



depiction of young man holding a tulip at the court of the Persian sultan by Levni

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## Discus Practice: Only Good Use for Books on CD

By Arthur Miller

**I'm** back; did you miss me? I know, right now you are thinking, "Who the hell are you?" Well, my answer is: Your favorite cantankerous ghost since Banquo (PS We ghosts do a shot whenever someone quotes or references Willie Shakes.....and I was thirsty). Right now, you must be confused if you haven't been following my column, so I will sum up. I am Arthur Miller, but my friends call me "A Mill." I was known as a gem of American Literature, penning some timeless classics. I died a few years ago and have been living in a suburb of Heaven in a dormitory with other great writers. Sometimes we get together and create some of the most beautiful works ever to grace parchment; mostly, though, we drink – as any great writer will tell you. Actually, our favorite pastime is comparing who has the superior writing utensil. The ancient Egyptians have a point that simplicity reigns with berry juice and chalk, but the Old English contention usually ends the argument by poking them in the eyes with a quill.

For the past few years, I have been contributing to *Babble-ON* to keep my "weapon" sharp, and I choose topics relating to the literary realm. There. You are caught up. Ask me again, and you'll get "Quill Eye." Tell me if you like it.

...continued on page 3...

## Barmaster Brett's Alchemical Explorations

By Brett

**As** a well documented but unqualified mixologist, I feel as though my position outside the constraints of Mr. Boston's tightly fitting coat grants me unprecedented insight into dere-lict con-coc-tions not often in public consciousness but guaranteed to numb your sensibilities and embolden your soul. So, today I introduce three new, in my opinion, rather original (perhaps by way of their reinterpretation) drinks, none of which carry any particular moniker, and perhaps it's better that way, lest they be consigned to compositions enabling frequent practice by the pros, when what we are after is strictly underground. Deeper. Harder. No jacket required. The tulips will never have felt so sensual, and I will be able to escape another Babble-ON deadline with easily writable, albeit hopefully useful, poppy-cock, since anyone with any basic reading skills can tell you that I haven't really written anything poignant since my bachelor days, and I'm not even married, folks. On to the drinks:

...continued on page 3...

## A Senatorial Anecdote from Iraq

By Anonymous in Iraq

See page 4

## Newsletter Ideas

**I'm** looking for writers for the following topics:

1. Wikipedia: Good or Evil?
2. Compare/contrast *Lost* and *Gilligan's Island*
3. Debate the best John Williams movie score
4. The evolution of the sitcom: from *I Love Lucy* to whatever crap there is these days

Send your article ideas in today!  
[editor@babbleonline.com](mailto:editor@babbleonline.com) ☒

## Quote of the Issue

*Contributed by Grant Calderwood*

**"America** is celebrating mediocrity. You see it on *American Idol*. We're finished as a culture."

- Ron Jeremy ☒

## Letter from the Editor

April Nor'easters bring May...feast...ers. I am dubbing May National Eat-Lots-of-Bar-B-Que month. With summer's tantalizing knuckles knocking on our door, I propose to celebrate with a beer in one hand, a sizzling side of meat in the other (using the proper grilling utensils, of course), and a daffodil in your lapel—to be fashionable.

While you celebrate the rest of April fat and happy with your tax return, I urge you to fire up the coals and put them on a low simmer. Those suckers have got to last the whole summer. It'll be good!

Dan, [editor@babbleonline.com](mailto:editor@babbleonline.com) ☒

### ***Tower of Babble-ON's***

## 'Before-and-After' Corner

*By Susan Fritz*

**"Hail** a Taxi Cab Calloway"  
☒

## Hand Art

*Contributed by Elizabeth Carlson*



## Recipe of the Month:

*Potato Cheese Soup*

*By Elizabeth Carlson*

### Ingredients:

- 6 cups of water
- 8 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1 10 oz. frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 small bag of frozen chopped broccoli
- 1 2 lb. bag of frozen hash brown potatoes (cubed)
- 1 chopped onion

Bring water and bouillon cubes to a boil. Add the remaining ingredients. Bring back up to a boil. Turn heat down and simmer 25 minutes.

In another pan, put 1 lb. of light Velveeta cheese, 2 cans cream of chicken soup, 3 cans of evaporated milk. Heat on Low until cheese is melted. Stir occasionally.

