



Cover Picture: *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Jan Vermeer

## The Burning in of Music Sentimentality

By Brett

**The** beats surround my ribcage and clutch my heart like a fist squeezing juice from a lemon. From there the sensation sprints up my throat and draws my cheeks back with the relentlessness of someone drawing a hotel curtain with an assertive yank. My tongue goes taut and occasionally caresses the roof of my mouth, flicking tension like a catapult against my front teeth. While my body is undergoing this corporeal transformation, my mind is not only many miles but also many years from its physical location. It is dancing in the wind of a post prom truck caravan to the shore. It is dousing itself with cheap screwdrivers while flailing like a gangly stuffed animal. It is anticipating the thickness of a passionate and immoral hookup. It is scanning a montage of old times that can only be revived in its own playground. This is what happens when I listen to 2 Live Crew's "Hoochie Mama", Chumbawamba's "Tubthumping", Eminem's "My Name is", and Jeff Buckley's "Grace".

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### Letter from the Editor

**I** picked a very well-known piece of artwork for this issue's Cover Picture, since I just saw the movie of the same title starring Scarlett Johansson. While I found the film to be generally confusing and melodramatic, I did pull at least this weather-beaten moral from the movie: looking at the world a little more closely reveals striking colors. In the case of Scarlett's character, it made her life quite a bit more interesting.

The movie also made me want to mix paints, which may be a far better—though unintended and similarly trite—message: stay young. Mix paints, stay young. Read this newsletter, stay young.

Dan

## Dubya: Wrecking the Name of the Republican Party?

By Steve Fenn

**Life** is difficult for a Republican these days, especially hanging around a liberal collegiate setting. Marisa tells me of her anthro comrades (no inference intended??), sitting around in a Starbucks, sipping lattes, and declaring that there is no good reason to be a Republican. Rather, we choose that side of the platform because it has some kind of association with power, or some such non-sense like that. But I think I know what they are really saying, there is no good reason to support George W. Bush.

Unfortunately I am inclined to agree...always have been. At the time of the last election I was one of

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## Dictator of the Month: Chuck Taylor

By Dan Fritz

**No**, I'm not talking about the hightops you were wearing at the Lemonheads concert. I'm talking about Ghankay Charles MacArthur Dapkana Taylor, Liberia's former, "elected" dictator. "Former," because he was forced to step down after pressured by the United States in 2003. "Elected," because we all know what it means to be elected in a dictatorship.

Another victim of the allure of the diamond trade and Africa's general lack of effective governmental and legal structures, Chucky found out the hard way that being a dictator never works out in the long run.

And by the way, if Liberia and Sierra Leone can serve as examples, let us not forget that it's not a good idea to enslave people and then toss them back to their ancestral homeland decades later and expect everything to be okay.

### Past DOMs

Milosevic  
Saddam  
Mugabe  
Pinochet  
Ceausescu  
Pol Pot



## Practicing for the Big Day

By Fishman and Fritz

**When** practicing the ever popular "I do" phrase for your wedding, try to avoid these common mistakes:

"Yes, ma'am!"  
"Like, what... EVER!"  
"Donde esta al bano?"  
"I dddd..."  
"Me do."  
"Do me."  
"Uh, yeah?"  
"Shoot!"  
"Ich bin ein Berliner"  
"Hayll yeah!"  
"Yes—I mean no—I mean—Aahh!"  
"As you wish."  
"Sure."

☒

## Tower of Babble-ON's "Before-and-After" Corner

By Susan Myhr

"The Bible Belt-way Sniper"

"Here's Johnny Cash and Prizes"

## Math Corner

By Grant Calderwood

**Remember** how to do this type of problem?

$$2^x = 8$$

By definition, if

$$b^x = a$$

then

$$\log_b a = x$$

In this case, if

$$2^x = 8$$

then

$$\log_2 8 = x$$

$$x = 3$$

## Deep Thoughts

By Jack Handy

"The next time I have meat and mashed potatoes, I think I'll put a very large blob of potatoes on my plate with just a little piece of meat. And if someone asks me why I didn't get more meat, I'll just say, "Oh, you mean this?" and pull out a big piece of meat from inside the blob of potatoes, where I've hidden it. Good magic trick, huh?" ☒

...Dubya, page 1...

the infamous Florida voters. Did I vote? Unfortunately I did not. I always used to say, “I can’t vote for Gore, and I *won’t* vote for Bush.” One of my biggest issues with him is that he is a part of a political legacy, groomed from day one to be the President of the United States. It doesn’t take a hard look to see that he has been spoiled rotten his whole life. That his “wise” “business investments” have been nothing more than sure-thing buy ins attained from his father’s connections. That everything he has was simply handed to him on a silver platter by some shady group of old men trying to control the country (think X-Files meets Manchurian Candidate). That is not who a president should be.

