

THE || FRESH START ISSUE ||

Esquire



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to **READ THIS**
MAGAZINE!

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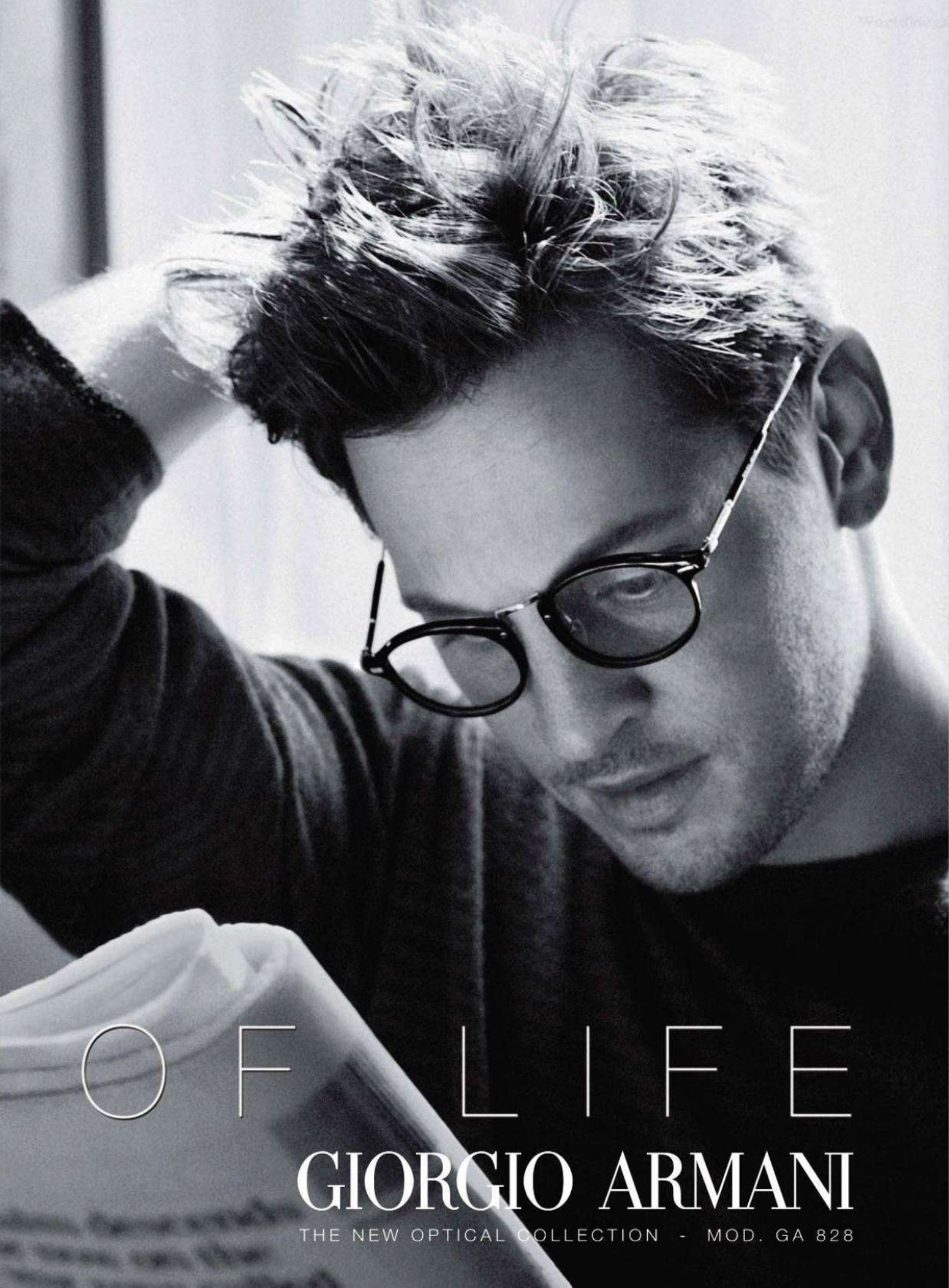
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ARE INVISIBLE.
AND THAT'S ABOUT IT.**

*WHEN YOU BUILD A COUPE SO PURE
OF FORM THAT THE MANUFACTURING
PROCESS HAD TO BE REINVENTED,
EVEN THE DOOR HANDLES
SHOULDN'T GET IN THE WAY.*



THE NEW STANDARD OF THE WORLD





1860 ————— 1916 ————— 1969 ————— 2011 —————



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Is relentless.
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Our contents
this month:
A visual mash-up.

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ABSOLUT WILD TEA GIMLET

Pour 2 parts ABSOLUT WILD TEA over ice in a rocks glass. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ part fresh lime juice and $\frac{1}{2}$ part simple syrup. Stir and garnish with a wheel of lime.



HOW TO READ THIS ISSUE

IF YOU'RE...



... ON A PLANE

Start with John H. Richardson's engrossing profile of New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg (**page 88**). It'll get you up to cruising altitude. Flip through the list of reengineers (**page 85**) while you wait for the drinks cart, then read Piers Morgan's What I've Learned on **page 96**. (British people are funnier when you've been drinking.) Save the Brooklyn Decker article for later; there's no way to read it without the older woman next to you thinking you're just staring at the pictures.



... IN LOVE

Turn to **page 42**, where we've put together a quick quiz to determine the veracity of your feelings. Not that we don't believe you, but you might have fun proving it to yourself. You're having trouble focusing on much else, aren't you? That's sweet. Put down the magazine and give her a call.



... A POLITICAL JUNKIE

You'll love Tom Junod's arresting piece on Fox News Channel CEO Roger Ailes (**page 66**). Check out that Bloomberg profile (**page 88**), then turn to the State of the Union address that we asked a conservative speechwriter to draft for President Obama (**page 112**). You'll be pleasantly surprised, no matter your politics. After that, flip through the images of our redesigned logo (**page 74**). You deserve a little break.



... AN ENGINEER

How about this flap, huh? And check out our new Before We Begin section (**one page turn away**) and our other unconventional new section, The Appendix, on **page 44**. You might also enjoy our honor roll of "reengineers" (**page 64**), people who change things whether they need it or not. Sorry they're not "engineers" ... but you can still read Chris Jones's story about completely renovating an old house (**page 98**). There must be something in there you can sketch on graph paper.



... A FAN OF SCAVENGER HUNTS

Read Tom Chiarella's account of his evening with Brooklyn Decker on **page 56**. Like the pictures? There are more; you just have to find them. Download the free GoldRun app from iTunes and go to any Barnes & Noble. Find the magazine section, activate the app, and hold up your phone until you see exclusive images of our girl on the screen. Interact with them (politely). Take your picture with her. Share and tweet at will. (For more information, see page 58 or go to esquire.com/scavenger-hunt.)

Esquire

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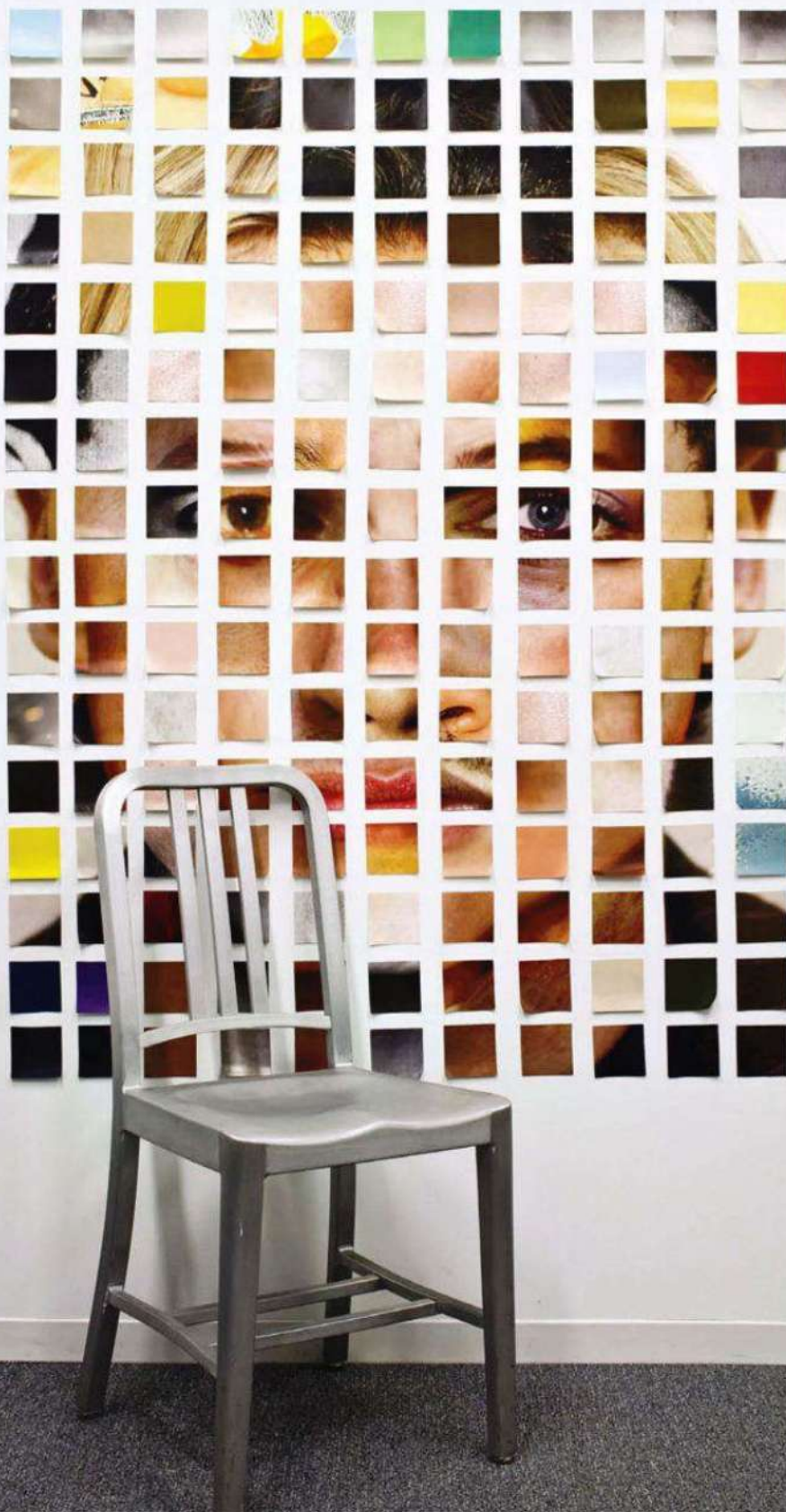
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A NEW
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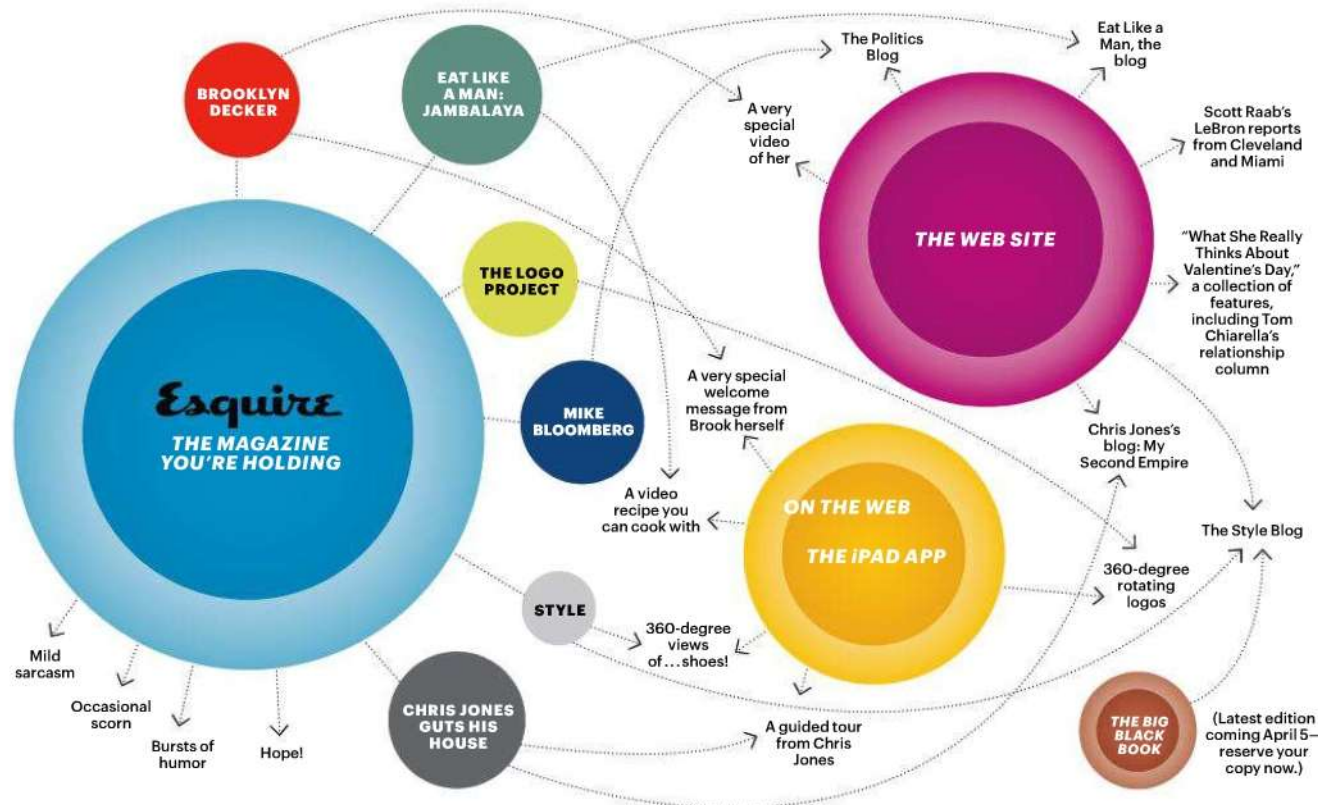
A VISION FROM KAREN O AND WARREN DU PREEZ & NICK THORNTON JONES

FEB
2011

BEFORE WE BEGIN

Essential information for this issue and your month

THIS MONTH IN THE ESQUIRE UNIVERSE



THE MEMO

On the occasion of some changes in Esquire this month, a few composite thoughts by Esquire writers and editors...



CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

AT SOME POINT, you stop building on top of what you've already built and start taking things down to prepare for a new way.

Creative destruction: No mere phrase, it's our birthright. You ever watch a baby work? Smashes shit to pieces just to find out what's inside. Also for the buzz, the joy of it. Rules? Structure? Politesse? These stone walls come later, imprisoning the vision, begging to be blown to smithereens.

Blame and credit God. The Flood? Sodom and Gomorrah? Creative destruction writ large. Not being God, you get to make only one omelet, of your life.

Spare not the broken eggs.

Basketball teams creatively destroy all the time. They're constantly starting over with a whole new lineup. Basketball teams seem fearless that way.

A principle passed down to us from the lumberjacks: It all pretty much comes down to felling, limbing, bucking, and stacking. Fell: You cut the tree down. Limb: You cut the branches off the fallen tree to stabilize it and start working with it. Buck: You chop the wood so you can move it and work with it. Stack: You put it away, for later or for all time—the point is, it's out of the way.

You don't have to get rid of everything. You shouldn't. Anybody can destroy something when there's no thought to replacing it.

Something someone told us recently: "An angry baboon once stormed into a room where some friends and I were eating breakfast. It leaped onto the table, smashed a coffee cup, and screamed in our faces. Then it took a shit and ran off with our jar of honey. This was the most willfully destructive behavior I'd ever seen an animal engage in. It was also the most creative."

There's a fine line between mixing things up and fking things up.

When you start a new job as the boss, never entirely clean house. There's always one guy. Find that guy. Hang on to him. Learn from him.

A principle passed down to us from the ants: When someone steps on the anthill, immediately start reengineering it.

When you're stuck, stop. Then start. You can reengineer anything.



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BEFORE WE BEGIN



[1]



[2]



[3]



A NOTE FROM DAVID GRANGER

Down, Tear It

YEARS AGO, shortly after I'd bought my first house, we dug out a hill in the backyard and had a wall built to make room for a little patio. The wall was finished, and I went out with my morning coffee (or maybe it was an evening beer) to admire it. It was not level. It sloped precipitously from left to right. Having never paid for a wall to be built before, profound despair gripped me. I called the wall guy. He showed up, agreed with me, and, over the next couple of days, took the wall apart and rebuilt it. Level. It was a lesson for me.

We tend to think of people and things as being fixed and permanent. As much as we laud reinvention, our instinct is to see things as they are and imagine that they have been and always will be that way. But internally, individually, that's not the case. Each day is a series of choices, and we each know that we can maintain the course we normally take or we can completely change it up.

Throughout this issue, we demonstrate that change is possible, even among people or things that have been in the public eye

for so long that we see them as immutable.

Whether it's [1] Roger Ailes (70 years old, determined agent of chaos, right-wing rabble-rouser, genius of the television medium) or Barack Obama's presidency (see page 112) or [2] a 140-year-old house (page 98) or Esquire itself (as in our new section, Before We Begin, in which you are reading these words, or see "The Logo Project," page 74), everything is, below the surface, a roiling cauldron of possibility. Even Ailes, the man who gave life and expression to Glenn Beck and Bill O'Reilly and [3] the Fox News babes and the Tea Party, is aware of his frailty and is constantly reengineering his life and work to shore them up.

The exception may be New York mayor Michael Bloomberg, who, through the constancy of his belief in his own gifts, is determined to reengineer not just his city but the country into a more competent union.

He and Ailes are an interesting pairing. Ailes (see page 66) profits from the disharmony that he recognized long ago was the chief characteristic of modern media culture and then did all he could to encourage. Bloomberg (see page 88) does all he can to counter that anarchy by fiat, by application of his will and personal fortune, and by assembling a coalition of the competent—a mostly benevolent autocrat who aspires to mandate that change be an orderly improvement rather than a descent into chaos.

→ **SENTENCE OF THE MONTH:** "FOR THE RECORD, THOUGH, WOMEN, FISH, AND QUAIL DO DIFFER VASTLY IN OTHER RESPECTS." Page 42.

Esquire

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THE VOCABULARY

Terms and ideas you will encounter in the pages that follow



Follicular memory (n):

When hair that has been styled a certain way for a number of years resets itself no matter what you try to do to it. (See page 27.)

ORGASM

Refractory period

(n): The recovery phase that must take place between orgasms. (See page 42.)



ASSHOLE

ANTHROPOMORPHIZE

(v): TO ATTRIBUTE HUMAN FORM TO SOMETHING THAT IS NOT HUMAN. HANDY DURING DIY PROJECTS. (SEE PAGE 98.)

CENSURE! In the January issue, we published a letter from Leon Ginsberg of Boone, North Carolina, in which he describes the four members of the Esquire commission to balance the national budget as a "collection of wealthy men." One member wrote us to reply: "As a teacher at the University of Colorado who has refused to lobby, I am distinctly not wealthy. Jumping to conclusions is one of America's most dangerous sports." —Gary Hart, Kittredge, Colo.

**BEFORE
WE
BEGIN**

THE CHECKLIST

□ Aeron chair □ The Mike Douglas Show □ CNN and MSNBC and NBC □ Fox News' Megan Kelly □ the flag pin □ Philipstown, N.Y. □ Bloomberg by Bloomberg, by Mike Bloomberg □ the roof of Buckingham Palace



...AND NOW A FEW WORDS FROM JOHN IN WEST OAKLAND

Dear Esquire,

I wear my hair long. Quite long. In fact, I wear it in a ponytail. I find it easier than finding a style of haircut that doesn't go out of style or isn't already so. (Also, I love it when my wife fusses with it and puts it in a braid for special occasions.) In reading Chris Jones's very interesting profile of the amazing inventor Danny Hillis ("The Brightest," December), I noted the line "He has a ponytail." Knowing Esquire's position on long hair in general, and the ponytail in particular, the air of dickishness I detected by the inclusion of this detail is to be expected. But here's the deal: Much like the difference between "nerd" and "geek," there is a difference between a guy who can think of nothing else but to pull his hair out of his soup and tie it with

the rubber band he got off the morning paper (nerd) and a man who takes the time and effort to tend and groom his hair into the classic "ponytail," which is not at the nape of the neck but a couple inches higher (geek). These distinctions matter.

Great profile, though.

JOHN P. QUIJANO
West Oakland, Calif.

A RESPONSE

We have to plead our—and Chris's—innocence. His reference to Hillis was innocuous description. Still, your distinction between types of ponytails is an important one. And it leads us to make an important point of our own: If you and your wife are happy with your hairstyle, we would never hope to influence you to change it. For anyone potentially on the fence, however, we'd like to present the following:

The Official and Concise Esquire Position on Ponytails (as of February 2011)* *Having a ponytail is like having an eye patch: Polite company won't acknowledge it, but you can be sure it's all they're looking at.*

*Subject to impromptu revision.

Letters to the editor may be e-mailed to editor@esquire.com. Include your full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



↑ TOOL OF THE MONTH*

THE RECIPROCATING SAW. Cutting, at its base, is about taking a single piece of something and turning it into two or more pieces. Breaking is about that, too, of course. Snapping. Shattering. Hacking. Smashing. They're all about reduction, about division. But cutting is the only one of the Dividing Arts that resembles something like

craft. Cutting is alone in its sharpness. There are things that can be cut that could never be broken. An old two-by-twelve. Lead or copper or PVC pipe. A rusty bolt. Skin. Hair. Door casings. Subfloor. And when it comes to those things that can be both cut and broken—tile, brick, glass, hearts—cutting does a cleaner job of it. Cutting al-

lows for precision, for measurement, for mathematics, for straight lines and smooth edges. Cutting allows for control, for order, and for care. Cutting is division, but it's division without the mess of a remainder.

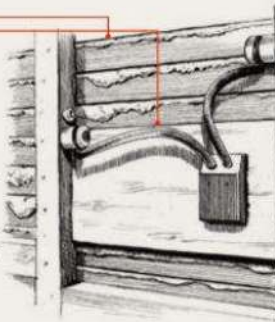
The reciprocating saw, as it happens, is an excellent tool for cutting.

—CHRIS JONES
For more, see page 98.

*THE THING, NOT THE GUY

PLASTER AND LATH (n): A CONSTRUCTION PROCESS IN WHICH NARROW STRIPS OF WOOD ARE COATED WITH PLASTER. (SEE PAGE 98.)

KNOB AND TUBE (n): AN ELECTRICAL SYSTEM MADE UP OF PORCELAIN "KNOBS," COPPER CONDUCTORS, AND CLOTH INSULATION FOUND IN MANY OLD HOUSES. (SEE PAGE 98.)



THE VOCABULARY



Antecedent denial (n):

Willfully not copying your predecessor in order to distance and differentiate yourself from him in the eyes of others. (See page 96.)



Brooklyn (n):

1. The largest borough in the city of New York.
2. The most beautiful woman in the largest borough in the city of New York. (See page 56.)

BEFORE WE BEGIN

SOME '80s LOGOS WE FOUND IN A FOLDER (MORE LOGOS ON PAGE 74)



Esquire Solves Your Problems

For David Wondrich: When Dickens toured America, he sampled many cocktails and mentioned them in *American Notes*: Gin sling, mint julep, and others are common, but he also talked about a timber-doodle. He liked it so much, he named a pet dog after it. But he doesn't say what went into it. Do you know?

Helene Androski
Madison, Wis.

After years—literally—of attempting to answer this very same question, the only thing I've ever found that sheds any light on the subject is a single quote from an 1843 issue of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, in which a fictional Kentuckian asks for a "holdfast, or a timber-doodle" and qualifies that request by saying "anything in the shape of stone-fence will suit my fancy." Going by that, then, it's simply a form of a Stone Fence, which is, as everyone knows, a mix of brandy or rum and hard cider.

—David Wondrich, *Esquire* drinks correspondent

My problem is women. I haven't been in a relationship for almost six years. I've been on dates—but without so much as a kiss for 68 months. There's nothing wrong with me, but there's not much going for me, either. Please, I need all the help I can get.

Scott Lacy
Arlington, Tex.

A new haircut, a well-tailored suit, and courage.

—Editors

I bought the December issue because I'm a big

fan of Christian Bale, and I really like the jeans he's wearing on the cover. Could you tell me what they are and where I can buy them?

Jeffery Jee
New York, N. Y.

Slim-fit antique-indigo jeans by Double RL. They cost \$325, and you can pick them up at the Double RL store on Bleeker Street between 11th and Perry.

—Editors



I'm a medical transcriptionist with two jobs. I spend a lot of time sitting at the computer, transcribing mumbling doctors and clueless residents, and it's making it hard to keep in shape. I put about 45 minutes on the treadmill between levels two and three, but it obviously is not enough. What should I eat, not eat, and when and how should I exercise? I have the metabolism of a water buffalo.

Brian Hodge
Bluff City, Tenn.

We've offered a lot of health and fitness advice

over the years. If we had to distill it all, it comes down to a good breakfast and a pull-up bar.

