beyond all differences of race or creed, we are one country, mourning together and facing danger together. Deep in the American character, there is honor, and it is stronger than cynicism. Many have discovered again that even in tragedy, especially in tragedy, God is near.

In a single instant, we realized that this will be a decisive decade in the history of liberty -- that we have been called to a unique role in human events. Rarely has the world faced a choice more clear or consequential.

Our enemies send other people's children on missions of suicide and murder. They embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed. We stand for a different choice -- made long ago, on the day of our founding. We affirm it again today. We choose freedom and the dignity of every life.

Steadfast in our purpose, we now press on. We have known freedom's price. We have shown freedom's power. And in this great conflict, my fellow Americans, we will see freedom's victory.

Thank you, thank you all, and may God bless.

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Bush Diary

By Michael DiGioia

Been reading the paper much? Well even if you have it's easy to miss the following excerpts from the major news sources. They reveal a clear sense of purpose by the Bush administration to funnel money to the energy and defense industries, muckrake in various countries, and do their best to cover their tracks. In many cases these tidbits go against the general tone of the media. Although the diary is meant to last from November until the beginning of February a few items have been added up front to give historical context.

December 8, 1998

Joining Unocal's board of directors are James W. Crownover, who will complete his career as a director of McKinsey & Company, Inc., at the end of this year, and Dr. Donald B. Rice, president and chief executive officer of UroGenesys, Inc.

Rice served as Secretary of the Air Force in the Bush Administration after a 17-year stint as president and chief executive officer of the RAND Corporation. He earlier served in the U.S. Defense Department as deputy assistant secretary for resource analysis and director of cost analysis.
- *Unocal Web site*

July 6, 2001

Former US President George Bush "hates" the current situation of former President Carlos Menem, under house arrest on charges of smuggling weapons while in office.

Menem collaborators yesterday distributed a seven-line e-mail recently sent by the former US head of state to Menem in which Bush said that "you will always be my friend." "I want you to know that you are my friend, that you will always be my friend and that although I don't know anything about the problems you are going through at the moment, I fully trust in you," were Bush's words according to the copy of the e-mail handed out by Menem aides. *Buenos Aires Herald*

September 14, 2001

During this time, Afghanistan was in the midst of a civil war. We met with many factions, including the Taliban, to educate them about the benefits such a pipeline could bring to this desperately poor and war-torn country, as well as to the Central Asian region. At no time did we make any deal with the Taliban, and, in fact, consistently emphasized that the project could not and would not proceed until there was an internationally recognized government in place in Afghanistan that fairly represented all its people. Our hope was that the project could help bring peace, stability and economic development to the Afghans, as well as develop important energy resources for the region. *Unocal web site - Press statement*

November 4, 2001

Throughout the mid-1990s, a U.S. oil company was tracking the outcome of the Afghan conflict. Unocal, a California-based energy giant, was seeking rights to build a massive pipeline system across Afghanistan, connecting the vast oil and natural gas reserves of Turkmenistan to a plant and ports in Pakistan.

Raphel, who shuttled to Kandahar to meet with Taliban leaders and met at other points with different groups, said the agency also thought the project might help rally them around a common goal. "We worked hard to make all the Afghan factions understand the potential, because the Unocal pipeline offered development opportunities that no aid program nor any Afghan government could," she said.

Unocal appealed to the Taliban and received assurances that it would sup-

port a \$4.5 billion project rivaling the trans-Alaska pipeline. The deal promised to be a boon for the Taliban, which could realize \$100 million a year in transit fees.

But Unocal also needed U.S. backing. To secure critical financing from agencies such as the World Bank, it needed the State Department to formally recognize the Taliban as Afghanistan's government.

Unocal hired former State Department insiders: former secretary of state Henry A. Kissinger, former special U.S. ambassador John J. Maresca and Robert Oakley, a former U.S. ambassador to Pakistan.

Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-born former Reagan State Department adviser on Afghanistan, entered the picture as a consultant for a Boston group hired by Unocal. Khalilzad is now one of President Bush's top advisers on Afghanistan.

Officially, Unocal refused to take sides in the Afghan conflict. But its favors to the Taliban sent a clear signal to rivals. Unocal gave the Taliban a fax machine to speed its communications and funded a job training program affiliated with the University of Nebraska that was set up in Kandahar, the Taliban stronghold in southeast Afghanistan.

Before Unocal, the Taliban "were just a bunch of wild jihadists running around. They came out of nowhere," said Richard Dekmejian, a University of Southern California terrorism specialist.

In a late 1997 public relations move, Unocal flew Taliban officials to tour the company's U.S. offices. They took a side trip to the beach, then flew to Washington for meetings in the Capitol and at the State Department to press their case for U.S. recognition.

But the visit only fueled the outrage of women's rights groups who were incensed by Unocal's coziness with the regime.
- *Washington Post*

November 6, 2001

Former Pres Carlos Saul Menem of Argentina says he will run for president in 2003 election; he was just released from house arrest after Supreme Court ruled prosecutors have insufficient evidence to link him to conspiracy to sell arms illegally to other countries when he was in office. *NYT*

December 13, 2001

Hamid Karzai, the new interim leader of Afghanistan, feels at ease in a Washington or London salon. He has a large knowledge of western culture. After Kabul and India where he studied Law he has improved his education in the US, as he has worked for a while as a consultant for the oil company Unocal, when the company was working on a project to build an oil pipeline in Afghanistan. - *Le Monde*

December 16, 2001

The government of Carlos Menem acquired a lot of debt, both domestic and foreign, and that sent domestic interest rates up. The more the government was borrowing, the more expensive credit became for businesses. And that forced many companies to close.

A wave of privatization in the 1990s under Menem had already thrown a lot of people out of work, and because many of the privatized companies were utilities, prices for such basic services as electricity and phones spiraled upwards. So Argentina's recession had started three-and-a-half years ago.

The IMF made clear they were not inclined to bail Argentina out by making an advance payment on a previously agreed loan to allow it to make its next debt payment. - *Time*

December 20, 2001

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said the Bush administration, the IMF and the World Bank have tried since January to pull Argentina back from the verge of economic collapse.

"It seems quite clear they're not able to service that level of debt," O'Neill said. "They're working through the difficult options that a sovereign nation has to look at to put itself on a sound financial footing. That initiative has to come from the leadership of the country. It's not something that can be imposed from outside." - *AP*

December 21, 2001

Despite Argentina's severe economic and political crisis, Bush administration officials said today that they were unlikely to support any new aid until the country adopted an economic course that had a chance of lifting it out of a four-year recession.

What administration officials are not saying publicly is that Argentina will almost certainly have to devalue its currency and default on its debt before it has a chance of restarting the flow of loans from a \$22 billion aid program administered by the International Monetary Fund. - *NYT*

December 26, 2001

On his way to his ranch in central Texas, Bush telephoned Presidents Vicente Fox of Mexico, Ricardo Lagos of Chile and Jorge Batlle of Uruguay.

He declined to elaborate on their conversations, saying only that they "discussed the ongoing economic issues in Argentina."

Bush has urged Argentina's new leader to implement the austerity measures proposed by the International Monetary Fund, saying this could clear the way for the lending agency to free up funding to stem the country's economic slide.

"Hopefully the new president will do the austerity measures necessary to be able to protect the creditors, including the IMF, which is, as I understand it, willing to loan more money if the austerity measures are put in place," Bush told Reuters and other news agencies Friday. - *Reuters*

January 10, 2002

Mr. Bush told reporters as he toured a research laboratory in Pittsburgh: "This is a business problem, and my Justice Department is going to investigate. If there's wrongdoing, we'll hold them accountable for mistreatment of employees and shareholders."

Lawyers representing the employees have accused Enron of stock fraud for imposing the moratorium and for not disclosing the company's financial condition, resulting, the lawyers say, in losses of more than \$1.2 billion for the 15,000 participants in Enron's retirement plan. During the moratorium, employees could not sell stock restrictions in selling their stock. - *NYT*

January 11, 2002

The appointment of someone with as questionable credentials as Zalmay Khalilzad -- a former oil lobbyist for Unocal, a vocal critic of Iran and a former public supporter of Taliban -- as the current U.S. envoy to Kabul has certainly not escaped the attention of the Iranians and cannot be seen as a reassuring move toward stabilizing Afghanistan by inviting the constructive

participation of its neighbors." - *IPA Institute of Public Accuracy*

Editors Note: This is not mentioned in any White House press release or any American press that I could find. However Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, then the Director of Strategy and Doctrine of the Program Project Air Force at the RAND Corporation, made this mention during a March 9, 2000 speech in L.A.:

"Afghanistan was and is a possible corridor for the export of oil and gas from the Central Asian states down to Pakistan and to the world. A California company called Unocal was interested in exploring that option, but because of the war in Afghanistan, because of the instability that's there, those options, or that option at least, has not materialized."

January 12, 2002

In a finding rich with irony, a statewide recount, could have produced enough votes to tilt the election to Gore, no matter what standard was chosen to judge voter intent.

Another complicating factor in the effort to untangle the result is the overseas absentee ballots that arrived after Election Day. A *New York Times* investigation earlier this year showed that 680 of the late-arriving ballots did not meet Florida's standards yet were still counted. The vast majority of those flawed ballots were accepted in counties that favored Mr. Bush, after an aggressive effort by Bush strategists to pressure officials to accept them. - *NYT*

January 17, 2002

For weeks, White House officials have swatted away questions about Enron, trying to maintain distance between the president and Lay, one of the staunchest supporters of Bush's political life.

Lay, a friend of Bush's father, became close to the Oval Office's current occupant in 1992. Lay was serving as co-chair of the host committee for the Republican National Convention in Houston, where the elder Bush was nominated for a second term.

Bush and Lay met up again during the site-selection process for the senior Bush's presidential library.

As the younger Bush emerged as a force in first Texas and then national politics, Lay and other Enron officials emerged as some of his most generous campaign contributors. During the presidential race, Lay -- whom Bush calls "Kenny Boy" -- joined the ranks of the Bush "Pioneers," supporters who raised at least \$100,000 for the candidate and then provided more cash to defray Bush expenses during the Florida recount. - *Houston Chronicle*

January 15, 2002

Argentina's currency devaluation and debt default could create problems for some of the biggest US and European telecommunications companies. International arm of US wireless carrier Nextel Communications has missed debt payment to banks, mainly as result of Argentine crisis. Other telecommunications companies with big presence in Argentina, including AT&T, BellSouth, Verizon Communications and Telefonica of Spain, all could feel pinch of decline in hard-currency revenue and could find themselves in uncertainty. Venture capital investors are also exposed, including Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst, which financed expansion of telecommunications and cable television companies within Argentina. - *NYT*

January 17, 2002

Pres Bush cautions Argentina against using its economic crisis as excuse to backtrack on free-market reforms or return to era of protectionism. Bush speaks at Washington headquarters of Organization of American States, hoping to send strong message to Pres Eduardo Duhalde, who has said his country's economic crisis is caused in part by American led 'model' of economic development, particularly rapid market openings and deregulation. *NYT*

January 30, 2002

The government of Chile said today that it would buy 10 F-16 fighter jets from the United States, with the blessing of the Bush administration, in a sale valued at \$660 million. - *NYT*

January 31, 2002

Administration officials say President Bush decided to lump Iran and North Korea with Iraq as members of 'axis of evil' whose support for terrorism seeks to acquire and spread weapons of mass destruction despite fact that two nations have sporadically sought improved relations with US. Bush wants to send clear warning that any nation that puts its nuclear or biological weapons within reach of terrorists can expect strongest American reaction. Bush's wording, using stark term 'axis of evil,' rockets around world, leading to puzzled calls from diplomats in Washington seeking to explain it their capitals. - *NYT*

February 1, 2002

The Duhalde government of Argentina agreed "absolutely" with the Bush Administration's concerns about the twin dangers of rising protectionism and expanded state control in Latin America. Argentina, he said, also shared Washington's worries about continuing government controls on exchange rates and bank withdrawals. Senior Official Ruckauf said Argentina would abandon them gladly--with, of course, appropriate international financial support, he said. *Washington Post*

February 2, 2002

In a move that provoked partisans in the abortion debate and could set the stage for a legal challenge, the Bush administration said Thursday that states may classify a fetus as an "unborn child" eligible for government-paid health care.

Critics of the decision characterized the move as a backdoor attempt by the Bush administration and conservative Republicans to establish fetuses as people with legal standing, possibly paving the way toward criminalizing abortion. In its landmark 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision, the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion nationwide and ruled that fetuses were not "persons." - *Chicago Tribune*

February 03, 2002

A key task-force meeting, sources tell *Time*, was held by Cheney in the White House on May 3. Among attendees were two lobbyists for electric utilities: former Montana Governor and now G.O.P. chairman Marc Racicot and former G.O.P. chairman Haley Barbour. Two weeks later, Cheney's report gave the lobbyists much of what they wanted, including a re-evaluation of a costly clean-air rule, called the new-source review, which requires new pollution controls when power plants are expanded. While he was lobbying for these energy interests, Barbour was also raising at least \$250,000 for a May 21 G.O.P. gala honoring President Bush. The group of utilities Barbour was representing, led by Southern Co., gave \$150,000 to the event. - *Time*

February 5, 2002

The Bush administration is opening the red rock country near two of Utah's popular national parks to oil and gas drilling, over the objections of some park rangers in the Southwest and government scientists.

As part of the president's energy plan to expand development on federal lands, 50,000-pound trucks have been pounding the ground between Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, searching for oil with seismic measuring instruments. At the same time, oil companies have bought leases to drill on federal land outside Canyonlands park.

"You won't see it looking like West Texas with oil pumps everywhere," said Bill Stringer, of the Bureau of Land Management. "The drilling will be spread out, and in some cases we'll get them to turn the drills sideways so you can barely see them from the parks."

"We're all just sort of shaking our head because this area is so controversial," said Beth McBride, president of Legacy Oil, which owns a lease that allows it to drill for oil in the Lockhart Basin next to Canyonlands National Park. - *NYT*

February 6, 2002

The Bush administration is proposing to expand military aid to this war-racked nation by training the Colombian Army to protect a 500-mile-long oil pipeline from leftist rebels, senior American officials visiting Colombia said today. Such a program would be a sharp departure from a policy that until now has focused on eradicating drugs.

The administration is seeking Congressional approval of a \$98 million request that would pay for helicopters, communications equipment and training for Colombian troops to guard the Caño Limón pipeline, which transports crude oil pumped by Occidental Petroleum of Los Angeles from the country's eastern oil fields to a Caribbean port. - *NYT*

February 6, 2002

President Bush's new budget shows extraordinarily slow growth in Medicare over the next decade, puzzling members of Congress and health policy experts, who say the numbers appear to be unrealistic.

Reasons for the slow growth remained something of a mystery today as lawmakers pored over the budget that Mr. Bush unveiled on Monday.

Assuming a slower rate of growth for Medicare has the same effect as cutting the Medicare budget; it saves money. But it avoids the political uproar that would surround a proposal for large cuts in Medicare.

The budget office, the official scorekeeper for Congress, estimated last month that Medicare spending would double in the next decade under existing laws. By contrast, Mr. Bush said that Medicare spending would grow 73 percent in the next decade, even though the rolls would begin to swell with the addition of the first baby boomers in 2011 and 2012. - *NYT*

February 8, 2002

Crown Prince Abdullah ibn Abdulaziz, the leader of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah interpreted the president's remarks as absolving Israel and blaming Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, for worsening conditions, according to a senior Saudi official.

Abdullah delivered a harsh message:

"We believe there has been a strategic decision by the United States that its national interest in the Middle East is 100-percent based on [Israeli Prime

Minister Ariel] Sharon." This was America's right, the message continued, but Saudi Arabia could not accept the decision. "Starting from today, you're from Uruguay, as they say. You [Americans] go your way, I [Saudi Arabia] go my way. From now on, we will protect our national interests, regardless of where America's interests lie in the region." - *Washington Post*

February 8, 2002

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld asked the Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday to approve a \$379 billion defense budget for fiscal 2003 and heard not a word of protest from Democrats or Republicans about the largest proposed increase in defense spending since the Reagan administration. - *Washington Post*

Feb 9, 2002

Tremors of fear (if not loathing)—of American power, American hubris and what is perceived as an American inclination to ignore its friends as it damns its enemies—are coursing through Europe these days. As Europeans listened last week to Bush proclaim his vision of a new and dangerous epoch—which, with its very own "axis of evil," sounded chillingly like world wars of the past—America's traditional allies were left wondering where they fit into his scheme of things.