But he won. At the time I figured no big deal. Even after 9/11 and the fighting in Afghanistan his popularity was high, and there was no irreparable harm done. Then came Iraq, and a hodgepodge of other things beyond the scope of this vent session. Despite the straw polls I think most true Republicans opposed it. Only the Hawks were gung ho about going in...

So, this article is almost incoherent, but let me take it a step further. Republicans know that the Iraqi war was unjust, and unnecessary. We are neither blind, nor stupid. Many of us opposed it for our own various reasons. Mine, for example, was I felt something was incredibly odd about how we just plunged in. I didn’t think it was right to do it without at least majority UN support (French be damned!). I was very concerned about stirring things up in an already hot bed of turmoil. I, like every other person of some intelligence, saw our current situation coming (or did we really think once Saddam was out the people without power and those recently removed from it were going to suddenly start singing and holding hands?). Lastly, I was very concerned about all of the expense of a war in an already lousy economy.

Despite concerns similar to my own, we all fell in line and cried out together at the top of our lungs that this war was good and necessary. Well to understand how that happened one must understand the workings of the Republican Party. One thing they have always had over the Democrats is organization. They know how to put their party first over their ideals. Is this right? Well that depends on how you look at it. It wins elections. When the group of old men say get in line, we do, no questions asked. Is there a Ralph Nadar of the Republican Party? Absolutely not (Buchanan does NOT count!). Because that guy would be committing political suicide if he were a Republican (or wait maybe Buchanan does count, and we all see what has happened to his career).

So when the President (or his controlees), made a lousy, ridiculous, absurd decision we all fell into line to say what a great one it was. Since it is so hard to support a bad decision, it takes a multitude of voices saying the same thing over and over again to get the average American to actually believe it. A few out of line, and the rather obvious holes start becoming obvious to everyone else.

In conclusion, this is how Dubya is wrecking the name of the Republican Party. We are not blind to the problems with the way the current administration has run things, we just won’t admit what we see. So it makes the entire party seem like it agrees with the way the way things have been done, when in fact, I think there are very few of us who do....

P.S. Does this mean I will be voting for Kerry? Ha, he is just a Dubya in Democrat clothing. Of all the criticisms hurled in his direction, I do agree with the accusation that he is a flip-flopping Talleyrand, a true politician. No real ideas of his own, just spitting out what he thinks people want to hear at the time, and I have no desire to bring back “tax and spend” politics. That is why this year I will be voting for “You Fuckjer,” and I suggest everyone else does the same. McCain in 2008! ☒

Do you want to be a published, international celebrity? Send in a submission to *Babble-ON!* All submissions are due the Friday before publication. See the website for details.

<http://newsletter.fritzcomics.com>

*...The Burning in of Music Sentimentality, page 1...*

Just like a song is preserved in digital, magnetic, or wax format, the memories accompanying it sit in the shelves of our brain like old movies. They are the sentimental favorites that we constantly pop in, and they are scored by the soundtracks that accompanied their actual unfolding at each particular groove in time. Nothing beats driving with friends or getting dressed for a big night out while listening to the tracks that guided us to unspeakable and unforgettable escapades in years past. Just as great times are accompanied by their own scores, sad times don't go without their own – an emotional film would be not nearly as wrenching without its comforting shoulder, music. Either way, we can augment our current situations by injecting musical sentimentality: the blasts from the past. Should we want to dig deeper into depression, we remember those tunes that tugged at us while we were already emotionally bruised. Should we want to add more pop to the step, keenness to the eye, and flare to the expression, the hits of the past lift us to new emotional heights. We become Gods of our own experience served by the satyrs, who remain ready to strike a tune that resounds in our soul, echoing through previous emotions and experiences until we feel it again in our present situation.

We feel the euphoria through music, but there is no original song – in fact, if all one ever did was recall the heights to which certain songs exalted the soul, we'd listen to the same things over and over again. That rare, but magical occurrence that guides each new and memorable experience with powerful and memorable licks will henceforth be called “burning in”. Once a track has been burned into our soul, its playing immediately unleashes a flurry of emotions suitable for the occasion. Naturally I won't be as happy to hear the “Humpty Dance” in the dentist's office, as I would be if I were cranking a round of shots. Regardless, it is precisely this sentimentality that allows music to occupy such a commanding place in our emotions. Yet, I must also admit that great care is needed to avoid overindulgence in previously burned in tracks.