Like this:
For breakfast, bring 1½ cups fat-free milk to a simmer in a medium saucepan. Mix in 1½ cups old-fashioned oats and simmer 5 to 8 minutes or until thickened, stirring once or twice. Stir in ¼ cup apple cider or juice, then 2 small plums (pitted and diced), ½ cup dried prunes, 1 tbsp sliced almonds, and 1½ tbsp maple syrup; heat through. Sprinkle cinnamon on top.

Pull-up bar: Install it in a hallway at home and do a few every time you pass it. It helps.

—Editors

1. The fact that the baby hasn't afforded my wife and me a single complete night's sleep since his birth.
2. My wife's weight.
3. We can't keep the *%&ing cats from spraying inside the house, and I haven't yet formulated a plausible explanation as to how several of them might mysteriously "disappear" if they keep it up.

Kyle Moore
Fullerton, Calif.

1. It gets better.
2. Come on, Kyle.
3. Cat theft. It's a thing.

—Editors

If you have a problem you'd like *Esquire* to solve, visit esquire.com/talk or e-mail us at esquiresolves@esquire.com.

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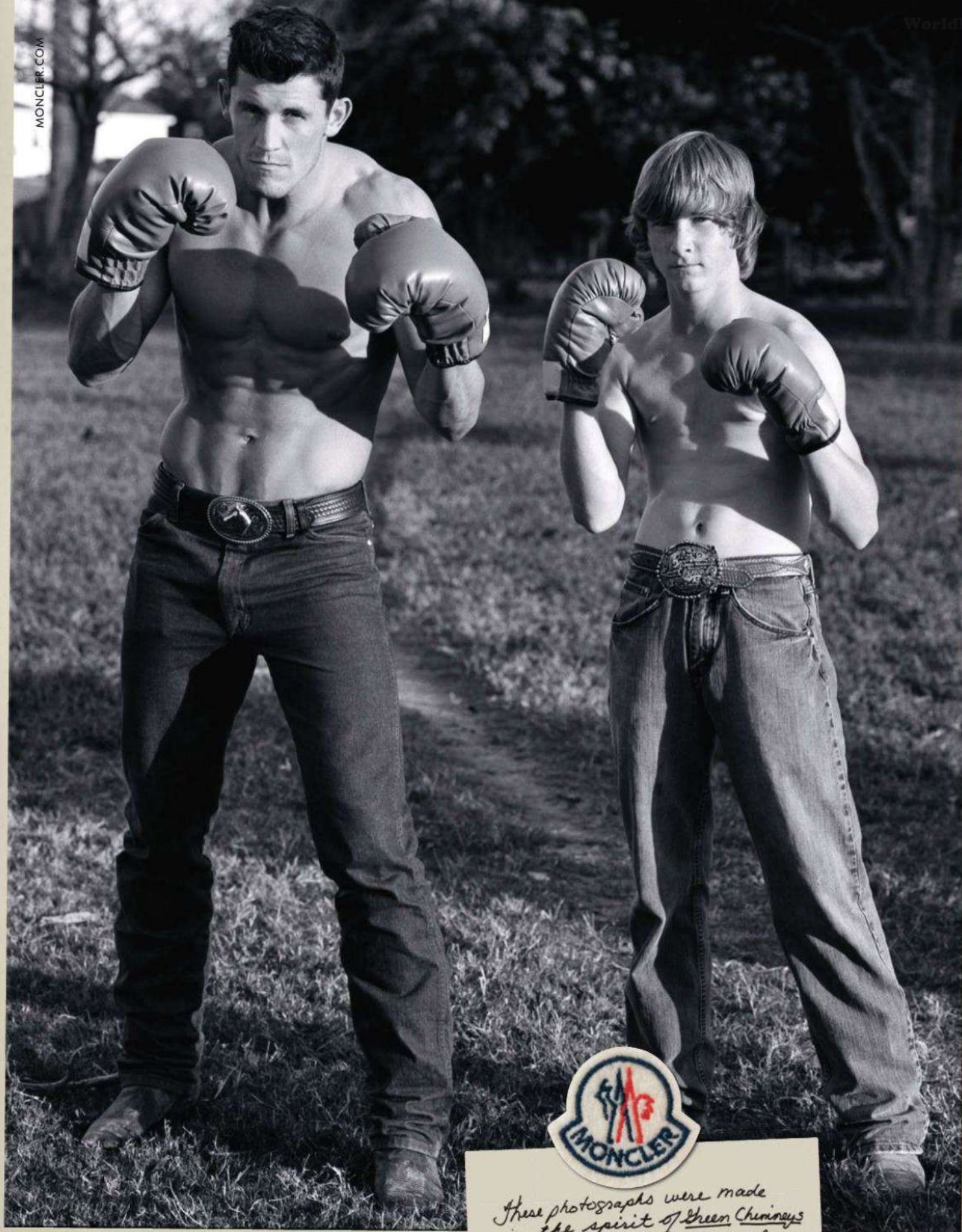
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MAN AT HIS BEST

MaHB

1 Minimum number of Caans who don't know who Robert Pattinson is. (See page 30.)

 **Pg. 34**

CONTEXT-FREE PREVIEW:

"...deep voices, and laughing babies, and fat women falling down stairs, and Katy Perry's giant eyeballs."



Pg. 32



ESQ+A: Scott Caan

THE SON OF NOTORIOUS TOUGH GUY JAMES CAAN AND STAR OF CBS'S HIT *HAWAII FIVE-O* REMAKE TALKS ABOUT HIS SHOW, HIS HAIR, AND THE LAST TIME HE CRIED

BY PETER MARTIN



ESQUIRE: Things are good.

SCOTT CAAN: Yeah.

ESQ: Twelve million people.

SC: I think something like that.

ESQ: Did you expect this?

SC: With the hype and everything, I think ultimately we expected the show to do even better.

ESQ: You sound disappointed. Are you worried about getting picked up? Seems if *Outsourced* gets picked up, then you have a good shot. [It's since been picked up. —Editors]

SC: If what?

ESQ: *Outsourced*.

SC: I don't know what that is.

ESQ: What made you decide to do *Hawaii Five-O*?

SC: I read the pilot and I'm like, This has promise and isn't stupid. This is some of the best stuff I'll be able to have done.

ESQ: Better than your movies?

SC: I'm kind of like the goofy number-seven guy in a lot of movies. So I say yes [to doing the show], then the anxiety starts. I'm like, What have I done? And I go crazy because I fancy myself a tortured artist. I'm the guy who'll be in the one-bedroom with the coffee and a cigarette. And I don't smoke.

ESQ: No offense, but have you ever had to live in a one-bedroom? You've had a relatively charmed life.

SC: No. I'm just saying I don't want to sell out. I want to struggle and make films. It's not a financial thing, it's more of a who-I-am thing. I'm glad that you said that because now I'm in a place where I'm like, What an asshole I would be not to ride the wave and be appreciative.

ESQ: Is making a TV show harder than making a movie?

SC: We're making an hour every single week. It feels like

THIS MONTH

FANTASTIC! The Super Bowl.

OH, JESUS!

The Chicago Code, a police drama. Damning quote: "If there's one thing Chicago knows, it's how to punch back."

Traffic Light, a sitcom on Fox from Bob Fisher, the guy who wrote *Wedding Crashers*.

Cut Copy's new album, *Zonoscope*.

SCOTT CAAN CONT'D.

I'm constantly doing an independent movie that we didn't prepare for.

ESQ: But you're in Hawaii.

SC: I'm a malcontent when it comes to art. I don't want to sound pretentious, but you could hire a bunch of monkeys to be on a TV show, and if it's successful, then everything's perfect and everybody's happy. But when you hire people that give a shit and they want to make good art—I don't want to say *art* and *TV show* in the same sentence because I sound like a jerkoff—you're going to have unhappy people, because they want to make it better.

ESQ: How would you make the show better?

SC: If it was up to me, if I had the reins, I'd try to do an episode where there's no case.

"I don't want to sound pretentious, but you could hire a bunch of monkeys to be on a TV show."

ESQ: They do seem to have the formula down: Throw you guys in a weird situation, something crazy happens, and then your partner says, "Book 'im, Danno."

SC: Simplify it some more so I can jump out a window.

ESQ: Did you worry that as an actor—sorry, artist—people wouldn't respect you as much if you were on TV?

SC: Does that sound pretentious?

ESQ: No, I'm an artist, too.

SC [laughing]: You pretentious fuck. Yeah, that's what I'm talking about. My dad talked about it with me when he did his show [Las Vegas]. He was like, "Are they going to not respect me?" Are you nuts? Because you want to take care of your family? And that's where I'm at—I don't even have a family, and so I struggled with, well, why I am doing this now? And the answer was because, dude, when someone throws you a fastball down the middle, hit that shit.

[Caan leans back and bumps his

hand against a post.]

SC: Ow. Fuck.

ESQ: You all right?

SC: No. I have something [on my hand] and just banged it.

ESQ: Your dad never would have said that.

SC: Said "Ow"? No, no chance. I'm sensitive, dude.

ESQ: That surprises me, be-

cause I was a little intimidated coming into this. You always play such a hard-ass.

SC: Here's the thing: I've always fancied myself a tough guy. I grew up scrappy. Ultimately, I think that's a little bit of a front that I had no choice but to follow.

ESQ: Because of your dad?

SC: My dad's genuinely one of the toughest people on the planet. He wasn't playing that part. That's him. If I cried about something, it wasn't "Hey, stop crying." It was "What is that? What are you doing?"

ESQ: What's with slicking back your hair all the time?

SC: I watched *The Outsiders* ■

THE
ANNIVERSARY

YOUTUBE, 6

BY CHRIS JONES

Six years ago on Valentine's Day, YouTube happened. It became an address. And because there is that definitive beginning, there must also be definitive firsts: the first clip, the first view, the first thumbs-up and -down, the first viral video, the first copyright-infringement claim, the first lost afternoon.

They must exist, but it seems just as likely that nobody remembers them, exactly. Do you remember your own first few clicks? Was it *Star Wars* Kid who first brought you? Was it a 9/11 conspiracy? Was it a Weezer video?

Chances are, nobody really knows. Maybe all of those firsts happened so quietly that nobody was paying enough attention to notice, and then they got lost in the subsequent layers of clutter and noise. Maybe it was less like a baby's first step or first word, a moment of precision, and more like the first time that baby saw the ocean or heard Elvis Costello. Maybe the birth of YouTube is one of those events that will defy archaeology.

Maybe YouTube simply was not, and then it was.

Which is strange to think, because YouTube, more than anything else, represents the triumph of mathematical fact. It provides a perfectly calibrated list, hundreds and thousands of entries long, of the things we like and the things we don't like quite as much and the things we like least of all. YouTube, more than any other modern device or unit of measurement, quantifies popularity with an alarming precision. The birth of YouTube has brought the death of many things—police brutality and the anonymity of

lip-synching basement shut-ins, personal shame and the need to remember—but it has ushered in the death of delusion especially.

Six years ago, lying began to die.

Do the surviving Beatles know which of their songs was the most popular? Probably not. They might be able to make a rough list, an educated guess, but they could never really know. They could still argue and imagine. But the boys in Linkin Park know without a doubt. They know their successes and failures—the way we know, too, which hockey fight was last season's sickest, and which movies will be hits and misses, and which professor gave the most moving last lecture, and which episode of *Seinfeld* had the best joke.

And because we know those things, we can know ourselves better than ever before, too. YouTube has become the single most terrifying window into our souls. We might like to think we're inventors and astronauts. Apparently, we're also a species entranced by singers with preternaturally deep voices, and laughing babies, and fat women falling down stairs, and Katy Perry's giant eyeballs.

Those are facts. Those are hard, inarguable facts.

It's a fact, too, that six years ago, while we were out buying roses or hustling a last-minute dinner reservation, our universe changed forever. Suddenly there was a pocket in which there were no limits to our self-understanding, where everything fell away except for the truth and absolutes.

Most of us didn't know that at the time. Now we know.

Brooklyn Decker in *Just Go with It*, Adam Sandler and Jennifer Aniston's new comedy, in which Sandler improbably dates Brooklyn Decker.



The Eagle, a Roman epic starring Channing Tatum in which he tries to honor his father's memory by finding a lost emblem of an eagle and not wearing a shirt.

Justin Bieber: *Never Say Never*, his 3-D life story.



The Sunset Limited, an HBO film based on Cormac McCarthy's play about a man who saves another man from jumping in front of a train.

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SCOTT CAAN CONT'D.

when I was 12, and I was like, That's who I want to be.

ESQ: You know, I wouldn't be as scared of you if you had a different haircut.

SC: The only other things I've ever done are shave my head bald and wear a Mohawk. [My hair] just wants to go back.

ESQ: Do you think this is your time as an actor? You have a different appeal than the current breed of guys out there. You're not like Robert Pattinson.

SC: Who?

ESQ: Robert Pattinson. The vampire guy. The *Twilight* guy.

SC: I don't know who he is.

ESQ: But you get my point?

SC: I feel like I would have been more successful 30 years ago, because I think what people are interested in has changed. But are you saying doing television?

ESQ: No, not at all. Just your personality, your look, what you



Scott Caan ("Danno") and Alex O'Loughlin on *Hawaii Five-O*.

bring to a role, it's really different from new actors in general.

SC: I'm going to take that as a compliment.

ESQ: It is. Do you get in fights anymore?

SC: If I get in a fight at 35, I'm going to be pissed. I'm at art functions and charity parties. It's not like I'm hanging out at the Tunnel and shit.

ESQ: Which of us do you think has cried the most recently?

SC: I guarantee it's me.

ESQ: I'm having trouble thinking of the last time I cried. I should've prepared better for that question.

SC: In the last few weeks not so much, but in the last year...



The Appendix:
How to Photograph
Naked Women, by
Scott Caan, page 44

THE COMPLAINT

Sexless Novels

HERE IN COLD FEBRUARY, IS ANYONE KEEPING WARM THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY?

BY BENJAMIN ALSUP



One of the stranger acts of literary time travel involves rereading Updike, Roth, and Mailer, the triumvirate that

David Foster Wallace aptly named the "Great Male Narcissists" on the subject of sex. Holy Christ! Those cats were freaks!

It's not that those fellas wrote about sex particularly well. In fact, many of their passages have aged badly. One can almost feel the itchy unkindness of synthetic fibers against the skin.¹ But they did it more often, more graphically, more honestly, and altogether differently from most contemporary writers. It shocks in its candor, in its generalized, post-Pill, irresponsible wackness. Them freaks weren't afraid to get their hands dirty.²

Today, many writers have largely abandoned sex as an area of concern. There are exceptions. Predictably, the French are still capable of producing an enfant terrible, though in the case of Michel Houellebecq, he is no longer particularly enfant nor terrible. The best writing about sex I've read recently comes from England, where Geoff Dyer seems to have a right and healthy attitude about the way these things can work—a little cocaine, some free booze, a chance encounter over a few days in Venice—voilà... healthy,

happy orgasms for all!

And happy readers, too. Because if you're gonna commit all of yourself to reading a book, a writer has gotta give all in return. He's gotta use his hips. Maybe put a little back into it. Jonathan Safran Foer is a lovely cat and all, but Jesus, does that guy ever break a sweat? Brooklyn is lovely, too. But does anyone in his borough remember how to get down? Or anyone else?

The contemporary American landscape is populated by the sexually unlucky, unhappy, and/or uninterested.³ In *The Financial Lives of the Poets*, Jess Walter's narrator thinks his wife is "cute" and he longs for a little "smack-smack." Gary Shteyngart writes hilariously about sex, but far more often, its absence. His characters keep close watch on their "fuckability" numbers via their smartphones but fall asleep while going down on one another.⁴ Meanwhile, Sam Lipsyte's best love scenes involve dudes left to their own devices. The importance of frequent masturbation, it seems, is one thing the old narcissists got right.

Writing about sex is hard. Some writers claim the best way to do it is by not doing it at all. Focus on the furniture and leave the bodies out of it. But I think that desire is easy and bodies are what's difficult. We need more bodies in our fiction. We need bodies on bodies in all the wack configurations that consenting adults will allow. Fucking matters. And when we ignore it or pretend it was something that can only be elided, or joked about, the joke is on us. Let's stop kidding ourselves. Besides, it's only sex. Which is to say, it's only the most important thing in the world, and nothing to get hung about.⁵

[For another view, see Stephen Marche's column on page 54.]

FOOTNOTES

¹ Here's one from Updike: "He had wanted to cry out, sitting up as if jolted by electricity as the spurts, the deep throbs rooted in his asshole, continued, but he didn't know what name to call her.... 'Call me Sukie,' she said, having read his mind. 'I sucked your cock.' 'You sure did. Thanks. Wow.'"

² From Roth's *Sabbath's Theater*: "Yes, you have my permission, you dirty man, yes," she said, "you can have her, I give her to you, you can have her tight young pussy, you dirty, filthy man..."

³ "It wasn't that the kiss was bad, but it was just a note of punctuation in our long conversation."

—Nicole Krauss, *Great House*

⁴ "I was too drunk and scared to develop an erection. But I didn't want intercourse anyway.... I licked and licked, breathing in the slight odor of something authentic and human, and eventually must have fallen asleep with my face between her legs." —From *Super Sad True Love Story*

⁵ "Love is not the dying moan of a distant violin. It's the triumphant twang of a bed-spring." —S.J. Perelman

Unnecessary adaptation of the month: *Little Miss Sunshine*, the musical.

January Jones and Diane Kruger as icy blonds in *Unknown*, the Liam Neeson thriller in which his identity is erased.

Inexplicably Anonymous Actor of the Month: Stephen Merchant, of *The Office* and *Extras*, now in *Hall Pass*, the new Farrelly brothers movie about two married men who are allowed to cheat for a week.



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1 Minka Kelly, Esquire's 2010 Sexiest Woman Alive 2 Guests enjoying the newly opened Plunge lounge at the Gansevoort Park Avenue Hotel 3 (L to R) Esquire Publisher Kevin C. O'Malley, Minka Kelly, and Esquire Editor in Chief David Granger 4 DJ Mad Linx spinning tunes 5 Football players David Diehl and Larry Johnson 6 Guests enjoyed a selection of Ultimat Vodka cocktails throughout the evening

Matthew Carasella Photography

ESQUIRE'S SEXIEST WOMAN ALIVE

Esquire and Ultimat Vodka took over the newly opened Plunge lounge on top of Gansevoort Park Avenue in New York City to host its annual Sexiest Woman Alive Event, in honor of November cover star Minka Kelly.

Over 450 guests, including NFL players David Diehl and Larry Johnson, joined event host Minka Kelly to celebrate her November cover. Guests enjoyed exclusively created Ultimat Vodka cocktails and delicious hors d'oeuvres high above the Manhattan skyline.

Legendary DJ Mad Linx was on the turntables as guests enjoyed a beautiful evening at Gansevoort Park Avenue—New York's hottest hotel.

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AS TOLD BY

**EMMY
ROSSUM**

A GUY GOES to the doctor and the doctor tells him he has only a day to live. He goes home to tell his wife, who asks what he wants to do with his final hours. Of course he wants to spend them having sex. They have great sex all night long. Finally, at about 2:00 A.M., his wife says she's tired and wants to go to sleep.

He says, "Oh, come on, can't we just do it one more time?"

And she says, "Look, I've got to get up in the morning—you don't!"

ABOUT THE JOKESTER: Emmy Rossum seems a little...wacky, like the kind of woman who'd set up a fight between her dog and some lobsters, just to see who'd win. What gave us that impression? She told us: "I put my Yorkie on the counter [next to] two live lobsters...and they didn't give a flying fuck about each other. It was such a letdown." A little background on this 24-year-old native New Yorker: At the age of seven she was already singing alongside Pavarotti at the Metropolitan Opera. She soon landed her first movie role in *Songcatcher* and a few years later left Columbia University for starring roles in *Mystic River* and *The Day After Tomorrow*. Now you can see her on Showtime's new series *Shameless*, in which she plays Fiona Gallagher, the feisty, overwhelmed daughter of a ne'er-do-well played by William H. Macy. "It's definitely brought out my ballsier side," she says. We can tell.

—MARK MIKIN

*Esquire cannot guarantee that this joke will be funny to everyone.



AND THERE'S VIDEO! More Emmy at esquire.com/funny-joke-videos and on the Esquire iPad app.



MASTERS *of the* MANHATTAN

For the second year, Woodford Reserve and *Esquire* challenged bartenders across the country to craft the ultimate Manhattan.

Bartenders responded with creative new twists on the classic drink, including our favorites listed below:

THE MASTERS



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Washington



EZRA PATTEK
Houston Street Manhattan
Florida



NICKY KONTANTOULAS
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Arizona



STEVE BAYUSIK
The Eliot Ness
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How to Watch TV Better

was a little late to the Internet-on-television revolution. It recently became a problem when I wanted to show my guests the Jimmy Fallon/Bruce Springsteen version of Willow Smith's "Whip My Hair" after her dad, Will Smith, was raving about it on the set of *Men in Black 3*. If I'd had an Internet-equipped television, or one of the boxes I tested this month, it would have been a breeze. Instead, I had 20 people gathered around my Lenovo laptop.

Shooting *Men in Black* takes up a whole bunch of my time, but in the late evening, after calming my sciatica with a brutally shaken tequila in a martini glass, I've been testing the near future of television viewing in the form of various new Internet boxes that allow you to download content from the Web. A lot of new TVs have this sort of thing built in, but if you're not in the market for a new TV, these set-top boxes are a good way to add those features to your existing set, usually for \$100 to \$200.

My favorite is the \$99 [1] **Roku** (roku.com), which, along with letting you play YouTube and Vimeo videos, gets both Netflix and Amazon video on demand in HD as well as Hulu Plus, the new subscription service that gives you access to network shows from every major broadcast channel other than CBS (for now). The box is small, and the controller intuitive. What makes the Roku so convenient is that you can search directly for Netflix video-on-demand content, instead of queuing your choices via your computer first.

The [2] **Apple TV** (\$99; apple.com) also lets you watch Netflix films without queuing, and it has the great Apple design. But it doesn't have Hulu. The new box is a substantial improvement over the old one. It's smaller, faster, and less glitchy. Plus, the new Apple AirPlay technology allows you to push pictures and video content to your TV from any of your devices—computer, iPad, iPhone, or iPod Touch.

At \$300, the [3] **Logitech Revue** (logitech.com) is a different kind of option. The first product on the Google TV platform, it has a full keyboard and touch pad and lets you pull up any content you can find on the Web. My biggest complaint is that it feels like a huge, slow computer, although it does have picture-in-picture, which lets me do some of my favorite things all with one device: drink a martini, turn on the Weather Channel (does anyone *really* think Jim Cantore looks better with a shaved head?), and surf the Web for new cars (even though I'm not in the market). Unfortunately, the keyboard



isn't backlit, so it's a little hard to use for nighttime viewing. Plus, at the moment, it doesn't get Hulu.

Finally, there's the [4] **Boxee Box** (\$199; boxee.tv). It has a two-sided remote, with basic controls on one side and a keyboard on the other, which allows for easy Web surfing. By the time this article comes out, it should also have Netflix and Hulu compatibility. Since it can play nearly any video format, some might be tempted to use the Boxee for illegally downloaded movies. As far as I'm concerned, downloading pirated content is fine. Just don't be mad when I come to your house and take your car. Or your credit card.

Barry Sonnenfeld is an Emmy-winning television director and the director of *Get Shorty* and *Men in Black*.



THIS MONTH IN REMOTES

MOST TV REMOTES are nothing special: utilitarian afterthoughts that change the channel and volume. If you're lucky, their buttons might glow in the dark. But the remote that comes with the Samsung 9000 (\$6,000; samsungusa.com), a stunning 55-inch 3-D LED TV that's only 0.3 inches deep, may be the first one that's nearly as functional as the TV it operates. The touchscreen remote does everything a standard remote should. Plus, it serves as its own minitelevision, showing live programming via WiFi on its three-inch screen. Which means, among other things, that you can finally take the game with you to the kitchen. Or even to the bathroom. You shouldn't—and we hope you won't—but you could.

—PETER MARTIN

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In the rare event of an erection lasting more than four hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

In rare instances, men who take PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision, or sudden decrease or loss of hearing. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines or to other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time.

VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit viagra.com for full prescribing information.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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IMPORTANT FACTS

VIAGRA®
(sildenafil citrate) tablets

(vi-AG-rah)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT VIAGRA

Never take VIAGRA if you take any medicines with nitrates. This includes nitroglycerin. Your blood pressure could drop quickly. It could fall to an unsafe or life-threatening level.

ABOUT ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

Erectile dysfunction means a man cannot get or keep an erection. Health problems, injury, or side effects of drugs may cause ED. The cause may not be known.

ABOUT VIAGRA

VIAGRA is used to treat ED in men. When you want to have sex, VIAGRA can help you get and keep an erection when you are sexually excited. You cannot get an erection just by taking the pill. Only your doctor can prescribe VIAGRA.

VIAGRA does not cure ED.

VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or HIV. You will need to use a condom.

VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

WHO IS VIAGRA FOR?

Who should take VIAGRA?

Men who have ED and whose heart is healthy enough for sex.

Who should NOT take VIAGRA?

- If you ever take medicines with nitrates:
 - Medicines that treat chest pain (angina), such as nitroglycerin or isosorbide mononitrate or dinitrate
- If you use some street drugs, such as "poppers" (amyl nitrate or nitrite)
- If you are allergic to anything in the VIAGRA tablet

BEFORE YOU START VIAGRA

Tell your doctor if you have or ever had:

- Heart attack, abnormal heartbeats, or stroke
- Heart problems, such as heart failure, chest pain, or aortic valve narrowing
- Low or high blood pressure
- Severe vision loss
- An eye condition called retinitis pigmentosa
- Kidney or liver problems
- Blood problems, such as sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- A deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- Stomach ulcers or any kind of bleeding problems

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take or use:

- Medicines called alpha-blockers to treat high blood pressure or prostate problems. Your blood pressure could suddenly get too low. You could get dizzy or faint. Your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.
- Medicines called protease inhibitors for HIV. Your doctor may prescribe a 25 mg dose. Your doctor may limit VIAGRA to 25 mg in a 48-hour period.
- Other methods to cause erections. These include pills, injections, implants, or pumps.
- A medicine called REVATIO. VIAGRA should not be used with REVATIO as REVATIO contains sildenafil, the same medicine found in VIAGRA.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIAGRA

Side effects are mostly mild to moderate. They usually go away after a few hours. Some of these are more likely to happen with higher doses.

The most common side effects are:

- Headache
- Feeling flushed
- Upset stomach

Less common side effects are:

- Trouble telling blue and green apart or seeing a blue tinge on things
- Eyes being more sensitive to light
- Blurred vision

Rarely, a small number of men taking VIAGRA have reported these serious events:

- Having an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If the erection is not treated right away, long-term loss of potency could occur.
- Sudden decrease or loss of sight in one or both eyes. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. They may be caused by conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. If you have sudden vision changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Sudden decrease or loss of hearing. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. If you have sudden hearing changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeats, and death. We do not know whether these events are caused by VIAGRA or caused by other factors. Most of these happened in men who already had heart problems.

If you have any of these problems, stop VIAGRA. Call your doctor right away.

HOW TO TAKE VIAGRA

Do:

- Take VIAGRA only the way your doctor tells you. VIAGRA comes in 25 mg, 50 mg, and 100 mg tablets. Your doctor will tell you how much to take.
- If you are over 65 or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg).
- Take VIAGRA about 1 hour before you want to have sex. VIAGRA starts to work in about 30 minutes when you are sexually excited. VIAGRA lasts up to 4 hours.

Don't:

- Do not take VIAGRA more than once a day.
- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor tells you. If you think you need more VIAGRA, talk with your doctor.
- Do not start or stop any other medicines before checking with your doctor.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information OR
- Go to www.viagra.com or call (888) 4-VIAGRA (484-2472).

Uninsured? Need help paying for Pfizer medicine? Pfizer has programs that can help. Call 1-866-706-2400 or visit www.PfizerHelpfulAnswers.com.



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Chivalry, Dollar Coins, and What to Say When an Atheist Sneezes

I'VE HEARD THAT A MAN walking with a woman should walk on the side closest to the street. I've tried, and it feels awkward to be switching sides. Where did this idea originate? Should I bother doing it?

"It's a protection thing," says John Bridges, author of *How to Be a Gentleman*. "That comes from an age when there were horses in the street and there was lots of unpleasantness to be tossed up against a lady's skirt. So the man would walk on the curb side to protect her from that."

"I'm not sure there's any reason particularly for that anymore, except it's just a true and ancient tradition. It's certainly still polite to do it. I think a woman would be kind of impressed if you did. And there's still water and muck that gets thrown up by a car going too fast. I think the gentlemanly idea is that you should be willing to be there as a sort of shield."

As for technique, Bridges suggests that "you just step around like you would if you were opening a door for somebody. You don't make a big deal out of it. Just slide to the other side. I can't imagine why he would feel awkward about it, because it's a nice thing to do."

AF has tried this with Mrs. Fella, by the way, but it's more difficult when the woman you're with is walking five paces ahead.

Why hasn't the United States adopted the one-dollar coin like the UK, the EU, and Can-

ada? Wouldn't it save the government a fortune? Why doesn't it just take dollar bills out of circulation and force the public to accept the coin version?

Two related reasons: It would require congressional courage, and Glenn Beck's wee brain might melt with fury.

According to a ten-year-old study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the estimated benefits of replacing dollar notes with coins would be more than \$500 million per year. "The average life span of a dollar bill isn't much more than two years," says Robert W. Hoge, curator of North American coins and currency at the American Numismatic Society. "A coin's life span is about 50 years—and it doesn't cost much more to print a dollar bill. The reason it hasn't taken off in recent years is because of the continuance of the dollar bill. It's been proposed many times. Congress has chosen not to do it—they don't want to do anything they think their constituents will dislike."

"We do everything on congressional authorization," says Michael White, spokesman for the U.S. Mint. "We have two dollar coins right now—the Native American coin and the presidential series. We're mint-

ing them. We're putting them into circulation."

Meanwhile, says Senator Tim Johnson, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Financial Institutions, "The U.S. Mint has worked hard to encourage use of the dollar coin, but it seems Americans are creatures of habit who are attached to the paper dollar."

Right. And members of Congress, too, are creatures of habit who are detached from all priorities beyond keeping their seats.

Is it wrong for me to respond to a post-sneeze "Bless you" by saying, "Thanks, but I'm not religious"? It irks me that something no different from burping or farting is intertwined with religion.

"I do that," David Silverman, president of American Atheists, tells AF. "I usually don't do it the first time, but if I've got a lot of sneezes going on, I will say, 'Please don't bless me—I'm an atheist.' I don't view it as an overtly religious statement, but, yes, it does get irritating. A sneeze does not need a response."

On the other hand, you might consider the wisdom of Dale B. Martin, professor of religious studies at Yale: "Why do people feel it's necessary to inform other people of their religious beliefs, or lack thereof, just because someone says something that's a measure of courtesy? The literal meaning of 'Bless you' does not imply a belief in God. The words literally mean 'May you be happy.'"

AF suggests that if you choose to stick to your godless guns, stop fiddling around: Simply tell the offender to go to hell.

After competitive eaters down 50 hot dogs or whatever, do they vomit? How long before they eat another meal?

"No one regurgitates," says Jason "Crazy Legs" Conti, who once won a contest by downing more than 160 oysters in ten minutes. "Digestion is part of the process. In terms of when you would eat next, it would be the next day—24 to 36 hours."

Pete "Pretty Boy" Davekos, who has consumed 7.5 pounds of spinach in five minutes, says, "I think there are some people who regurgitate, probably just because they're rookies and they don't know how to handle themselves. For me, it's a pride issue."

Pretty Boy's postcontest appetite? "Three to four hours afterward, we're showered up and we're out family style having dinner. We try to get buffet style of some sort."

Joey "Jaws" Chestnut, ranked number one by the International Federation of Competitive Eating and winner of four consecutive Nathan's Famous Hot-Dog-Eating Contests, also digests. "I'm used to being bloated. It's like weight training: You make your body adapt. The rest of that day, I don't eat anything—just lots of liquids. The next day, I'm going to be craving usually yogurt or a Cobb salad."

Jaws holds the Nathan's record: 68 hot dogs with buns in ten minutes. Answer "Kaopectate" Fella squats in awe of him.

ESQUIRE'S ANSWER FELLA believes that there are no stupid questions, just stupid people who don't ask questions, fearing they'll look stupid. So ask Answer Fella anything. If he doesn't know the answer, he'll find out who does or who has a guess that sounds right.



Contact AF anytime at answerfella@esquire.com.

Ma
HP

The Way of the Shaker

AN APPRECIATION, INCLUDING THE BEST ONE AND HOW TO USE IT

I've been a full-time cocktail writer for a good decade now. As in any other line of work, that means trying to keep up with innovation (barrel-aged cocktails, anyone?) and maintaining a full set of professional tools. I sometimes go overboard with that last part. Our house is full of things like copper pot stills, ice mallets, restaurant-sized juicers (manual and electric), milk-punch filters, nutmeg graters, and, not surprisingly, cocktail shakers by the dozen. Old ones, new ones, tiny little ones, and ones the size of atomic cannon shells. At least I can say that I've used every last one of 'em. It's true that many—okay, most—

FRUITFUL SEARCH TERMS

cocktail [+] kingdom and esquire [+] drinks [+] database



From the author's collection, the oversized Parisian shaker: makes ten drinks at a time. Not currently being produced but is available online at used-gear sites.

of them get one spin and into a drawer they go. But a select few I've used hundreds and even thousands of times.

Those are the ones I'm going to talk about, but first let's consider just what a shaker has to do. It has to be convenient to use. It has to hold a reasonable amount of liquid—at least two drinks' worth—and a lot of ice, which you should be able to get in there easily. It has to be made of something that's a good conductor of heat, so that your ice can devote its cooling power to the drink, not the shaker. It has to withstand a vigorous shaking without leaking. It has to be quick and easy to pour from so the drink doesn't dilute more while waiting to get out. Finally, it has to look good in action.

The two most popular styles of shakers—the so-called **Boston shaker**, the mixing-glass-shaker-tin combo favored by bartenders, and the three-piece "**cobbler**" shaker, with its strainer built into its cap, favored by home hobbyists—balance all these things pretty well. But that said, the cobbler pours too slowly, can be hard to open, and often has too little space between the liquid and the top to allow vigorous shaking, while the Boston can be tricky to use and doesn't look all that great, and the heavy glass is a poor conductor of heat.

Fortunately, there's a third style: the so-called **Parisian shaker**. Although it was apparently an American design of the 1870s, this elegant device found its most enthusiastic devotees behind the great cocktail bars of Europe, and in particular those of Paris. Essentially, it splits the difference between the Boston and the cobbler: Like the former, it's quick to strain from and has plenty of headspace, while it's all metal (and hence a good conductor) like the latter, and almost as easy to use. It does have a couple of drawbacks, though: Without a built-in strainer or a glass part to let you eyeball what's going into it, you'll need a strainer and a jigger. And unless it's very well engineered, like the WMF Hotel line version from Germany, it can be difficult

to open, as the ice forms a vacuum that can hold the parts together. But another German company, Carl Mertens, has gone a long way to solving that problem, too, by giving the top a little flare so you can grip it better. With either of these, or one of the gorgeous vintage silver-plated ones from Christofle of Paris, should you be lucky enough to find one, shaking a cocktail is a sheer pleasure—at least until the shaker becomes so cold and frosty that you can barely hold it.



The Appendix:
The Parisian cocktail and three other drinks that are red-dish-colored but don't have cloying names. For Valentine's Day.
Page 44

WE TRY IT SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

WHAT: Skinnygirl Margarita

WHY: Liquor stores can't keep the stuff in stock, which means your girlfriend is drinking it.

WHAT IT TASTES LIKE: Say the cute little four-year-old down the block made a bowl of lemonade but instead of sugar used Splenda and instead of lemons used lemon flavoring and put it in a big bowl filled with ice and set it in the sun so all the ice melted and the "lemonade" got kind of hot and she got bored and went inside and a Labrador retriever came along and lapped some up and then stuck his head in the bowl and got the stuff all up in his nose and sneezed uncontrollably into the bowl for a while. That's what it tastes like. On ice.

—DAVID GRANGER





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DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Pretty easy

NUMBER OF POTS TO CLEAN

One

WHAT TO DRINK

A crisp beer, like Stella



How to Stay Warm

JAMBALAYA: IT'S COMFORTING, IT'S SPICY, IT'S EASY TO MAKE, AND IT FEEDS A LOT OF PEOPLE. PLUS, IT'S AN ENJOYABLE WORD TO PRONOUNCE.

BY SARAH O'KELLEY
As told to Francine Maroukian

JAMBALAYA IS a classic dish of southern Louisiana—no surprise given the amount of rice grown there. The cooking culture of that region is built upon making a little bit go a long way. Jambalaya is the epitome of this philosophy. Although you can make it with anything from rabbit to duck, we keep our jambalaya pretty basic with roasted chicken and spicy andouille sausage, another staple of Louisiana cooking. There's a beautiful economy in cooking with andouille: As the sausage browns, it flavors the aromatic vegetables without any extra effort. And although we love our local heirloom grains, in jambalaya we use rice that has been parboiled, a process that makes rice easier to mill but also helps it keep its shape. Once you put the jambalaya together, the hot oven does the rest. It's a complex dish made easy.

As we prepared to evacuate New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina, my business partner and I made a pot of jambalaya. When we got safely across to the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, we heated up that pot on a gas grill and sat around eating jambalaya and playing cards. It wasn't until the next afternoon when we listened to the news on the car radio that we learned what we'd left behind.



CHICKEN- AND-SAUUSAGE JAMBALAYA

Chef Sarah O'Kelley,
Glass Onion,
Charleston, South Carolina

- 1 stick plus 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 2 lbs diced andouille or other smoked, ready-to-eat sausage (about 7 cups)
- 3 cups chopped yellow onion (about 1½ medium onions)
- 2 cups chopped celery (about 5 ribs)
- 2 cups chopped green bell pepper (about 2 medium peppers)
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic (about 3 medium cloves)
- 4-lb roasted chicken, skin and fat discarded, meat pulled (about 5 cups)
- 1 qt chicken stock or low-sodium broth
- 1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes
- 8 sprigs fresh thyme, tied together with kitchen twine
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 tbsp hot sauce (or less if desired)

- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 4 cups Uncle Ben's Original converted parboiled rice (or other parboiled rice) *NOTE: Look for the orange box marked "Original" with the words converted and parboiled. It's on every supermarket shelf.*
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- **Preheat oven** to 450 degrees and start chopping.
- **In a large pot**—at least 8 quarts with a tightly fitting lid—melt butter until foamy over medium-high heat. Add andouille and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, 5 to 10 minutes.
- **Add onions**, celery, bell peppers, salt, and pepper and cook until onions are translucent, 5 to 10 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
- **Add pulled chicken**, chicken stock, tomatoes, thyme, bay leaves, hot sauce, Worcestershire, and coriander. Stir to combine. When liquid comes to a simmer, add rice, cover, and transfer pot to preheated oven. Cook until rice has ab-

sorbed all of the liquid and is tender, 30 to 40 minutes. (The rice should be moist but not wet with excess liquid.) Do not remove lid before 30 minutes to check—quickly—for doneness, as you will interrupt the steaming process. (Note: Cooking any grain is about steam. The cooking time here depends on your pot's ability to retain heat and the lid's ability to trap steam.)

➤ **Remove from oven.** Discard bundle of thyme and bay leaves. Add scallions and stir to thoroughly combine. Salt to taste.

➤ **Serve** in bowls, passing extra hot sauce on the side. (Note: There is always carryover cooking with rice, so if you're not serving immediately, transfer to a large platter or bowl.) Serves 10 to 12. Watch the how-to video on esquire.com/jambalaya or on the February Esquire App for the iPad.



The Appendix:
Several delectable
Louisiana meat
products, page 46

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IT WHEN IT'S REACHED PERFECTION.



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SEX

BY STACEY GRENROCK
WOODS



women experience a refractory period. So how does one explain multiple orgasms? "Maybe think of it like sneezes," suggests Dr. Margery Gass, consultant at the Cleveland Clinic and founder of the Committee to Make Sexy Things Un-sexy. "If you have a sneeze and there's still some tickle left, you might want to sneeze again. But if you really got that tickle satisfied, you may not feel like putting the effort into another sneeze," she explains, forever cheapening my perception of sneezing. "Our entire definition of orgasm probably needs to be changed," says Dr. Abrams, but we shouldn't hold our breath. The people at Webster's are notoriously slow, and as I see it (and this is, after all, my column), no matter how a woman navigates her orgasmic archipelago, there comes a climax after which she will seek no further satisfaction for a variable length of time. Whether it's due to physical or mental inability is irrelevant. It's like the sound of one chicken clapping in the forest.

Why does it seem like women are more attracted to me when I'm with someone else?

I'm going to give it to you straight: They are more attracted to you when you're with someone else. As the Canadian chanteuse once asked, Ironic, isn't it? (And it is ironic, by the way. For clarification, please download my e-book, *The Difference Between Ironic, Sarcastic, and Facetious*. It makes a great Valentine's Day gift.)

Women consider the men of other women to be sort of pre-screened for quality. And, ironically, their esteem for you rises correlatively with the attractiveness of the woman you're with. Scientists think it's some sort of holdover from when men were the dominant species on earth—during the pre-Palin period. The phenomenon is called "mate copying," and it's also been observed in fish and quail. For the record, though, women, fish, and quail do differ vastly in other respects. Women, for example, scored much higher on the written test.

Got a sex question of your own?
E-mail it to us at sex@esquire.com.



IF I'VE BEEN DATING a girl for only a couple of weeks, do I have to make a big deal out of Valentine's Day?

I think the holiday warrants some acknowledgment—her inclusion in a simple group text, at the very least—but I'm probably a bad person to ask. My generation didn't bother much with dating or Valentine's Day. We took drugs and slept together like our parents did.

Fortunately for both of us, the media is flush with dating coaches, relationship experts, matchmakers, and even matchmaker coaches. "I think it's overthought because of the pressure," says Lisa Clampitt, social worker and cofounder and executive director of the Matchmaking Institute, which is the first establishment of its kind to offer matchmaking training and certification, of the famous lovers' holiday. "It's meant to be a fun little romantic holiday, but I think people read into it a lot. I think guys definitely feel pressure. Women definitely

feel like it's an indicator of progression in the relationship," she says. "If it's a new relationship," advises Maria Avgitidis, fourth-generation matchmaker and date coach, "I don't suggest dinner," which she says is "way too pressurized." Instead, she stresses fun, because, I suppose, no matter what happens, it will be fun. What kind of fun? "Ice-skating rinks, bowling alleys, something that would show a little bit of your creative or kooky side." Don't worry if you don't have a creative or kooky side—I think they sell them at Urban Outfitters.

My girlfriend is orgasmic but not multiorgasmic. Do women have a refractory period like men?

Opinions on this vary throughout the medical community and my local Pinkberry: Are all women orgasmic? Are all or-

gasmic women multiorgasmic? Can women refrain from having orgasms for the measly 30 minutes required by the average teenage boy? If not, who will do all the matchmaking?

"The whole problem here is our conception that the female orgasm looks like the male orgasm," says Dr. Rachel Abrams of the Santa Cruz Integrative Medicine Clinic and Chi Center and coauthor of *The Multi-Orgasmic Woman*. The orgasm that Masters and Johnson described, the one that sounds like an orgasm, is, according to Dr. Abrams, a classic male orgasm. "But women have lots of other orgasms," she insists.

In orgasm circles, the classic male orgasm is known as a "terminal orgasm" for a woman. (Full disclosure: I've had one and it's not nearly as bad as it sounds.) After a terminal orgasm, both men and

THE 10-SECOND QUIZ

ARE YOU IN LOVE? Select your answers, then add up the assigned points.

1. Did you cringe when you saw this quiz's title? **Yes (-5) No (5)** 2. Smile? **Yes (10) No (0)** 3. Smile dopily? **Yes (25) No (0)** 4. How many pictures of her are on your desk? **None (-5) One (5) Two (10) More than two (20)** 5. Tattooed on your arm? **None (0) One or more (20)** 6. Add five points for every one of her habits you can name. 7. Ten points if you find them cute. 8. If she wanted to, would you watch *The Millionaire Matchmaker*? **Yes (10) No (-5)**

ANSWER KEY > **More than 65 points:** You're in love. **45 to 64:** You're open to the idea. **25 to 44:** But not with this girl. **Less than 24:** Who hurt you?

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ESQUIRE HOME @ NAT SHERMAN

In celebration of the launch of the *Esquire Home Collection*—a comprehensive collection of furniture, home décor, lighting, barware, and rugs that have been inspired by Esquire's legacy of style—Esquire has partnered with *Tobacconist to the World* Nat Sherman to host a series of events at it's flagship location in New York City.

From February 15–April 15, 2011, visit Nat Sherman for an exclusive preview of furniture and accessories from the *Esquire Home Collection*.

For more information about the **Esquire Home @ Nat Sherman** experience and/or event inquiries log on to www.EsquireHomeatNatSherman.com.

To view the complete Esquire Home Collection and locate a retailer, please go to: www.EsquireHomeCollection.com.



THE OUTTAKE

SEE
page 27

PHOTOGRAPH A NAKED WOMAN IN 9 EASY STEPS



Photos from the book Scott Caan
Photographs Vol. 1

1. Temporarily reside in a hotel.
2. Date an uninhibited artist type.
3. When she asks you "How come you never take photos of me?" say, "It's just not my thing."
4. When she insists, take out your camera.
5. Use any available light. Use the hotel-room lamp if you have to.
6. Pick the right pose. "The idea is to come up with something that you find beautiful. Sometimes something raunchy is something beautiful to somebody, but to me, that's not it."
7. Don't force it. "Anything you shoot photos of, it's what you keep in the frame. You look at something, and if you really want to take a photo of it, take a photo of it. The second you start adjust-



ing things and making it work, that's when it becomes photography as a job, and that's just not my style."

8. Call ten female acquaintances and ask them, "Hey, can I shoot photos of you?"
9. Repeat process with each.

TIPS GLEANED FROM THE CONVERSATION WITH ACTOR SCOTT CAAN THAT APPEARS ON PAGE 27.

APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

SEE
page 38

THE PARISIAN COCKTAIL

BY DAVID WONDRICH

To go with the Parisian shaker on page 38 you'll need a Parisian cocktail. There is one, of course, although it needs a little tinkering. As originally served in the early 1920s at Harry's New York Bar, then and now a Paris institution, it was a nearly undrinkable blend of equal parts gin and vermouth and crème de cassis. That's way too much of the thick, funky black-currant liqueur. In the 1930s, Frank Meier of the nearby Ritz fixed that by cutting the cassis back to a mere barspoon. But for me the best version is the one my wife, Karen Rush, and her friend Melissa Clark, the food writer, created years ago when they were making shift drinks at the New York restaurant where they worked. By adding a little lemon juice, they came up with a bright, debonair drink that's a perfect tribute to the City of Light and great for pre-Valentine's dinner.



PARISIAN COCKTAIL

Shake well
with ice:

- ☐ 1 oz Tanqueray gin
 - ☐ 1 oz Noilly Prat dry vermouth
 - ☐ ½ oz fresh-squeezed lemon juice
 - ☐ ½ oz imported crème de cassis
- Strain into chilled cocktail glass.

THREE MORE ROMANTIC DRINKS WITH INTRIGUING NAMES

Because before she drinks it, you have to offer it.