Bush made just one scant reference to Europe in his State of the Union speech, and yet much of what he said will directly affect European lives. Some feel as if they're hooked to a superpower locomotive that's about to go out of control, with an engineer who sees no reason to heed their warnings. "What is worse," says former Swedish prime minister Carl Bildt, "is that [the Europeans] don't have a clue where it's going." MSNBC

February 10, 2002

Prof. Marc W. Herold, an economist at the University of New Hampshire, added up at least 3,767 civilian casualties from Oct. 7 to Dec. 6. Carl Conetta, co-director of the Project on Defense Alternatives, used a more stringent distillation of media accounts and concluded that a better guess would be 1,000 to 1,300 deaths.

Whatever the total, the Pentagon would likely continue to insist that it is a bare, if inevitable, minimum. "There is no question but from time to time, innocent people, noncombatants, undoubtedly are killed and that is always unfortunate," Mr. Rumsfeld has said repeatedly. - *NYT*

February 10, 2002

When Pennsylvania was considering a deregulation bill in 1997, Mr. Lay prevailed on Governor Bush to call Governor Ridge to vouch for Enron. "I said it would be very helpful to Enron," Mr. Lay said last year.

Pennsylvania wound up enacting deregulation.

Texas' deregulation plan — the culmination of a legislative battle that began in 1995 — went into effect last month. While Enron did not get all it wanted, it scored a partial victory. Texans for Public Justice, a watchdog group, estimates that Enron's statehouse lobbying cost \$535,000 to \$945,000.

Enron hired 83 lobbyists in Texas, bought advertisements in local papers and gave to local charities, including Laura Bush's book fair.

"Enron was unique because of the sophistication of their play," said Tom Smith, Texas director of Public Citizen, a consumer group. "It was all Enron, all the time. They helped craft the legislation. They gave to high-profile charities. They gave to both sides of the aisle. They'd hold fund-rais-

ers for those they wanted to re-elect. And they had the good ol' boy lobbyists go out after hours boozing and schmoozing." - *NYT*

February 11, 2002

Anyone trawling for insights into the most recent former governor, George W. Bush, or say, his ties to Enron in the years he ran Texas, would have to travel 118 miles east to College Station. Even then, it might be months, maybe even years, before many of the records are available.

The papers, sitting in 1,800 boxes, are at the center of a tug of war between Mr. Bush and the director of the Texas state archives. By placing them at his father's presidential library at Texas A&M University, Mr. Bush is putting them in the hands of a federal institution that is not ordinarily bound by the state's tough Public Information Act.

Last Nov. 1, President Bush issued an executive order that blocked the long-awaited release of documents from Ronald Reagan's presidential library. The order, which is being challenged in court by several organizations, permits a sitting president to veto the release of a former president's records.

The Bush administration has also been criticized over a memorandum that Attorney General John Ashcroft issued in October, telling federal officials that they could "be assured" of Justice Department backing if they resisted freedom-of-information requests. Vice President Dick Cheney is also battling the General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress, over a request to produce records about his energy task force.

"What seems to be coming out of the administration is the idea that public information is a dangerous thing," said Tom Connors, a council member of the Society of American Archivists. - *NYT*

February 11, 2002

Angered by the United States' labeling of Iran as part of an "axis of evil," hundreds of thousands of Iranians chanted "Death to America" on Monday during demonstrations to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

The gathering was much larger than last year's commemorations as Iranians used the occasion to show their anger with President Bush's condemnation of their country in his State of the Union address. Many Iranians who said they rarely join such celebrations spoke of taking to the streets to show solidarity. - *Chicago Tribune*

February 11, 2002

US troops are ready to suffer casualties to help the Philippines fight Muslim extremist guerrillas that are holding an American couple, the head of the US forces said.

In a training exercise, 160 US Special Forces part of a 660-strong contingent would be allowed to enter war zones to observe Filipino soldiers battling Abu Sayyaf guerrillas on southern Basilan island.

US troops are forbidden from engaging in combat but will be armed for self-defence. *LA Times*

Bush Counts on the War Without End

by *Thomas Walkom*

Originally published in *The Toronto Star*, 2/05/02

THE WAR against terrorism is a brilliant construct. It may not have been started by George W. Bush, but it certainly works to his advantage.

It has provided oomph to the sagging U.S. economy and a new raison d'être for the alliance of politicians, defence contractors and security specialists who make up what former U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower christened the military-industrial complex.

What makes this war so superior, in political terms, is its vagueness. Since the terrorist, by definition, can be anyone — the man in the next apartment, the person lurking on the subway platform — we can never be sure who the enemy is.

More important, we can never know when we've won. As a result, this war has the capacity to go on forever. It will be called off only when those in charge choose to do so. And why would they?

Those who mock Bush now — those who even dare criticize him — do so at their peril.

Thanks to the war, Bush has been transformed from a figure of fun into a national icon. Before Sept. 11, the U.S. president was viewed as a slightly moronic frat boy — mocked even on prime-time television. The very legitimacy of his election was in question.

Now the frat boy is a war president, every patriotic American's commander-in-chief. Those who mock Bush now — those who even dare criticize him — do so at their peril.

For Bush, an end to the war against terrorism could spell political disaster. Look what happened to his father. George Bush Sr. was an immensely popular president when he was waging war against Iraq. But as soon as the fighting stopped, his ratings tumbled. Without war to focus their attention, Americans remembered why they disliked the elder Bush and threw him out of the White House.

By contrast, Bush Jr. has discovered the perfect way to avoid his father's fate — war without end. The war against terror can go on indefinitely because, unlike the Gulf War, or World War II or even the Cold War, it involves no measurable criteria of success.

Is Afghanistan defeated and its former Taliban government in chains? No matter, says U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Afghanistan is small potatoes, the Taliban mere tools. The terrorists, we are told, live on. They are everywhere, part of the international conspiracy known as Al Qaeda.

Yet even Al Qaeda escapes definition. Each time its alleged leaders are

identified, we are warned that more are hiding in the shadows. And whenever the world's attention flags, a new discovery is made. A notebook found in a bombed-out house in Kabul proves that Al Qaeda is planning a nuclear attack. A videotape found in Singapore demonstrates that Al Qaeda is preparing another terror bombing.

Luckily for us, these fanatic anti-modernists make plenty of videos. They video each other plotting, video attack plans, video their dinner parties, then leave the videos lying about.

Luckily also, they write down many of their schemes in English. In November, for instance, journalists searching through a Kabul home said to be an Al Qaeda training centre found hand-printed plans, in English, on how to manufacture a multi-million-dollar, homemade stealth bomber.

Other reporters found jars of "foul smelling liquids" and notebooks filled with equations, all of which were taken as evidence of an Al Qaeda germ warfare factory.

Even when the New York Times reported that the most well-publicized find — plans for the manufacture of a homemade nuclear bomb — had probably been cribbed from a hoax website, the thunder of fear and condemnation continued.

Not since novelist Ian Fleming invented SPECTRE, the shadowy force of evil dedicated to eliminating 007 agent James Bond, has the world's imagination been seized in quite the same way. Is there a rebellion in the Philippines? Al Qaeda is responsible. A plot in Malaysia? Al Qaeda again.

Like Fleming's SPECTRE, Al Qaeda has access to unlimited funds. Its leaders, like the villains of Bond movies, live in vast underground complexes staffed by fanatical minions.

Even the occasional intervention of reality has no effect. In Afghanistan, the underground complexes turn out to be cramped, primitive caves rather than sumptuous subterranean cities. No matter. All it proves is that the real Al Qaeda headquarters are somewhere else — perhaps Yemen or Somalia.

In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the enemy of the state is personified in Emmanuel Goldstein. Goldstein is the Osama bin Laden figure of the novel, an elusive figure who is never seen, never captured but believed by all patriotic citizens of Oceania (Orwell's fictitious state, an amalgamation of North America and Europe) to be an evil genius bent on their destruction.

Since Goldstein is never captured, Oceania's battle against him must never cease. Sometime it wages war on one country said to be aiding the nefarious Goldstein, sometimes on another. The battleground may change but the war never ends. It cannot. The government's very existence depends upon it.

ads

Sampling the War on Terror

Compiled by Edmar

Beware the leader who bangs the drums of war in order to whip the citizenry into a patriotic fervor, for patriotism is indeed a double-edged sword. It both emboldens the blood, just as it narrows the mind. And when the drums of war have reached a fever pitch and the blood boils with hate and the mind has closed, the leader will have no need in seizing the rights of the citizenry. Rather, the citizenry, infused with fear and blinded by patriotism, will offer up all of their rights unto the leader and gladly so. How do I know? For this is what I have done. And I am Caesar. - *Julius Caesar*

We may be witnessing the Nazification of our nation. --*Toni Morrison, Nobel laureate in literature, January, 2002*

Already passed by the Utah House of Representatives, Bill 100 defines the crime of "commercial terrorism," which can be a felony offense. The Bill reads, "a person is guilty of commercial terrorism if he enters or remains unlawfully on the premises or in a building of any business with the intent to interfere with the employees, customers, personnel, or operations of a business." - <http://www.kwru.org>

"Make no mistake about it. The United States is preparing for war. Events immediately following the 2000 US election debacle are ominous predictors for the Bush-Cheney Administration. . . the key posts of Treasury, Defense, Justice and National Security Advisor point to the most militarized oil-and-big-business-friendly administration in 35 years. . . We can be assured that an empire (as opposed to a republic) is emerging in the United States more quickly than many have expected. And the Bush Administration is already acting in a "godlike" manner. It is an empire that may have little need even of the pretence of democracy as American corporate fascism removes its mask in the wake of our election circus, the prostitution of our Supreme Court and the virtual destruction of American government as a servant of anything other than money, greed and power."- *Michael Ruppert January, 2001*

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of modern man is his domination by the force of myths and manipulation by organized advertising, ideological or otherwise. Gradually, without even realizing the loss, he relinquishes his capacity for choice; he is expelled from the orbit of decisions. - *Paolo Freiere Education for Critical Consciousness*

There is more than one way to respond to the horror of Sept. 11. And there is more than one kind of patriotism. We forget this. You do not have to rally around Bush and tolerate Cheney's chthonic creepiness and wave a frantic flag and believe every scripted half-truth that drizzles out of the Pentagon, applaud the nonstop attacks on an already demolished nation. Pro-America does not mean pro-war. Or pro-Bush. Or anti-Afghanistan. Or pro-little-flags-on-SUV-antennas. - *Bushwatch.net*

The greatest danger to America's dominant position today is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is the arrogance of American power. - *The Times of London*

George W. Bush's State of the Union address has laid bare his Administration's political strategy. It is to manipulate the grief, anger and patriotism inspired by September 11 to fit the contours of the right-wing Republican agenda of September 10. What that Day of Infamy means to George W. Bush & Co. is more tax cuts for the wealthy, more money for wasteful weapons schemes and the back of their proverbial hand to those who suffer the misfortune of not being rich in Bush's America. *PR Watch, February 8, 2002*

Not since the hysterical "This is your brain on drugs" ads have young people been so simultaneously perplexed and amused by the misguided efforts of grown-ups to get them to not do drugs. During the Super Bowl, the government reached uncharted levels of hypocrisy, launching an ad campaign that claimed your local drug dealer is in cahoots with terrorists like Osama bin Laden. Of course, the ads conveniently glossed over the U.S. government's historical role in the international drug trade. But the ads also seemed to forget some more recent history - that the War on Terror just installed into power some of the biggest heroin dealers on the planet, the Northern Alliance. For all the Taliban's myriad evils, they actually destroyed thousands of tons of Afghanistan's poppy crops. - *PR Watch Feb 4, 2002*

Critical thinking is compatible with patriotism. . . . Amnesia is not a requirement for patriotism. . . . We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty. When the loyal opposition dies, I think the soul of America dies with it. -- *Edward R. Murrow*

"At Bush's direction, America has turned its back on every agreement with our friends, enemies, allies, and neighbors, except those that cooperate in a pact of war. Thousands, if not millions, of Americans have lost their jobs, thousands more have been killed, and even thousands more have lost both their financial and personal security. The national coffers have been raided, and Social Security is about to become a distant memory. Where it looked, only a short time ago, that we would pay off our national debt in only a few years, we are now screaming toward massive deficits, to be followed by the return of long-term corrosive red ink. Our individual patriotism is brought into doubt if we ourselves question undefined threats of never ending war at home and abroad." - *James Higdson - Online Journal*

Popular culture acts as a sponge to soak up spare time and energy that in earlier times might well have been devoted to nurturing and instructing children or to participating in political, religious, civic, or community activities or in crafts, reading, and continuing self education. But such pursuits sound a bit old fashioned today, although political theory still rests on the assumption that these activities are central to the functioning of a democratic society. Yet increasingly, vicarious experience via film, video, and music is a substitute for civic life and community. As it becomes harder for young people in many parts of the world to carve out satisfying roles, the rush of commercial sounds and images offers escape.- *Barnet and Cavanagh*

"I may be confused by Bush, but folks [in the media] have absolutely no idea who he is. Let's try this again, team. George W. Bush sides with the malefactors of great wealth not because he is a tool of the rich or because Enron bought him with campaign contributions -- that's who he is, that's what he really believes, that's his life experience." - 02.07.02 Molly Ivins

The "War on Terrorism" is indeed a fraud, as Australian film and print journalist John Pilger has repeatedly pointed out. "Terrorism" is simply taking the place of "Communism" during the Cold War as the propaganda line spewed by the state and the corporate media to rally a confused and fearful population against "enemies" who supposedly threaten them. This most effective form of social control was recommended by Hitler's chief propagandist, Josef Goebbels. The purpose of the "War on Terrorism" is to maintain carte blanche for the ever more desperate agenda of American capital: the domination of the continent of Eurasia (the critical sector of which is Central Asia, precisely where the "War on Terrorism" just happens to have begun), and the crushing of the Left worldwide, especially its explicitly anti-capitalist core. - Max Kolskegg, indymedia.org

The current war may be the most serious global political crisis in decades. The need for viable democratic journalism has never been greater, and the performance of the mainstream news media has fallen far short of that goal. - Robert MC Chesney

"Naturally the common people don't want war. But after all it is the leaders of a country who determine the policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or 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 to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country." - Herman Goerring

The threat of "terrorism", some of it real, most of it invented, is the new Red Scare. The parallels are striking. In America in the 1950s, the Red Scare was used to justify the growth of war industries, the suspension of democratic rights and the silencing of dissenters. That is happening now. - John Pilger

Cults share three basic traits, according to Dave Arnott author of Corporate Cults. (1) They demand complete devotion of their followers, (2) they have a charismatic leader, and (3) they foster separation from the community. Enron scores on all three. Enron nurtured a quasi-religious belief in the company's mission and its leader's greatness. It ran elaborate motivational sessions, where moderators would distribute inspirational rocks bearing the words "integrity," "respect" and "Enron." Many employees referred to Enron as their "family," and only team players need apply. - Froma Harrop

Despite Bush's attempt to resurrect the rhetoric of World War II in his reference to the "axis of evil," it is the US government and Bush himself

who are following in the footsteps of the Nazis. One would have to go back to the diatribes of Adolf Hitler to find comparable bellicosity in the public declarations of a major world power, and comparable cynicism in the lies and provocations employed as justifications for military aggression. The comparison is an apt one, because like Hitler and the Nazis, American militarism has embarked on a campaign of world conquest and world domination. The State of the Union speech was a declaration of the unbridled appetites of the military and of the most ruthless, corrupt and criminal sections of the American ruling elite, who find their direct representative in George W. Bush. - www.Wsws.org

The individual is handicapped by coming face to face with a conspiracy so monstrous he cannot believe it exists. - J. Edgar Hoover, former head of the FBI

"Every twist in the war on terrorism seems to leave a new Pentagon outpost in the Asia-Pacific region, from the former USSR to the Philippines. One of the lasting consequences of the war could be what amounts to a military encirclement of China." The newspaper cited the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review which, without naming China, warned of the danger that "a military competitor with a formidable resource base will emerge in the region," and called for a policy that "places a premium on securing additional access and infrastructure agreements." - Guardian

The Bush Administration has announced its intention to move forward with a proposal to allow states to make "unborn children" eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). It is essential to note that the Administration's proposal would make the "unborn child," not the woman, the new CHIP client. - NARAL Feb 7,2002

"There is growing suspicion, which is officially unspeakable, that the Afghanistan War is a set-up, including September 11 itself. With any such hypothesis, one looks not only for the evidence confirming it, but more conscientiously, for the evidence disconfirming it. The principal reason against is the assumption that it is impossible that the U.S. national security apparatus would ever permit such a mass killing of Americans on U.S. soil, but this assumption itself is shaky given that Pearl Harbour itself was likely known about in advance, and non-defensive wars since have sacrificed tens of thousands of U.S. citizens (not to say millions of others) for so-called 'foreign policy and national security objectives'". - Professor John McMurtry of the University of Guelph

Images from NYC, WEF Protests

This document found in a separate pdf
called Newtheory.pdf

Images from NYC, WEF Protests



Big Apple Pied



The Ten Worst Corporations of 2001

by *Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman*

In a year marked not only by the now-standard forms of corporate marauding but also by brazen wartime profiteering, it was no easy chore to identify Multinational Monitor's 10 corporations of 2001.