To elaborate what I said in the previous paragraph, there is no original song. Human passion isn't born preloaded with such hooks to fish back powerful memories. The library continually begs for expansion, but this in turn necessitates action, decision, and excitement in one's life. The song heard while riding back and forth from work will not “burn in”, unless of course that particular period of time also coincides with some particularly memorable experience. Yet at the same time, one should not constantly reach for old standards to supplement a current lack of interesting tunes to burn in either. Life desires both – a swashbuckling scene and its musical cohort. Old standards charge up with energy the longer they remain dormant, and therefore an overuse of them might lead to an eventual and perhaps permanent dulling of their intensity. The ultimate goal amounts to balance. If one constantly languishes in sentimental reflection, time will continue to further wedge itself between present action and the good times of the past, thereby perpetuating a cycle in which no current experience will ever rival previous ones due to the domination of reminiscence in the emotional foreground. New burning in entails new experiences, and this is not to toss our old friends out the window, rather, it means inviting new ones to the party. It should be a harmonious accumulation of synergistic (and undoubtedly illogical) parts; played, put together and recalled at certain moments with a 1-2-3 overlapping of complementary songs all guided by the heat of the moment and the energy of the past. Couch new tracks in with old. Imagine Def Leppard with Toni Tony Toné with Sum 41 with Pearl Jam with the Fine Young Cannibals with George Clinton with Genesis with Too Short and you have the making of a memory montage that spans years and awaits further concatenation. Make new memories to befriend those old ones, and acquire an Alexandria of “burned in” favorites to thrust life and feeling to higher levels. ☒

## Preparing for 43+ years of suck Acerbic as always, this is my 'A Day in the Life'

By James Schneider

**It's** long and it's hard.

Oh, well, that is too, now. Better cover that up. Thanks for noticing, though. No, people, I'm talking about my work day.

You know that taste that sours your throat on days of 8:30 exams? It is an especially ironic sensation since you were smart enough to schedule classes after 2 p.m. Yeah, that was fun. Well, now that I've grown up and entered the real world, that is an unending sensation.

Is this normal? Am I alone? Was *Office Space* just a funny movie about no-talent ass-clowns, underachievers and the latter's ability to score with Jennifer Aniston? Yes, no and a resounding no.

It's really ridiculous sometimes. I get to my cube early, not 'cause I'm a big work fan, but 'cause I hope to steal a few minutes of completely free time before I'm made to do copies. Because I just walked for 25 minutes from Penn Station and don't feel like wandering anymore. And, because I'm stupid, I guess.

Predictably, right as I think I'm in the clear; i.e., I can walk to my desk without being forced to do anything profoundly ridiculous, my supervisor walks towards me from seemingly out of nowhere. Whaaaaa? Where did she come from, thin air? Ridiculous.

My job is supposed to start at 9:30. Meanwhile it's 9:08 and I'm making 1000 copies on letterhead, scratching my head and my nuts at the situation.

Now, very much like *Office Space*, I do about 15 minutes of real work all day. This is not exactly work that a monkey could do, but it's not exactly much harder than spelling your name. So, let's just say a very intelligent monkey could scrape by.

I get the false sincerity from every toothy "thank you" and every "Oh, I really appreciate that. Thanks." Really, I do. But, if you are actually that excited by my ability to hand you a stapler, well, my friend, you should be tarred and feathered, shot, lit on fire, hung, crucified and beheaded. Wait, what was I thinking?

Now, I don't have a prestigious, well-paying or good job, but I am employed and that says something. It says that if you squander almost 200,000 of your parents' dollars, then, one day, if you are really really lucky, you will make \$5 an hour to make photocopies for people who got to go to college for free.