METROPOLE

- ☐ 1 ½ oz cognac
- ☐ 1 ½ oz dry vermouth
- ☐ 2 dashes bitters

STINGER

- ☐ 2 ¼ oz brandy
- ☐ ¼ oz white crème de menthe

JUNIOR

- ☐ 2 oz rye
- ☐ ½ oz lime juice
- ☐ ½ oz Bénédictine
- ☐ dash bitters

VISUAL RULE No. 66



● ○ ○ Always



○ ● ○ Sometimes



○ ○ ● Never



THINGS A MAN SHOULD NOT BE DOING THIS MONTH

APPLYING LIP BALM IN PUBLIC • POURING HOT WATER ON HIS WINDSHIELD TO MELT ICE →

#57

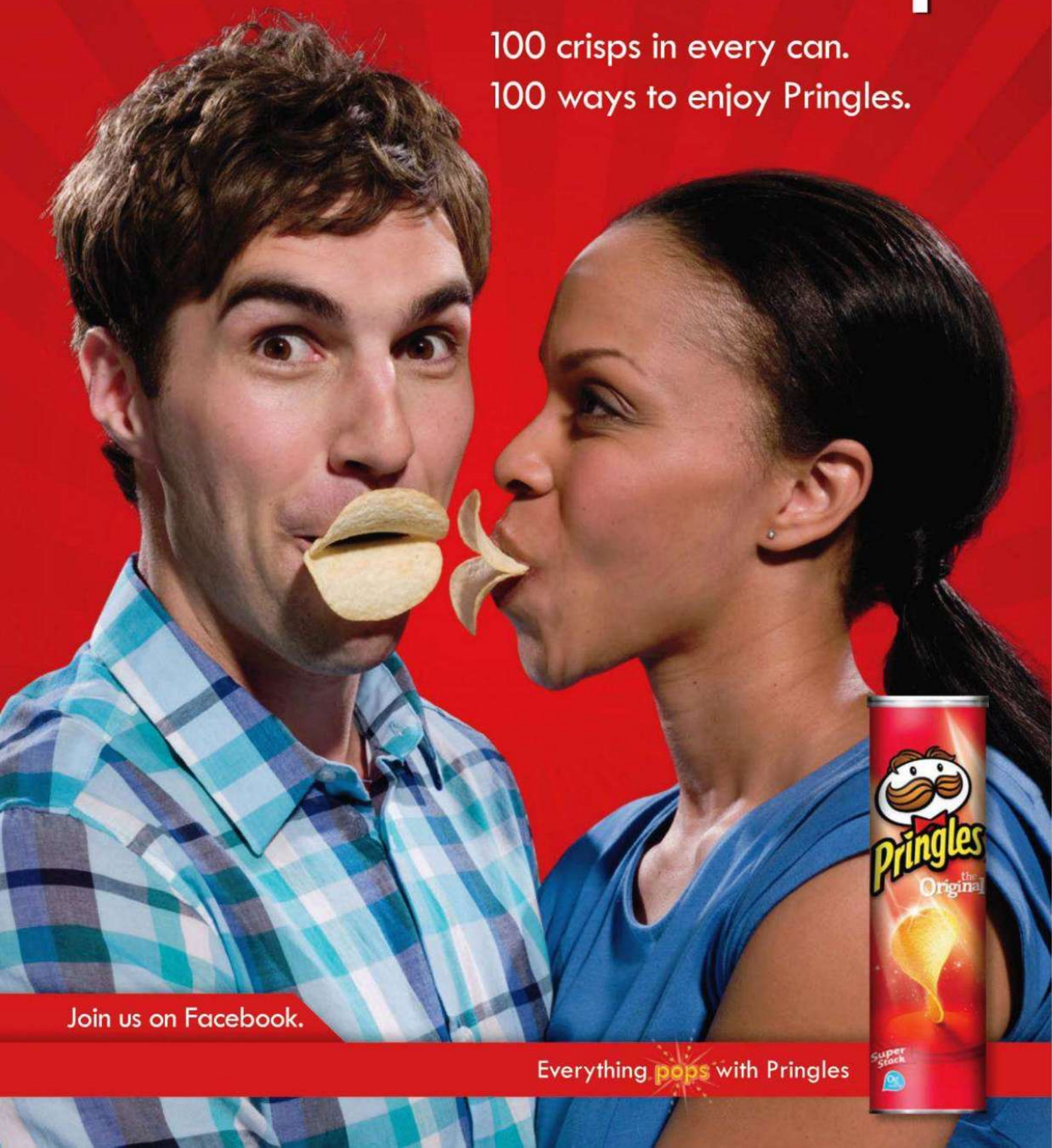
WorldMag

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The Pucker-Up

100 crisps in every can.

100 ways to enjoy Pringles.



Join us on Facebook.

Everything **pops** with Pringles



Ma THE HB APPENDIX

FURTHER EXPLORATION

SEE
page 40

ANDOUILLE: THE GATEWAY MEAT

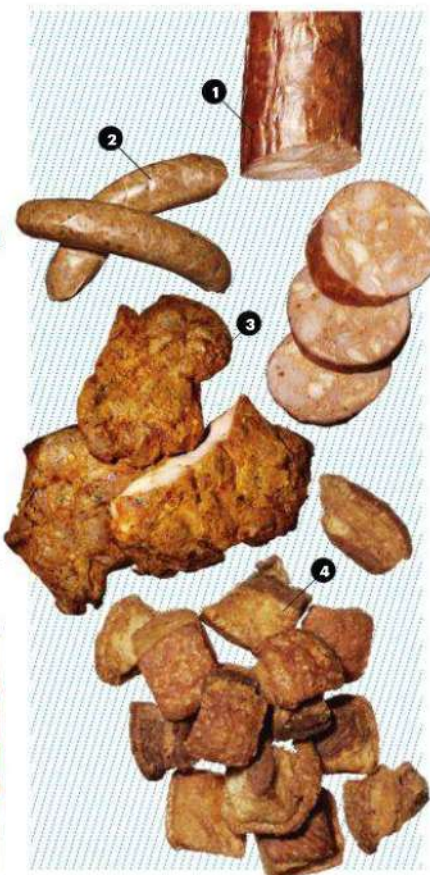
BY FRANCINE MAROUKIAN

Although you can get supermarket **ANDOUILLE** [1] from brands like D'Artagnan or even Aidells, if you are going to cook up a Cajun one-pot like the jambalaya on page 40, you might as well cook the hell out of it—and that's where Poche's comes in. A third-generation smokehouse market—located along the Bayou Teche near the larger town of Breau Bridge in the very heart of Cajun country—Poche's makes the sort of andouille a dish like jambalaya deserves: a heavily smoked, coarse-ground pork sausage that oozes exactly the right flavor into the pot. And while you're there—or while you're on pochesmarket.com—poke around. Order some of the other specialty Cajun meats you've never tasted. When they arrive by mail, you will be happy. A few others worth discovering:

BOUDIN [2], an extremely regional soft-er-style pork sausage stuffed with rice. ("A six-pack of beer and a pound of boudin—that's the traditional Cajun seven-course meal," says Floyd Poché.)

Lightly spiced and smoked **TASSO** [3], a ham often used to season sauces.

CRACKLIN [4], fresh pork skins, cut and cooked in big black iron pots until crisp and bubbly.



WORDS
AND
PHRASES
A MAN
SHOULD
NEVER SAY

NOs. 86 to 92

GATHER
'ROUND
•
TWITTER
(AS A VERB)
•
THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE
•
MYSELF
(INSTEAD
OF "ME")
•
THE HEALING
PROCESS
(FOR ANY-
THING OTHER
THAN A
PHYSICAL
WOUND)
•
FALLOUT
(FOR ANY-
THING OTHER
THAN THE
NUCLEAR
KIND)
•
DITTO

THE RULES **Rule No. 268:** Hotel rooms look 30 percent more inviting online than they do in person. **Rule No. 277:** When an item in a vending machine is teetering on the precipice, it must be dislodged. **Rule No. 278:** ... But only by purchasing the product above it. **Rule No. 279:** ... Unless the product in question is baked chips. **Rule No. 280:** There isn't a hunger that baked chips can satisfy. **Rule No. 302:** When speaking of e-mailing, do not pantomime typing.

HANDY!

SKILLS OF
THE MONTH

ARCANE!

WRITE A VALENTINE'S DAY CARD

PERSONALIZE TO SUIT:

[Sweetheart/Darling/Oh, you!],

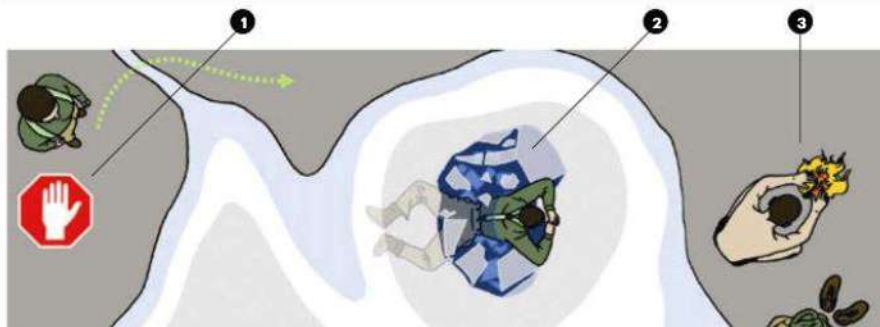
Thank you for [these last few months/an other great year/the other night/saying hel-lo to me once]. When I think back on all the times we've shared, the only word that comes to mind is [love, desire, daaaamn].

The [ring/ticket to Paris/sky-written mes-sage of admiration] was only an emblem for everything we've shared in the past and everything we'll share in the future.

The more I know you, the more I [love/want/am intrigued by/feel comfortable around] you. The last of your kisses was ever the sweetest; the last smile the brightest; the last movement the gracefulest.*

[Love/Always/Yours],
[Your name here]

*Attribute to John Keats or not. Your call.



WALK ACROSS A FROZEN RIVER

Number one, don't [1]. Exhaust all your other options, one of which is simply to stay where you are. If you absolutely have to cross, find a straight, slow stretch of the river. Near rapids and on the edges of curves, faster currents weaken the ice from below. Blue ice is strongest, followed by white. Gray ice or ice with puddles on it is soft and weak.

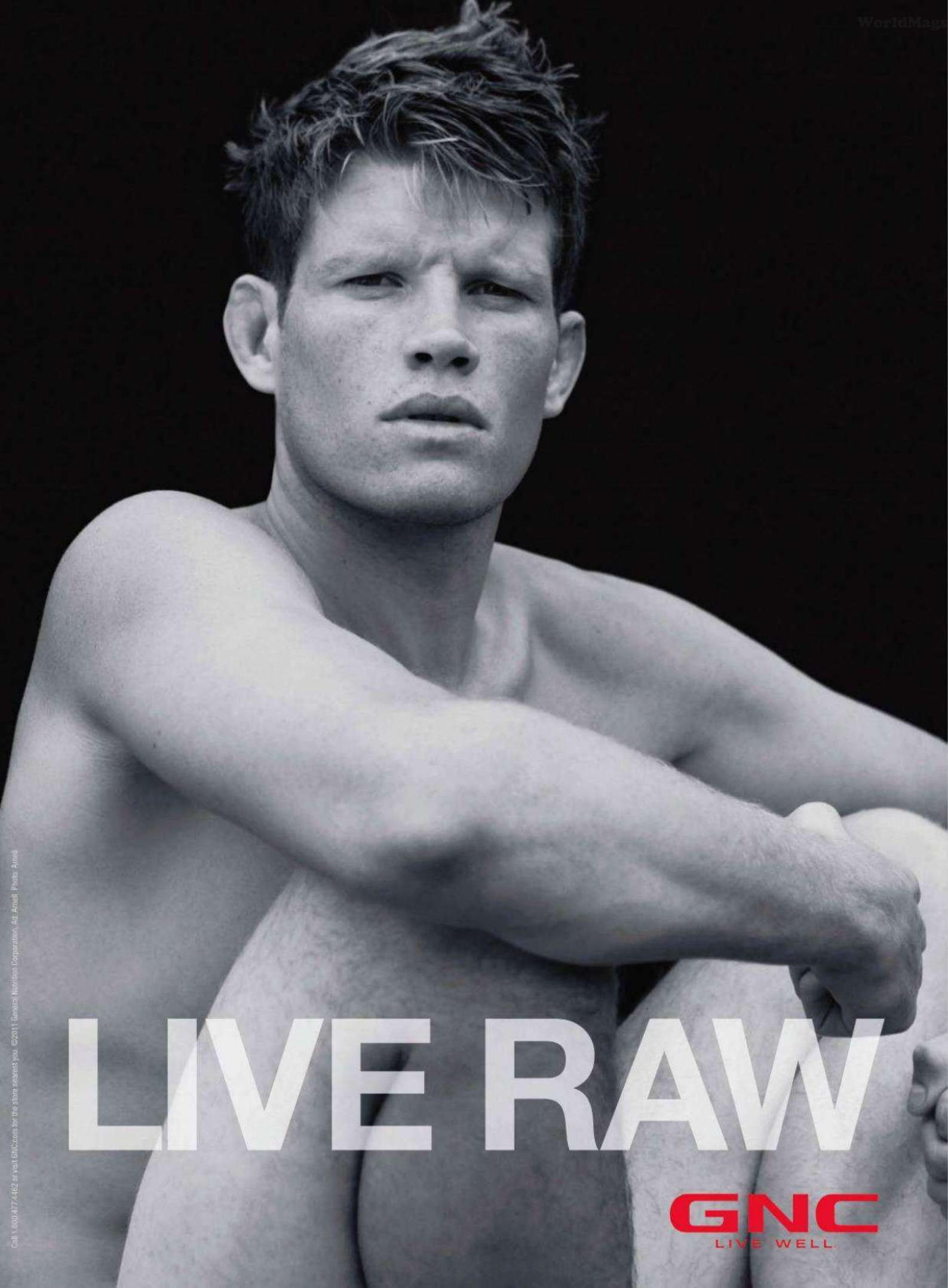
A number to remember: four inches. That's the minimum safe thickness.

When crossing, spread your weight as

much as possible: wear skis or snowshoes, or lie down and crawl on your belly.

Finally, if you do fall through, don't plan on climbing out. Plan on swimming out [2]. Kick yourself upward as hard as you can, reach out as far as you can, and get your chest back on the ice. Keep kicking and dragging yourself, arms out and chest down, until you're out. Then crawl the hell away from the hole, get back to land, build a fire, and get out of your wet clothes [3]. Hypothermia kills.

USING A GIFT CERTIFICATE TO PAY FOR ALL OR PART OF A NICE VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER • LIP-SYNCHING TO ADELE'S NEW ALBUM • POUTING (STEWING IS FINE)



LIVE RAW

GNC
LIVE WELL.



Bell & Ross
TIME INSTRUMENTS

HERITAGE COLLECTION
INSTRUMENT BR 03 Ø 42 mm
VINTAGE BR 126 Ø 41 mm
Natural Leather strap

Style

ESQUIRE / FEBRUARY

IN THIS
SECTION

- Casual shoes: a user's guide
- A few words on rolling up your pants
- An accidental cobbler

THE FLORSHEIM LIMITED WING TIP

IN THE 119 YEARS since Sigmund Florsheim started making shoes in his tiny Chicago workshop, the world has seen the rise of cross-trainers, flip-flops, Crocs, and those webbed-toe abominations that let you walk and run as if barefoot. And yet for all this progress, a man still needs at least one pair of casual shoes that look like something ol' Siggie might've cobbled himself. Something with a beefy sole and some firm support in the arch. Something durable that can take both a polish and a beating. And, most important, something with some personality to it. The brand that Florsheim built is still in business and enjoying a creative revival, led by the forward-thinking fifth-generation members of the Florsheim family, and these gray, personality-packed leather wing tips from its new heritage-driven Limited line are just the extra 10 percent that any casual look could use. For a bunch more just like them, read on.

THE ESSENTIAL:
THE FLORSHEIM LIMITED WING TIP



See the 2011 style trends straight from fashion week in Milan, Paris, and New York, all this month at esquire.com/style-blog.



ON LUKE LANGSDALE, VIDEO DIRECTOR, NEW YORK: Leather wing tips (\$160) by Florsheim Limited; two-button cashmere jacket (\$6,278) by Kiton; cotton oxford shirt (\$98) by Polo Ralph Lauren; cotton trousers (\$165) by Dockers; cotton-and-nylon socks (\$24) by Smart Turnout. (Bow tie, his own.)

Style

CASUAL SHOES: A USER'S GUIDE

THE ONLY TWO WAYS TO WEAR 'EM

BECAUSE THERE'S THE RIGHT WAY—CLASSIC, STYLISH, AND COMPLETELY CORRECT—AND THE ESQUIRE WAY, WHICH LETS YOU PUT YOUR OWN SPIN ON THINGS. TRY IT FOR YOURSELF.

MOCCASINS

The most casual shoe this side of sneakers.

The right way: Choose a simple pair in dark leather and lose the socks for maximum comfort. Since you're playing it safe with your shoes, feel free to turn up the volume with your pants.

The Esquire way: Travel outside your color comfort zone with a sky-blue or bright-red moccasin. Keep your pants a muted shade and let your shoes do all the talking. *Near right:* Cotton khakis (\$65) by Dockers; leather moccasins (\$315) by Façonnable. *Far right:* Cotton jeans (\$225) by Z Zegna; suede driving shoes (\$425) by Tod's.



ANKLE BOOTS

Not those tough, mountain-ready SOBs that have been so ubiquitous these past few winters. We mean the soft-handed, easy-going ones that are right for spring.

The right way:

You'll pair your standard-issue beige boots with blue jeans and you'll look great.

The Esquire way:

You'll pick a pair in an unexpected color, with a contrasting-colored sole, and you'll wear them with dark casual pants. You'll look better. *Near right:* Cotton khakis (\$65) by Dockers; suede boots (\$235) by Church's; cotton socks (\$30) by Pantherella. *Far right:* Cotton jeans (\$200) by Diesel Black Gold; suede boots (\$278) by Coach.



WHAT'S WITH ALL THE PANT ROLLING?

IT'S AN EASY WAY TO MAKE ANY OUTFIT A LITTLE MORE CASUAL. HERE ARE THREE WAYS TO DO IT.



THE TURNUP

When: Your pants are running a little long.

How: For trousers, there is usually an inch or so of "cuff" at the bottom; this is the fabric folded in on itself and then sewn closed. Flip this over for the easiest version of a turnup. For denim, flip up the hem but try not to go more than an inch.



THE ROLL

When: Your pants are a lot long. Or your ankles need a little breathing room.

How: Take that turnup and fold it over again, and then again if necessary. But stop at three rolls; showing some ankle (or some sock) is fine, but half a calf is just unacceptable.



THE TIGHT ROLL

When: Your pants are wide or flared.

How: Add a little pinch to the roll to create a tapered effect at the bottom of your pants. Start by folding over a portion of the pants in front or on the side of the leg and then roll once, then again, while holding the pinch in place. Ask your little sister if you need help.

NOTE TO SELF:

SWAP OUT YOUR STANDARD-ISSUE SHOELACES FOR A PAIR OF BRIGHTLY COLORED LACES. THEY ADD PERSONALITY TO EVERYDAY LACE-UPS.

Shoelaces (\$4 a pair) by J. Crew.

**BUCKS**

The classic round-toed, red-rubber-soled casual shoe for spring and summer. **The right way:** White and clean, with muted khakis or even a pair of rumpled seersucker trousers. Socks are optional. **The Esquire way:** Look for variations on the classic buck like Zegna's, which loses the laces altogether and bleeds the red of the rubber sole onto the toe cap. Pair them with an equally unexpected color of pants and throw in some go-to-hell socks while you're at it. From top: Cotton khakis (\$65) by Dockers; canvas bucks (\$550) by Z Zegna; cotton socks (\$24) by Smart Turnout. Cotton chinos (\$138) by Gant Rugger; suede bucks (\$125) by Florsheim Limited; cotton-and-nylon socks (\$14) by Johnston & Murphy.

WING TIPS

Come Saturday, leave your dressy, thin-soled, delicately brogued wing tips in the closet and opt for their more casual cousin; the brogueing will be a little more pronounced, the sole a little thicker, and the toe a little rounder. **The right way:** Ditch the socks and try a pair of lightly colored suede wing tips that contrast with a pair of bold pants. **The Esquire way:** Choose a brown leather pair with a bright-red sole, keep 'em polished, and wear them with striped socks and dark-blue jeans. From top: Cotton khakis (\$135) by Façonnable; suede wing tips (\$375) by Mark McNairy New Amsterdam. Cotton jeans (\$188) by Gilded Age; leather wing tips (\$330) by Grenson; cotton socks (\$30) by Thomas Pink.

THE SNEAKER HALL OF FAME

IF YOU'RE GOING TO WEAR SNEAKERS WITH JEANS OR TROUSERS, GO CLASSIC



NEW BALANCE
999
\$110



SPRING COURT
G2
\$70



CONVERSE JACK
PURCELL
\$50



VANS CLASSIC
SLIP-ON
\$42



CONVERSE CHUCK
TAYLOR ALL STAR
\$45

ASK NICK SULLIVAN

THE ESQUIRE FASHION DIRECTOR WILL NOW TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS



I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT WOMEN JUDGE MEN BY THEIR SHOES; I'M WEARING SHOES THAT I'VE HAD FOR A DECADE. IF I WANT TO STEP UP MY GAME, WHAT SHOES DO I NEED AND WHERE DO I GET THEM?

JOSEPH POOLE, ALBANY, N. Y.

→ The key is finding shoes that are properly constructed—that means a Goodyear welt, good leather, and a classic rounded toe. For one thing, they'll last longer, and for another, when the soles give out, you can get them fully resoled—which, if you go the Goodyear-welted way, is like putting an entirely new engine in your favorite car. Start with one simple black pair [FIG. 1, by Allen Edmonds; \$325] for office, evening, interviews, and funerals, and then one mid-brown pair [FIG. 2, by Allen Edmonds; \$285] for weekends and such. Add a pair of casual lace-ups like saddle shoes and a heavier casual shoe (or even a boot for winter) and you should be set. In Albany, you can find all of these at Mark Thomas Men's Apparel, 518-438-7887.

I LIKE THE IDEA OF A LEAN WARDROBE, BUT MY WORRY IS THAT A NEW GIRLFRIEND MIGHT THINK, THIS GUY'S ALWAYS WEARING THE SAME SHIRT. HOW MANY CLOTHES DO I REALLY NEED?

RICH TYLER
DES MOINES, IOWA

→ Golden rule concerning items of clothing: The closer

they come to your body, the more you need of them. I'd say the following is a good start: 2 suits, 2 blazers, 12 dress shirts (seriously—you can't wear them twice in a row), 2 pairs dress shoes (but ideally 3), 3 to 5 ties (because everyone notices the tie), 2 pairs casual shoes, 4 sweaters, and 4 chinos, jeans, or casual pants. Socks and undershirts, meanwhile, are no place to be economical.

WHEN WEARING A COLLARED SHIRT UNDER A SWEATER: COLLAR IN OR COLLAR OUT?

FRANK PIGULSKI
ARLINGTON, VA.

→ In. Unless you're going for the whole John Belushi look [FIG. 3].

I'M PACKING MY TUXEDO FOR A BIG OVERSEAS TRIP. HOW CAN I ENSURE THE LEAST AMOUNT OF CREASES?

ROBERT MOGGIO
SEATTLE, WASH.

→ Save wearing it on the plane, which may not win you any points with the good people of the TSA, there are two options. You can lay it as flat as possible at the bottom of your suitcase, and while that works for pants,

it's hit-and-miss for jackets. I came across another option last year in Milan: The sales guy at Italian label Piombo's store turned one sleeve inside out, then pushed the shoulder of that sleeve carefully into the inside of the other shoulder, popping the jacket's collars so each lay flat against the other, before folding the then-almost-flat jacket in half vertically. You can try that, or you can just accept creasing as an unavoidable part of travel and invest in a travel steamer [FIG. 4, Jiffy Steam; jiffysteamer.com]. The steam relaxes the fibers of the cloth and miraculously removes the creases.

I'LL SOON BE MOVING FROM ITALY TO VIRGINIA, WHERE I'M TOLD EXECUTIVE BUSINESS ATTIRE IS TROUSERS WITH OPEN COLLARS. IS IT STILL POSSIBLE TO DRESS FOR SUCCESS IN SUCH A CASUAL ATMOSPHERE?

JOHN HANSON
VICENZA, ITALY

→ Remember to take with you the lessons you see everywhere about you in Vicenza. In Italy, even when the workplace dress code is casual, men deliberately set the bar higher than they need and still clear it with ease. Since your new office has an open-collar policy, make sure your shirt is well constructed so the collar stands up on its own. (Quick tip: Italian brand Camicissima's New York store offers four proper dress shirts [FIG. 5] for a staggering \$99—that's regular price, not sale.) As for trousers, if you're talking chinos, try Dockers' new slimmer-leg D1 pants. They come in interesting colors and are just a touch less slouchy than run-of-the-mill khakis, but you have to make sure they fit.



FIG. 3

FIG. 4

FIG. 5



GOT A QUESTION FOR NICK SULLIVAN? E-MAIL HIM AT ESQSTYLE@HEARST.COM.



THE ACCIDENTAL COBBLER

HOW GEORGE ESQUIVEL IS PUTTING HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD WITH FRATELLI ROSSETTI

THE WAY **GEORGE ESQUIVEL** tells it, he really has no business making and designing shoes—not the custom and ready-to-wear lines he sells under his own name and not his new capsule collection for Fratelli Rossetti.

“I had a crazy upbringing,” he says. “I grew up in Orange County—in motels, on welfare, my dad’s been in prison and all this other stuff—and in that environment, you’re never taught to dream. So I never knew what I wanted to do, and when I was 22, driving a truck for a living and trying to figure things out, I was on a trip to Mexico with my now wife, then girlfriend, and we saw a sign that said **SHOEMAKER**. At the time, I’d been looking for a pair of vintage-inspired shoes for a while but hadn’t been able to find anything that I really, really liked, so I walked in and I said, ‘Hey, if I give you a sketch, can you make me a pair of shoes?’ They said yes, and I went back in two months and they were perfect. I was hooked. And that’s kind of what started it.”

He returned to Los Angeles and hooked up with a veteran shoemaker who taught him everything he knew, and over the next few years, without any formal training, Esquivel was making handmade, custom shoes out of a garage for clients who came to include members of No Doubt and the Offspring. He eventually started selling a ready-to-wear line that he describes as having a “California, free-spirit

aesthetic”—think unusual colors, clever detailing, and distressed leathers—that brought him national exposure and collaborations with emerging designers like Maria Cornejo and Timo Weiland. And then—

“Last year I was a CFDA Fashion Fund finalist”—a pretty big deal, by the way—“and one of the things they ask you during the process is, ‘What would you like to do?’ and I said I’d love to work with a brand with some real history to it. The next thing I know, I’m meeting with Diego, one of the brothers who run Fratelli Rossetti, and that was it.” For his first collection for the storied Italian brand, Esquivel, now 40, designed seven styles (in colors ranging from brown and black to white, olive, and blue) that

merge Fratelli’s expert construction with his own design sensibility. “When I first went into their workshops, I said, ‘Wow, you guys actually do a lot of your work by hand. You should let the world know about that.’ So, slowly, instead of trying to make every shoe look absolutely perfect and exactly the same—something that’s impossible, by the way, with anything that’s handmade—I’ve been trying to let the little imperfections show. People love to see those little tell-tale details, and when you tell them that the line on the burnishing is a little off because it’s done by hand, they understand it. They’re not looking for it to be perfect. They want it to be special.” And from this guy, that’s what they get.