The competition was even tougher than usual. But choices had to be made. And now decisions have been reached.

Multinational Monitor has named Abbott Laboratories, Argenbright, Bayer, Coke, Enron, Exxon Mobil, Philip Morris, Sara Lee, Southern Co. and Wal-Mart as the 10 worst corporations of 2001

Appearing in alphabetical order, the 10 worst are:

Abbott Laboratories

Abbott Laboratories, for its TAP Pharmaceuticals, a joint venture with Japanese Takeda Pharmaceuticals. TAP was forced to pay \$875 million to resolve criminal charges and civil liability in connection with allegations of major Medicare reimbursement fraud. Among other alleged fraudulent activities, as a way of hooking doctors on prescribing Lupron, its prostate cancer drug, TAP gave doctors free samples and then encouraged doctors to bill Medicare for the free samples.

Argenbright

Argenbright, the security company, for repeat violations of regulations for airport security. Argenbright's appalling record -- including violations of security rules it had been caught breaking just a year earlier -- helped convince Congress to federalize U.S. airport security operations.

Bayer

Bayer, for its overcharge of the government and public for the anti-anthrax drug Cipro, based on a patent monopoly that may well be improperly maintained by virtue of a collusive arrangement with a generic manufacturer. Bayer also secured a place on the 10 worst list for its dangerous peddling of antibiotics for poultry (contributing to antibiotic resistance among humans) and its harassment of a German watchdog group, Coalition Against Bayer Dangers, for maintaining a BayerWatch.com website.

Coca Cola

Coca Cola, for its sponsorship of the first Harry Potter movie and possible sequels, using a children's favorite to hawk its unhealthy product, and for alleged complicity with death squads in Colombia targeting union leaders there.

Enron

Enron, for costing many of its employees their life savings by refusing to let them dump company stock from their pension plans, as Enron plunged toward bankruptcy.

ExxonMobil

ExxonMobil, for leading the global warming denial campaign (even O'Dwyer's a leading rag of the public relations industry, has chastised the company for its "stubborn refusal to acknowledge the fact that burning fossil fuels has a role in global warming") and blocking efforts at appropriate remedial action, plus a host of other reckless activities.

Philip Morris

Philip Morris, for its "we've changed" marketing campaign -- revealed to be a hoax by a Czech study it commissioned alleging cost savings from smoking-related premature deaths, as well as the company's ongoing efforts to addict millions of new smokers.

Sara Lee

Sara Lee, for a scandal involving its Ball Park Franks hot dogs. Listeria-contaminated Ball Park Franks killed 21 and seriously injured 100 in 1998. In 2001, with civil and criminal litigation around the case heating up, the Detroit Free Press reported that Sara Lee stopped performing tests for bacteria after it started recording too many positives. The U.S. attorney, which handled prosecution of the criminal case, insists Sara Lee did not know about the presence of listeria in its hot dogs. In an extraordinary move, the U.S. attorney issued a joint press release with Sara Lee announcing settlement of the case. The final tally: 21 dead. A misdemeanor plea. A \$200,000 fine.

Southern Co.

Southern Co., the largest electric utility in the United States, for its efforts to defeat sensible air pollution regulations. Southern is a heavy user of coal, and leads the fight to maintain a ridiculous "grandfather" clause in the U.S. Clean Air Act, which exempts power plants built before 1970 from Clean Air Act standards.

Wal-Mart

Wal-Mart, for continuing to source products from overseas sweatshops, for viciously battling efforts to unionize any fraction of its workforce (the largest in the United States, among private employers), and for contributing to the sprawl that blights the U.S. landscape.

For a complete version of Multinational Monitor's article naming the 10 worst corporations of 2001, see www.essential.org/monitor.

Russell Mokhiber is editor of the Washington, D.C.-based Corporate Crime Reporter. Robert Weissman is editor of the Washington, D.C.-based Multinational Monitor. They are co-authors of Corporate Predators: The Hunt for MegaProfits and the Attack on Democracy (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1999; <http://www.corporatepredators.org>)

**Enron's End Run:
The Bush White House's Brewing Scandal**



by Sander Hicks

The Washington Post once referred to Kuwait as an "oil company with a flag." Perhaps this is what the Bush White House once thought the USA should be. This administration was intimate with the Enron Corporation, now in ruins of potential scandal and alleged fraud. This slowly emerging scandal leaves us with questions, but one thing's for certain: L'Affaire Enron will build and haunt the White House for years to come. The Senate's newly announced investigation has a lot of work ahead of it. Will the White House survive intact? Will it sacrifice key officials to appease a Special Prosecutor?

Welcome to Enron, the biggest corporate disaster of recorded history.

When Enron filed for Chapter 11 on 2 December 2001, 4,500 of its employees were unceremoniously relieved. At its peak, Enron stock's total value was \$70 billion, capital many people relied on in their retirement plan investments. Today, the total loss in equity value is hard to gauge, because before throwing in the towel, Enron was forced in November to restate its real earnings for years 1997, 1998, and 1999. Enron had hidden a lot of debt in "special purpose vehicles," that is, front companies it created to hide losses off the books, so its previous earnings reports were meaningless.

Like the dot-coms, a lot of Enron's value as a business was based on the "trust" that people placed in it, as it traded intangible bits of risk in its myriad of speculative trades in energy. When that trust was lost, a lot of people got burned. Today, Enron faces two Congressional investigations,

a high profile Senate inquiry, a class action lawsuit from angry shareholders, and a suit from the General Accounting Office. The union bank Amalgamated is already on the warpath. They are suing on behalf of the pension funds damaged by Enron's \$70 billion impllosion.

The fiasco's intimacy with Bush may bode badly for the President's future. The White House and Enron have at times seemed interchangeable, both financially and politically. Vice President Dick Cheney and Bush's ruthless campaign advisor Karl Rove have consulted Enron Chair Ken Lay on energy policy. Lay's suggestions to Rove on government appointments were followed. Enron and the White House have shared a revolving door of personnel: five former Enronians work in the White House and Cabinet. (Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White was a Vice Chairman; Economic Adviser Lawrence Lindsey and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick were both advisors; and Senior Staffers Karl Rove and Lewis "Scooter" Libbey owned a serious amount of Enron stock.)

And of course, the flow of money since the Reagan years has been colossal and reciprocated. Enron donated almost \$2.4 million to federal candidates, and \$2 million to Bush alone. They were in turn rewarded with legislation that allowed them to profit off the deregulation of state-run power industries. Enron has made contributions to 71 of 100 U.S. Senators and about half of congress. Enron is the number one career contributor to President George W. Bush.

On Thursday, 3 January 2002, the Senate Government Affairs Committee, headed by possible Presidential hopeful Joe Lieberman, announced it would launch a serious investigation into just how much Enron was affecting decisions in the executive branch. It was high time. Congressman Henry Waxman (D-CA) has been asking Cheney and advisor Karl Rove for these answers for six months and he has been treated like an unwanted guest at a wedding. On 8 January, the White House announced that the meetings with Enron had indeed been extensive. As part of Cheney's Energy Task Force, the White House admitted Enron executives had visited "six times." But with the stubbornness of a Richard Nixon, Cheney still refused to release the complete attendance lists for all meetings of his Energy Task Force.

Comparisons to Teapot Dome and Watergate are not untoward. The media is beginning to feel the symbolic importance of Bush's Enron scandal. The Nation and the United Kingdom's Independent on Sunday both recently suggested we are seeing Enron becoming Bush's albatross. Both called it a "cancer on the presidency," a phrase that recalls John Dean's early warning to President Nixon.

Bush is already suffering at the polls, the approval ratings that used to enjoy the low 90s sank to 80%, according to CNBC on January 18th. Is the loss of over 10 points of approval the beginning of a slide? Analysts have been pointing out that not capturing Osama bin Laden might come back to haunt the administration, just as the deliberate sparing of Saddam Hussein was partly responsible for Bush Sr.'s defeat following the Gulf War. Poll experts point out that wartime presidents usually experience a return to pre-war approval ratings eight months after a war's peak. Just as the May 2002 midterm elections heat up in congress, Bush might not be able to help fellow Republicans keep the House.

A Brief History of Enron

The pas de deux between Enron and the Bushes goes a long way back (almost as far as the relationship between the Bush and bin Laden families). Under Ronald Reagan, Vice President Bush led a task force to deregulate finance and energy. In February 1993, the Bush White House announced that two former Cabinet members, Secretary of State Baker and Secretary of Commerce Robert Mosbacher, had agreed to help what later became Enron secure natural gas projects overseas.

In 1995, Enron was officially created out of two regional natural gas companies by Ken Lay. In seven short years, Enron became the seventh-richest company in the US, ranked by revenue (although real revenue accounted for properly places them 280 notches lower, at 287th). Chairman Lay soon became intimate with both Bush Presidents, the younger granting him the pet name "Kenny Boy." In an increasingly deregulated market, Enron made a transition from selling natural gas to speculating on aspects of the power industry, issuing glorified lottery tickets in the form of derivatives. Derivatives are chances, or "financial instruments," to take bets on the future value of a share price or commodity based on its current value and external market forces. At its peak, 80% of Enron's business was from trading.

Enron began acting less like an energy company and more like an investment bank. Eventually, they even sold derivatives that bet on changes in the weather, or the price of broadband internet. CFO Andrew Fastow mysteriously told Business 2.0 that "Enron has 1,217 trading 'books' for different commodities. We don't want anyone to know what's on those books. We don't want to tell anyone where we're making money." Another Enron executive told The New York Times the company's goal was to create "a regulatory black hole" in order to be "the first mover into a market and to make money in the initial chaos and lack of transparency."

As the night began to permanently close in on Enron, there was a brief glimmer of hope against hope that the "smaller, scrappier" Dynegy company would acquire the ailing giant. Perhaps the lesser competitor wasn't Enron's size, but it wasn't so small to hand Enron \$1.5 billion cash as a calling card, as merger talks opened in November. But by the end of the month, the deal was practically dead. In Dynegy CEO Chuck Watson's conference call with Enron management on 3 December 2001, he asked why cash-on-hand in the recent 10-Q was \$1.2 billion. Where was the \$3 billion he had been expecting? Well, that nice \$1.5 billion present had been burnt through. What's worse, Enron couldn't account for it. "Neither the treasurer nor the CFO could explain where the cash went. The 10-Q destroyed any remaining confidence and credibility."

[For a brief tangent, both humorous and sad, let's go take a look at Enron's interior at this time. This was a corporate culture that praised arrogance as a virtue. A lot of top management at the time didn't really believe the smaller Dynegy would actually be able to acquire their mighty Enron, and even as they issued news of the merger, they claimed that this was really just "buying us some time until we can come up with some other, better alternative" according to direct reports to me from a Senior Director. My source went on to describe this meeting of the trading floor, "This young woman raises her hand to state that she is an analyst and of all the offers she had coming out of school, she came to Enron, because she is smart, she is one of the best and the



brightest, she is arrogant [she said this, in fact she said it several times] and she wants to work for the best company out there. she wants to work for Enron, she wants to be arrogant, she wants to be the best, she DID NOT come here to end up working for Dynegy. She said this in front of the entire trading floor. It was unbelievable to me, especially since I knew that we would most likely be going under, and she would most likely be out of a job."]

Dynegy might have realized it was buying a big mess, and then purposefully released language in a 21 November 2001 release that sent a "luke-warm" signal. This scared the institutional investors even more. Simultaneous with this, Enron's credit rating was downgraded, and they were thus bound to pay out \$690 million to a creditor. Whoops, there goes another half of cash-on-hand. Now Enron was down to \$510 million. The investment banks downgraded Enron's stock even lower, giving Dynegy an excuse to scuttle the deal. Their gentleman caller leaving town, Enron sued Dynegy for backing out of the marriage.

With no one left to screw over, Enron ate their own flesh. After they were abandoned by Dynegy there was no way Enron could recover, so management decided to do the most professional thing possible: they stuck their own workers with the tab. They had already planned for this

a month-and-a-half in advance: on 17 October 2001, when the S.E.C. announced it was investigating Enron, top brass deliberately switched 401(k) administrators. This move locked their employee's pensions into this stock as it began to nosedive. Enron executives unloaded their own equity on the market, and ran for the door stuffing their pockets with \$1 billion in cash. Enron robbed their common employees of their life savings. Sick employees were left without health insurance; the transitional health care system COBRA was a mess of unfinished paperwork. Overseas employees in the UK were told "find your own way back," in violation of British Law. An ex-employee who until recently helped run the generators stated "none of Enron's laid-off H1B's [temporary overseas employees] have been given their expense funds to return home." In Houston, he states, "Rich White Republicans remain above the law."

In the first week of the New Year, a poll from Time/CNN showed that Americans have become more concerned about the economy than terrorism. Even when Bush's pre-war approval ratings were middling at around 55%, issues of corporate partisanship were haunting him. In April 2001, an ABC News poll found that only 28% of Americans believed Bush "cares more about protecting the interests of ordinary working people" than the "interests of large business corporations." The American people are not blind: 60% said they felt Bush cared more for big business.

The Favors

After researching the Bush/Karl Rove/Enron connection since June, I don't believe there has ever been a complete list in the big media of exactly what favors the Bush White House did for Enron [if you don't count the website of Congressman Henry Waxman.]. About 60% of ordinary Americans already have a hunch that Bush's priority is to help out big business, so they won't be shocked. But to get us all on the same page, here are some of the paths the Senate should pursue in its upcoming investigation:

1. Nora Brownell: Hand-Picked by Enron, Nominated by Bush

Bush's Karl Rove took the advice of Enron's Ken Lay about a prospective appointee to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Nora Mead Brownell (also known to her detractors as "Nora Mead Brownout") was appointed by Bush and confirmed by the Senate. A childhood friend of Director of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, at the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission Brownell had helped Enron enter Pennsylvania's newly deregulated energy markets.

The law was most likely snapped in two. When Rove consulted with Lay over Brownell, Rove owned a significant number of shares of Enron. Normally, a White House official needs to apply for and receive a waiver to clear this kind of conflict of interest. When Congressman Henry Waxman asked why Rove had not sought the proper waiver, the White House curtly replied that Rove was not within the jurisdiction of that law. Representative Waxman didn't buy that. But somehow, our political system lets a non-elected paid campaign official in the White House get away with blatant white collar crime while an elected Congressman, the ranking member of the House Government Reform Committee, can't even get his questions answered.

Before her appointment to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission,

Brownell had no experience in public utility management. She was a banker. Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs at Meridian Bancorp in Philadelphia, she did receive high marks for opening up housing loans to minorities. But her first decision in Pennsylvania, on wholesale phone rates, was criticized as "anti-consumer." The opening stanzas of her testimony to the Senate opens with this breathy libertarian posturing: "In the interest of full disclosure, I believe in free markets."