Combine two. ☒

## Submission Suggestions

**Your** contribution can be anything that fits onto a sheet of paper.

Here are a few ideas:

<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Reports</b>	<b>Philosophy</b>
<b>Reviews</b>	<b>Ramblings</b>	<b>Rants</b>
<b>Comics</b>	<b>Puzzles</b>	<b>Jokes</b>
<b>Quotes</b>	<b>Polls</b>	<b>Trivia</b>
<b>Drawings</b>	<b>Poetry</b>	<b>Recipes</b>
<b>Photographs</b>	<b>Short stories</b>	<b>News</b>
<b>Predictions</b>	<b>Advice</b>	<b>Graphs</b>

Please send all of your submissions to [editor@babbleonline.com](mailto:editor@babbleonline.com). ☒

...*Disc Practice, from p. 1...*

The quill brings me to an important topic: the written word. It is, of course, a key component to the literary intelligentsia's ability to share the word with the world. It is this ability to communicate in some language, picture, symbol, etc that makes everything possible. It paints, it captures, it intrigues. It IS the stuff of books.

Now, however, a disturbing trend is on the rise: books on tape – or CD, I should say (for the love of theorems, it's hard to keep up with you). Rather than curling up and getting lost in adjectives and adverbs on a lazy Sunday afternoon, people are popping in \$20 disks of shame into their big SUVs and drinking a cup of java from Starbucks while listening to *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* on their players. Have we sunk this low, people?

It's not that I discourage verbal storytelling; on the contrary. Verbal storytelling is a valuable art that has existed since speech began. In its true form, nothing can be greater, for it allows histories to be passed down in the most personal of ways. It gives a new flavor to an old story. It encourages togetherness and unity. But, these benefits that I describe are none felt with a Krispie Kreme in one hand, a mascara tube in the other, and your knee guiding the steering wheel, all the while listening to John Gray posit on why men just don't get Venus.

Parents reading to children, encouraging the love of reading – responding to their child's reactions and desires; grandparents sharing the journey that brought them to where they are; tribesmen, passing down the values that have held their core together for centuries: that's verbal storytelling. Not, "Presenting Walter Matthau as he reads *Tuesdays With Morrie*."

Willie Shakes is bothering me to remind you that it is fine to retranslate work into your own. Plays, discussions, round tables, book clubs. These all encourage an initial reading of a text before the verbal activities start, so we'll call them "add ons." But, cheating on a book with a CD is shameful. You are a slut, and it's time to apologize to your books.

What I want you to do is to go down to the library the next time you have the urge to watch *Grey's Anatomy* or play Halo 25. Walk up to any book shelf, and tell the books you're sorry. Explain why you haven't picked them up on weekends or paid their mother (the librarian) her alimony (library dues). Tell them that you are the victim of a broken home, and you should remember how that feels the next time you think about giving that feeling to an innocent book. Then, choose one of the books from the shelf, softly stroke it, and tell it that everything will be ok.

As you may not have even read this—I know words hurt your eyes—I will be reciting this missive at the end of your next CD. Watch me. ☒

...*Barmaster Brett, from p. 1...*

Drink #1: Any Size glass but shot  
1/2 Stoli Orange  
1/2 Red Bull  
Ice - Orange Slice

You'd be surprised how awesome this rereading of the standard Vodka+Red Bull combo tastes. It's a real trade up from the Popov that I guarantee barman will be reaching for, especially after midnight, when in fact, that's the time you really do need to let it all hang out. Rather than tasting like Red Bull diluted with paint thinner, you have an elegant upgrade to the Orange Crush, and Mr. Stipe would tell you that it tastes just as good. Best suited for clubs. I never do Vodka Red Bull anymore unless I have to. If I'm in that state of mind, I procure this treat, a living reflection from a dream, but better.

Drink #2: At least a pint, bigger glasses are better  
Gin  
Vodka  
Tequila  
White Rum  
Triple Sec  
Tropical Flavor Pucker (Blue)  
Sour Mix  
7UP  
Glass (or container) should be filled with ice, or it tastes too alcoholic

Anyone who really wants to appear like a party genius need only try this wily beverage out on unsuspecting customers. Like a well made strong island (on which this is obviously based), no one should suspect the big load coming their way. The Sour Mix and the Blue Pucker will give it an astonishingly attractive light green hue. The drink tastes like the Great White Shark in the old 80s fruit snack, Shark Bites. And if you don't believe the gaping sized chunk it will take out of your ass, I recommend you try it. The Tropical Pucker, 7UP, and sour mix need to comprise about 1/4 of the drink, or the flavor of alcohol will come through - especially if you are cheap like Srida and have no top shelf handles. Depending upon your bar makeup, certain variations on the four clears can subtly add character to this perplexingly powerful potable. For example, switch standard white rum for coconut, and the delicate nutty notes will keep you unzipped and asking for more, or at least asking how this drink can simultaneously taste so good and be so strong.