For more information, call 212-888-5107.

Suede shoes (\$530) by Fratelli Rossetti.



A
THOUSAND
WORDS
ABOUT
OUR
CULTURE

IS JAMES FREY THE MOST IMPORTANT WRITER IN AMERICA?

BY STEPHEN MARCHE

TODAY IS AN UPLIFTING, degrading, and all-around confusing time to be a writer in America. Even as creative-writing departments proliferate like bedbugs and each year brings a fresh (and deserving) claimant to the title of Great American Novel [Fig. 1], content farms are herding the young and determined literati into anonymous sweatshops run by all-seeing, unforgiving masters of metrics. More people want to be writers even as continual technological breakthroughs—Blogspot, Twitter, and tablets of every shape and size—make the future of writing less solid and predictable. The old orders are falling and the new ones have not yet emerged, and worst of all, nobody, it seems, knows how to write about sex anymore. (See page 30 for more on that.) We are in a moment of literary in-betweenness,

and into this world of upheaval, to everybody's surprise, has stepped James Frey [Fig. 2], a refugee from the great decade of American fraud, pointing the way up and out like a deranged false prophet. The man has plans.

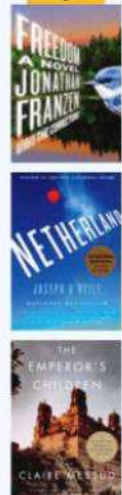
It's hard to believe that it's been five years, to the month, since Oprah humiliated Frey on national television. And though he proceeded (sensibly) to make himself scarce for a while, you are going to be reading a lot about him this year, even if you're not really meaning to. His upcoming novel, *The Final Testament of the Holy Bible*, follows a man who may or may not be Christ through twenty-first-century Manhattan, and the film version of the best-selling book *I Am Number Four* [Fig. 3] will be released this month. The latter is the first fruit of Frey's publishing venture, Full Fathom Five, the setup of which has caused a minor scandal. Frey finds young writers to "coproduce" commercial young-adult fiction: They write it, he controls it, they can tell their friends and parents that they've written a book, and he takes up to 70 percent of the royalties. Frey, at least according to some, trolls the M.F.A. programs in New York rather the way pimps in movies troll Penn Station for



The author of *A Million Little Pieces* and other works of fiction.

Fig. 2

Fig. 1



Great books. Read them all.

Fig. 3



The story is about a good-looking teenage alien and his struggle to survive.

Fig. 4



Hemingway and Mailer are among Frey's idols.

Fig. 6



Jonathan Safran Foer, Dave Eggers, Jonathan Lethem.

Fig. 7



Gary Shteyngart, Sam Lipsyte, Joshua Ferris.

farmers' daughters, but I hesitate to judge his plan. The truth is that anyone who spends \$40,000 a year to be taught how to write by writers who cannot make a living by writing, or who imagines that fairness and common sense have anything to do with the publishing industry, could probably use a lesson in how life really works.

Which leads me to the only thing I really like about Frey: his arrogance. He unblushingly compares himself to some of the greats [Fig. 4] and believes that his new young-adult production scheme is like the work of Jeff Koons or Ai Weiwei, who both hire workers to produce their oversized art [Fig. 5]. We haven't heard this kind of boldness from a writer, this claim to an inheritance of a grand tradition, since Norman Mailer died. The best writers now are humble to the point of insanity. Before he went on his *Freedom* book tour, Jonathan Franzen told Terry Gross on NPR that he just hoped to hand-sell a few copies at local bookstores. (He ended up on the cover of *Time*.) The younger generation, meanwhile, seems to come in two flavors: the earnestly meek

Fig. 5



Two Koons employees at work in the artist's studio.

[Fig. 6] and the ironically meek [Fig. 7]. The danger of all this—and it is a real danger—is that their meekness will be taken seriously, and that writing will then be accepted as the natural domain for losers. The world today is filled with graying men who became writers so they could follow in the swaggering footsteps of Mailer, Bellow, and the other giant egos of postwar American letters. But how many young men today read, say, Jonathan Safran Foer's dollhouse fiction and say, *That's what I want to do with my life?*

Whatever else you can say about Frey, he refuses to be a loser, and writing matters to him in a ferocious, palpable way. He is always trying to connect as massively and viscerally as possible, and, when he wants to, he can write quite well. Don't misunderstand me: The idea that he belongs with either a brilliant cynic like Koons or an artist saint like Ai Weiwei is ludicrous. They use the methods of mass production to create gorgeously unique events; he is using the methods of mass production to create mass-produced fiction. With *Full Fathom Five*, he has turned himself into just another pulp publisher with a notorious past. But the lessons Frey offers for ambitious writers are essential: Never apologize, never give up, and be entrepreneurial. It also helps to know how to write.

So what comes next for writers? It might help to look at another time of literary in-betweenness, the mid-eighteenth century, when writers endured the overlap between the end of the era of patronage and the beginning of the era of the professional writer. Samuel Johnson, who famously said that anyone who didn't write for money was a blockhead, nonetheless wandered the streets of London in a state of near beggary for years. His *Lives of the Poets* documents the sufferings of his contemporaries to make a living with words, but through their struggles to create poems and longer narrative forms that people would actually pay for, they prepared the way, commercially and intellectually, for the nineteenth-century novel and the Romantic poets. Like them, we don't know where our world is headed, but we're going to need Frey, and any other writer who thinks writing is worth fighting for, to push us forward toward something completely new and different. It might even be magnificent. ■

Esquire

BROOKLYN DECKER LIGHTENS THE BURDEN OF LIVING IN THIS WORLD

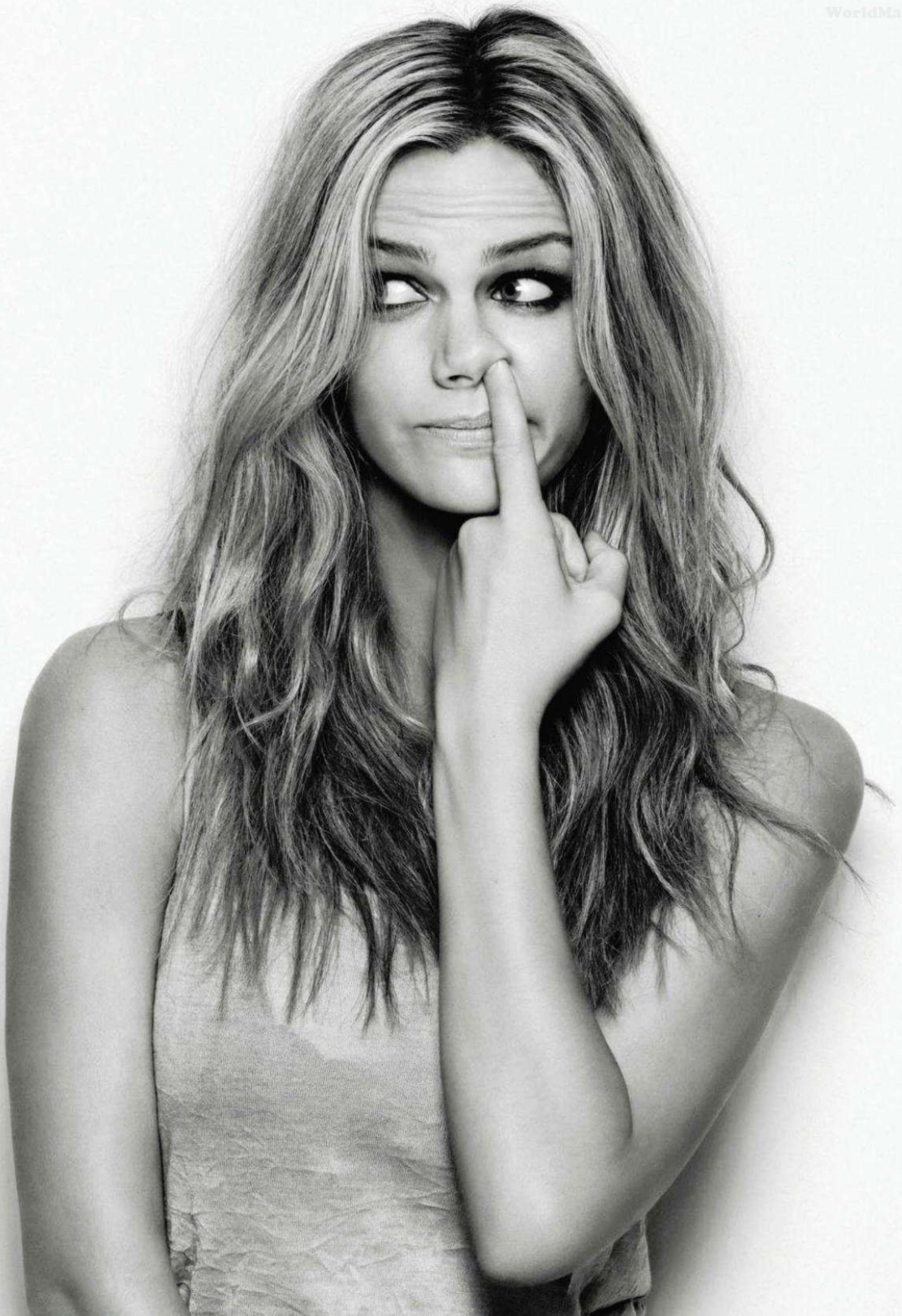
WHY SITTING AROUND EATING CHICKEN AND LOOKING AT PHOTOS IS THRILLING WHEN YOU'RE DOING IT WITH A WOMAN LIKE THIS: **A SPECIAL ESQUIRE INVESTIGATION**

BY TOM CHIARELLA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY YU TSAI

Outside her apartment, on the cold and dusky streets down under the Manhattan Bridge overpass, Brooklyn Decker, wrapped up just a bit too tight against the wind, gives a weak, unconvinced handshake. It has the feel of a first handshake, the kind you give early in your handshaking life, when you can't figure why anyone would want to meet you. When we start walking the tilt of the hill down to the high-end grocery store near her place, she widens her eyes, so blue they seem backlit, and admits, "I'm not sure what you can say about me yet."

Maybe it's just the time and place, some play on the obvious trope. Like *Brooklyn in Brooklyn*. *Brooklyn Decker lives inside her name. So much Brooklyn.*

"Yeah, yeah," she says. She's heard it before. I can do better than that, I tell her. I don't want to disappoint. Just give me some time. Half a block later, we're at the market. The scale of Brooklyn surprises. She is so tall, for starters.



he starter is a salad. That's the only starter Brooklyn makes. Green-leaf lettuce, avocados cut up like pats of butter, ground pepper, and dressing pulled mysteriously from her refrigerator. She whisks it from the door and back again.

To the doorway and back again, while cooking, for an adjustment to the lights. When Brooklyn Decker walks toward you, the world feels a little bit of all right. She brings promise with her. Light of heart and unexpectant, she gives the impression that being present is easy, that passing time talking with a man she doesn't know is exactly what she wants to do on a Friday night in New York. She makes her little salad. What do I like? What do I not like? She even seems a little curious about my preferences. I'm cool with whatever, I say. I can handle anything she dishes up. But Brooklyn doesn't cook like that. She doesn't want to disappoint. She just wants me to like it. There is no protest or resistance in her voice. It's just something she can do.

She cannot cook, she says, but she's learning. This chicken thing, with its components handpicked at her grocery store—two organic breasts, five slices of prosciutto, two avocados not yet collapsed in ripeness, a nameless jar of spice—is her one thing, her one dinner. There's no apology or excuse. She'd made an offer: this in lieu of a restaurant. She knows this one thing, one reliable ritual of assembly, leaving her free to stand and cook for a guest who sits schlumped on the other side of her kitchen island. This is so she can offer wine, tend to her guest without apology for the things she can't do.

One thing she can't do: She can't explain how she got here, not clearly. The story of her childhood in North Carolina comes and goes—What does she miss? “Just my friends.” UNC or Duke? “It could have gone either way, but it can never go the other way. I'm a Tar Heel, pretty randomly.” Answers lost, threads dropped what with all the chopping, the tenderizing. Her mother named her after a horse. “I love the name,” she says. “Brook. Next time we meet, you'll call me



TAKE YOUR PICTURE WITH THIS WOMAN

TO LEARN HOW YOU CAN BUMP INTO BROOKLYN AT A BARNES & NOBLE NEAR YOU, OR EVEN HAVE YOUR PICTURE TAKEN WITH HER, TURN TO THE FLAP ON THE CONTENTS PAGE, OR GO TO ESQUIRE.COM/SCAVENGER-HUNT.

Brook. Almost everyone does.” The next time. Hah. Beauty always promises a return. The young always assume they'll see you again.

The young. At twenty-two she married Andy Roddick, the only appealing American tennis player with gonads. Young, right? She was then merely a swimsuit model and may in fact be only that now: known for her frame, for her confident carriage in body paint, for the slope of the back of her legs, for eyes that issue the command *Get over here*. And the breasts, ah, yes, always the breasts. It'd be foolish, and a little dishonest, to mention her history of swimsuit modeling, to allude to the *Sports Illustrated* cover and to the myriad catalogs of her image on the Internet without mentioning her breasts.



They are not much evident tonight, here in the kitchen. She plays smaller in her own space, in a sweater and jeans like a lonely college girl, the kind who keeps her body a secret. But there they are. Have a look. She does not mind—she can't. Fill in your own simile. Just don't make her less than her whole in so doing.

Brooklyn Decker's sum of the whole of Brooklyn Decker? So far there's very little, nothing lasting. Photo shoots don't accrue in the inventory of experience; they pass by until you don't notice them. She sees it this way: She is twenty-three, just starting out. "I feel for you," she says. "I really do. People are going to come up to you and say, 'What did she do for you?'"

**BROOKLYN LOOKS
RIGHT AT ME THEN.
SHE CAN ESTABLISH—
AND HOLD—A GAZE
WITHOUT MUCH
EFFORT.**



Super Capacity
Direct Drive System
Quiet Operation
WASHCARE

• spin
SPIN
SOIL LEVEL
POWER

"No, they won't."

"Oh, please! And I'm a model. Okay? What are you going to talk about?" Here she jams a piece of bread in one side of her mouth and affects a deep, slippery Scooby-Doo kind of male voice, pinching one eye, whistling the words in mock seriousness: "*How does it feel to get your hair and makeup done every day? How does it feel to be Photoshopped?*"

It's supposed to be me, or Jimmy Cagney playing me.

"It's difficult for you," she says, plucking an avocado from the grocery bag. We are early in the evening here—not one leaf of lettuce has been broken, not an onion chopped. "I'm not a politician. I'm a model. I'm not sure what I bring to the table for you."

"First off, you say 'model.' Aren't you a model and an actress?"

She raises one shoulder in an incomprehensibly loose, over-yogaed shrug.

"Well, come on. How cheesy does that sound? I can't say 'actress' unless someone says I'm halfway decent at it."

Having just come from the screening of her new movie, the Adam Sandler phone-it-in wonder *Just Go with It*, I can declare this: "You are halfway decent at it." I'm not lying, either. Exactly halfway, at this point.

"Thank you."

And here, let me say: When a beautiful woman thanks you, voice all low with modest surprise and whispering tonal modulation, it gets a man past a lot of impossibility. For a minute, it seems as though she might really value the sentiment, which ups the ante on whatever is said next. What I do is I start talking—explaining and over-explaining what I thought of the rough cut of the film I just saw, as if my opinion mattered. About there, Brooklyn Decker starts the cutting of the avocado. She listens.

"The problem is, your character is likable and the people in the movie treat her in the most unethical way. They just kind of use her."

Brooklyn looks right at me then. She can establish—and hold—a gaze without much effort. "So you hurt for her then?"

Not exactly. She was being conned. But I find myself nodding. My obligations to her beauty have become overwhelming. "Yeah."

"That means I did a good job, right?"

"Good job" is something you tell a kid at soccer practice. And rhetorical questions, asked by a woman whose hair is the kind of blond that feels like the mother of everything blond, are generally not worth answering. But yes, good job, for what that's worth. She plays a teacher, one who inexplicably dresses like a schoolgirl and somehow falls for Sandler's muttering, closed-down, early-forties resignation routine. Brooklyn Decker: funny, unobligated, young. Right in there amongst Aniston, Kidman, and Sandler, each desperately tit-twisting the hell out of every laugh, Decker plays an honest-to-God clueless straight man. It's a kind of good job, for sure. A first step, anyway. Add to that the fact that toward the end of the movie, she walks up out of the surf, *rises* from the surf, a towering monolith of slow-motioned, bikinied grace. Gratuitous, sure. But that really doesn't hurt the case: good job.

ood job with the chicken! The process is clear and she is steady. She cooks this—chicken swaddled in leaves of cured pork—for Roddick, too. She works the skinless breasts in her hands till they are cylindrical, then finger-pinches the fat away, patiently rubs the spices (different areas of the flesh have different needs, it seems) as if she knew what formulation her guest needed. Her guest babbles as she works. He cannot stop talking. She invites this much, claims she wants to hear opinion, to understand experience. I have to admit it feels like a gift, like she's beckoning me to bulldoze the night with my own stories, to fill my own recorder with stories I've heard myself tell a thousand times.

It is a kind of seduction, I suppose. She must know that beautiful women have always made men pour forth the dopey war stories of work and travel. Men speak to beauty, maybe too much, and Brooklyn Decker creates a little room for that. But she isn't playing. She's being pragmatic, not manipulative; it's so she can work—check the oven temperature, wash and dry the two plates that live in her cabinets, top off the wine, check the music. At one point, needing more light on the cooking surface, she walks, palms up—as they are slathered with raw poultry—to the doorway and kicks the light switch with one pendulum swing of her glorious leg. A movement so easy, so thoughtless and accurate, that it says one thing clearly: The woman is young. She doesn't remark on it, making the acrobatics a domestic gesture—easy, sweet, comforting. When she stands by the door, it feels as if she'll never leave, though she's standing next to a bag of her clothes. She sees it and laughs. "I should have never shown you that," she says. "The bag on the floor makes me look bad, doesn't it?"

That's what she'd said earlier, in the hallway, before she unlocked the door, groceries bedangled from one gloved hand, keys pointing from the other: "Oh, man. The bag is right there on the floor. Right inside the door. That fact alone will reveal everything. You'll see that I'm not all that good an adult yet. Remember, I dropped everything for you. This will prove it," she'd said, turning the keys in the lock. "And you'll think I'm a slob."

She's a slob. Not the foul kind, not the scary hoarder kind. She's the careless kind, a drop-your-bag-on-the-floor-and-live-out-of-it slob. The young slob at rest, hiding nothing with the habit, hurting no one. She just returned from a movie shoot (*Battleship*) in Texas and is on her way to more filming in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She's just checking in—returning the way a kid does, flopping her zippered duffel inside left of the front door, yanking it open to pull just one item from the guts of it. Bra straps, T-shirts piled on a couple pairs of jeans, little fists of underwear beneath that—it's a snapshot of a cozy mess,



private as the top dresser drawer of a person with nothing to stash, dropped and splayed open on faith. She gives it a kick as she walks past to hit the light. That Brooklyn Decker leaves her bag open, that her underwear remains somewhat visible all the while she cooks dinner, is undeniably prurient to note and inexplicably cool to observe.

On the bookshelf: a set of framed photos. Brooklyn Decker with her crew from home, pressed shoulder to shoulder, all five of them in a chin-lifted *woot!* to the world. "That's really me," she says. "These are my best friends. That's who I am." She nods at a photo of Roddick, standing near an arena exit with another man, seemingly out of earshot of anything like a *woot*. "This is my husband," she says. Then she laughs. "Look, I'm with sorority girls, and look at him: He's with, I don't know, Woody Allen, or the Dalai Lama."

I lean in for a look. "Is that Woody Allen?"

She turns away. She was illustrating a point. "Or Shaq. I don't know. He meets people. He's one of those people, you know?"

She's walking away, drawing me with her. So much so that I fail to note whom Roddick is standing with in the photo. Not Shaq is all I can tell you. That's what I put in my notes later that evening: "Not Shaq." Such is the extent of my due diligence with her in the room. I do recall there was an unstrung tennis racket lying flat on the couch. Otherwise, I follow.

The chicken cooks, under the broiler now. She wants to teach me her tricks, which she says aren't hers at all.

"Nicole Kidman taught me how to look into the sun while shooting." Brooklyn lays her hands flat on the counter. If this is some mock seriousness, I cannot tell. "You close your eyes," she says. She does this much and waits. After a moment, she opens her eyes for a quizzical look at me. "Close them." She means my eyes. She's teaching now. We're supposed to be looking into the sun, though I am looking straight at her face.

She talks to me like a Pilates instructor: "Keep them closed, face the sun. Straight at it. Then, as soon as they call 'rolling,' right before 'action,' take your eyes down to the camera, line up your sight, and then open them." She's speaking to me. "Open them," she says. "Really. Do it." When I open my eyes, I find that she is leaning in a little, over the kitchen counter, arms folded under her breasts, smiling. "Open them like that," she says, "and the dark of the camera should help your eyes adjust." She is about two feet from my craggy face, staring right into my crusty, bloodshot eyes, smiling. There is no camera. And she's right. My eyes adjust just fine, thanks.

She refills my wine. She wants to know if I like it.

"I'm not a wine person," I say. "I'm a whiskey person."

She looks around, behind her, then past me, as if trying to remember where things are. She's not a drinker, and she hasn't been home in a month. She and Roddick have a house in Texas, outside Austin. That is where she keeps her bulldog, she's told me. There are several pictures of the bulldog on the shelf next to the one of Roddick and Not Shaq.

"All we have is vodka," she says. There is a long pause, after which she fusses with the stove again.

"You want a drink?" I ask finally.

"I don't want any," she declares, just as plaintive and confident as a child who doesn't like the parsnips. No way. No apology. No offer



for me to go ahead without her. Somehow it's charming.

Ask Brooklyn Decker what she knows, and she will laugh and winnow it down to very little. Like this one way to cook chicken. That's something. But what about an essay question, something like: "What do you know about men?" I ask it when she serves the chicken, which looks pretty damned good, if a little spartan by itself on the plate. It's hot to the touch. Hot as hell.

She thinks it over. "Men need to learn to put everything on the table," she says. "Just put everything on the table. And when it comes to the game playing, enough."

But.

"I know. It doesn't sound like anything real. You're dealing with a college kid. I feel for you." She cuts into the chicken, forks up a biteful, and thinks. "With females," she says, then she starts again. "With women, when you're in your twenties, it's all about game playing. Men could get ahead of women if they'd just throw everything out on the table. Cut to the chase."

The chicken is in my mouth. Too hot to eat, really. "What the—"



To see an exclusive video of Brooklyn Decker, go to esquire.com/brooklyn-video.



I say, taking a mouthful of wine, shaking my head. "What is that supposed to mean?" I want to halt her progress up the platitude trail. So I point a fork and say, "That just sounds like total horseshit."

She laughs, full out and hard, covering her mouth with one hand, spitting bits of chicken into her palm. "Try to be a little specific," I say. "Start with young guys maybe. What do you know about them?"

She's chewing her food, smiling. She looks up, out of the corner of her eye. "In their twenties men just want, want, want, want, want." She puts a little salad on her plate with the chicken, just one leaf. "Don't make everybody deal with your want all the time. It gets so old. You know?"

I know. I do. She makes a good point.

"I don't want to change anybody," she tells me. "But there is that."

We eat for a while. What about a guy who's Roddick's age? I ask. Past twenty-five. What's the issue then?

"After twenty-five," she says, "it's just throw the ego out the door."

Then she glances from my eyes to my plate theatrically, emanating a little alarm. She chipmunks a bite in her cheek and Cagneys out another couple of questions: "So what's it like eating the model's

chicken? That work for you?"

Stupid me. So rude. "Why, yes," I say, trying to put an exclamation point on every word. "It does. *Really.*"

This seems a comfort to her. And she says it again: "Thank you," low and sweet and in that way that says, *I hear you*. It's a thank-you worth hearing. "You can tell me the truth," she says, "but thank you."

"Thank you," I say, making a big show out of the next bite. "And, really, I am telling you the truth."

But it isn't the truth. The chicken was good when it came out of the oven. Just fine, juicy—piquant, even. Nice touch with the prosciutto, Brooklyn. But it was too hot, and so, when opened up by the knife, the meat dried out immediately. The salad couldn't save it. By the time she asked, the chicken really was quite a chore.