On 25 May 2001, the Senate confirmed Ms. Brownell. Simultaneously that day, in a move that can't be coincidental, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), a leading member of the committee that confirmed Brownell, called for hearings into the possibility of an improper relationship between the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the energy industry. In her Press release, Feinstein cited the day's New York Times report that FERC Chairman Bob Herbert had been contacted by Ken Lay, and offered "support" if he would change his policies to be favorable to Enron. Senator Feinstein noted "FERC is a \$175 million a year agency charged with regulating the energy industry, and it would be unconscionable if any of the nation's electricity traders or generators were in a position to be able to determine who chairs or becomes a member of the commission."

Today, Nora Mead Brownell remains a defender of Enron's integrity. To her, Enron's spectacular crash was not the product of deceit or hubris, as many Wall Street analysts find. The government's "regulator" is far more forgiving than even the most bullish critics in the marketplace. To Nora Brownell, Enron's fatal flaw was simply a lack of restraint. She told the Washington Post, "In my mind, it is a classic case of a company growing very fast and not putting in place the financial controls and management depth that was needed." Unregulated markets were not at fault, of course. "In fact, the market has worked pretty efficiently." She dismisses the accusations of criminal fraud and chalks it up to the wild west nature of the "free market." In a forgiving voice, she recently told PBS, "When you don't have a Ten Commandments, it's very hard to have a sinner." Enron should hope to find the Senate so understanding. Does the killing of over 4,500 jobs not prick Brownell's conscience? Does the vaporizing of \$70 billion in value not strike her as bad for the pensions and economy of average, hard-working Americans?

2. Enron in the California Energy Crisis: How Could Ken Lay Learn Nothing?

In 2000, Enron's annual revenues surpassed the \$100 billion mark, more than doubling its revenue of \$40 billion in 1999. Critics on the West Coast charged that Enron earned such grosses partly by exploiting the hungry, under-supplied, deregulated California market.

Enron's Ken Lay would later blame his lack of willingness to supply new plants on a lack of full deregulation: "When the governor put on price caps back in October, we, along with another company, cancelled the construction of a couple of big power plant peaking plants, which would have been available for this summer, because we couldn't justify making those big investments in peaking plants, which will just run a few days during the year. Price caps do not solve the problem, but price caps just require the politicians to decide who's going to be curtailed."

But it's ironic that Enron complains about public policy in California. The company played a role in the writing of the California deregulation law that eventually stuck consumers with a \$40 billion bill. In 1996, for-

mer B-movie actor and California State Senator Steve Peace led the legislature on an eighteen-day "death march" that often worked past midnight to cobble together incomprehensible legislation. At the time, Enron was eager to enter the California market, and was influential through lobbyists like D. J. Smith of the California Large Energy Consumers Association. Eventually, Peace's energy deregulation law was passed in Sacramento without a dissenting vote. "There was a blind adherence to free-market ideology that couldn't possibly work," former utility securities analyst Eugene Coyle later told the San Francisco Chronicle. "There were poorly thought-out specifics."

And today in the Bush White House, the lesson of California has been lost. As recently as this spring, Karl Rove and the Bush White House rejected California Governor Gray Davis's plea to impose price caps on electricity, which, among other things, would have been costly to Enron. (And remember, at this time, Rove was still a shareholder in Enron.)

As reported in a 17 May 2001 energy industry newsletter, Governor Davis is currently so frustrated with deregulation Texas-style, that he threatened to use the laws of eminent domain to seize the power plants of Houston-based Reliant Energy. "He warned that actions taken by Reliant and other independent generators this summer will determine whether he signs a windfall profits tax bill or, in the extreme, commandeers the electricity produced by a plant or seizes the facility itself." Later, the Governor addressed President Bush directly: "Mr. President, runaway energy prices are not just a California problem. With all due respect, I once again urge you to stand up to your friends in the energy business and exercise the federal government's responsibility to ensure energy prices are just and reasonable."

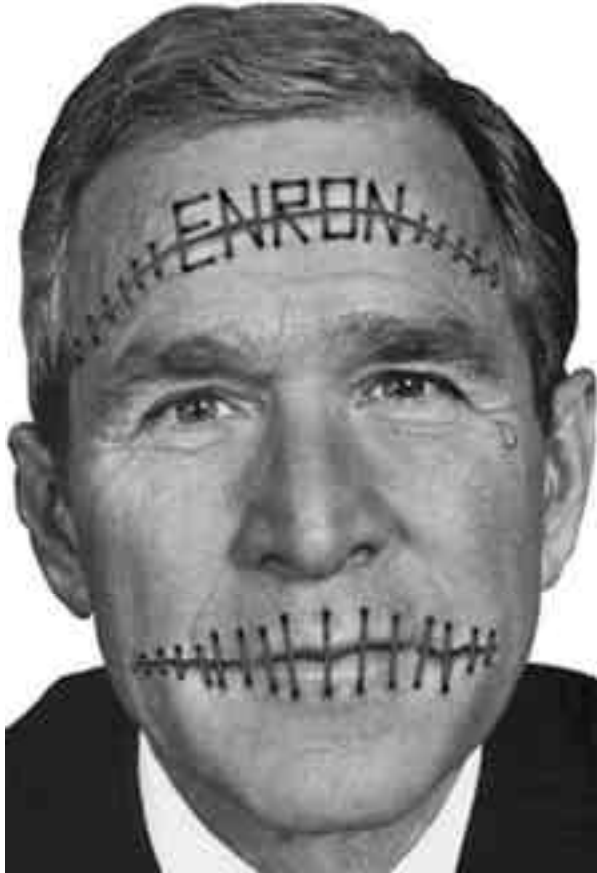
3. Enron Holds Itself Above the Law?

Today, the California Legislature is recanting its death march toward deregulation. In June, it was seeking to discover whether power-generating companies willfully manipulated electricity supply in order to drive up prices last year. After being subpoenaed, Enron refused to appear or provide information. The Legislature found them in contempt.

This is similar to the way that Chairman Ken Lay declined to show up at the first Congressional investigation of Enron. On 11 and 12 December, the House Financial Services Committee held a Joint Hearing on "The Enron Collapse: Impact on Investors and Financial Markets."

However, the CEO of accountant Arthur Andersen, Joseph Bernadino, did testify on behalf of Enron, a company Andersen both consulted for and audited. His testimony was followed by the AFL-CIO's Richard Trumpka, who accused Andersen, Wall Street, and Enron's management of defrauding consumers, workers, and shareholders. In clear, angry language, Trumpka described "a story of people so shameless and greedy that literally as the bankruptcy papers were being drawn up they were still passing what remained of the firm's cash out to themselves--\$55 million on the last working day before they filed for Chapter 11."

According to Trumpka, Andersen was giving important business advice, "including, many believe, advising Enron on the structure of the special purpose vehicles" that were used to hide debt. "The financial statements themselves contain proof that the auditors were aware of each of the



transactions that led this company to grief—the self-dealing with the CFO, creating partnerships to trade in the company's own stock, other partnerships whose purpose seemed to be to generate dubious revenues, hide liabilities and otherwise bookable derivatives positions from the investing public."

Part of the problem was Enron's Board of Directors, a body commanded by SEC law to be independent of the company. But according to Trumpka, this board was actually dependent on Enron management through political and investment relationships. "Is it any wonder that when the crisis began and shareholders needed desperately to hear from outside directors, all they got was silence?"

It should be noted that Trumpka is by no means an angel himself, and was a little sullied in a scandal of his own. Accused of laundering cash to aid the reelection campaign of Teamsters President Ron Cary in 1996, Trumpka is a lifelong union bureaucrat and attorney. A brief was filed on 15 September 2000 by the union watchdog National Legal and Policy Center, pleading to have Trumpka disbarred in the State of Pennsylvania.

4. A Free Market in Derivatives, Thanks to the Paid Services of Congress

Enron's investments in Capitol Hill have paid off. In 2000, Congress passed a law that exempted its energy derivatives business from regulation. Today, in 20/20 hindsight, many analysts state that Enron's reliance on unregulated derivatives business is reminiscent of Long Term Capital Management, the high-risk megacapital hedge fund that also almost took the entire economy with it when it went under in 1998.

Analysts report that your proximity to Wall Street often determines whether you will be bailed out. A Goldman Sachs insider recently noted, "With Long Term Capital Management they were so integrated with the Wall Street dealer community and the Fed, that their bailout was quick and concerted." Compare this to "The demise of Drexel Burnham. As a Street competitor, they were ripped apart. Alan Greenspan did not even return the calls for help of Fred Joseph, their CEO. Similarly with Enron, the Street has kept a distance, not least because of their involvement in funding and/or helping to set up Enron's offshore special purpose vehicles."

5. Enron Air Quality

In Texas, Enron influenced public policy time and again while Bush was Governor, including the infamous "grandfathered plants" deal, which allowed plants to "self-police" their emissions. As a result, Texas has some of the worst air quality in the Union.

As the late Bush biographer Jim Hatfield put it in his last press conference in Chicago, 2 June 2001, "We go to Houston, and my kid can't even breathe."

Enron Workers Respond by Organizing

As the country saw after 11 September, Americans have a great capacity to band together to weather common adversity. In Houston, this took the form of a website for displaced employees, www.enronx.com, which created a message board to air grievances and help Enron workers find a job. Created "in one day, December 5" by José Lazzo and friends, EnronX quickly had 5,200 members sign up and use the site. Today, it gets 11,000 page views a day.

On EnronX, I met the power generator worker mentioned earlier who preferred to remain anonymous. We'll call him "Clifford."

When Enron Management made \$600 million cash unloading their shares, who did they sell them to? It couldn't have been the open market, which would have severely depressed the share price even more in a time of scrutiny. Clifford has an explanation about how management pulled their liquidation scam: "Ever wonder who was buying Enron stock in November, as it was tanking and as anyone with a clue knew it was insolvent/worthless? Smart people were selling, of course, but we now know the buyers were the pension funds of government employees in Florida, New York and Texas, states with the Republican governors closest to George Bush. Florida lost \$300 million, and Texas and New York \$100 million. Can't you just hear the conversation at Fidelity, etc: 'Gotta dump this P.O.S.: find me someone we can screw with it—there's

the government fund's managers over there--have the Boss give him a call. Florida, Texas and New York. What a fucking coincidence!"

When Enron was still in business, Clifford had the honor of shaking hands and speaking briefly with the future GOP head Mark Racicot: "He came by my office at Enron and we chatted a bit--what a whore he is." Racicot is the former Montana Governor who also deregulated his own state's energy. Later, in the Missoula Independent, George Ochenski protested that deregulating Montana's electricity had created, "Rather than the promised reduction in cost, electricity price spikes [that] have created a disposable work force of Montanans who may or may not have a job depending on the day-to-day cost of electricity." Racicot is a former Enron lobbyist with Bracewell & Patterson.

Upon probing, Clifford related the full story on meeting Racicot: "Yes, what Enron wanted was the deregulation and (certainly not a bad idea) federal eminent domain for power lines from east to west (what he [Racicot] and I briefly chatted about). Of course, the Mountain-Mormon Republicans then killed that bill, once again begging the question just what the Republican Party ever did for any working man, even those here at Enron below the fiftieth floor. . . . Anyway, the story is the Republican Party--nothing at Enron was ever about anything else. I mean, if Whitewater was a story, then what in the hell is this?"

Good question. Since June, fringe voices on technology and political websites have been saying as much. With the New Year, the Senate has taken up this burning question, first posed by plastic.com, "This event probably would have qualified as a scandal if Clinton's chief strategist had done such a thing, but is that sufficient reason to apply the same unreasonable standard to the Bush administration? Of course it is! Payback's a bitch, ain't it?"

In a similar way, both armchair and professional political experts are speculating about how the President might extricate himself from this growing scandal. Is it possible that his colorful but controversial advisor, Karl Rove, might be turned into a sacrificial lamb? After all, it was Rove who most flagrantly broke the conflict of interest laws, working in the White House on policy that affected Enron while he was an Enron shareholder. In fact, on 4 June 2001, when he finally agreed to sell the entirety of his shares in companies with interests that conflicted with the goal of good government, Rove became \$5.6 million richer. In addition to Enron, for his first six months in office Rove held onto stock in Pfizer Inc., General Electric Co., Boeing Co., Cisco Systems Inc., American Express Co., Sallie Mae, Intel Corp., Wells Fargo & Co., and Johnson & Johnson. Rather than follow the law, Rove stated that he'd rather wait to sell as to avoid a capital gains tax. The White House at the time stated that there was no rush, after all, it's common knowledge that Bush owed Rove most of the credit for a (semi) successful Presidential campaign.

Further pressed, Rove claimed that it was a paperwork issue, and that he had applied at the federal Office of Government Ethics for the "certificate of divestiture" needed to divest from his holdings. But when asked, an ethics office spokesman said Rove hadn't submitted the request for such a document, and that if he would, it would only take only a few days to process. Just in case anyone smelled something here, the White House's Anne Womack quickly swept it under the rug. "In the meantime," she claimed, "Rove said he's been skipping discussions that could have a direct impact on his stocks. He told me, 'There have been con-

versations I just walked away from."

The bare falsity of this statement is proved by the White House's own statement twenty-one days later. On Friday, 29 June, the White House admitted that Rove "participated in meetings on administration's energy policy while he owned stock in energy companies such as Texas-based Enron Corp," according to a bulletin from ABCNews. This time, White House lawyer Alberto Gonzales claimed that the meetings were general enough to prevent a crossing of the conflict-of-interest lines clearly spelled out in the Federal Code. Yet the White House still refuses to release the attendance lists of their Energy Task Force lists. What are they hiding?

In closing, I'm reminded of the words of Jim Hatfield, a friend of this reporter, who wrote one of the best, most balanced books on young Bush, but was vilified through the cagey destructive tactics of Karl Rove and the hypnosis of a compliant Bush-friendly media. Before Jim took his own life this past July, he gave an interview to the lefty website Buzzflash.com.

With his trademark, smart-aleck irony, Jim commended Bush thusly: "He made a campaign promise 'to do for America what I have done for Texas.' And he sure as hell is trying his best to honor that pledge with tax breaks for the rich that will eventually consume the surplus, turn the country into a toxic waste dump, push a conservative agenda through the legislature, and screw the poor and middle class."

The Conclusion

Some day, Enron executives and the entire ruling class will have to face justice. But that day is not today. We hope that the U.S. Senate will deliver justice, but 71% of this same Senate has received Enron money in the past. No, the only way we're going to see justice in this country is after we have a workers revolution. We need to use everything we have—our politics, our history, and our art—to rip the pigs from power and create a just world.

Sander Hicks is founder of Soft Skull Press and plays in White Collar Crime.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Quantazelle



Quantazelle, which is composed of an individual bearing the name" Liz Revision, " is native to the Chicago area, and spends most of its time in front of computer monitors. Formal education and corresponding subversive behavior of Quantazelle has occurred on both U. S. coasts, most recently in Los Angeles at California Institute of the Arts. Subsequent speech patterns have since relied heavily on multi-syllabic definitions, obscure theoretical references, quasi-quantum non-sequiturs, and recitation of particularly esoteric diatribes. Quantazelle co-organized and participated in Laptronica: A Laptop Cage Match, which featured a bunch of audio-battling laptop musicians and two wrestling, life-size teletubbies. It was out of hand and a total success. A second match will coincide with the Version>02 Festival at the MCA in April She is also about to release a new album called "Beets" with works that are almost entirely created from environmental sounds.

What is your day job?

Volunteer web design and programming. My portfolio is at www.wombatcombat.com/lizrevision If anyone wants to help me make the shift from volunteering to paid employment.

What initially inspired you to become an artist?

I went to CalArts for visual arts and chose that school because they didn't make you specialize in a medium, unlike most other art schools. I took an african drumming class and was organizing electronic music events and they seemed to get much better turnouts and generate more enthusiasm than the art exhibitions I put together. When I came back to Chicago I started spending a lot of time with friends of mine who were electronic musicians (K-Rad) and started absorbing information and then finally self-released some of the tracks I had created on my own for "The Toaster One."

What inspires your work now?

Aesthetically, I want to make music that I'd like to listen to, I guess that's most

people's motivation... interesting music has a lot of different layers and relations and interesting sounds, while at the same time being groovable; I think the rhythmic quality of this kind of music is what makes it accessible, which can be a good thing since it allows you to experiment in different aspects of the internal relations of the music.

List five favorite places in Chill.

1. Uncle Fun on Belmont
2. American Science and Surplus
3. Softcore
4. Earwax
5. Danny's

List Five favorite humans in Chill.