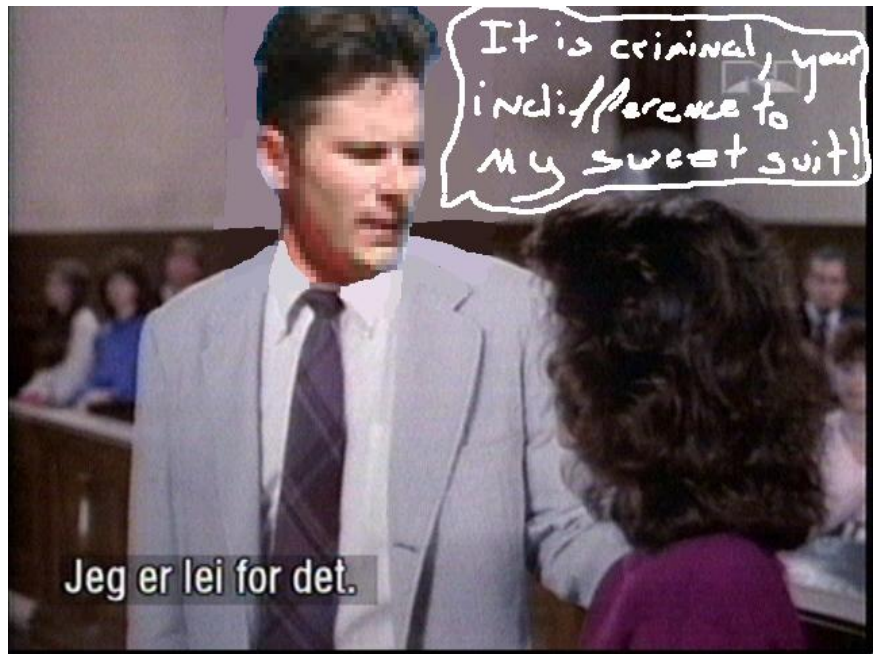
Wait, that's just me.

Am I bitter? No. I'm just using as much Jim Beam mouthwash as I can. And somehow the taste will leave my mouth. ☒

The Criminally Comical Trials of

## Mattlock

By Grant Calderwood



## More Deep Thoughts

By Jack Handy

"One thing kids like is to be tricked. For instance, I was going to take my little nephew to Disneyland, but instead I drove him to an old burned-out warehouse. "Oh, no," I said, "DisneyLand burned down." He cried and cried, but I think that deep down he thought it was a pretty good joke. I started to drive over to the real Disneyland, but it was getting pretty late." ☒

## Weather Report

Forwarded by Aaron MacPhie

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/LAW/10/04/tornado.porn.ap/index.html>

## Āsa Say...

By Asa Hadsell

"Write it down, or you won't ever get past the first scene...."



**Key**

● = site of Babble-ON contributor

**Global Watch Map**

**Babble-ON** is an international hit. Not only has it penetrated numerous markets in the United States, with contributors from approximately a dozen places and growing, but Babble-ON has also exploded onto the European scene with contributors in Brussels, Belgium. ☒

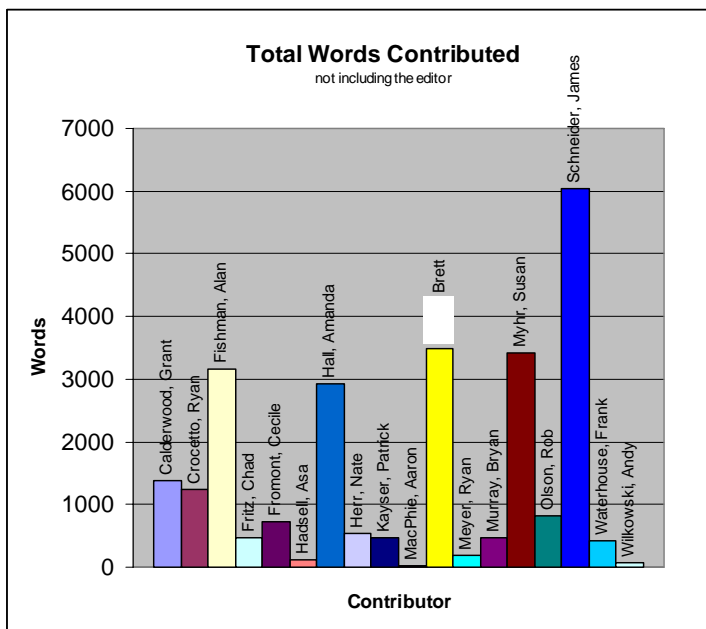
**Submission Suggestions**

Your contribution can be anything that fits onto a sheet of paper. Here are a few ideas:

- |             |               |            |
|-------------|---------------|------------|
| Editorials  | Reports       | Philosophy |
| Reviews     | Ramblings     | Rants      |
| Comics      | Puzzles       | Jokes      |
| Quotes      | Polls         | Trivia     |
| Drawings    | Poetry        | Recipes    |
| Photographs | Short stories | News       |
| Predictions | Advice        | Graphs     |

**Babble-ON Stats**

These are close approximations. This does not include non-article contributions.



Please send all of your submissions by the deadline to [dan@fritzcomics.com](mailto:dan@fritzcomics.com).

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