No matter. A young cook's mistake. She's just starting out. I would have called it halfway decent. Exactly that. In fact, I wish I had. Not to disappoint her, but because I'm certain that it would have made her laugh. I think she might have even thanked me one more time. ■



→ PRES

What a time. The century begins its second decade with our nation poorer, less certain, but also less cocky than it began the first. Our federal government is starting over, trying change again, now with a chastened president and a divided and maybe a bit frightened Congress. NBC is starting over under Comcast. The Miami Heat are trying to restart their new start. *American Idol* is so unbroken, it's changing just about everything. And we at this magazine, getting all into that changey-hopey thing, have ripped up how we start an issue (see pages 20 to 46) and invited some of the world's most imaginative designers to take a shot at reinterpreting our own iconic logo (page 74). In fact, as this new era begins, we have decided to devote this issue, in the pages that follow, to the topic of redoing and starting over, to the subjects and objects and agents of change and reengineering that are defining (or redefining) our time.

TART

THE REENGINEERS

BY TOM CHIARELLA

REENGINEERING IS ABOUT SURPRISE, emergence, and reemergence. Think **JOSH HAMILTON**, of the American League champion Texas Rangers. Several years ago, he ripped asunder his athletic gift in trailers and on couches up and down the East Coast. He reengineered—self, being, game—and became a smiling, slider-hammering MVP by rousting his own set of self-destructive needs.

Or **REED HASTINGS**, CEO of Netflix, making cable obsolete in a living room near you. Or **NICK DENTON**, the Gawker Media creator who celebrates the lowbrow, shunts Web traffic to public lynchings, craves trouble, banks on gossip, and deconstructs the privacy of anyone with a public identity. What he's really reengineering is America, by making us even more tawdry.

Take **VICTORIA COX**, an FAA official who has treated the implementation of NextGen, the GPS-driven overhaul of the nation's antiquated air-traffic-control system, as her personal passion play. With trial runs out of the way, it's closer than ever, promising more flights flying closer together on shorter, safer, and more efficient routes.

Of course, sometimes the reengineer is the product itself. **KANYE WEST**, with the strong mother—the bug-eyed crazy one—might just be trapped in the briar patch of his own narcissism, but he keeps the music moving forward. Always better than we have a right to expect. **MARK WAHLBERG** did it by figuring out how to box for real. And **MICHELLE WILLIAMS**, outliving the spectacle of Heath Ledger's overdose, refigured a path to be the actress who gets the roles many claim aren't out there for women. (Read: the ones other actresses are too afraid of.)

CHRIS CHRISTIE, now there's a reengineer. The overweight governor of New Jersey? Winner of the Virginia Tea Party's straw poll for 2012? The Republican who works well with Newark mayor and Democratic lightning rod—and reengineer Hall of Famer—**CORY BOOKER**? Yes, him.

Difference makers. More of them on page 85. And the guy on the following page, who has changed the meaning and power of what used to be called the news...



WHY DOES ROGER AILES HATE AMERICA?

BY TOM JUNOD

An exclusive and unbiased investigation into the highly paid operative of a foreign-born tycoon, a man who reengineered political and media culture and fomented a revolt that threatens the very stability of our country

ILLUSTRATION BY THOMAS POROSTOCKY

TODAY, HERE AT ESQUIRE—AND ONLY

at Esquire, because only Esquire has the *guts* to tell you this story—we're going to tell you about a man you need to know a little better, maybe a *lot* better: a man named Roger Ailes. Maybe you've heard of Mr. Ailes. As the chairman and CEO of a well financed and admittedly antigovernment organization called Fox News, he made a reported \$23 million in 2009, which, to do the math, was not just more money than you earned, it was more money than everyone *related* to you earned, combined, even if you count the sudden windfall that came your aunt Ida's way after she got five out of six in Powerball. Nice work if you can get it, Mr. Ailes—especially when that “work” consisted of nothing but advancing your own agenda at the expense of the president of the United States of America during a time of war. But that \$23 million, outrageous as it sounds, is chump change next to the almost \$1 billion in profits that Fox News—and even Mr. Ailes's most ardent defenders admit that he *is* Fox News—earned Ailes's foreign-born boss, Rupert Murdoch, aka “Koala Kong,” in honor of the Australian heritage he long ago rejected in favor of more convenient American citizenship. So yes, you might have *heard* of Roger Eugene Ailes, because you read the newspapers, you read books, you stay informed (despite what members in good standing of the East Coast media elite like, well,

And we're not going to call you fat, either. Or bald. Or old. First of all, Esquire is completely unbiased, and beholden to no agendas. Second, we're not going to call you any names. We're not going to hurt your feelings, because in our extensive and exclusive investigation, we've found that you actually have them. You're a sensitive guy, Mr. Ailes. You're vulnerable. Indeed, for a guy who attributes his power to the power of not caring what people think about him, you really care what people think about you. You even care what *bloggers* think about you. You not only read the blog posts that your wife sends you, you remember what they say. And so, when you yourself are accused of unfairness, you'll say, “Well, the Huffington Post says I'm a J. Edgar Hoover look-alike with a face like a clenched fist. Keith Olbermann calls me the worst person in the world. How is that fair?” And then you go out and crush them.

You are particularly sensitive about your weight. “It's not that I eat too much,” you say. “It's that I can't move.” Is this just another example of the “Ailes spin”? It is not. In the course of its exclusive, intensive, and above all unbiased investigation, Esquire has learned many surprising things about Roger Ailes. One is that he claims to have discovered the openly socialist folksinger Buffy Sainte-Marie. Another

HE KNOWS WHY FOX SUCCEEDS AND OTHER NETWORKS DON'T: BECAUSE “I'M NOT TRYING TO BE ANYONE. YOU

oh, like Roger Ailes might say about you), but how much do you really *know* about him? For forty years, he has stood astride the intertwined worlds of media and politics like a veritable colossus, making sure the worlds of media and politics *stay* intertwined, the better to control them. He has used his considerable powers of persuasion to persuade us to elect presidents, and, if they're not following the “Ailes Agenda,” to turn against them. At seventy years of age, when most hardworking American seniors have had enough of the rat race and are looking forward to spending some more quality time with the grandkids, Roger Ailes is at the height, perhaps the apogee, maybe even—some say—the very *zenith* of his power. Indeed, with most of the potential Republican candidates for president in 2012 on his payroll, he may be said to be just getting started. *Hmmm*. Maybe we don't know this Roger Ailes as well as we think we do. Maybe we don't know him very well at all, which is, of course, just the way he likes it.

Until now.

“I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO write about me,” Roger Ailes says. “I can pretty much pick the words for you. *Paranoid, right-wing, fat*. I love that. I'm the only guy in America who's fat.”

No, Mr. Ailes, you're wrong. You're not the only fat man in America.

is that his body has been wrecked by arthritis. The man who has challenged the world to a fight turns out to be a man who can't, by his own admission, walk two city blocks. Even in his office, he's too stiff to unwrinkle himself, walks like he's learning to ice-skate, wears rubber-soled shoes, props up his feet on the nearest low table as soon as he sits down, bites his lower lip when he's in pain (or angry), strains and sweats, loosens his tie and unbuttons his collar, wears a tie bar, pops breath mints, and is supposed to be proud of his arms, which look like cinder blocks under his wrinkled suit jacket. He has thin lips, a long nose, hair that curls over his collar, and small hands and feet, all of which conspire to give his appearance a certain aristocratic delicacy, as if his bulk were not earned but rather imposed. His eyes are gray, and, because they are framed by extensive and almost geological gray circles, often look black. They are the only things about his physical presence that are true to his reputation for menace.

So no, Mr. Ailes: We're not going to call you fat. But paranoid? You have seven TV screens in your office. Six are on your wall and allow you to watch what's being broadcast by Fox or its competitors. The seventh is on your desk, and the screen on your desk shows nothing but the live feed from the security cameras in your building. Beyond that, your private-security apparatus is both extensive and expensive, and your office itself is a study in contrasts. On the one hand,



Paranoid? Mr. Ailes has seven monitors in his office—six showing news and one on his desk showing the feed from the security cameras outside his office.

KNOW WHY OTHER [NEWS] EXECUTIVES ALWAYS HIRE PHONIES? BECAUSE THEY'RE PHONIES. THEY LIKE PHONIES."

you sit at the very heart of the world that you have made—a world of information and power, of information *as* power—and all you have to do to reach virtually any of the world's most powerful people is pick up a phone. On the other, you communicate by means so personal and old-fashioned, they would make Tony Soprano comfortable. Your door opens, and your assistant approaches, her arm extended and her fingertips bracketing a yellow Post-it note. You read the note and nod; she leaves. "Rupert," you say, indicating that your down-under overlord is waiting outside. "He comes down here a lot, because I'm the only one of his executives who's not crawling up his leg."

NOW, WHEN YOU TALK to Roger Ailes, he will inevitably tell you a few things. One is that he's a simple man. Another is that he's from Warren, Ohio. Another is that he owes his success to the fact that he's a simple man from Warren, Ohio. Another is that he knows *you*—the American viewer. Another is that he knows you because he is *like* you—"an average guy from flyover country." And yet another is that because he is like you, he *likes* you, and thinks that America is a "pretty good country" that we ought to think twice about blaming for the world's problems.

Okay, Mr. Ailes, we get it. You don't have to tell *Esquire* that America is the greatest country in the world. And there's no doubt you have a talent for giving American audiences television news that they want to watch. But if you're such an average guy, can you please tell us what happened to your BlackBerry?

Oh, you don't have one, do you?

We didn't *think* so.

Of course, a lot of average Americans do have BlackBerrys, or something like them—"smartphones," they're called. And a lot of Americans can be depended upon to handle their BlackBerrys responsibly, to be "smart" with their "smartphones." Not Roger Ailes. For Roger Ailes, having a BlackBerry was a very big deal—or, to be more precise, a very small one. You see, while most of us average Americans are very happy with our BlackBerrys, our iPhones, and our Androids—happy for the chance to stay "connected" with our loved ones when we're out there trying to make ends meet—Roger Ailes was not. Roger Ailes admits that he thought his BlackBerry was too... *small* for a man of his size and stature. Roger Ailes thought that *his* BlackBerry made him look... ridiculous. Indeed, when Roger Ailes sees one of his few peers in the rarefied world of media, business, or politics using a BlackBerry, he tells him to... get rid of it, adding, "You have executives for that." Thanks, Mr. Ailes. Thanks for the tip. The

next time one of our readers uses his BlackBerry to receive a photograph of his daughter in the school play he had to miss because he's out there making ends meet, we'll remind him: "You have executives for that." And we'll remind him of the reason that you gave us for giving up your BlackBerry in the first place: You don't get paid to think about some little device you have to work with your thumbs. You get paid to think about *winning*. And that's what you spend all day doing at Fox News: "thinking of ways to win."

But the story of Roger Ailes's BlackBerry doesn't end there, with his admission that he is an obsessively competitive man. Esquire has found out—from Roger Ailes himself—that he didn't give up his BlackBerry simply because it was beneath him. No, he lost it because he wasn't *above* it—wasn't above the temptation to use it to get into fights with average Americans. Is Roger Ailes, as he likes to think of himself, a "perfect target"? To be fair—and Esquire strives to be never less than fair—he is. Of course he is: He's one of the most powerful media executives in the history of the world, if not the universe. People are going to come at him, and they might write him an intemperate e-mail once in a while. But think of it: You're Roger Ailes, one of the most powerful media executives in the history of the world, if not the universe. Your BlackBerry "pings" you with an intemperate e-mail from one of your fellow Americans, telling you that he's going to catch a plane from the heartland of our great homeland so he can find you among the rich and powerful there in New York City and kick your big Aeron-seated posterior. Would you answer him? Probably not—you would probably figure that the fellow had a bad day trying to make ends meet and leave it at that. Would you threaten the fellow back? Would you tell your fellow American that if he buys a ticket to New York City and tries to come up to see you at your well-guarded domicile in midtown Manhattan—and here we quote—"he shouldn't bother buying a return ticket because he'll never make it back home"? No, you wouldn't, because you're an American, and Americans don't threaten other Americans exercising the sacred right of free speech, no matter how intemperate they might be. But Roger Ailes would. Roger Ailes did. He did it time and again, fighting fire with fire, intemperately answering every intemperate e-mail that came his way with no insult or complaint beneath his notice, until his public-relations staff, fearing that the Ailesian e-mails might become public and that their boss was having too much fun, concluded that maybe giving a man like *Roger Ailes* a BlackBerry wasn't such a good idea after all.

SO WHO IS THIS... ROGER AILES,

if he's not who he says he is—if he's not an average American? Well, the short answer is this: He is not only a man who has spent his entire life thinking of ways to win; he is a man who has spent his entire life winning. Nothing

wrong with that, of course: America loves a winner. But let's be honest here: We're all average Americans. Does any of us *win* all the time? Of course not, or else we wouldn't be average. But Roger Ailes does. And so, Mr. Ailes, Esquire has a question, on behalf of other average Americans: What kind of man wins *all the time*? What kind of man gives his country, in roughly this order, Mike Douglas, Richard Nixon, Tom Snyder, Ronald Reagan's "Morning in America," the Willie Horton ad, the ad in which Michael Dukakis rides around in a tank and looks like a chipmunk, the presidency of George H. W. Bush, CNBC,

Fox News (upstart-insurgent edition), Fox News (airwaves-of-the-empire edition), Fox News ("Obama sux" edition), and Fox News (Tea Party edition)? More pointedly, what kind of man figures out at age twenty-seven how to use television to legitimize Richard Nixon and then at age seventy to legitimize Sarah Palin?

Wait. You didn't know that it was Roger Ailes who gave us Richard Nixon? Well, he did. And, more important, Richard Nixon gave America Roger Ailes. Put it this way: When Richard Nixon met Roger Ailes in 1967, Nixon was still the sweaty, shifty-eyed, self-pitying, petulant, paranoid perpetual candidate whom Americans instinctively mistrusted. And Roger Ailes was still the prodigy who'd started with *The Mike Douglas Show*—the first nationally syndicated daytime television talk show—when he was right out of Ohio University and was executive producer by the time he was twenty-five. Roger Ailes was still a card-carrying member of the notoriously liberal entertainment industry, still a guy who liked to go to clubs and listen to "folksingers" such as José Feliciano and Buffy Sainte-Marie and then put them on television, so American housewives could have their consciousness raised and realize that they hated their husbands. And it was as

entertainment that Roger Ailes booked Richard Nixon on *The Mike Douglas Show*, along with "Little Egypt," a burlesque star who raised more than consciousnesses... and who made American husbands realize that they hated their wives. Well, as Mr. Ailes tells it, even admitted pornographers have some scruples, so instead of making Richard Nixon wait in the same greenroom as Little Egypt, he asked the candidate back to

his office. "It's a shame a man has to use gimmicks like this to get elected," Mr. Nixon is supposed to have remarked to Mr. Ailes. "Television is not a gimmick, and if you think it is, you'll lose again," Mr. Ailes is supposed to have remarked to Mr. Nixon. And there the modern conservative movement—not the ideological entity but the telegenic one—was born.

You see, when Richard met Roger, it was not just a meeting of men; it was a meeting of need. It was a meeting of what Roger Ailes calls "stuff." As in: "If Richard Nixon was alive today, he'd be on the couch with Oprah, talking about how he was poor, his brother died,



Even in high school, Ailes mocked government, as above in a statewide competition. He also pretended to be people he was not, as in his senior play.



his mother didn't love him, and his father beat the shit out of him. And everybody would say, Oh, poor guy, he's doing the best he can. See, every human being has stuff—stuff they have to carry around, stuff they have to deal with. And Richard Nixon had a lot of stuff. He did the best he could with it, but it got him in the end. Still, he did a lot of good things as president.” Yes, Roger Ailes is instinctively alert to people's stuff—perhaps because he's as surprisingly empathetic as he is sensitive, and perhaps because it allows him an all-important sense of advantage. But is he aware of his own? He began working for Richard Nixon a few months after he met him on the show. He began working to get Richard Nixon elected “by television,” as he says, instead of in spite of it. He disavows his political commitment to Nixon by saying that he never worked in the White House and was more interested in the political potential of TV than he was in politics itself—“I wasn't worried about the message. I was worried about the backlighting.” And a year later Richard Nixon was still sweaty, still shifty-eyed, still petulant, still paranoid, and still instinctively mistrusted by most Americans. The only difference was that thanks to Roger Ailes, he was president.

As for Mr. Ailes, he was free to pursue what he was really interested in: raw power. But it was a new kind of power, based on the insight that came to him through his own “stuff.” Before the arrival of Roger Ailes, television was thought to be a unifying medium—the “electronic hearth.” Mr. Ailes knew better. Mr. Ailes knew that it was the fire itself. Mr. Ailes knew that the television screen in each American home was nothing less than a battleground, and he who controlled it controlled America, no matter what the message. He didn't even have to be overtly political, because television was by definition a political medium. Roger Ailes could win... if the idea of a unified America lost. He could win... if his own subversive vision of America was realized. He could win... if American life became an endless, entrenched, and above all electronic argument. And you know what?

He did win.

Did you hear that, Mr. Ailes?

You won.

We surrender.

We concede.

You're absolutely right when you say that the nature of your achievement isn't political, because you've done nothing less than change the game... the conversation... the very nature of public discourse in these, the United States of America. Politics? For a man like you, politics are just a way of *keeping score*. And so, as a measure of your triumph, we ask only the question that you would ask of a man as radical, as subversive, as much of a mischief-making provocateur as yourself. On Fox News, your reporters and opinionists would never simply ask if you hate America. They would never give you that chance. And so, as the only suitable tribute to how much you've changed us, we can only ask the question as you would ask it:

Why does Roger Ailes hate America?



Conspiring with Nixon (1969); enslaved by the styles of the times (1971); and prepping President Bush to beg foreigners to immigrate to America (1990).



OKAY, COME TO THINK OF IT, there was one time Roger Ailes lost. Of course, he was a good sport about it, no big deal, all's fair in love and war and the rarefied world of the media elites.

Just kidding.

No, Mr. Ailes wasn't a good loser. Was he the kid who loses and takes his marbles home? Well, not exactly. More like the kid who takes his marbles, sells them to Russian spies, then works with the Russian government to deliver a thermonuclear device straight to your house.

In this case, though, it wasn't the Russians who were interested in what Mr. Ailes was selling. It was the Australian oligarch Rupert Murdoch. Talk about stuff meeting stuff! On the one hand: the cunning antipodean entrepreneur who is to “global domination” as Tiger Woods is to “be sure to tip your waitress.” On the other: Roger Ailes, who had just lost out to the very media elite he'd always despised and distrusted.

This was 1996, almost thirty years after Roger Ailes helped Richard Nixon win the presidency. He was fifty-five and undergoing a midlife crisis. He was at NBC, where he had turned CNBC from a news channel into a highly successful talk-show circus, complete with dancing bears (and bulls), and where he had an unsuccessful channel of televised talk shows called *America's Talking*. (Name of one of the shows he programmed: *Am I Nuts?*)

Now NBC was planning to turn *America's Talking* into MSNBC, a twenty-four-hour news channel to compete with CNN. MSNBC? With characteristic delicacy, Ailes told NBC News that it “sounded like a disease.” But still he wanted it. Oh, how he wanted it. See, he had some ideas about cable. NBC was thinking along the lines of extending its network news to cable—all Brokaw, all the time. Roger Ailes was thinking more along the lines of “divide and conquer.” What Mr.

Ailes understood about the political nature of television back in 1968 he would be able to put into practice on cable television thirty years later. “Roger got cable,” says Phil Griffin, the president of MSNBC. “Everybody else learned it, studying Roger. Well, maybe not CNN. CNN still doesn’t get it. But Roger got it from day one.”

What did he get? Well, he got what he was temperamentally equipped to get: that cable news would be different from broadcast news. That cable news didn’t have to please all Americans. That a committed audience was better than a broad one. And that the best audience of all was one you had all to yourself—one that had not only been ignored, but one that *felt* ignored.

He pitched that idea to NBC.

NBC’s answer: “Are you nuts?”

So he quit, and he called Rupert Murdoch. The cunning international media tycoon asked him the question that would come to define Fox News, and so our era: “Can you build me a network that can beat CNN?”

Listen again, folks: *beat* CNN, an American company. Not “compete with.” And certainly not “play nice with.”

Beat.

And this is what Roger Ailes remembers answering: “Yes, if you take away whoever stands in the way of my complete control and get me distribution. I can beat CNN because CNN has never had any competition and won’t know what to do. And MSNBC will ignore me, because they’re arrogant. And if they ignore me for two years, I’ll destroy them.”

So Roger Ailes began studying CNN. Studying the screen, searching for weaknesses.

He found two: Boring. Biased.

He took out a notepad and wrote, “Fair and balanced” and “We report. You decide.”

And here we are today, boys and girls. It’s Mr. Ailes’s world. We just get spun in it. Is Fox News “fair and balanced”? Doesn’t matter. Because fair and balanced is not a description of Fox News; it’s an attack on everyone else. And what really makes Fox News dif-



Ailes's weakness for older, powerful men and younger, aggressive women is not only well-known but is much remarked upon.

instead of three million:

American jobs.

Pretty clever, Mr. Ailes. You win again. You must be proud of yourself. We wonder if you’ll still be proud when you do the math and figure out what was lost when you did an entire ad campaign for fifteen hundred clams

THERE’S A PROFESSOR AT THE

Columbia University School of Journalism by the name of Dick Wald. Yeah, yeah, we know—Roger Ailes doesn’t give a CNN ratings share about what some professor at Columbia journalism school has to say. Indeed, whenever he’s asked what qualifies him to be the head of a major television-news network, he gives the same answer: “I dug ditches for a living, there are no parties that I want to go to, and I didn’t go to Columbia journalism school.” But Professor Wald is no mere *don*, no mere pointy-headed practitioner of the liberal arts. He used to be the president of NBC News. He *likes* Roger Ailes. And if you ask him the secret of Mr. Ailes’s success, he’ll say it’s pretty simple: “Roger, in many ways, is just more compe-

tent. He just does it better. The anchors are better. The crispness of the reporting is better. The anchors don’t interrupt, the shows move along, and the point of view is clear. It’s just a good product. Roger found an area in which he could reach each audience member individually. That’s the big difference between Fox and CNN.”

Then he adds this, about the difficulty of taking on Roger Ailes: “You can’t beat Roger fighting on territory he’s left behind.”

Pretty astute for a professor. Indeed, it might be the most astute thing Esquire’s ever heard on the subject of Mr. Ailes, because it explains why he drives his opponents absolutely nuts. The pundits, the professors, the professional journalists, the left-wingers, the tree huggers, the liberal blogosphere, President Obama—they all keep trying to catch him on violations of rules that they follow and he doesn’t.

HE UNDERSTANDS PRESIDENT OBAMA: “WELL, MAYBE IF YOUR FATHER LEFT YOU WHEN YOU WERE TWO,

ferent from other respectable news organizations is that its original charge, from the Emperor of the Outback, was neither “report” nor even “decide.” It was “win.”

“Well, winning is a lot more interesting than the other alternative,” Mr. Ailes said recently, when asked by Esquire to justify his consuming need to win at every turn, damn the consequences. Oh, come on, Mr. Ailes. Esquire has no ax to grind and will bend over backward to give you a fair shake. But you know as well as we do: That’s just spin. You told us yourself: You just can’t help yourself. You told us yourself that when you saw MSNBC’s new advertising campaign, *Lean Forward*, you said, “Lean? They paid Spike Lee \$3 million for ‘Lean’? What kind of word is that? Isn’t that their problem—that they’re *leaning*? Didn’t anybody say, What about ‘move’?”

And so once again, you took out your pad, wrote down “*Move Forward*,” and in four hours had your own campaign on the air for \$1,500.

“Frankly, Roger doesn’t give a shit,” says an associate. “He just doesn’t have the governor that other media executives have. He does things they would never do, says things they would never say.”

And recently Roger Ailes gave us a demonstration of precisely what the associate—and Professor Wald—might mean.

It was Veteran’s Day, and he was watching TV in his office on the second floor of the News Corp. building in New York City. He does a lot of that. Yes, that’s right: Roger Ailes likes to watch. He watches TV, he studies TV, mostly with the sound off, so that he can observe one of the rules he does follow—if someone’s doing something to make you turn the sound *on*, then they’re doing something interesting. On a wall in his office, there are screens broadcasting Fox News and Fox Business Network, as well as CNN, HLN, MSNBC, and CNBC. He watches them all, from the corner of his eye, and if you give him three seconds, he’ll give you the world... a world of criticism for

each one, including his own. That's because he knows how to follow his own eye—show Roger Ailes a television screen, he'll tell you what works, what doesn't, and how to make it better. "I tell my people that if they want to be artists of television, the screen is their canvas, but they have to repaint it every three seconds." Then he said: "Look at all those screens. Where does your eye go?"

You really want to know the truth, Mr. Ailes?

We don't know about you, but Esquire's eye goes to the screen featuring your creamy redhead, Jenna Lee.

Sure, that's a Fox screen, and so you win again. But—if you don't mind our saying so—it didn't exactly require an advanced degree in TV geniusology to see the potential of Ms. Jenna Lee.