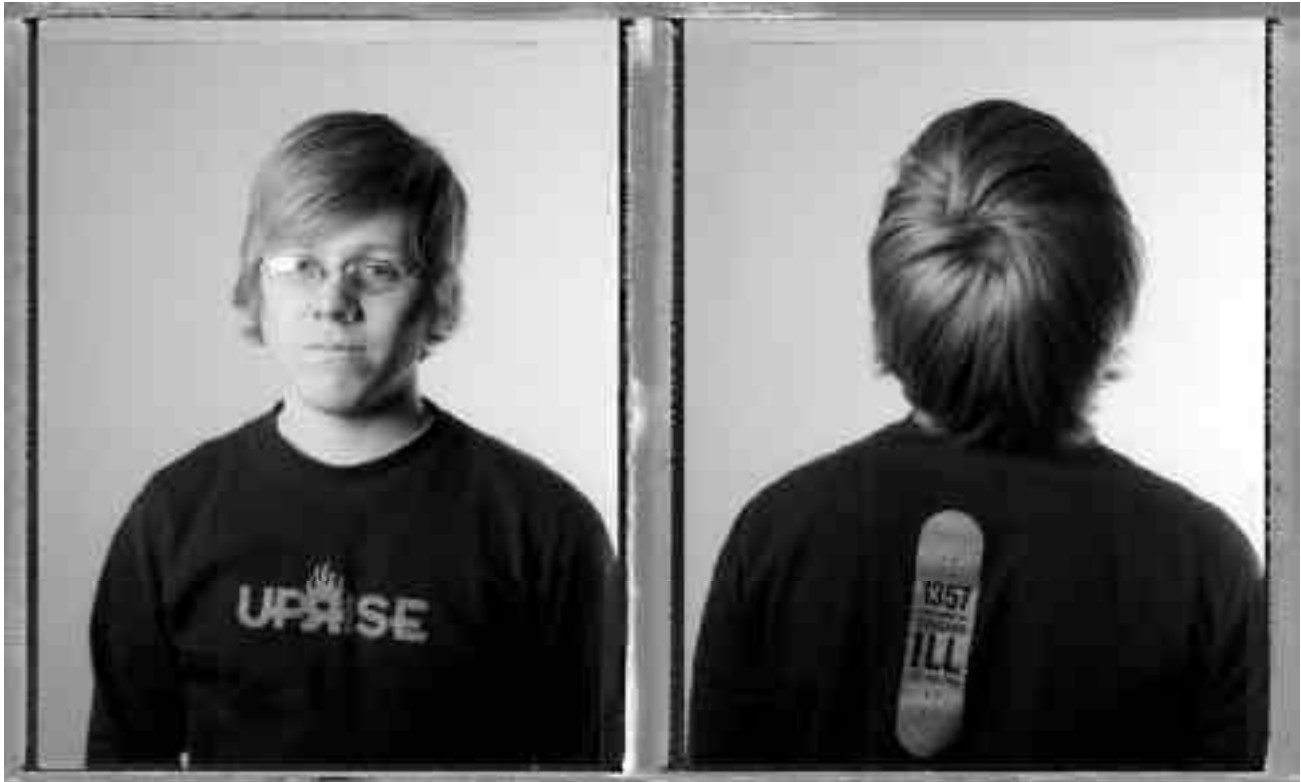
1. Brien Rullman (OVT Visuals)
2. Salvo Beta
3. Peter Grimmer
4. Pal Future A/V
5. um... can't think of the last one right now...

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

No punching. If I had to make someone's mouth feel unpleasant, I would recommend "Mustard-Filled Candy" which you can find at Uncle Fun. Some people who might benefit from this would be people with "god bless america" signs and bumper stickers... no benevolent god would bless a country that murders humans for profit and uses its media channels to mentally-engineer its citizens into being complicit. check out alternet.org and <http://www.awakeningearth.org/books/awakening/aecontents.html> for a lengthy essay on where humanity is headed.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Doug Lussenhop



Doug is a videomaker, a computer music composer, a DJ and the curator for Heaven Gallery's video screenings. Recently, he's completed a rap video for "Matt Cutter" (a.k.a Kleenex Girl Wonder), shot footage for an upcoming Fensler Film, showed videos at PS1 in New York, completed tracks for the Grundrauschen label in Berlin and is programming video screenings at Heaven Gallery in March.

What initially inspired you to become an artist?

My boring surroundings, plus I craved accomplishment, experiment and discovery, reverie and optimism. I didn't know it was art at the time. The intellectual approach ruined it for a week in '95.

What inspires your work now?

A combination of having a lot of ideas, a fondness of keeping busy and giving myself something to look forward to: a finished product. Lucrative leisure is the goal. My work is also reactionary, having a day job and doing work I'm not interested in motivates me to invent entertainment for myself. I enjoy improvisation and spontaneity. Also inspirational is the array of music, shows, records, videos, artists and energy that I absorb from this community.

List five favorite places in Chill.

Burnham Skatepark
Heaven
Pacific Cafe
Sears Tower
Weekend

List Five favorite humans in Chill.

No faves, I'm neutral like the Swiss...
Army knife I got for Chist-mas
You'll be pissed when I miss
spell your name
Bring pain to my game
Have me walking with a cane.

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

After the events of September 11, I don't think that violence is the answer. The following have been instrumental, and I'd like to toss it up: M. Bray, T. Carter, D. Dobie, Edmar, E. Fensler, A. Guler, M. McCarthy, S. Lussenhop, V. Buccella, K. Voss, G. Smith, G. Rischke, C. Baran, T. Nicola, R. Nails, U. Alshaibi, TV POW, TRS-80, K-Rad, P. Davis, all the Pals. And a bad boy smack to those thugs at the Atari Parti.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Cattivo



His mysterious Italian band is currently setting various undisclosed Chicago locations ablaze with their fiery blend of Brazilian rhythm, 60s psychedelic rock and prog rock excess. Catch Cattivo's debut record now out on Ecco Records. Watch Cattivo and his orchestra perform at a the upcoming Lumpen Après Ski Party event. (Funky Buddha Lounge, Sunday March 3, 2002)

What is your day job?

Entrepreneur

What initially inspired you to become an artist?

I don't refer to myself as an artist. I haven't achieved that level of asshole, yet. I'm more of an impresionario.

List five favorite places in Chill:

Alkhaymeih, Soul Vegetarian, Hi-Fi Records, the lake, Museum of Surgical Sciences

List five favorite humans in Chill:

Maxton, Ethan, Ernie Banks, Cin Salach, Tom Skilling

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

You!

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Rusty Nails

Rusty is currently working on four shorts films and a feature documentary: 1) "God is Dad," a video for Arab on Radar - it's a(n) homage to surreal films of the 40s and 50s 2) "Superbird," a video for local band Evil Beaver 3) "Blood Drinkers," a video for the Goblins, another favorite Chicago band, made in the style of fifties B-Movie trailers 4) "Jesus," a short mood piece about the lives of three Jesus' in the city of Chicago 5) "Highway Robbery," a feature documentary about the Ditzler's, a Rockford family whose land was taken away by the government to make an unnecessary highway through their backyard. Look for his feature "Acne" on video and dvd within the next two months--check www.neweyefilms.com for more info. Rusty has also been doing a monthly short film/band/performance series at the Fireside Bowl and occasionally other places called "Movieside." The next Undershorts short fest (he's a co-director) is March 1, 2002 (www.undershortsfilmfest.com). Last but not least, his band, The Dutchess, has reformed and will be putting out their first EP/LP soon.

What is your day job?

I work at survey place where we go out into the street, show people clips/trailers for new feature films and ask their opinions--you'd be surprised at how many "normal" people don't really care for bad Hollywood films. The same films that go on to become blockbusters. My theory is that--instead of people having poor taste --they just have bad options. I also just got a job teaching directing at Chicago Filmmakers--which I'm very excited about.

What initially inspired you to become an artist? What inspires your work now?

Some of my inspirations include The Ramones, Jean Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, Orson Welles, The Dead Kennedys, Kurt Vonnegut, J.D. Salinger, Maurice Sendak, Jim Jarmusch. Punk rock changed my life--I'm not sure I would've had much of a chance without it. Everything influences me as well as everyone else - bad movies inspire you to make good movies (maybe)--music,

books, friends--it's corny but true.

List five favorite places in Chill

- 1) The rooftop of Roosevelt University--it's the best view of the city, hands down
- 2) The rooftop of the University of Chicago's Ida Noyes Hall--ooh la la! I really like a lot of the U.O.C. campus
- 3) The Nervous Center (Lincoln Square)--great atmosphere, two freaky brother owners
- 4) Roger's Park--The Krishna Temple, Heartland Cafe, No Exit, the beach, the lake, the view, no "cool art" kids, what's not to like?!!
- 5) (Split) Soul Veg/Don's Cafe--Soul Veg is one of the coolest vegetarian restaurants ever--what's better than being served great veggie/vegan food by black panther decedents? Don's Cafe (in Roger's Park)--not as good as it used to be when Don owned it--but still fun 40s type atmosphere.

List Five favorite humans in Chill:

I know too many people for that to be fair or easy.

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

I don't want to punch anyone in the mouth, I'd rather punch them in the mind. At the moment, I'd really like to sit down with George Bush and try to figure out some of the issues he's been dealing with as a person--maybe over pie or soup. Then perhaps we could get him more interested in human rights over corporate paychecks and stop all this sad/silly war business.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Magas

Magas is a solo artist from Chicago, who produces raw and swaggering techno pop with reckless abandon. Bizarre electro rock anthems are squeezed out of cheap electronic equipment, creating head-nodding euphoria and teen-like hysteria. With strong emphasis on rhythm and power, Magas songs have an electrifying melodic throb that move like a slow black car. In September of 2001, Magas was recorded in Detroit by Ersatz Audio's Adam Lee Miller (ADULT., LE CAR). The results of these sessions will be released in early this year, by Ersatz Audio.

What is your day job?

My day job is running Weekend Records and Soap, with my wife, Bridgette Wilson. I'm either selling music, buying music, or making music. Somebody asked me, 'Don't you ever get sick of hearing beats constantly?' Actually, I get nervous if I go more than a few hours without hearing a kick drum.

What initially inspired you to become an artist? What inspires your work now?

I was born with a burning brain. A raging hurricane in my soul, which doesn't find much release in light office work. When I was younger, I wanted to be a visual artist, but I got impatient with the process. I much more enjoyed the immediate satisfaction of turning on something with a speaker in it and hearing it go BLAAAAAAAAANG! I never became a musician per se, but more of a concept man, an idea pusher. After the breakup of my second band, I started to experiment with electronic equipment, and realized that the machines are like a direct link to the brain—you can take your twisted visions and translate them directly to an audience, in bone-crushing fidelity. Things became infinitely easier once I entered the world of electronics, and the possibilities of what you can do are so much greater. I've always been inspired by the surrealists, the dadaists, the anarchists, the realists, the completists, the synthesists, the fetishists and the narcissists.

I'll always be a half-step short of perfection and that is what drives me onward. I want to make a song capable of destroying the world.

List five favorite places in Chill.

Indian food on Devon, Korean barbeque at Kedzie and Lawrence, Monday nights at Danny's, ice cream at Margie's, but most of all, Home Sweet Home.

List Five favorite humans in Chill.

The Yeller: The old man who yells "BAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA-yabadehabadah!" in front of Big Tony's.

The Comparer: A man who will compare every single cover of every single magazine on the rack—he will tirelessly plow through stacks and stacks of Spin, Rolling Stone, Maxim, et al, presumably probing for microscopic differences on the covers, and never actually looking inside any of them.

Burlap Man: This huge man will wrap himself three or four times over in burlap (and perhaps this very issue of Lumpen) before putting his clothes over the top of it all.

The Bread Lady: I began to think she was an urban myth, until one day I realized that she'd been there all along.

The Guy Who Just Got Back From Europe: He just got back from Europe.

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

Anybody who fucks with the fantasy.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Misty Martinez

Is Misty Martinez indulging wet dreams or confirming worst nightmares? More importantly, is she even legal? This sexy chick hatched from a pink fantasy electro-world where bad taste reigns supreme. Misty Martinez does it all: she writes, records, and produces all her bitchslappin' beats on her computer, using the cheesiest programs and samples she can find; she commissions avant-garde designers to help interpret her fantastic costume ideas; and her elaborate burlesque act is choreographed to the second. She's been featured in Jane, Oui, and Lumpen magazines, and her exhibitionist offerings have been noted in the Baltimore City Paper, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Reader, and the Miami New Times. Currently she's a back-up singer in fantasy pop group Strawberry. Oh, and did you know she's a starlet? Well, maybe not exactly, but she's had parts in indie films by Jim Fotopolous (the forthcoming *Christabel* and *Esophagus*) and Gym Jones (as the star of *Undisciplined*, which screened at the 2001 Pink Bubble Bath sexy film festival in Los Angeles). Get in touch at misty3m@aol.com, PO Box 101061 Chicago, IL 60610 or virtual home: <http://pages.ripco.net/~nailhead/misty/>

What is your day job?
Professional eavesdropper.

What initially inspired you to become an artist? What inspires your work now?
I became Misty at age 17, when I went to a back-woods suburban party where a bunch of heshier bikers kept jumping in the bonfire and yelling, "Who stole my crack?!" That was so totally weird I transformed right then into the lady I thought best complimented the situation. Reading every perverted, romantic, deranged

issue of *Rollerderby*, Lisa Suckdog Carver's zine, helped a whole lot too, as did having a lot of inadequate, funny sex with total idiots.

What inspires me now: playing dress-up all day, Manford Man, tarot card readings, tarty ladies, science fiction writers, fancy fashion mags, anyone who knows things I don't, Pink Floyd, dreams while midday napping, Rimbaud, alternative rock, DJ Tommie Sunshine (just 'cause he can always make me dance), Oscar Wilde, bad childhood memories, MAGAS, goth shows on college radio, Jean Cocteau, and wild parties where I do something totally embarrassing.

List five favorite places in Chill
(in no particular order) Weekend Records & Soap, Midwest Center for Acupuncture, the trashed-out train yard/kitty depot near my apartment, The Mystery Spot (I know it's gone but the memory lingers), any place wherever people are nice to me or feed me good, healthy food

List Five favorite humans in Chill
(again, no particular order) Weasel Walter, Marci Cole, Suzy Poling, my family (they count as a unit), whomever I'm dating right now

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?
This is a trick question, isn't it? If I have to answer, I guess maybe my landlady's brother-in-law.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Trevor Arnholt



Undershorts Founding member Trevor Arnholt is a video artist who bought his first camera when he was a freshman in a Cleveland high school. He came to Chicago in 1992 to study film, writing and performance at Columbia College. In the ensuing years, he has produced bodies of work and emerged as a leader in the city's video and independent film communities. His credits include *The Composer* and *Jerry Vegas*, and a variety of shorter works. He has also participated in a wide range of works by other artists. Trevor also co-founded the company Merkaba Video Productions that specializes in producing video/musical environments at events around town. In this role, he is known as a "Chaos Engineer", but the title can be misleading if you ignore the depth of his serious artistic commitment. He has programmed such high profile events as the annual Solstice Celebration at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) each June. He and his sister also founded a recording studio known as the House of Chaos. Mr. Arnholt also works in association with Million Ways Productions putting on the Independent Multimedia Urban Assault (IMUA), a monthly showcase for artists, videographers and musicians held at the Alumni Club on Lincoln Avenue the last Tuesday of each month. His newest creation is Videokee. It is an interactive showcase of video-love ballads written and sung by him. He has HIGH-hopes to tour world-wide with his undershorts. [See undershorts primer on page 50]

What is your day job?

I am currently on a special assignment getting great writing material working at a video rental store in the suburbs with a fantastic pornography section and strange suburb inhabitants.

What initially inspired you to become an artist? What inspires your work now?

I really have too long of a list of mentors and idols (on average, I add 5 a day to my list just from the people I meet, see, and/or hear about).....{definitely all my friends, family, and enemies}

List five favorite places in Chill:

The House of Chaos
All the Museums in town; Art, Science & Industry, Shedd, Field, etc.
All the Theatres in town; Chicago, Congress, Aragon, Uptown, etc.
I know of some great bathtubs around the city
The Ba-hi Temple (not exactly sure on the spelling of this one... it's that big thing up north that looks like an orange juice maker!)