Drink #3: Brandy snifter glass, or rocks glass is appropriate.  
1/2 Irish Whiskey (Tulamore Dew, Jameson, etc.)  
1/2 Bailey's Irish Cream  
Top off with butterscotch schnapps  
Should also be filled at least 3/4 with ice.

Really only appropriate for cold weather occasions, this little ball of joy can keep you sustained through any interminable holiday event populated by dreadful souls you'd rather not see, or conversely, put you in the spirit to lay right down by the fire and enjoy the slow, deliberate burn of the Yule log. The whiskey provides the punch, the cream lends the suppleness, and the sweet butter notes of the schnapps round this drink out to perfection. Depending upon how sinister of a holiday you plan to make it, you can alter the whiskey/cream ratio. It's like sex in a glass really, but no one would be such a carelessly clichéd writer to make such a banal statement.

\*\*\*And the encore. Well, I promised three drinks, but the fanfare was too much to  
...continued next page...

## A Senatorial Anecdote from Iraq

*By Anonymous in Iraq*

A friend of mine [we'll call him Jack] is a 26-year old Army helicopter pilot who is pretty sure the world revolves around him. I'm forced to admit that in many ways it does. I have now met two women here who believe they are his primary girlfriend, but that's beside the point. He was the aviation escort during a recent visit by John McCain and Hillary Clinton. I assume you can guess where those two individuals rank in the eyes of the military establishment. I actually met McCain in 2001 at a book signing in Cincinnati. Some grotesque weather kept the crowd low, so I actually had about a minute of one-on-one conversation with him; very pleasant and personable and I actually hope that, despite his obsession with campaign finance and other inexplicable leftward veers, he runs for President in 2008.

There's long been a friendly and not-so-friendly rivalry between aviators of the various branches of service. Army aviators are seen by their jet-flying brethren as the low men on the totem pole, because they don't fly supersonic jets and bomb unseen targets from 25,000 feet. Army helicopter pilots actually, you know, fly within range of enemy small arms fire, so that makes them less skilled in the eyes of the Air Force and Navy. Don't ask me to explain. All I know is that when some ground-pounder has his butt in a sling, he's far more likely to get help from a set of snarling rockets launched from a helicopter flying 75' off the ground than he is from some jet jockey.

Anyway, Jack meets McCain, and during the handshake McCain spots the flight suit and says, "So, you fly choppers, do you? I was an F-4 pilot in the Navy."

Says Jack, "Yeah, and we all know how that worked out for you." (Please tell me you know McCain spent seven years in prison after his F4 got shot down over Vietnam...) McCain's aides are just stunned by this apparent impudence. Because of McCain's popularity, they're accustomed to people treating him with great respect and deference. He probably gets tired of all the ass-kissing. Anyway, McCain's response was, "I didn't say I flew them very well," and that was the signal for everyone to enjoy a laugh instead of cutting on the spot orders shipping Jack to the Horn of Africa.

Now, here's the rest of the story. At the end of the trip the travel party is approaching their helicopters, a group of three lined up in serial one behind the other behind the other. McCain is strapped in the first bird, ready to go. Ms. Clinton approaches the bird wearing heels and a long skirt with a coat draped over her arm (although she is the butt of this joke I really don't fault her; this is not her world, and her staff did a very poor job of preparing her for this part of the trip). Jack's the ground chief, on the pad talking to each of the pilots through a headset. All three birds are running, so there is total cacophony on the helipad. All communication is done through hand and arm signals. Ms. Clinton approaches the lead bird but is waved to the second bird in line by the crew chief. She turns to the left and continues to walk. Jack then directs the lead bird to go "light on the wheels." That means increase engine power to lift the bird so that the weight is no longer resting on the tires but not enough to actually lift off. The additional power creates a ferocious airflow that nearly knocks Ms Clinton off her feet, her skirt is billowing, and her overcoat blows back and covers her face and shoulders. Aides are pawing at the coat and helping her stay upright.

The second crew chief likewise waves Ms. Clinton to the third helicopter. Jack, being Jack, directs bird two to go "light on the wheels," with predictable results. Disaster is avoided and Ms. Clinton safely boards the last helicopter. McCain was fitted with an intercom headset, so he hears Jack give these commands and knows exactly what is happening. He is doubled over with laughter, and his aide is looking around desperately to make sure there's no media taking pictures of him laughing at Ms. Clinton's expense.