Wait—it did? "Well, she didn't look anything like she looks now when she came here. She'd just completed Columbia journalism school, and she wanted to be a *writer*. But I met with her and sent her down to hair and makeup to clean her up a little. When she came back, I took a look at her and said, 'What would you think of going on air?' I had to work with her a little to bring her pitch down, and now she's going to be a big star. And she wanted to be a writer."

So *that's* how it's done—that's how Fox has become the Schwab's drugstore for right-wing mean girls. But if you listen to Mr. Ailes, it's not simply a matter of beauty; it's a matter of authenticity. "Look at the girl over there on HLN. African-American. Attractive, though she needs a haircut. And she doesn't know how to dress—her dress is too busy, look what it's doing to the screen. And they use her too much. But she has an interesting look. Look at the difference between her and the anchor. She's just being herself. She's not trying to do anything. She's just trying to tell him a story. That's interesting. He's trying to be an anchor. He's trying to project authority. It's always more interesting watching people be who they are than it is watching people try to be who they are not.

"Now look at Megyn."

By "Megyn," he means, of course, Fox fox Megyn Kelly, the meanest of the mean girls, the heaving, sumptuous blond with the wide-set eyes, the briskly triangular chin, and the porno sneer she directs at ill-fated liberal guests. Roger Ailes *loves* Megyn Kelly (in a fatherly way, of course): "She's a *host*. For one thing, she's fearless—she'd crawl down a smokestack for a story. But look at the way she moves. She'd move like that if she was arguing at the dinner table. Very natural. O'Reilly's the same way. He's an Irishman who likes to argue. He'd do it anywhere. We just found a way for him to do it on TV."

Now, if you talk to some other network people, they'll tell you that Roger's not exactly the first person to figure out that people would rather look at pretty girls reading the news than plain ones. "Rog-

veteran and the other networks are... well, they're not *even* pro-choice. "They say they're pro-choice. They're proabortion! Some of the talent who come to Fox come here because the other networks *require* them to be proabortion."

Then he told a story of triumph, about wearing a flag pin to an event at New York's Museum of Television & Radio after 9/11 and being accosted by none other than Morley Safer and "that asshole Dick Wald" for giving up his journalistic objectivity. They really got on him, asking how he could possibly be fair and balanced sporting a flag pin, until finally he'd had enough: "'Look,' I said, 'I might be a little squishy about killing babies. But I'm pro-choice about flag pins!'"

O-kay... and so Esquire called Dick Wald afterward for comment. "I remember it a little differently," he said. "We weren't asking whether Roger had a right to wear a flag pin. I would never do that. What we were talking about, if I remember correctly, was whether *anchors* should wear flag pins. I seem to remember something about Roger asking his *anchors* to wear flag pins..."

And then we heard it. Do you? Listen closely. Yes... that's the terrible sound of someone trying to beat Roger Ailes on territory Roger has long ago left behind.

THERE IS A RESTAURANT in New York City called Michael's. If you haven't heard about it, don't worry—you have a life. You're out there trying to make ends meet. You have more important things to worry about than what kind of table you get at Michael's compared with what kind of table your competitor at another network or at another newspaper or another magazine gets. You have more to worry about than your standing amongst the media elite. Because that's who goes to Michael's. It is not the kind of place an average American goes to. It is not even the kind of place an average New Yorker goes to. It is a clubhouse for media people and for only media people—for exactly the people whose contempt Roger Ailes regards as an inspiration and a reward for a job well done.

Does Roger Ailes have a table at Michael's?

Of course he does. He has the best table at Michael's. He goes there for lunch, and this is how one of his guests describes the experience of eating with him: "You'll be sitting at his table at Michael's, and he'll grouse about not getting any respect and being an outsider while everybody is lining up to kiss his ring. And you'll be like, Roger, you're at Michael's, you're at the best table—what more do you want?"

Is Roger Ailes a cynical man? Not at all. He really believes the things he says. He really believes that he is an average American. He really believes that he is looked down upon by those who admire and fear

AND YOUR MOTHER WAS OUT OF YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU WERE TEN, YOU WOULDN'T BE WARM, EITHER."

er's just willing to go further than anyone else," one industry insider says. "He takes the obvious further than anyone else. Everybody else goes halfway, and they wind up looking foolish." Roger, however, has a different take. He is able to hire authentic talent—that is, talent who have the ability to appear authentic in front of a camera—because he himself is authentic. "I'm not trying to be anyone," he says. "You know why other executives always hire phonies? Because they're phonies. They hire phonies because they *like* phonies. They're comfortable with them." It's the same reason they all hire left-wingers—"because they *are* left-wingers.

"Look," he said, "it's Veteran's Day, and we're the only ones doing anything about it. So maybe people like us because we like veterans. Those other networks probably had to have a *meeting* about it. They probably worried that if they were pro-veteran, people would think they were pro-war." See, that's the difference: Fox is pro-

him. He really believes that he is the only man in America who can be called fat with impunity. He really believes that his power is rooted in his disregard for what people think of him. He really believes that he is the only genuine person in the media business. He really believes that Fox is fair and balanced. He really believes that his success has very little to do with politics and very much to do with television. He really believes—despite his subsequent apologies—that the people who fired poor Juan Williams from NPR are Nazis. He really believes that he seeks out liberal voices as ardently as he seeks out conservative ones. He really believes that until his arthritis immobilized him, he could always have gone back to digging ditches for a living. He really believes that despite being immobilized by arthritis, he could handle himself if someone challenged him to a fight, and that whoever comes to New York to fight him shouldn't bother buying a plane ticket home. [continued on page 116]





THE INTELLIGENT MACHINES

+ TRONIC STUDIO

Before founding Tronic in 2001, Vivian Rosenthal and Jesse Seppi studied architecture and learned all about what gravity wouldn't let them do. But at their New York-based design firm, Rosenthal and Seppi combine animation, live-action film, and installation art in ways that defy every law of physics. (Visit tronicstudio.com to see what they've done for GE, Samsung, Target, and other clients.) Their version of the Esquire logo, for example, imagines each of the seven letters as towering intelligent machines, rendered digitally in three dimensions and placed in distinct environments throughout a digital world. In an animation available on esquire.com, the letters come to life, Transformer-like, and find one another to form a complete (and linear) logo. And in a special augmented-reality extension, developed with a Tronic affiliate called GoldRun, each of these letters has been virtually scattered across the country so you can find them with your mobile device and enter for a chance to win a free iPad. Like everything else in the Tronic universe, there's not much this logo can't do.

How to find a letter and win a free iPad: We've selected seven cities in which to place the seven letters of our logo—New York; Los Angeles; San Francisco; Boston; Washington, D.C.; Chicago; and Philadelphia. Make sure you're in one of those cities, and make sure you're using an iPhone. (Otherwise the application won't work.) Now then: Download the free GoldRun application from iTunes and head to one of those cities' most recognizable landmarks. (View the full list of locations at esquire.com.) Activate the GoldRun app, hold up your phone so you can see the landmark and/or its immediate surroundings on the screen, and before long one of the virtual Esquire letters will appear on the screen near the landmark. Snap a picture of it, upload it to esquire.com/scavenger-hunt, and enter for a chance to win a brand-new iPad. See page 119 for sweepstakes rules.



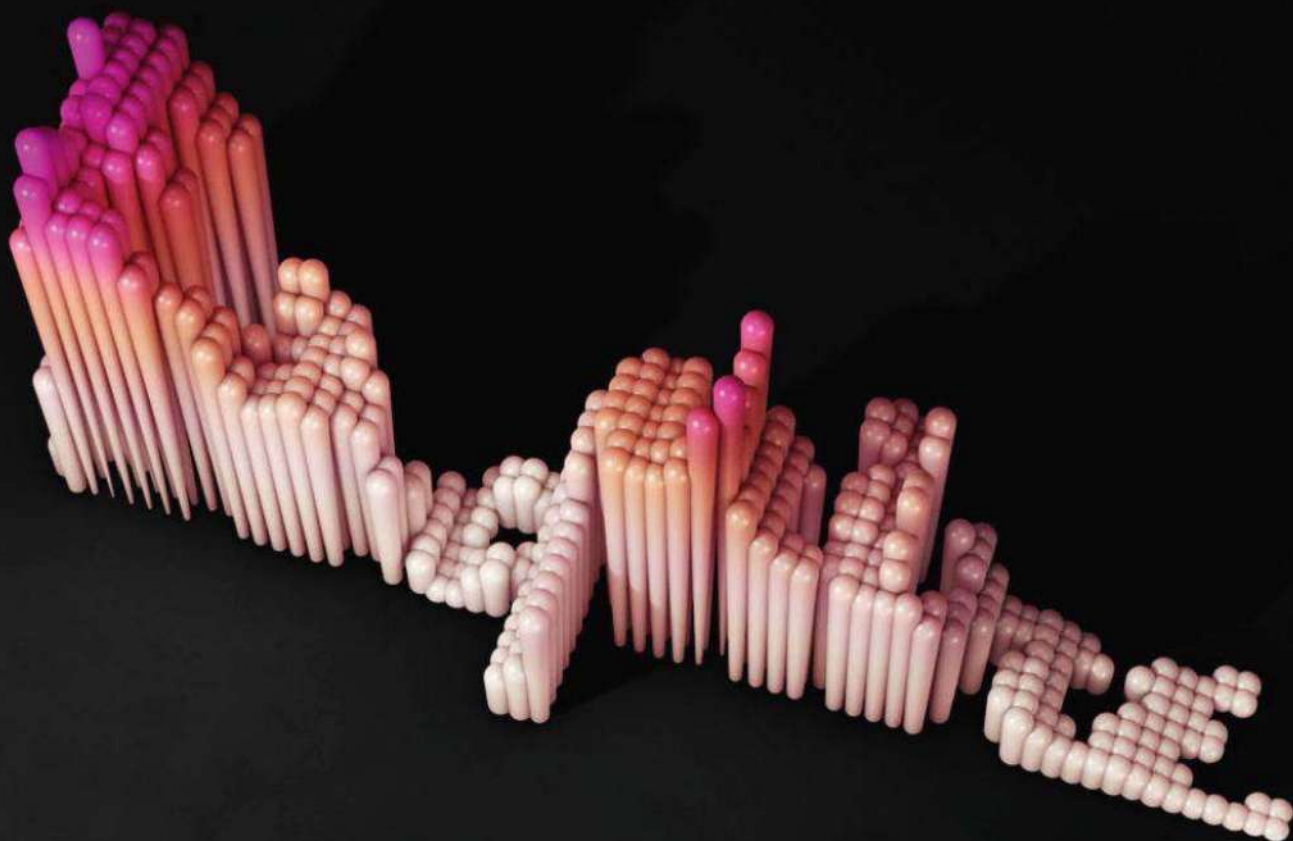
THE LOGO PROJECT

TWELVE OF
TODAY'S MOST
INNOVATIVE
ARTISTS AND
DESIGNERS
REENGINEER
THE ESQUIRE
LOGO FOR THE
TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY

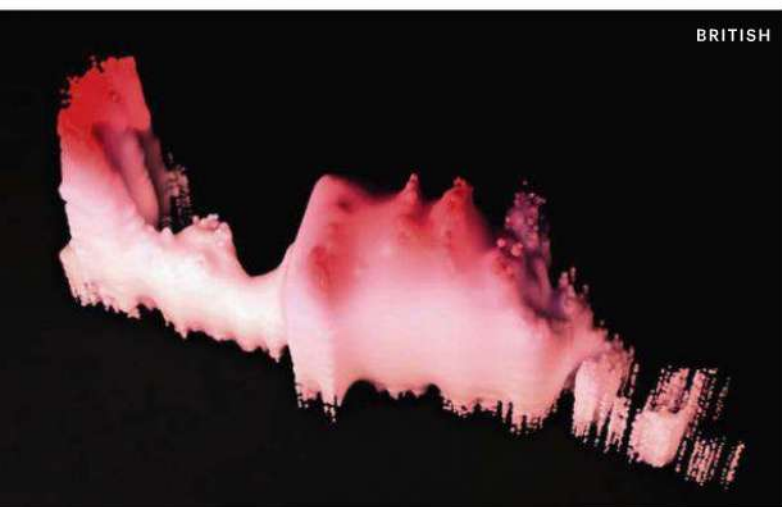
*Featuring logos, video,
and interactive animation by*

- MICHEL GONDRY
- GM DESIGN
- THE ANGRY BIRDS GUYS
- UNIVERSAL EVERYTHING
- AARON RAYBURN
- TRONIC
- TOM GEISMAR
- MASAMICHI UDAGAWA
- DAVID ROCKWELL
- PORSCHE DESIGN STUDIO
- YVES BÉHAR
- AND, OF COURSE,
THE CROWD

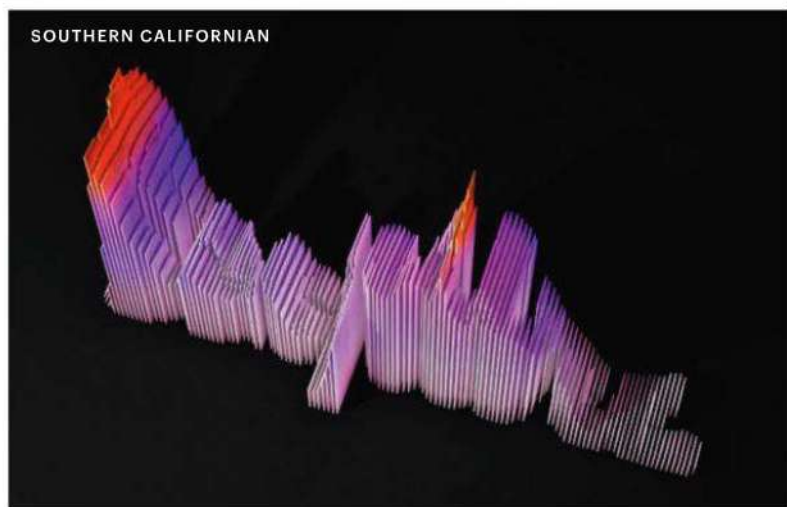
BY MARK MIKIN



SOUTHERN



BRITISH

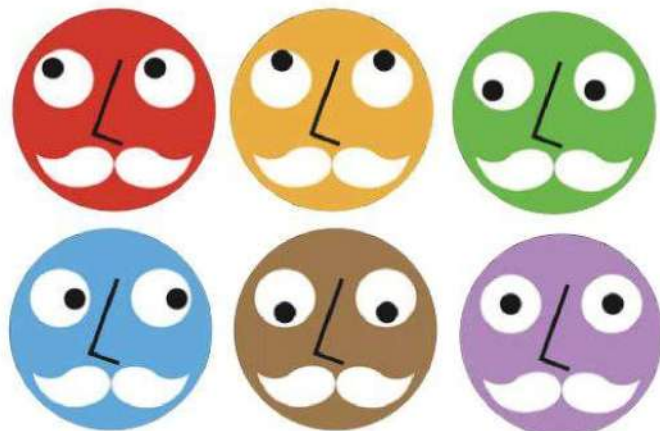


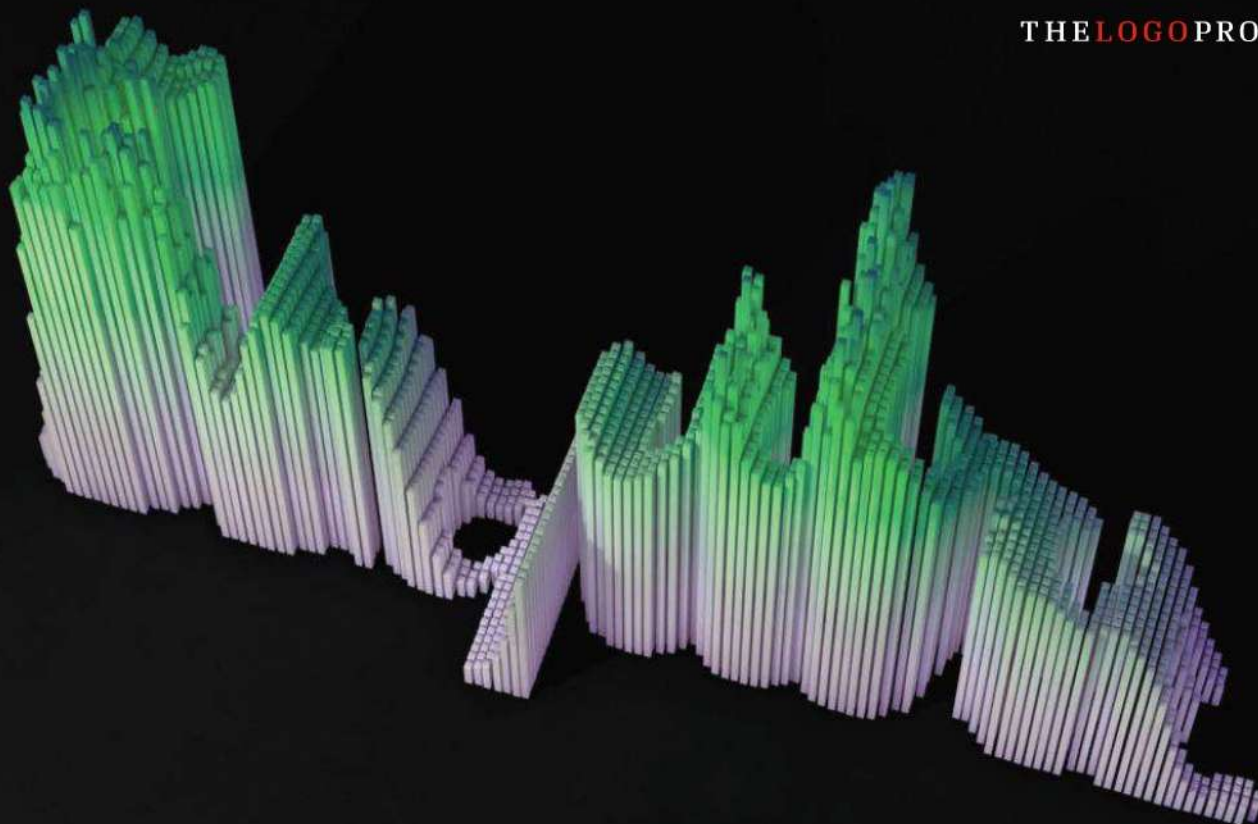
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN

NO LETTERS, NO WORDS. JUST ESKY.

+ TOM GEISMAR

If Tom Geismar and his colleagues at Chermayeff & Geismar have learned one thing through their branding campaigns for Mobil, Chase, and NBC, it's that logos come and go, but iconic symbols endure. (Seriously: Click through cgstudio.nyc.com; you'll be amazed at how much of their work you recognize.) To reengineer our logo, Geismar got rid of the letters altogether and focused on the one truly recognizable symbol of Esquire: Esky, our mascot since 1934. While in recent years the little guy has been presented as a three-dimensional character, Geismar chose to deconstruct him to his most essential parts, and the result is an instantly recognizable logo that can change color and expression (via the eyes) as needed. (These are just six examples.) "By being simple and straightforward, I was trying to get to the essence of what or who Esky is." No words and no letters are necessary for us to know what he's thinking—a good look is all it takes. Go to esquire.com to see Esky come alive.





MIDWESTERN

THE VOICE SCULPTURES

+ UNIVERSAL EVERYTHING

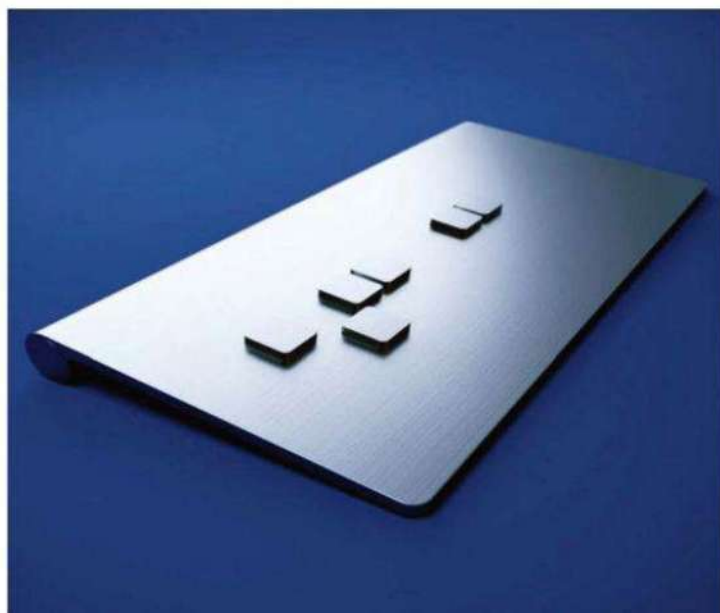
You've got to admire the ambition of a man who names his studio Universal Everything. Matt Pyke thinks big, and since founding the company in 2004, he's created colorful, hyperexpressive branding campaigns for AOL, MTV, and Nokia. (Visit universaleverything.com for highlights.) For Esquire, Pyke created a series of extraordinary "voice sculptures," each of which answers the burning question: "What does the word *esquire* look like when you say it out loud?" By recording four individual voices, each representing a different accent (noted above and at left), and using a program to map out the acoustical peaks and valleys, Pyke was able to demonstrate how we all have a unique relationship to this magazine, even down to the way we say its name. *Head to esquire.com to see (and hear) Universal Everything's voice sculptures in motion.*

esquire
MAGAZINE

A GROUP EFFORT

+ THE CROWD

If we learned nothing else from the Gap logo debacle of 2010, it's that you can't touch a logo without first consulting the Crowd. After issuing a challenge to redesign our logo on 99designs.com, an online community of graphic designers, we received 627 entries. We selected the above winning design—simple, striking, and clean—from Hugo Louroza, a thirty-one-year-old from Oporto, Portugal. To see the runners-up of our crowdsourcing contest, go to esquire.com.

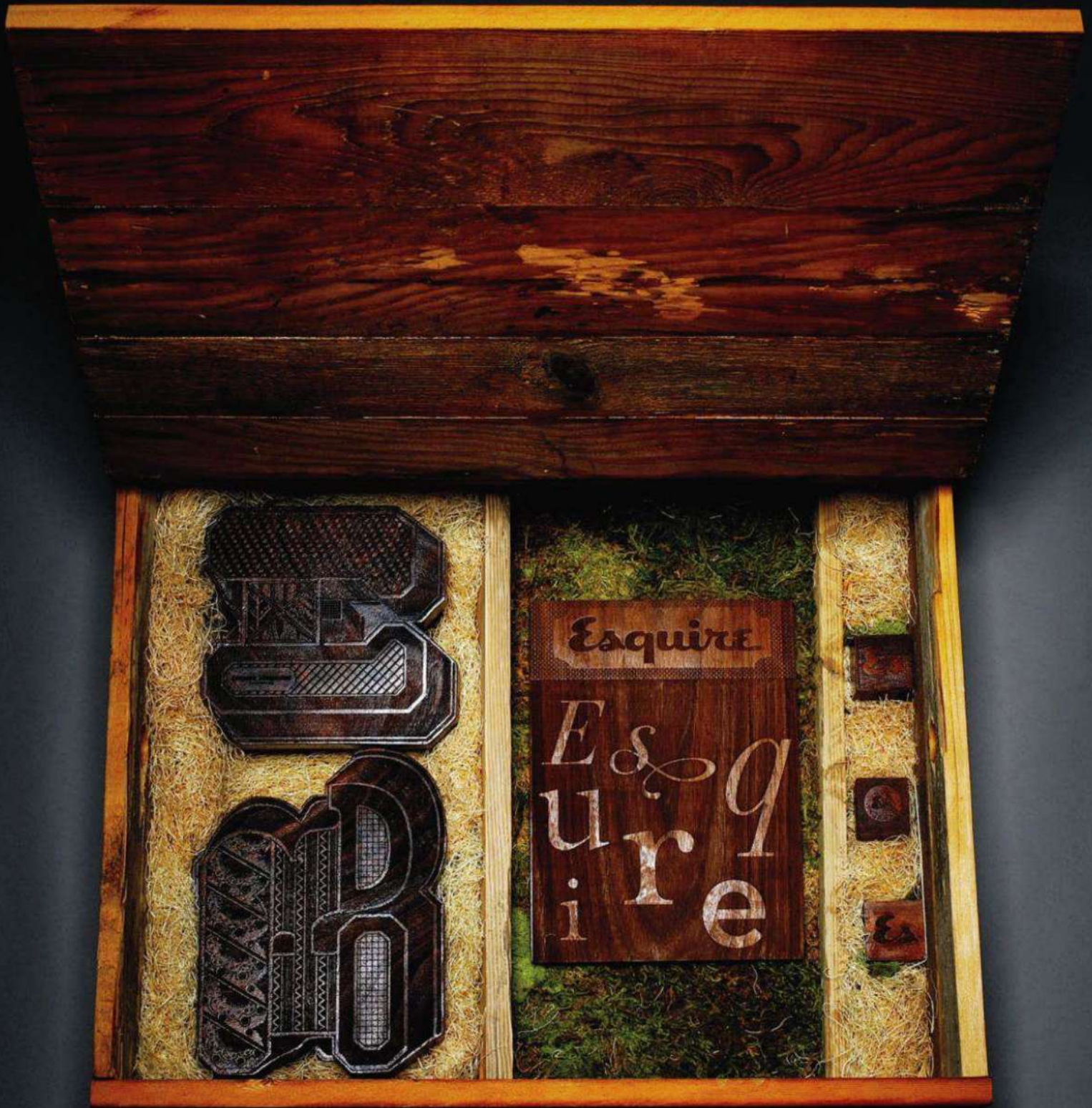


SIX KEYS, SEVEN LETTERS, ONE LOGO

+ MASAMICHI UDAGAWA

At Antenna Design, the firm that Masamichi Udagawa co-founded in 1997, form has always followed function. (See his designs for New York City subway cars, the city's mass-transit vending machines, and the new and improved Bloomberg terminals.) So for his version of the Esquire logo, Udagawa imagined it as a minimalist computer keyboard that reflects how many readers interact with the magazine today: "I realized typing e-s-q-u-i-r-e on the keyboard is probably more important than how the letters look, so I just yanked all the other keys." And since so many of us now spend our days working on a computer, we don't even need letters on the keys to tell which is which. We just know.