List Five favorite humans in Chill:

my sister; Cudra Clover a.k.a. Carey Arnholt
James Bond
Diego Trejo
Laura DiPaolo (this girl i love)
& Edmar is pretty cool (he does a lot for this town)

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

Rusty (only once, not too hard. I love the guy, but he'll make you go nuts)

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Watchers



Watchers is committed to making the New Chicago Sound, inspired by what has been forgotten past and present, in this city. A great soul thrives amongst the buildings, factories, and inhabitants. Watchers choose to observe these participants, and portray them sonically. Watchers finds a dance in the collapsed and burned out, the tired minds, that exist under the pretty things. We give back what is lost in your daily repetition, there is nothing left to do but build paper walls, so we say, "just get down!"

What is your day job(s): Chris Kralik-Family Resource Specialist for The Day Care Action Council of Illinois; Ted Danyluk-Bartender and Amateur race car driver; Michael Guarrine-Community Liaison for The Day Care Action Council of Illinois; Ethan D'Ercole-Record Store Guy with an Architecture Degree

What inspires your work now?: Dusties, Steppers, Rooftops, and Stiltnen

List five favorite places in Chill: Maxwell Street Market on Sunday, Lakeview Lounge, Uptown Theatre (as is), Danny's, and Pratt Beach in Rogers Park

List five favorite humans in Chill: Damon&Wayne, Mazen, Crosshair(Tom&Dan), Pete O'Malley, and Kelly

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?: When you have some training behind your fists you can do some serious damage... hippies & longhairs, singer songwriters, freshmen, and frat boys

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Leslie Stella

Her first novel, *Fat Bald Jeff*, was published last year. Now she's finishing up final edits for her second novel *The Easy Hour*, which will be published by Three Rivers Press, an imprint of Crown/Random House, in early 2003. It's a comedy set in the world of retail hell, where a hard-drinking saleslady launches an easy listening craze upon the city of Chicago. In the meantime, Stella has been working on the first draft of her third novel (still untitled). She used to edit a little family magazine years ago... maybe you've heard of it? It's called *Lumpen*.

What is your day job?
Full-time writer.

What initially inspired you to become an artist?
What inspires your work now?

I always wanted to be a writer, ever since I was a little kid. When I met Edmar in Myopic Books in 1993 and we talked about the new magazine he'd started (*Lumpen*), I realized there were other like-minded people in town, and it saved me. Go ahead, put that in your article: *Lumpen* saved me. It gave me something meaningful to look forward to after that daily march toward five o'clock in the working world. These days I find myself inspired by other writers I like to read: Kingsley Amis, Dorothy Parker, Joe Queenan, Calvin Trillin, David Sedaris. I love to write, it's the only thing I've ever wanted to do, and that inspires me to work hard, keeps me from getting discouraged.

List five favorite places in Chill

- 1) 2558 W. Armitage—the old Lumpen house. The house had fleas, even though there were no pets
- 2) Promontory Point
- 3) The Chicago Botanic Garden
- 4) Maria's Tavern in Bridgeport
- 5) The seventh floor of the Harold Washington Library Center (the Literature and Language Division). I liked to look at the picture of young Ernest Hemingway at the beginning of the stacks in the north wing.

List Five favorite humans in Chill:

- 1) My husband and former co-Lumpen, Chris Molnar
- 2) My sparring partner and former co-Lumpen, Edmar
- 3) Studs Terkel
- 4) My landlady from our old Logan Square apartment on Kedzie
- 5) Joe Judd from Myopic Books

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?
Anyone on Rush Street.

13 Cholos to Watch in 2002

Calbee



You've seen him on Lake St, shooting skaters and rocks stars. perhaps you've seen him at shows around town. Calbee is a favorite Lumpen photographer that shoots live music and portraits of bands. When he's not shooting bands he's taking pictures of his friends and anyone else he can get to stand in front of him. Recent gigs include bcoming a photo editor for a magazine called Stop Smiling and portraits of insane children His next book is due out later this year featuring photos of musicians and performers from 1990 to present, with tons of killer shots, most never published.

What is your day job?
professional photographer

What initially inspired you to become an artist?

What inspires your work now?

I'm just into people, without people I wouldn't have anything to shoot...my sitters are my biggest inspiration, there all so different and very passionate about what their doing...

List Five favorite humans in Chill:

A. nicole(venus) mark(BMP) casey (missing) JC(stop smiling) mia (uprise)

List five favorite places in Chill

A. uprise, reckless, snapcult, kinko's, and barts poker pit...

Who would you like to punch in the mouth?

A. did it...check the 1984 video...

Behaviour Actualisation Winter 2001

A conference on conceptual structures**RANDALL J GUEPWHELDT MEMORIAL LECTURE****Speaker: Prof EK Blankenship****Place: Institute Hall, University of Bink**

Topic: Today Argentina, tomorrow - the world! -?

Prof Blankenship ascends the podium to sustained applause. As he adjusts his glasses, a strand of light coming through one of the stained glass windows of Institute Hall reflects off the lenses in a bright, rainbow-like arc, drawing a hushed awe from the audience.

Prof Blankenship: An auspicious beginning. [Laughter] Or perhaps not.

You obviously find something amusing.

[Sustained silence]

I've had an interesting moment just now. Studying you. You entered this auditorium, after waiting in line. You filed in, found a seat, and amused yourself for about twenty minutes. And then, when the speaker came out, he adjusted his glasses and - an amazing thing happened! We all saw it! A bright, sparkling rainbow.

And I think I can safely say that it was the most beautiful thing I have seen for many years.

Those of you who are familiar with my work may be surprised to hear me speak this way - one columnist recently referred to my "post-modern old-fogeyness" [laughter] - and again, you find amusement. I noted it earlier to throw you off guard. No one wants to think they've made an ass of themselves. And to have someone point out in a superior, disdainful way that you have relaxed yourself for a second - there can be few things more horrible.

Except death from the sky.

And that is what I want to talk to you about today. At least in part.

Mostly, I want to gain an appreciation of "where we're at", as members of the Behaviour Actualisation community. We stand at a crossroads, and the opportunities before us are immense.

If only we don't "blow it".

I can remember, some years back, being told by various wise men that the future would be a technological marvel, that would render all labour problems an historical oddity, and usher in a golden age - well, you heard it as well, I'm sure. And some hopeful souls bought it. The 80's and 90's really seemed to be unstoppable, from the point of view of surplus-acquisition. Money was being made hand over foot and the stock markets looked unbeatable.

And then.

And then, things started to go wrong in the Asian economies, the Russian miracle failed to materialise, and all of a sudden, those weirdos at demonstrations no longer seemed so weird.

To say this poses a problem for those of us involved in the Actualisation process would be, well...overstating the obvious. That we need to find a solution - note that I did not say "solutions" - this is an imperative. And of course it won't be an easy task. But find the solution we must, because, and I'm not seeking any kudos as some sort of oracle - this is insight from a lifetime's work. Because if we blow this, then we will spend our twilight years watching mediocrity's rise to unparalleled heights. We will watch mere Enablers strutting around on history's stage. Well, it's an awful thought.

So where do we go? Well, what do you do when you're lost? Cry? Panic? I sincerely hope not. I hope that you would, instead, take stock of your surroundings, try and get your bearings and *move on*. If you have no map, you must simply try to find your way. And eventually you do. If not, well - you would still be lost, we've all been lost at some point, but we find our way eventually - if this were not so, none of us would be here, or not so many, at least. You'd be somewhere - *crying* [confused, halting laughter].

So, in the context of Actualisation. We are clearly, at a loss. Of course, at the *moment*, we've seen some ground clawed back. Because there is a war. Now, some dear souls think they have found the solution - but let's be clear, what works one day will not necessarily work the next. And what is being proposed? Permanent warfare? Well, that's fine, fine from the point of view of control - but *surplus acquisition*? To put it in vulgar terms, are we going to make a profit? Of course not. The military-industrial complex, which it could be argued, is as much a global concern as the manufacture of shoes, is one of history's most heavily subsidised enterprises.

And that's fine - however surplus acquisition occurs, that's fine. As its public money - something which I am in theory opposed to, what with it being "public" - well, at least its well spent. Weapons of mass destruction - fuel air explosives, daisy cutters, whatever - well these things help to maintain control. Very important.

But unless we are willing to use them on, say, striking labourers - well, for us, what use are they ultimately? Not much I fear.

"But what do we care about striking labourers?", I hear you ask. After all, union membership is down from the "bad old days" of the 70's. True. But unions are making something of a comeback, in the United States for example. And look at the recent demonstrations. Unions, environmentalists, gay rights activists - all linking arms and fighting on the same side. Now, back in the bad old days, these groups were usually at odds with one another. Not so now.

And remember, like it or not, we've been here before. An organised labour movement in the USA was smashed by Woodrow Wilson and after World War I came red scares and increasing wealth for the productive classes. And then came the 30's, militant labour and the Welfare State. But fine, control was maintained again, as the House Un-American Activities Committee helped regain ground. And then, the 1960's, popular forces rose, and control was not seriously regained until the 80's. And we've had a good run, let's face it. But, as CLR James

said, "nothing - no matter how profitable - lasts forever". A scary thought.

So do we have to ride this terrible thing out? Well, yes - *but*. And it's a big but.

Those of you familiar with my work will know that before September 11, I advocated corporate terror. Now, according to my Law of Diminishing Outrage, this should have worked. But since September 11, this has lost its lustre, to say the least. And so I have since revised my proposals. Fundamentally, there has been no change. But as Actualisers, we must, like Daumier, be "of our time". OK, so let's say labour makes a comeback - who knows, perhaps "people power" will once again rear its vulgar head! [Laughter].

So be it. Let's imagine this brave new world. Will it mean the end of surplus acquisition? Hardly. Will it mean a return to the Welfare State, and its degraded values? Probably. And you know, once you give people an inch, they'll take a mile, its true. So let them.

Because if the pendulum swings one way, you can be damn sure it will swing the other. And if we're careful, if we follow the advice of Jesus, and "be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves", we will be half way there. In the past, the problem has been to try and put the brakes on change, and then there's been the inevitable waste of energy trying to make things right again. But if we anticipate the next move of our opponents, if we can let them think they've won, then that's half the battle. Then we sit on our hands for awhile, act cowed and humbled. Oh dear, oh dear! The sky has fallen in! It was all our fault, sorry folks! [Laughter]. You see where I'm going.

Then, when they're comfortable, we hammer them. Death from the sky. Courtesy of Mega Corporation International. Something like that. Can you imagine the demoralisation of our opponents then?

And then, with the offer of voluntary slavery or prison, we can finally rid history of the twin menace of reciprocity and egalitarianism.

But where, you might ask, does it stop? You would be better to ask, *where does it start?* Because, I am afraid, ladies and gentlemen, that it starts with you.

Don't look so confused. After all, dear friends, you paid *me* tonight. Were you the sort of person who would be exempt from this future slavery of which I speak, I would be paying *you*. An important difference. Do you see what I mean? I have an Institute to fund, and if you think that I can do that by casting pearls before swine, you display an idiocy that is breath-taking. And I really do believe that for my ideas to have any currency, they must make the transformation from thought to action. The essence, really, of Actualisation.

You may notice, if you look over your shoulders, that all the exits have been carefully secured with heavy chains. You may wish to consider these chains to be representative of your future. You may come to think of this symbol as a hateful thing, or a comfort. Whichever way, its no interest of mine.

These armed gentlemen now marching in from behind the curtain are your guides to a fulfilling new future, one which will take place far, far

from your past. Did you know there are now, at this moment, an estimated 2.7 million slaves in the world today? Mostly children, as well. Fascinating stuff, I agree. And lucrative as well. Take my word for it on that one. [Shouts, scuffles].

Excuse me, calm down there! I can't see the point of that. No need for that.

Anyways, I shall take my leave, ladies and gentlemen, and remember what we're fighting for - the privatisation of the public. You can take comfort in the knowledge that you are pioneers in that great cause.

Oh, and by the way, the rainbow you saw earlier - all done with lasers. Amazing, isn't it?

Thank you for listening, good night, and sleep well.

An Open Letter To The Anti-Authoritarian Anti-Capitalist Left

By doyle and ben

January 31, 2002 slash.autonomeia.org

As revolutionary social anarchists living in North America, we wrote this letter to initiate conversation and debate among fellow anti-authoritarians, hopefully leading to new ways of thinking about how to organize and make decisions as a movement. For us, revolutionary means that we are in this to win. We think certain ways of thinking within some anarchist groups are preventing us from building a coherent and strategic revolutionary movement and thereby winning a social revolution. We want to focus on what we call dualistic thinking. This way of thinking mistakenly sees two things that are really mutually necessary, as mutually exclusive. When we look around us we find a world built on dualisms.

Many of us were turned on to radical politics by taking up an issue of special importance to us. It may have taken a revolution in our own thinking to see the connections between our own struggle and that of others. One of the most enduring images from the Seattle protests against the World Trade Organization is that of "Teamsters and Turtles." The years of organizing and exchange between once disparate movements culminated on that beautiful November morning with many people transcending single issue thinking and moving towards a broader anti-corporate, and even anti-capitalist analysis. Many people are overcoming false dichotomies like 'labor vs. environment.' We win the most profound victories when we set aside dualistic thinking. It's not just deforestation, and it's not just sweatshops; its all that and more. People everywhere are looking at politics more holistically and joining together on the streets. Applying holistic thinking to our anarchist organizing is essential to overcoming false dichotomies, which are holding us back from creating a broad based revolutionary movement.

The following are three dualisms we see as particularly relevant to anti-authoritarian organizing. We suggest that each of these dualisms can, and must, become complementary.

Practice Vs. Theory

Theory gets a bad wrap these days. No wonder! Most places that "do theory" are insulated academic environments and corporate think tanks. Revolutionary theory is often associated with Marxist ideologues who promote party politics and state socialism. Even anarchist theory is often discussed in ways that are inaccessible, and full of jargon. This can seem intimidating and disconnected from the daily struggles of most people. In a society that is so deeply beholden to directives of capital, there is very little space to talk critically about important theoretical topics such as political philosophy, revolutionary history, and theory of education. A combination of these factors leads many people to focus primarily on practice (what they do on a daily basis) while ignoring theory (reasoning what is the best way to go about these daily doings.)

Regrettably, the development of the black bloc in North America has reflected this trend. Instead of being a name for a set of tactics to resist police brutality at street demonstrations, "black bloc" has become an entity unto itself. It has taken on an entire subculture, persona, and a host of culturally specific no-no's (like engaging in popular culture or eating a hamburger). By definition there are no official leaders of the black bloc. There is no official organization that makes black blocs show up at demonstrations. However, in the minds of many who see and par-

ticipate in black blocs, anti-authoritarian beliefs and militant action have become inseparable. In many anarchist circles today, one is not accepted as sufficiently revolutionary without proper black attire, knowledge of jargon, and in particularly awful cases, whether or not the person is a young white male. These trends make anti-authoritarianism morph from a coherent (not dogmatic) set of ideas, accessible and applicable to people of all different backgrounds, to a small and even parochial sub-culture that, despite talk of "diversity of tactics," embraces narrow and even predictable means of resistance (dressing in black, acting anonymously, organizing in affinity groups, engaging cops in street battles, etc.). Furthermore, because it is becoming an entity instead of a tactic, there is no room to critically question whether a black bloc at a demonstration is a good idea or not. Some activists see militant action as the most revolutionary tactic possible and therefore good. However, there is no such thing as a revolutionary tactic. Revolution is a strategic process marked by decisive moments of confrontation with powerful elites and the development of counter structures that empower people to make decisions about their lives and meet community needs.

To know what is appropriate at what time in a revolutionary struggle, we need to think rationally about changing contexts so that our movement can grow and evolve dynamically. We need well thought out ideas, and means of implementing them everywhere.

Spontaneity Vs. Institutionalization

Ok. So we know what you're thinking: Spontaneity=good. It means autonomy, personal freedom, and free association; these are some of the foundations of anarchism. Ultimately, we want to be free to make decisions about our lives without an imposing system of command and control from above. Hooray! On the other hand, Institutionalization=Bad. We immediately think, "gray suits, bureaucracy, dogma, hierarchy. Yuck!" Indeed, the institutions most people in this society experience most directly include school, work places, and religious institutions. For many, these experiences are deeply demoralizing because they totally contradict the desire for spontaneity. Some conclude that they don't want any institutions at all, but what is an institution really?