Everyone lifts off and disappears over the horizon, and Jack has gained about a million cool points in the eyes of everyone. Perhaps the world *does* revolve around him. ☒

*..Barmaster Brett, from previous page...*

resist, especially for such a common man as myself, ergo you now have the instructions to create the legendary drink, the one and only: COCKPUNCH.

Glass (ice is for those without the minerals, you need none)

1/2 Kilbeggans CHEAP Irish whiskey

1/2 Jägermeister

1/3 Tequila

1/2 Nothing that tastes remotely good with the aforementioned liquors but is still at least 80 proof

So, ladies and gentlemen, as you can see, no drink can rival the aforementioned libation. Just try to mix something over 100% capacity. I dare you. It's not even remotely imaginable. And to those who dare to actually drink it, we'll see you in hell, smiling and smoking. As far as I know, only one man alive has survived this ordeal, at which point he abandoned his faith and left his jacket at the door. No one knows what has happened to him in the years following this wicked transformation, but some surmise he's running for Senate under the Republican banner. ☒

## Ode to Susie

*By An Admirer*

The dew still vapor in the air,  
A crisp reminder be  
And somewhere in the shadowed fog  
I hear it call, "Suuuuuusie....."

The twinkling promise never shy,  
Poke through the cumulus pyre  
I gaze upon a mistress fair  
A matron (as maiden, Myhr)

A touch, much like a Midas flavor  
With gold beneath its tips  
"Your care be not a care at all,"  
Comes tumbling from her lips

And true I yield and fast succumb  
To all her 'guiling ways  
And there she was, a beacon bright  
Brought solace mine for days

Is she nurse, angel, mistress, sis'  
(this list would never end)  
No, to sum her up in one sharp word  
Susan equals FRIEND  
☒

## A River Runs through It

By Shasta Cumleightly

**I**m farmer Joe and I've a farm  
And strange as it may seem  
Cutting through the middle field  
Is Spertaplenty Stream

As April came, so did a friend  
A solitary beaver  
To build a dam and forge for wood,  
The ultimate achiever

But from the thicket of the grass  
Hiding 'neath my rake  
Was the sneakiest of all the creatures  
A wily little snake

The snake, all stiff so as to hide,  
Watched the beaver as it worked,  
He smacked his tongue and slit his eyes  
In shadows where he lurked.

"The beaver's dripping from the stream  
And hairy though she be,  
I can fight all through the hair  
Though bald is more pleasing to me.

For I know not many bald, ripe treats,  
So hairier will do.  
I sure love beavers when they're wet.  
If dry, I'll eat those too!"

But as the snake planned sure dessert  
A hero watched from his dock  
High above the white hen house  
Peering over sat the cock.

He saw the beav' in peril, haste!  
And sprang up without a care  
And went to fight for beaver's life  
For he loved the beaver's stare

The beaver saw the mighty fight  
Between the snake and cock  
And the beaver's lips swelled twice their size  
In fear it may be caught.

And when the cock flew to the beaver  
And perched upon it's dam  
It spit the snake out from it's beak  
And postured proudly where stands

"I've saved you now, you're trouble's gone,"  
Said with amore in his eye.  
The beaver sighed and then replied,  
"You know, pal, I'm a guy."

☒

## Another entry in the annals of Business Vernacular

By Dan Fritz, PM

**Once** upon a time, this publication saw the great works of studies in modern Urban Vernacular. Since then, the readership has suffered needlessly from unfulfilled dreams. While Urban Vernacular may never be produced like it was in its heyday, this submission will at least give people something else to read in the mean time, namely studies in Business Vernacular. It's not funny to read – it's just sad. Nevertheless, I hope you enjoy it.