An institution is a lasting organization of stable relationships with a specific purpose. The question is not, "Institution or not?" Rather, "What kind of institutions?" People often resist building institutions with theoretical foundations and long-term programs, favoring episodic, spontaneous, moments of glory on the front lines, and in their personal lives. We want institutions with solid anti-authoritarian theoretical foundations that are committed to putting these ideas into practice: engendering spontaneity as part of a larger project of liberation. Creating good institutions does not mean compromising anti-authoritarian politics; it means committing to them. It means creating community-based revolutionary infrastructure that makes this movement relevant to our neighbors in between mass mobilizations. It means creating lasting systems of self-governance and community decision-making that mirror the free society we want to build.

The beginnings of this work have been extraordinary. Take for example the spokes council organizing model which has been essential to giving this movement a directly democratic and decentralized structure. These moments show us that what we want - what this world needs- is attainable. We can do it! What's most exciting is that these structures are beginning to empower more than just a few people. We should strive to

make the movement so inclusive and general that huge numbers of people feel empowered and connected. These decision-making bodies should be strongly anti-authoritarian so that no individual, organization, or political party can take them over for a particular interest. They must be stable enough so that decisions are resolved not by intellectual point-scoring rants, fist fights, (or worse) wars - but by equally empowered people rationally debating together.

Creating revolutionary infrastructure (affinity groups, community gardens, free schools, cultural centers, unions, counter community meetings, etc.) is not about making insular lifestyle hide-aways. Revolutionary infrastructure is the complex and diverse web of connections that is intricately connected to and a critical part of the larger political movement and revolutionary project.

Security Culture Vs. Organizational Transparency

So, the Feds are watching us. Hi Feds! Like our letter? That means we've got to organize in ways that resist this surveillance and try our darndest not to allow the State to throw us in jail for trying to build a free society. Our concern here is that the security culture we adopt often takes on a life of its own, turning into a barrier to democratic sharing of vital information.

One example of this is an experience we had at the Quebec 2001 actions against the Free Trade Area of the Americas. In the name of "security concerns," the place of the spokes council was not to be announced until the last minute. It seemed one had to already be privy to the organizers communications network to find out where the meeting was. This prevented many out-of-town people, and probably even local people, from finding the meeting where the action plan was to be discussed. The next day many people were not aware that if they did not want to be in a militant "red" zone, they should not be in the non-violent direct-action oriented "yellow" zone. It was an amazing, spontaneous, wonderful, and perhaps even historical moment when the red zone emerged out of the yellow zone to tear down the fence! The only problem was some people were not prepared to be in the thick of the police violence that followed. There were people who didn't realize what they were getting themselves into by being in the yellow zone.

This story illustrates how - if we want to truly embrace a "diversity of tactics" - there needs to be a way for people on all levels of the "traffic-light spectrum" to feel empowered in their participation. That's part of what resisting is about - feeling like you are taking control of your life and making decisions with other people to reclaim collective power. When some activists deny important information, which may be critical to making informed decisions about how to best contribute to the movement or action, organizations can fall apart, leaving participants with a bitter, disempowering, and anti-democratic feeling.

It's a fine line between security concerns, and making sure everyone has the information they need to make informed decisions. Security culture tries to stay one step ahead of the authorities, but we've also got to be in-step with each other. If information is sensitive, the process of releasing it should still be transparent. This is a challenge that requires creative and innovative strategy.

In closing, we are faced with a seemingly impossible task: transforming the fundamental institutional structure of society. Our vision for the

future should inform how we organize in the present. Theory informs practice; vision informs strategy. As we organize, we should hold each other mutually responsible that our movement be rooted in direct democracy, inclusiveness, and an ethical framework. In times of political repression, it is essential that we keep our eyes on the bigger picture and act in solidarity with one another in the struggle of the present. This letter is meant to be an ember that sparks conversation on the streets, and dialogue that continues everywhere. Now more than ever, we must demand the impossible - not only of our world, but also of ourselves.

The authors are interested in dialogue! Doyle can be reached at: doyle@riseup.net. She is studying critical pedagogy and is a community activist in Vermont. Ben (stokingthefires@aol.com) is studying food politics at the Institute for Social Ecology (www.social-ecology.org)."

Directory

WHERE TO SLACK**SIP**

1223 W. Grand

Seems like a friendly cafe where one can go sit and read. There's also a nice patio in the back. The zucchini bread is good and the waitstaff, friendly.

INTELLIGENTSIA

3123 N. Broadway.

One of the rare hybrid cafes that allows you to race in and get java in no time or sit and chill with your favorite read-ing. These cats have the business of coffee down to a science. Always featuring the best and freshest bean available. They also import and roast fair trade coffee which is available at many of our favorite places to slack.

CAFE LULA

2537 N Kedzie

This is more of a place to eat (the food is delicious!) but there's a patio in the summertime where you can sit and read without feeling guilty.

HOLLYWOOD DINER

1601 W. North Ave

Scares me, but if you really need a caffeine fix late at night by all means.

DEMAR'S

Good coffee, great breakfasts and an eclectic menu.

THE NERVOUS CENTER

4612 Lincoln Ave.

Interesting eclectic hub of coffee and experimental music and people lots of people. they've reopened!

BITE

1039 N Western

Consistently good food, nice art and great coffee.

DIXIE GRILL

corner of Chicago and Damen

Hobo Heaven. A great place to go for a good cup of diner coffee, and it's always open, too. Try the Jailhouse special, a slice of fried bologna in between two buttermilk pancakes, and tell me about it. The food is real cheap and real good.

THAI LAGOON

2322 W North.

Great brunch on the weekends. Try the shrimp shumai whenever you can

EARWAX

1564 N. Milwaukee Ave

Staple cafe fare that's vegetarian friendly. Good coffee. Great service and a great selection of movies.

ATOMIX CAFÉ

on Chicago Ave at Damen

A great place to sit and read, good coffee, and an interesting industrially designed atmosphere.

GALLERY CAFÉ

on North Ave and Wood

A great place to go to sit and read. Great smoothies and sandwiches named after artists. Try the blueberry raspberry smoothie!

KOPI CAFÉ

5317 N. Clark St.

I pretty much grew up at this cafe. It's a little but hip-hip-ish but it's a great place on the north side to sit and read. There's even an area with low tables and pillows. It can get a little busy but it's definitely home-y enough to be worth the wait and there's a little store in the back that sells jewelry and clothes that would appeal to the tie-dyed / batik-wearing, forty-year old art-loving woman crowd. There are also lots of women holding hands. You can't smoke there anymore, but then again, smoking is so passe....

THE BOURGEOIS PIG

73 W. Fullerton

I hate Lincoln Park, but if you ever find yourself there, the bourgeois pig, despite its name is a great respite from, uh, whatever reason you find yourself in lincoln park. A vast tea selection and great sandwiches. The staff is friendly, too.

PICK ME UP

Lincoln and Fullerton Sheffield and Clark

An all-round good cafe that's open 24-hours (I think). There's always a variety of people and if you miss seeing goths, there's also one or two around. Interesting jukebox selection, although the past couple of times I was there I found myself getting annoyed at what was playing. Excellent tofu scramble, and for a real kick, you should try the zombie (something like 4 shots of espresso in a large cup of coffee)-Yow!

CAFE JUMPING BEAN

1439 W. 18th St.

One of the few Pilsen area cafes serving the transplanted hipster and normal humans alike. Cute space that's not too big in the heart of the pilsen art buddy scene.

THIRD COAST

1260 N. Dearborn

An okay place to sit and read if ever you're sick of other cafes (think last resort). The smoking section looks like it houses a lot of ex-cocaine dealers and out-of-work porn stars, so if you're a smoker, definitely wear a patch and sit in the non-smoking section.

FALAFEL SHOP

North and Hoynes

Practically the only place in Wicker Park that serves a mean falafels (try them spicy) and excellent babaghanoush. This place rocks. Its as good as it gets south of Lawrence Ave.

WINGS**STREETSIDE**

Armitage and Kedzie

Newish Humbolt hangout is becoming the Wingers' Mecca. Almost freakishly large wings available with

two different sauces: a more traditional "Hot," plus the nicely seasoned "Caribbean." Both styles receive chunky bleu cheese dressing? best of the lot. Two size orders for any appetite.

NORTHSIDE

North and Damen

Gentrification's Restaurant Zero offers passable hot wings, nothing exceptional. A bit smaller than some of the competition, but still tender and juicy. Wet naps are a considerate addition. BBQ sauce also available.

BAR LOUIE

All over

Pretty darn good Buffalo wings, on a good day comparable to Streetside's. Tip: Beat the maddening crowd on Sunday nites at the Halsted location. There's a \$3 wing special, it's quiet, but you might have to watch sports or a bad movie with them.

BITE

Western and Cortez

The sesame wings have anchored Bite's glacially changing menu since they decided to buy a stove. The excellent Asian-inspired recipe is nice change of pace. Formerly served with green onions? favored by one reviewer, they now come with a spot of cucumber salad. Size can fluctuate, but quality is always good.

HOOTERS

Wells and Erie

(Not sampled by press time.) What can you say? Notorious chain known for wings served with eye candy. Five sauces available including the unfortunately named "911." And, yes 50-wing buckets are available.

GALLERIES**DOG MATIC**

1822 south desplaines phone: 312.492.6698 e-contact: dogmaticgallery@hotmail.com hours: saturday 12 to 6pm and by appointment

HEAVEN

1550 north milwaukee, 2nd floor phone:

773.342.4597 e-contact: heavengallery@yahoo.com hours: saturday and sunday 1 to 5pm

JOYMORE

2701 west augusta phone: 773.278.3375 e-contact: joymore@bust.com hours: saturday 3 to 5pm and by appointment

MN

3524 south halsted phone: 773.847.0573 e-contact: mngallery@aol.com hours: saturday 11am to 6pm

SEVEN THREE SPLIT

971 west 18th phone: 312.733.2263 site: www.seven-threesplit.org hours: saturday 12 to 5pm

THE SHOWROOM

1100 west cermak, building B, 4th floor, suite B-304

Directory

phone: 312.942.9503 e-contact: ashroom@hot-mail.com hours: call for current hours or for an appointment

STANDARD

1437 north bosworth phone: 773.486.1005 e-contact: david@standardgallery.com site: www.standard-gallery.com hours: saturday 12 to 5pm

THE SUBURBAN

244 east lake, oak park phone: 708.763.8554 e-contact: bkmgar@mc.net hours: saturday 10am to 5pm and by appointment

SUITABLE

2541 west thomas phone: 773.862.4748 site: www.suitable.org hours: saturday 12 to 6pm and by appointment

TEMPORARY SERVICES

202 south state, suite 1124 phone: 773.645.5443 site: www.temporarieservices.org e-contact: servers@temporarieservices.org hours: vary from project to project

THE GALLERY AT SUPREME

1459 N Milwaukee Ave. 773.782.7047 Inaugural show Sept 7th. Call for more info.

DELUXUE PROJECTS

500 west cermak phone: 312.492.7986 e-contact: dani@interaccess.com hours: saturday 12 to 5pm and by appointment

OPEN END

2130 W Division St.
Shows vary month to month. hours: 11am-5pm an by appointment.

CAN

1308 north milwaukee, 2nd floor phone: 773.342.3653 e-contact: contact@cangallery.com hours: saturday & sunday 1 to 5pm

BOOKSTORES**MYOPIC**

1468 N. Milwaukee
Without a doubt the best used bookstore in Chicago. Besides having shitloads of books, they're shelved in a logical, easy-to-decipher manner and the space is still not too crowded. Helpful, friendly staff make looking for a book very easy, and Myopic carries enough stock to be a good re-source for that certain book or just plain browsing. You can even have a cup of coffee, too. Most topics you can think of are carried, and books are bought Friday evenings and on Saturdays.

BOOKWORKS

Clark and Sheffield
Very roomy store with a fairly large inventory that's nicely shelved as well. Looking for a book is easy at Bookworks, and they have special sections for first editions, art mono-graphs and vintage paperbacks among others. Bookworks also carries CDs, cassettes (limited) and vintage vinyl.

THE GALLERY BOOKSTORE

923 W. Belmont
Just east of the Belmont stop on the Red Line, Gallery is a cramped, disorganized used bookstore with a lot of pa-perbacks. There are a lot of books in there, but finding any-thing is difficult because the organizational system is a bit hard to decipher (for example, one shelf is labeled, "Books by Actors"). Good source for vintage Playboy and Pent-house magazines, as well as old Esquire and Saturday Evening Post. There's also the most comprehensive Sherlock Holmes section I've ever seen in a bookstore, but on the downside there's an entire section devoted to Anne Rice.

OPEN BRAIN BOOKS

1441 W. Jarvis
Small used bookstore just east of the Jarvis stop on the Red Line. Open Brain opened about four months ago, and is slowly getting its legs. Highlights are a leftist/radical section and a healthy \$1 cart.

QUIMBY'S

1854 W. North Ave.
The best place for underground literature, zines, mags, design books and strange stuff.

PRARIE AVENUE BOOKSTORE

418 S. Wabash
PAB offers graphic designers and new media freaks a dense array of some of the best american and overseas titles available. Place to find the much coveted Gasbook.

BURRITOS**EL GUSTO**

down Milwaukee, next to Silver Room
Translated, this restaurant's name means "the tasty," and if that isn't truth in advertising, then kiss my grits. Their chicken burrito is the ultimate in smoky, charcoal good-ness, hands-down the veritable cock of the taqueria rock in Chill. Only \$3.50, and excellent chips and salsa, too.

TACOS QUITUPAN

Howard & Paulina, across from Howard stop on Red Line
Bless this brave little taqueria for setting up shop in a less-than-thug-free zone. The red and green chile alone is worth the trip to the end of the Red Line, no bullshit. The verde is made with chiles from Hatch, NM, the chile capitol of the world, and nobody—and I mean NOBODY—can top it.

LA PASADITA

Ashland and Division
Beloved of Wicker Parks drunks for years, Pasadita stands out for a couple of reasons. One, the burrito—no beans, frills—is more akin to Tucson's Baja style than a typical Chi-cago burro; a bit drier and the chicken is all white meat. Two, there are actually three separate Pasadita establishments within close proximity of each other on Ashland. The most north

on the west side of the street is for pork, beef and brains, head south for chicken and cross the street for mariscos (seafood).

PANCHO PISTOLAS

31st and Union
The best kept secret of the Community of the Future. Not so much for the wings, but for Mexican fare and great ser-vice. The wings are big and juicy enough, the hot sauce is hot, but lacks any depth of flavor. Bleu cheese is a little thin. Served with lots of carrot sticks.

TACO BURRITO KING

Jackson and Halsted
New to the neighborhood as of about four months ago, TBK burritos are special indeed, with the al pastor reign-ing supreme and spicy. Also notable are the veggie burros and tacos; they sautee the vegetables on the grill, making these selections almost like fajitas. Sour cream is included in the basic burrito, and they tend to leave them on the grill for that crispy tortilla sensation. Good horchata, but no chips and salsa for eat in, unfortunately.

TACOS CAMINOS DE MICHOACAN I & II

Clark and Lawrence (I), Sheridan & Irving Park (II)
Caminos de Michoacan serves hands down the best chips and salsa in town, and I'll fight anyone that says no, got it? The smoky chipotle flavor of the red is supremely tasty, and the burritos are outstanding as well. Choice here is the chicken. Open late and right next to the Sheridan stop on the Red Line.

EL BURRITO MEXICANO

Addison, just east of Wrigley Field
Three words for this place: big ass burritos, all flavors. Also serves great chips and salsa (salsa tray includes the Big Three: pico de gallo, red and green). Very fast, open late and right next to the Addison stop on the Red Line.

EL FAMOUS BURRITO

Clark and Greenleaf
Huge fucking burritos for \$3.50, and homemade chips and salsa (fresh tomato but not runny), too. El famous is kind of a small place nestled among many other, lesser-quality taquerias, so keep a sharp eye out for it and settle for nothing less in Rogers Park.