**Entry 1: Elephant in a China Shop** – used to describe a person who barges into situations that require a certain bit of delicacy and decorum. *"Janice handled that meeting like an Elephant in a China shop. We're never going to resurrect that project."*

**Entry 2: Stapling Jell-O to the Wall** – used to describe a hopeless task. *"Getting these dimwits to understand the new software is like stapling Jell-O to the wall. What is this—Amateur Hour?"*

**Entry 3: Low Hanging Fruit** – used to describe easily achievable wins. *"Let's grab all the low hanging fruit and then tackle the difficult stuff. We'll put everything on an issues log and work through the project plan."*

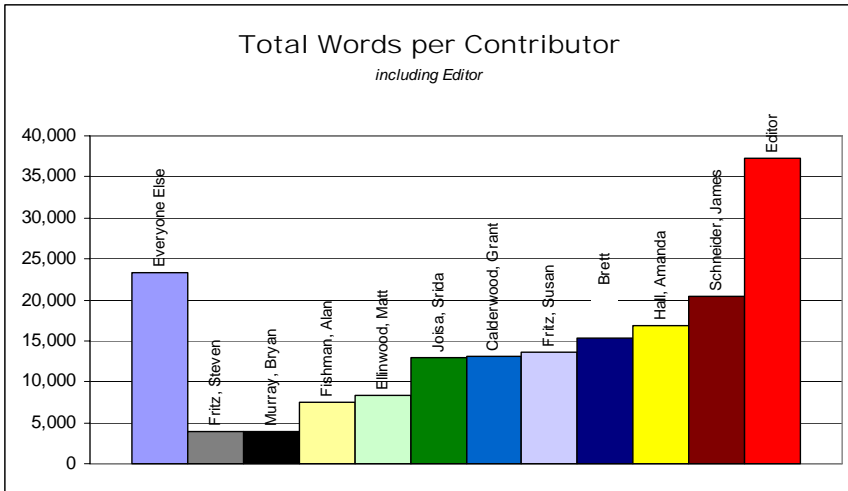
**Entry 4: "It is what it is."** – used in difficult/negative situations which need to be handled regardless of anyone's complaining about it. *"Ever since Bill left, it's been nothing but a sh\*tstorm. This reporting is ridiculous."* *"It is what it is. We have to get this done, so we can close the books."*

Until next time. ☒

Your article could be here!  
Send your ideas to [editor@babbleonline.com](mailto:editor@babbleonline.com)

## NEWSLETTER STATS

Note: Margin of Error is +/- 3%. Does not include the current issue.



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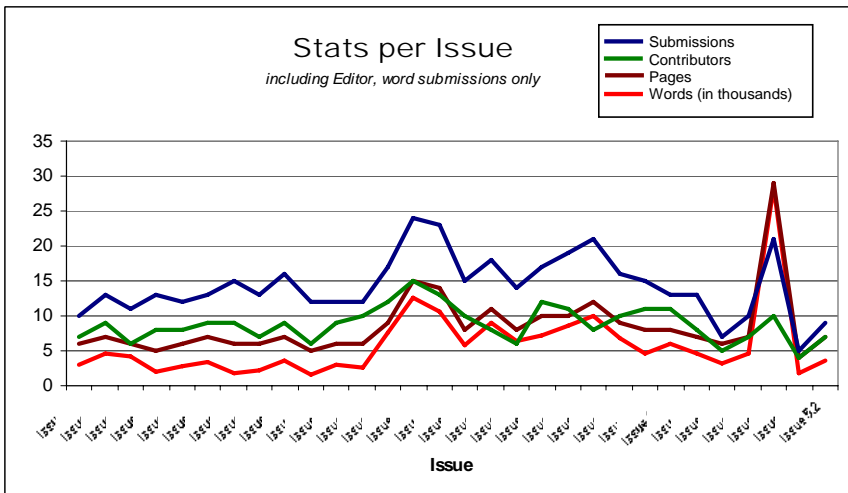
Dan Fritz, Editor  
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## Life-to-Date Stats

Word Submissions only  
Includes the editor  
Does not include the current issue

Total Words: **176,277**

Total Pages: **255**

Total Contributors: **37**

Total Submissions: **429**

Average Words/Page: **691** (↓)

Average Words/Contributor: **4,764** (↓)

Median Words/Contributor: **1,282** (↓)

Average Words/Submission: **411** (→)



## Global Watch Map

**BabbleON** has attracted contributors and readers from around the globe. In addition to the U.S. writers from 15 different states (noted on the map), there have been international submissions from: Germany, Belgium, Italy, Iraq, and Australia.

Key: Yellow circles mark the residence of each contributor. ☒



## Awards

These awards could be yours!

For Total Words Contributed:

1,000: **Little Scribbler**

5,000: **Babble-ON-ian**

10,000: **Grimmelshausen Award**

Each additional 10,000:

**Proust BabbleStar**

For Continually Contributing:

Contributing to over 10 issues: **Methuselah Award**

For Exceptional Content:

**Alfred, Lord Tennyson Platinum Seal of Excellence:**

To date, no one has won this.

Good luck, and keep the submissions coming! ☒