IRAZU

Armitage and (just south on) Milwaukee
Costa Rican restaurant which Edmar vows has the best burritos in town. Looks like an old gas station property from the outside, but has tables in the back and outside in good weather. Enormous veggie tacos.

::Submit your directory: email ed@lumpen.com

Mediamix: Music, Top 13s

Central Falls Latitude (Truckstop)

Given the gentle accessibility of Latitude, it may be surprising to learn that the members of Central Falls come from a decidedly improvised/experimental/minimalist background. Boasting former members of US Maple, Town & Country, and the Chicago Underground Quartet, the group has found an ideal pairing in the shape of Truckstop Records (the Chicago-based label that has been a home to kindred spirits Pinetop Seven) for its starry-skied pastoral debut.

Led by the lovesick troubadour vocals and guitars of brothers Adam and Ben Vida, Central Falls has crafted a gorgeous cycle of songs about lonely rooms, languid days, and the sort of dreamtime geography that paints a subtle picture of time and place.

Tracks like "Zip Codes," "Travel," "Famous Harbor," and the album-defining title track (which boasts the album's real theme in the line "I've got miles for the days you've wasted") are endlessly descriptive without dictating any simple plan or course.

Featuring accents of pedal steel, organ, and electric piano (courtesy of Edith Frost sidemen Steve Dorocke and Ryan Hembrey), Latitude hints that its roots lie in country, folk and jazz. More than anything, though, the album shows the emotional delicacy of a group of musicians so often associated with Chicago's 'difficult' avant-garde. -August Forte

Phil Ochs The Best of Phil Ochs (A&M Records)

When Bob Dylan went electric in 1966, the outcry from his folkie fans was deafening; the most revered folk artist of his time was labeled a sell-out and a fraud. More than 35 years later, Dylan's gamble has paid off (his most recent work has been hailed as brilliant), but at the time his future was uncertain. With Dylan taking the lead, however, a number of his peers and early disciples felt emancipated to move beyond the acoustic-troubadour sound that defined a culture. Tim Buckley would trade "Song to the Siren" (about as pure a folk song could be in 1967) for the avant-experimentation of 1970's Starsailor, while Nick Drake would add strings and exotic instrumentation to his quintessentially English folk music.

Phil Ochs, a Dylan peer known as much for his protest songs as his pro-Civil Rights/anti-Viet Nam stance, was yet another reliable folkie who began to stretch musically by the late 60s. The singer's disillusionment with his once-loved America and a move from Elektra to A&M Records signaled the dark complexity of his 1967-1970 stint on A&M, a period reflected on The Best of...

Baroque arrangements, dark humor, and surrealist touches abound on his 1967 A&M debut Pleasures of the Harbor, five tracks of which end up here including the ten-verse lament on JFK's assassination, "The Crucifixion."

1968 would prove to be a difficult year for the U.S., and Ochs was reportedly devastated by the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the violence of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where he was present to help organize an antiwar rally. These two events book ended the release of Tape From California (two songs of which are included here) and would influence the mood of 1969's Rehearsals For Retirement and its

caustic "William Butler Yeats Visits Lincoln Park and Escapes Unscathed."

His final release for A&M, 1970's sarcastically titled Greatest Hits, proved to be slightly more upbeat than his past efforts, but failed to catch on with the public. Ochs' final years would see a few scattered singles and some travel. The emotional downward spiral that began in '67 would end with the singer's 1976 suicide. Like Buckley and Drake, he died too young and would never live to see the countless musicians, poets, and activists bearing his influence.

The Best of Phil Ochs ends with a late live performance of the signature tune "I Ain't Marchin' Anymore," a proper final word for a performer who, like Dylan, followed his own muse, challenging his audience to keep up. -August Forte

Pedal Steel Transmission In the Winter, It Makes the Dead Grass Look Green (Self-released)

Until now, this Chicago four piece has been an "up and coming" country rock band in a city full of them. You needed only to look to the papers to find Pedal Steel Transmission leapingfrogging slots on bills with cowboy outfits like Old No. 8, Cedarcase, and The Steepwater Band at clubs like Martyrs, Nevins, or the late Rogers Park hang Morseland. Then, as the band's (loaded) name was getting out, songwriters Dan Schneider and Gary Pyskacek appeared under the moniker Sainte Chapelle, a haunted side project that channeled the broken pastoral melancholy of artists like Nick Drake, Pedro the Lion, and Will Oldham.

While not exactly haunted, the new In the Winter, It Makes the Dead Grass Look Green feels like a fever dream: recognizable elements are resculpted into strange new shapes within the course of nearly every song.

The album opener "Sorted" comes on like Crazy Horse (a constant influence on the record's hard-edged psychedelic outbursts of guitar) before mutating into Tortoise-style slickness. "Para Ella" is even more twisted, somehow managing to introduce StereoLab to the pedal steel before transforming into Sonic Youth/Sun Ra abstract intensity. The band's C&W and blues roots show through on the beautifully sinister "Her Dream," but even then, there are sly nods to Tom Waits and Captain Beefheart.

In the Winter... finds Pedal Steel Transmission using its namesake instrument more for shading this time out, but damn if the band doesn't hijack the transmission and take the listener on all manner of twists and turns. -August Forte

Various Artists Phil Ranelin: Remixes (Hefty Records)

Hefty's reissue last year of Phil Ranelin's The Time Is Now! (1974) and Vibes From The Tribe (1976)-restored and remixed by John McEntire with assistance and coordination from Hefty's founding son John Hughes III-led our own August Forte to declare that, "...in the true spirit of collectivism, McEntire and Hughes can now be counted as part of the Tribe." Well, in the spirit of reinterpretation and reconstruction, the Tribe just got a little bigger.

Re-issuing Phil Ranelin was a great idea. Many new listeners plugged into this overlooked Detroit pocket of rhythm and jazz. It is only natural, therefore, that Hughes follow up with a truly brilliant idea, and tote the rest of the Hefty family and friends along with him. Phil Ranelin: Remixes is the studied result of just such a brilliant idea.

As a founding member of Tribe (a Detroit artists' collective of jazz musicians that grew out of an extended concept of musical community and family), Ranelin's music worked to inspire a sense of kinship, and it is that same sense of kinship that sets up this unique collection. The various tracks (including cuts from Prefuse 73, Telefon Tel Aviv, Beneath Autumn Sky, Slicker and El P, among others) range from subdued to relatively straightforward to hypnotic, but all resonate around that familiar moody electronic atmosphere drifting around Hefty. The strength of the rightness in pairing up these particular artists with Ranelin's jazz-tempered soul makes Remixes one of those rare projects that manages to come off more than clean and smoothly... rather like a deliciously staggering blow to the forehead, with a cherry on top.

After hearing the remixes, Ranelin said his hope was to be "still around 20 years from now to hear what happens when the Phil Ranelin & Tribe Renaissance Remixes come out, wow!" Me too
-Cowboy Joe Collier

Superchunk here's to shutting up (Merge)

OK, if you name your album "here's to shutting up," define it in your press kit's first sentence as, "... a continuation of their ongoing journey from post-adolescent punk rockers towards a more diverse, creative sound," then pony up a perfectly mixed and measured pretty pop ditty as Track One to prove it--the attempt at playful irony is a bit thick; superchunk means it. here's to shutting up is not a whimsical detour; they're not looking back.

That's not to say that the Chapel Hill, NC veterans' eighth studio outing is without merit. HTSU glows with a pleasant mix of earnest melodic wandering and precisely safe deviation, spiked in all the right places with mildly threatening pop tension and somnambulant guitar (read: keyboards, strings, trad. crunch guitar and even a bit of "unplugging"), and mugs everyone from the Pixies to Veruca Salt to Alanis Morissette to the Alan Parsons Project. "Out on the Wing," however, gets gleefully dirty and messy like a ghost of chunk past.

Released on Merge (owned and operated by chunk's Mac McCaughan and Laura Balance), the warm feel of HTSU owes a lot to producer Brian Paulson (Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Slint, Superchunk on 1994's Foolish). And the layout and design (also by McCaughan)-featuring a cool opaque overlay and line drawings-is superb.

Superchunk is growing up musically. They're pulling an REM, and it'll probably work.-Cowboy Joe Collier

Vermont Calling Albany* (Kindercore Records)

Vermont have a way with a mournful, jangle-folk creeping pop song. Just try and get through one complete revolution of Calling Albany* without picturing these guys in shabby

Mediamix: Music, Top 13s

clothes, riding off into the sunset with harmonicas, determined to "make it"... or at least get a song on the soundtrack.

It would probably make a great MTV Valentine's Day concert to double bill these guys with Ben Folds (with or without Five), simulcast live from, say, Temptation Island... but seriously, though folks, Calling Albany* (the asterisk is part of the gimmick involving the album's title and it's relation to a specific lyric) is a beautifully crafted, fragile circuit through pop's whimsical, sleepy-but-happy-and-in-love songwriting side. "Ballad of Larry Bird" is the perfunctory radio-friendly sing-along, shamelessly rehashing the tired 70s basketball nostalgia hook, but "Hello, Goodbye Sex" neatly works in a nod to the Beatles' "Long And Winding Road" so well it can be put down to youthful exuberance. It should be noted by Vermont, however, that there is a fine line between acceptable emotive expression and just plain whining.

It's a summer day sliding into fall... that also seems remarkably appropriate for use in a well-produced, upscale television advertisement, product irrelevant as long as it hits the market in the next 18 months or so. This album will be liked by a lot of different people, from many different motivations, and in the end, that's a winner.
- August Forte

TOP 13s

Movies Abina Recommends

Performance - Donald Cammell/Nicolas Roeg
Soleil O - Med Hondo
Grounhog Day - Harold Ramis
The Swimmer - Frank Perry
Raging Bull - Martin Scorsese
Le Mepris - Jean-Luc Godard
Kuhle Wampe - Bertolt Brecht & Hanns Eisler
The Misfits - John Huston
The Brother from Another Planet - John Sayles
Battle of Algiers - Gillo Pontecorvo
Singing in the Rain - Stanley Donen
Tokyo Story - Yasujiro Ozu
Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne - Robert Bresson

Edmar's picks

Future farmers: Deface the persident
<http://futurefarmers.com/texandraw/>
Rtmark
<http://www.rtmark.com/>
Institute For Applied Autonomy
<http://www.appliedautonomy.com/>
reamweaver
<http://www.reamweaver.com/>
Yes Men
<http://theyesmen.org/>
Whitehouse
<http://www.whitehouse.org/>
New kids
www.newkidsontheblackblock.com
Las Agencias
www.lasagencias.net
Ricardo Mirangua Zunia
<http://www.volume71.com/>
2002 Beige World Cj Chapionship
<http://post-data.org/cassette/>
Get Your Enron On
<http://www.mnftiu.cc/mnftiu.cc/war7.html>

Deadtch

<http://www.deadtch.net/>
Surveillance Camera Players
<http://www.notbored.org/>

Evil Clown top 13

1. VNV NATION- FUTURE PERFECT
2. AIR- EVERYBODY HERTZ
3. APOCALYPTICA BERZERK- HARMONIZER
4. GRANDDADDY- CONCRETE DUNES
5. LAMBCHOP- IS A WOMAN
6. GLOBAL GOON- VATICAN NITEZ
7. FELIX da HOUSE CAT- KITTENZ AND THEE DLITZ
8. DESPARECIDOS- READ MUSIC/ SPEAK ENGLISH OF ELECTRICITY
9. JOHN FOX & LOIS GORDON- PLEASURES OF ELECTRICITY
10. PULP- WE LOVE LIFE
11. WHITE STRIPES- WHITE BLOOD CELLS
12. V/A- IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS RYTHEM
13. V/A- FORCE LAB EDITION: COMPOSURE

Weekend Top 13

1. Adult - "Run Run Crying 7" (Ersatz Audio)
2. Adult - "Misinterpreted 12" (Ersatz Audio)
3. Depeche Mode - "Electronicat Remix of "Goodnight Lovers" (Mute)
4. Ellen Allien - "Erdbeermund 12" (BpitchControl)
5. Various - "Disco Nouveau CD/5x12" (Ghostly International)
6. Various - "Other Mistakes EP (Soundlike)
7. Andrew WK - "I Get Wet (Island)
8. Bobby Conn - "Winners CD-single (Thrill Jockey)
9. Soul Center III (Novamute)
10. Blevin Blectum - "Talon Slalom (Deluxe)
11. Electronicat - "Amour Sale (Disco B)
12. Malaria! - "Compiled 1981-1984 CD (Moabit Music)
13. Various - "In the Beginning There Was Rhythm (Soul Jazz)

Promotional Propaganda:

The Undershorts Film Festival: What is Under Our Shorts?

Putting together an underground film festival is often just the love of the cause keeping the creators, filmmakers, performers, technicians and coordinators going. Eventgoers may not realize what goes into one of these babies...

For instance, raising sponsorship money. The show won't get past the video boxes without this grueling task. Nothing about asking for money is appealing. Raising cash for even the coolest of events is like asking permission to use the restroom in third grade in front of the class. Then, of course, there are the personal issues, morals, and folkways that are challenged in the committee when deciding on just what sponsors to go after. Throw in your technical and practical concerns: procuring the right venue, finding security, coordinators, ticket takers, places to sell tickets, places to print tickets and flyers. How about people to make flyers, people to print programs and posters? Don't forget people with working automobiles to cart stuff around town. "Do we know people who operate lights and sound equipment?" What about trustworthy sound people, people who are able-bodied and of sound mind? Who will cover travel expenses for talent? Who... who in hell can we find to write articles like this?!

Of course, you still have to consider traveling to hundreds of

film festivals around the world, talking to film students and independent film makers, contacting higher profile film maker's reps, searching the internet, watching thousands of films, looking for bands, hunting down DJs, finding fashion designers, finding live video mixers and the phone, the phone, the phone...

It's quite amazing that The Undershorts Film Festival not only pulls it off, but also manages to grow a little bit every time. On a shoestring budget, staffed by volunteers, an event erupts like Mauna Loa onto an anxious Chicago. Bringing film to the film lover, fashion to the fashionable, and music to the musical, the festival is a night that will express artist to audience and audience to artist. More than a few phone numbers are exchanged... that's the Undershorts thing. It's interactive and it packs venues.

The backstory to Undershorts is a simple one. In the lofts and apartments of many Chicago artists and filmmakers, creators of all types gathered together to share ideas, their latest trailers, new song riffs, a new costume design, etc... Rusty Nails, Trevor Arnholt and Gym Jones thought to bring it together and convince the owner of The Village Theatre to have the show there. Fast forward to an underwear clad tuba band, much hooting, even more howling and heckling, and voila! a new type of film festival was born.

We all know that long drawn out film festivals can be real butt-numbers, but with live music, performances and DJs helped make independent film festivals more accessible and less sedentary. After traveling to the Music Box, Congress and The Biograph, it became apparent that the Undershorts mixture of film and live performance was a hit. Much of this success is due to the crew behind the Under-Trio: either they're really really nice people or they're totally nuts, never seen without duct tape working long hours in places with insufficient heat and light, e-mailing on TRS-80s, and at times even adding numbers without calculators.

The Performers: Always something different. From mobile fortune-telling booths, The TV Sheriff of Hollywood and those crazy Kate-puppets to Alibi Video's mixing straight out of Kansas City-even Dorothy wouldn't want to go home.

The Filmmakers: Ahhh The films... you know when Eric Stoltz leads in a short trailer for the measly salary of 200 bucks, and Bill Plimpton's premier holds its own next to a New York student's film of a monkey beating the shit out of a robot, it's a night of anything but ennui!

Undershorts is the renaissance of the new multi-media gypsies. Hardly anyone is just a watcher anymore. With computers and groovy editing programs, DVDs, DV cameras, cell phones and tribal drums, people are getting more involved in creating their own entertainment. It is not uncommon to find an audience member of Undershorts participating in the following show, or even getting up to dance or sling some equipment the first time they attend. All are welcome. And yes, this is the Age of Aquarius.

Undershorts' next goal is to take their show on the road. The spiraling techno-media Chicagoans are on the rise, and it is looking more and more like LA and New York better watch out. This is raw, slick, slap-stick energy-invariably delicious and infectious.

Bring a pair of your own undies and receive a free night stay at this authentic underground candyland. All amenities and foot massage included.

- Cudra Clover