THE **LOGO** PROJECT



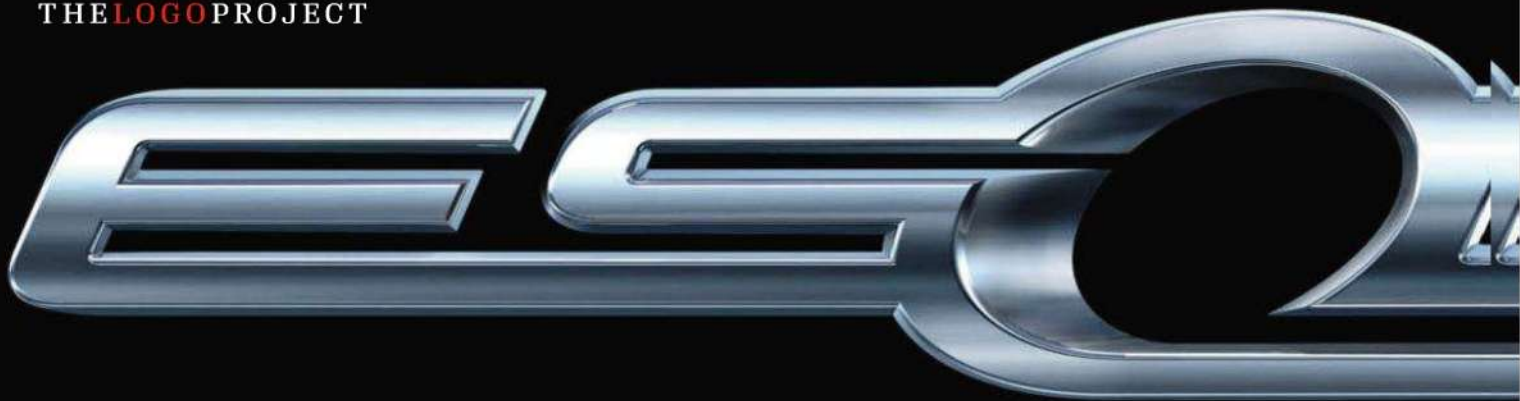


THE FUTURE IS HARD, HEAVY, AND REAL

+ AARON RAYBURN

Nothing says twenty-first-century multimedia logo quite like something hand-carved out of centuries-old wood. But that's exactly what Aaron Rayburn delivered: seven letters, each an inch thick and made of salvaged three-hundred-year-old black Oregon walnut that the twenty-nine-year-old graphic designer and artist carved and etched using a mid-nineteenth-century woodblock typeface. "I wanted my logo to last longer than any of the things we see onscreen," says Rayburn. To complement the letters, he also hand-carved three wooden blocks (below left) and a life-sized issue of the magazine, going so far as to build the crate (far left) that carried his creations from his Portland, Oregon, workshop to the Esquire offices in New York City. Rayburn's sculpture is a celebration of permanence, and a welcome reminder that even in the digital age, some things are built to last. *Go to esquire.com for a video chronicling Rayburn's creative process.*

THE LOGO PROJECT

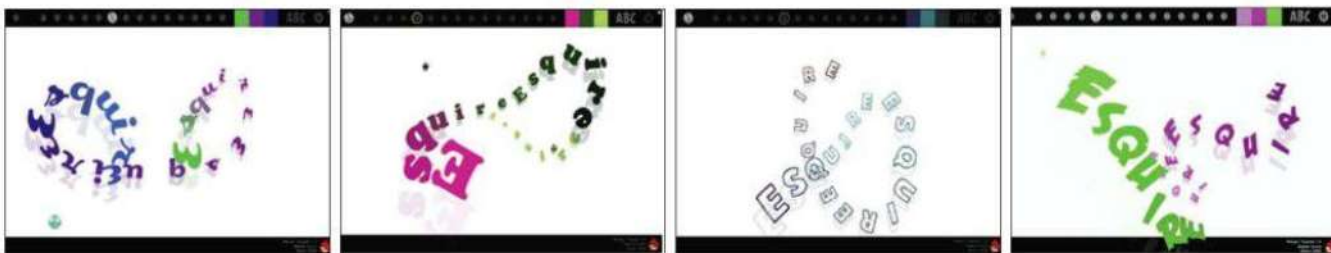


FORWARD MOMENTUM

+ GENERAL MOTORS DESIGN

It's not surprising that the above Esquire logo from Bob Boniface, Dennis Finos, and the rest of the design team at GM Design would evoke movement and athleticism. The *q* in the logo serves as the focal point, meant to evoke a car wheel; the font is italicized, leaning to the right to give the feeling that the logo itself is in motion; and its metallic finish was designed in the style of an automo-

tive badge. The team then fabricated the logo as a sculpture (right) using clay stereolithography—just as they would in designing a car—and rendered it as part of a 3-D animation not unlike the opening credits of some long-lost *Star Trek* movie. It's about moving forward, an important idea for any magazine (or major automaker) looking to the future. Visit esquire.com to view the full animated video and explore the contours of the logo.



A GAME THAT PLAYS ITSELF

+ ROVIO

For Jaakko Iisalo and his design colleagues at Rovio, the Helsinki-based gaming company behind Angry Birds, one of the most addictive and popular game apps in the world, the key to success is simplicity. And so for Iisalo's version

of our logo, he took a similar approach: an interactive animation (of which these are merely screenshots) in which the letters travel across a screen in pursuit of floating Esqy heads, and users can manipulate the letters' basic movements (along with their

fonts and colors) by clicking on the interface at the top of the screen. (They can also click on the Angry Bird at the bottom right for a nice surprise.) However, it's the algorithm that runs the program, not the user, that ultimately determines where the letters

go and when. In the future, we'll all have only so much control over the technology in our lives, and, according to Iisalo, that's the whole point: "I wanted to make a game where the game basically plays itself." Go to esquire.com to interact with Rovio's Esquire logo.

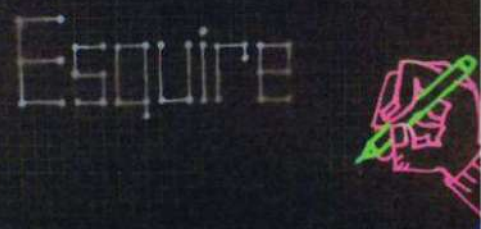
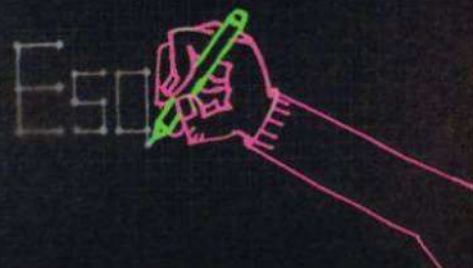
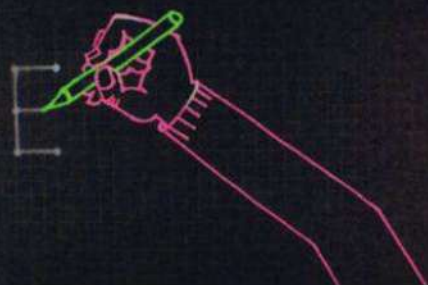
WIRE

THE NEVER-ENDING POTENTIAL OF PAPER

+ YVES BÉHAR

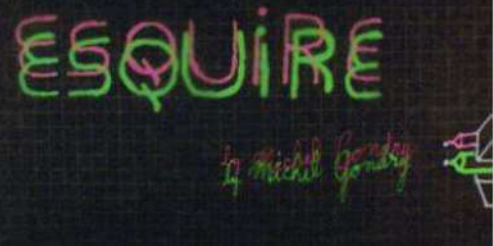
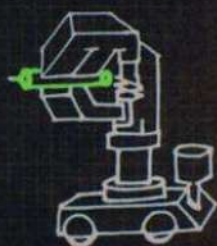
Through his groundbreaking work for the likes of Target, Jawbone, and Herman Miller, industrial designer Yves Béhar has shown just how much you can enhance the value and utility of a product by simplifying and editing down its design. His concept for the logo, based on an accordion cover that folds out, reflects this idea of addition by subtraction: When the cover is folded up (right), the logo reads *SQR*, which, if you say it out loud, sounds just like *Esquire*. However, once the accordion cover is unfolded (below), the full logo is restored and previously hidden panels of paper reveal additional editorial content. There's no magic going on here—it's just a smart designer doing more with less. That he does it with paper, a medium still capable of a cool trick or two, is all the more surprising.





Esquire

Esquire



THE WRITING ON THE WALL

+ MICHEL GONDRY

The director of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *Be Kind Rewind* is known for finding traces of the fantastic in ordinary life, and even something as ordinary as our logo got him to thinking. "The writing seems to mimic handwriting, but you can tell it's been calibrated, more and more, by computer design over the years," he said. To explore this tension, Gondry created an animation that shows a computerized logo being written by a human hand and then a handwritten logo executed by a robotic hand. (We captured eighteen stills at left.) It's a clever mash-up, and unlike the other animations created for the Logo Project, Gondry didn't rely on computer software; he hand-drew everything with a Sharpie pen and then filmed the animation himself using a 16mm Bolex camera. Look for more of Gondry's imagination unbound in *The Green Hornet*, his new 3-D remake starring Seth Rogen as the famous masked crime fighter. Visit esquire.com to view the full animation.

TOUCH THE LOGO,
FEEL THE LOGO+ DAVID
ROCKWELL

An architect whose body of work varies from W Hotels in New York to the set of the Oscars, David Rockwell is all about material culture. "The yearning to touch and feel and experience is deeply human." In re-imagining the logo, Rockwell kept the classic typography but laser-cut it in four different ways, with his two paper logos (the top two) offering a completely different tactile experience from his wood and plastic ones (the bottom two). They're all meant to be touched and handled, Rockwell explains, because, like so much of his work, they're "not about just the tyranny of sitting and looking at a screen. They're about getting out and experiencing something with other people."



A LOGO TO LAST FOREVER

+ PORSCHE DESIGN STUDIO

Just to clarify: Porsche Design Studio isn't really affiliated with the carmaker. The two companies share the same creative heritage, but otherwise Porsche Design Studio and its technologically advanced, futuristic-looking consumer products (sunglasses, mobile phones, golf clubs) are in a league of their own. To achieve what the company's managing director, Roland

Heiler, calls a "very clean, reduced look" for its Esquire logo, the design team envisioned a magazine cover machine-milled out of a solid block of stainless steel. The logo is raised, some cover lines are recessed, but the piece as a whole is a spare experience—minimalist at its core, lasting in its material. **W**

THE REENGINEERS

BY TOM CHIARELLA

They rebuild and start over. Take **BRAD STEVENS (1)**, head coach at Butler University. By taking Butler to the national championship game against the Yankees, er, Blue Devils of Duke, Stevens, thirty-four, rinsed the ethical stink off the Division 1 college basketball coaching fraternity for a week, reminding everyone that college sports belong to the students who play them. Now he has to do it again.

See **JOEL EWANICK (2)**, the media genius who lifted Hyundai from its status as grudgingly third-choice rental car to betting-man's Honda by coming up with Hyundai's job-loss guarantee: Lose your paycheck and we'll take your car back. Nissan poached him last March. Two months later GM came calling.

Or **ROBERT GREENBLATT (3)**, NBC Entertainment's new chairman. Or **DAVID PLOUFFE (4)**, Obama's former campaign manager. In his new job as senior White House advisor, he'll try to recast the president's poll numbers. Hopefully he knows it's going to take more than e-mail blasts.

Other reengineers presume.

MIKE BROWN, a planetary astronomer, convinced the world to redefine what makes a planet and got Pluto demoted. **PETER THIEL (5)**, cofounder of PayPal, is offering twenty kids \$100,000

PART TWO



1.



2.



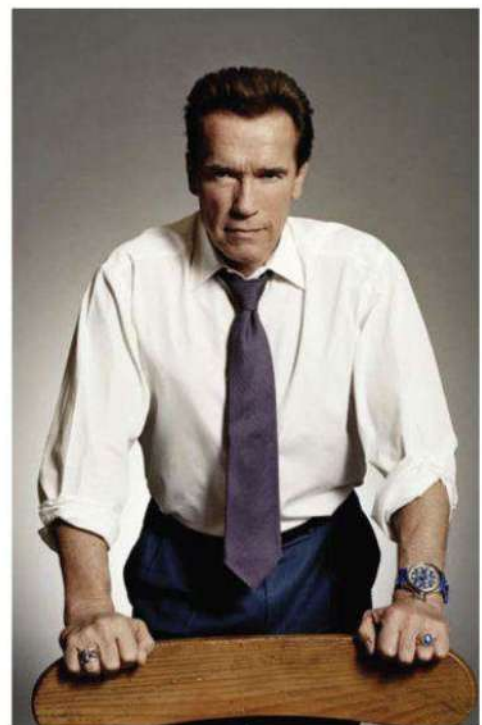
3.



4.



5.



Q+A ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR, ACTION HERO, BODYBUILDER—THE MAN HAS REENGINEERED HIMSELF HUNDREDS OF TIMES. NOW HE HAS TO DO IT AGAIN. INTERVIEWED BY MIKE SAGER

ESQUIRE: You campaigned as a reformer. Eight years later, were you?

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER: I went in thinking, I'm not going into office to accept the status quo—otherwise there's no reason for me to run, I just ought to do another movie. I'm going to fight the battles that people normally don't want to fight.

ESQ: Like what?

AS: In 2005 they spent \$160 million against me because I wanted to reform pensions, education, and the budget system. And now finally we got those things. It took seven years, but we've finally approved a solar-power initiative that will generate 3,000 megawatts of renewable energy. In 2006 we passed AB32, which will reduce greenhouse-gas levels to 1990 levels. It took years to do those things, but I fought and fought and fought. We got the pension reform, we got the budget reform, we did the things that we wanted to do.

ESQ: You're often called a postpartisan poli- ➔

THINGS BEING REENGINEERED IN 2011



➔ **Dynamics Inc.'s CARD 2.0 TECHNOLOGY** will turn your credit card into a



smartcard. Some versions have buttons that let you switch between bank accounts. Others have a digital display of account numbers that hides until you

type in a secret PIN. All are as thin and flexible as a normal card and scratch-resistant.

➔ **RED RIDING HOOD:** This



time for grown-ups, and with Amanda Seyfried.

➔ **TRANSCEND SNOW GOGGLES** from Recon Instruments and Zeal Optics feature a head-mounted dis-

play with Google Maps, real-time statistics, and GPS to track where





ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER CONTINUED

tician. Do you think it's time for a new party?

AS: I'm sure the United States can handle another party. But the more critical thing is that we look at things in a different way and not always do the same thing over and over again. I don't accept the fact that you have to have Democrats and Republicans that see things in opposite ways.

My father-in-law, Sargent Shriver, always talked about this. He said it was important that we find the things that we have in common. If it is just family things with children that we all love, you know, let's talk about that. We all want good education, so how do we go about it? For example, if the Republicans get rubbed the wrong way about global warming, then let me talk about oil independence. Or take global warming: If I say that pollution causes a lot of problems with health—nineteen thousand people in California, a hundred thousand people nationwide, are dying because of pollution-related illnesses—both parties have to be interested in that, in health, even though they might not agree on global warming.

ESQ: And your next act?

AS: Well, it evolves. I never stop anything. So I started the bodybuilding and I'm still doing bodybuilding. I committed to acting and I still do acting. And now I've gotten into politics, and I will continue doing politics and being a public servant in one way or the other. And doing something for the community and giving something back to the state or to the country. Getting involved in environmental issues and policy issues, in government, political reform, and all of those things. You know, the menu becomes bigger. That's the great thing: The older I get, the bigger the menu.

ESQ: It seems like you're resistant to sitting still.

AS: I can only operate to the utmost and to 100 percent of my potential if I have no safety net. Because it's only then that I'm at my peak. That's one reason I never did TV shows—I didn't want to have that security. What I liked about being governor was never knowing how a meeting would end. The legislative leaders could leave and destroy you to the press. Or they go out and compliment you. So you don't know. You don't know the way the people go. One year they like something, the next year it's number seven on their priority list. So you just never know. That brings excitement and spice to life. And that to me is the difference between living and existing.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.



11.

each to drop out of college and create tech start-ups. **ANDREW BOSWORTH**, the engineer behind Facebook Messages, is convinced that e-mail is antiquated.

More have dreams that won't die.

NASA may have halted plans for future moon walks, but **RON DIFTLER**, a project manager at Johnson Space Center, is overseeing the development of a robo-astronaut that can do the same scientific research as a human for a fraction of the cost. He is planning for the first mission in a mere one thousand days—a blink in bureaucratic space time.

Some reengineers seem destined to be considered and reconsidered. Constantly.

JAMES FRANCO (6). Fill in the blank.

JOAQUIN PHOENIX (7), ditto.

But you can pretty much forget Tiger Woods, who thinks Tweeting with fans constitutes a new direction. Try winning. Better still, try changing.

MICHAEL VICK (8)? Are we free to hate the reengineered man for what he did? Yes. Must we recognize that he reconstituted his game, his talent, maybe—just maybe—his belief system because of our reaction? Yes. Can we still turn our back on him if we want? Yes, indeed.

Same with **JAMES FREY**. (See page 54.)

JIMMY FALLON (9) sucked his first year. So he rebooted, cut the irony, pulled back on the absurdity.

But others do their reworking in the dark. They pull the levers that make your life just a little better.

Like **SHEILA CAMPBELL**, director of the General Services Administration's Center for Customer Service Excellence. She's the reason U.S. government Web sites are cleaner and easier to use than they have been in years. She reengineered simply by caring how things work—and look—at every level.

And the reason the suits you buy in coming years will be more comfortable than you ever thought possible? **ITALO ZUCHELLI (10)**, creative director of Calvin Klein's men's collection, who eschews standard sizing questions and concentrates instead on what clothes are made of and how they perform. Sometimes to the extreme—he used bicycle-seat foam to create men's jackets, simply because they are more comfortable than any jacket you will ever own.

So, yes, reengineers make things better. **SEE GORDON KNAPP**: the instigator of Scott's new tube-free toilet paper. **SEE DR. ROBERT A. BERG**: the lead researcher behind the redefinition of the American Heart Association's new CPR guidelines—no more mouth-to-mouth as first response, just chest compressions.

TONY CALCAO AND ANDREW KELLER at Crispin Porter + Bogusky. They designed the ad campaign in which Domino's admitted its pizza sucked. It reengineered. Sales rose 14.3 percent within months.

BRANDON SOLANO (11). That's Domino's head chef, that's the guy who reengineered its pizza.

you've been on the mountain.

→ **THE 2012 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE**, fully redesigned for the first time in thirteen years. This is the Beetle George Jetson would have

driven.

→ Stability-control has been around in cars for years, but **FORD CURVE CONTROL** is the first system designed specifically to tackle the most wide-

spread problem: taking turns too hard.

→ The original 1991



Duke Nukem video game was the Grand Theft Auto of its day, providing gamers with hyperintense violence while introducing a generation of boys to computer-generated

strippers. After many starts and stops since **DUKE NUKEM FOREVER** was first announced in 1997, it's finally here—far less pixelated and much more graphic and

grown-up. → As Estonia formally joins the Euro Zone, the **KROON**



The reengineer must be willing to destroy.

Take **HANS KEIRSTEAD (12)**, the hardheaded neurobiologist behind October's first human clinical trial with embryonic stem cells. With success, the trial could knock down the door for treatment of all sorts of spinal injuries with stem cells. But if it fails—if one of the test subjects dies—it could nail it shut forever. Or **LORIN STEIN (13)**, the new editor of the *Paris Review*, whose first act at the stodgy journal was cleaning house. Or **REX RYAN (14)**. When you're a Jet, you're a Jet all the way! From your first cigarette to your last rattling brain injury. Well, then they cut you. It's the NFL, and Rex Ryan is no fool.

But they also fix things. Take Giants GM **BRIAN SABEAN**: By drafting and sticking with a core of good young players, he shifted baseball back to its roots, replacing debates on HGH, salary issues, and mathematical tendencies with storytelling, pitching matchups, and timely homers. Or check out the new Fiat 500, the first totally new U.S. release from Chrysler under **SERGIO MARCHIONNE**.

Read **BRAD WATSON'S** story collection, *Aliens in the Prime of Their Lives*. It's the first book in twenty years that makes readers anticipate a gritty return to the cauldron of the Deep South. Or **AARON MICHAEL MORALES'S** *Drowning Tucson*, the bleakly human debut of the new Bukowski.

Former mixed-martial-arts agent **MYKALAI KONTILAI**, for snatching up the rights to PBS's *Nightly Business Report* and pledging to reinvent the sleepy half-hour public news into the impossible and improbable—a must-see business report that will be syndicated in two hundred countries.

But former governor of New Mexico **GARY JOHNSON**? Hell, yes. Because the only true libertarian in politics is not a true nut but rather a tough, clearheaded budget cutter with no special fetish for religion and no particular moral outrage over the leftward swing of the country in 2008. He's the GOP's best hope for countering the tea-powered revolution.

And for every **STEPHEN BALDWIN**, who reengineered himself as a tiresome, preachy, book-whoring ass, there's someone like his brother **ALEC (15)**, doing wise and funny PSAs about gay marriage, raising money for public radio, and maintaining his balance on *30 Rock* in the role of Jack Donaghy, the reengineer with a thousand faces.

Like **JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE**.

Reengineers take the jobs no one else wants. Managing a disaster fund? **KENNETH FEINBERG** should be sainted. Oscar host? You can fill in at least one of James Franco's blanks. Governor of California? **JERRY BROWN'S** been reborn more than once.

Of course, people always want their reengineering done fast. Like tomorrow.

AMAR'E STOUDEMIRE (16): Make the Knicks better. That might be really hard.

But the same could be asked of **THE PRESIDENT (17)**, of course, the man who promised to be the ultimate reengineer.



12.



13.



14.



15.



16.



17.



DANY BAHAR

CEO, LOTUS CARS

There are a lot of rules in the car business, but one is chief above all: If you want to make money, stay the hell away from sports cars. Purpose-built speed machines are expensive to develop, difficult to sell, and cater to a customer base barely larger than Mario Andretti's extended family. If you start a sports-car company, you're basically telling the world that you hate being rich.

There are exceptions, but even those who beat the odds—legends like Ferrari and Porsche—have spent years struggling with red ink. Most of them have had come-to-Jesus moments. English carmaker Lotus's come-to-Jesus moment is now, and its Jesus is Dany Bahar.

Bahar, thirty-eight, was installed as Lotus's CEO in 2009. He came from a vice-president gig at Ferrari and inherited a perpetually struggling company, one that had built impractical sportsters for sixty years and avoided insolvency only through a series of cash-fat owners. Faced with ever-rising engineering costs and the threat of going under, Bahar got moving. He filled Lotus's headquarters with talent pirated from Ferrari and Mercedes-Benz. GM's cocky professional-car guy, Bob Lutz, was installed as an advisor. And at the 2010 Paris Motor Show, Bahar unveiled a bombshell: five all-new models, a city car concept, and a plan to transform twenty-five-hundred-cars-a-year Lotus into a big-time luxury player.

If Lotus's massive plan comes to fruition, it will cost \$1.2 billion, nearly triple sales, and result in the company's first four-door sedan. It'll also catapult the brand toward apparent suicide—direct competition with Porsche, a juggernaut at the top of its game.

Bahar seems unfazed. He spouts one-liners ("This is the first time in my career that I've done anything like this"; "I don't think it's possible for a narrow-minded car company to work") and smiles disarmingly while arguing with the press. He appears to have no respect for traditional thinking (five of the Paris unveilings were sports cars) and claims his first Lotus memory is seeing Sharon Stone's Esprit in *Basic Instinct*. He might be crazy. But he might also be right. —Sam Smith

will be phased out and replaced with the euro.

→ Likely replacing the Tianhe-1A as the most powerful supercomputer ever, **BLUE WATERS** (which was devel-



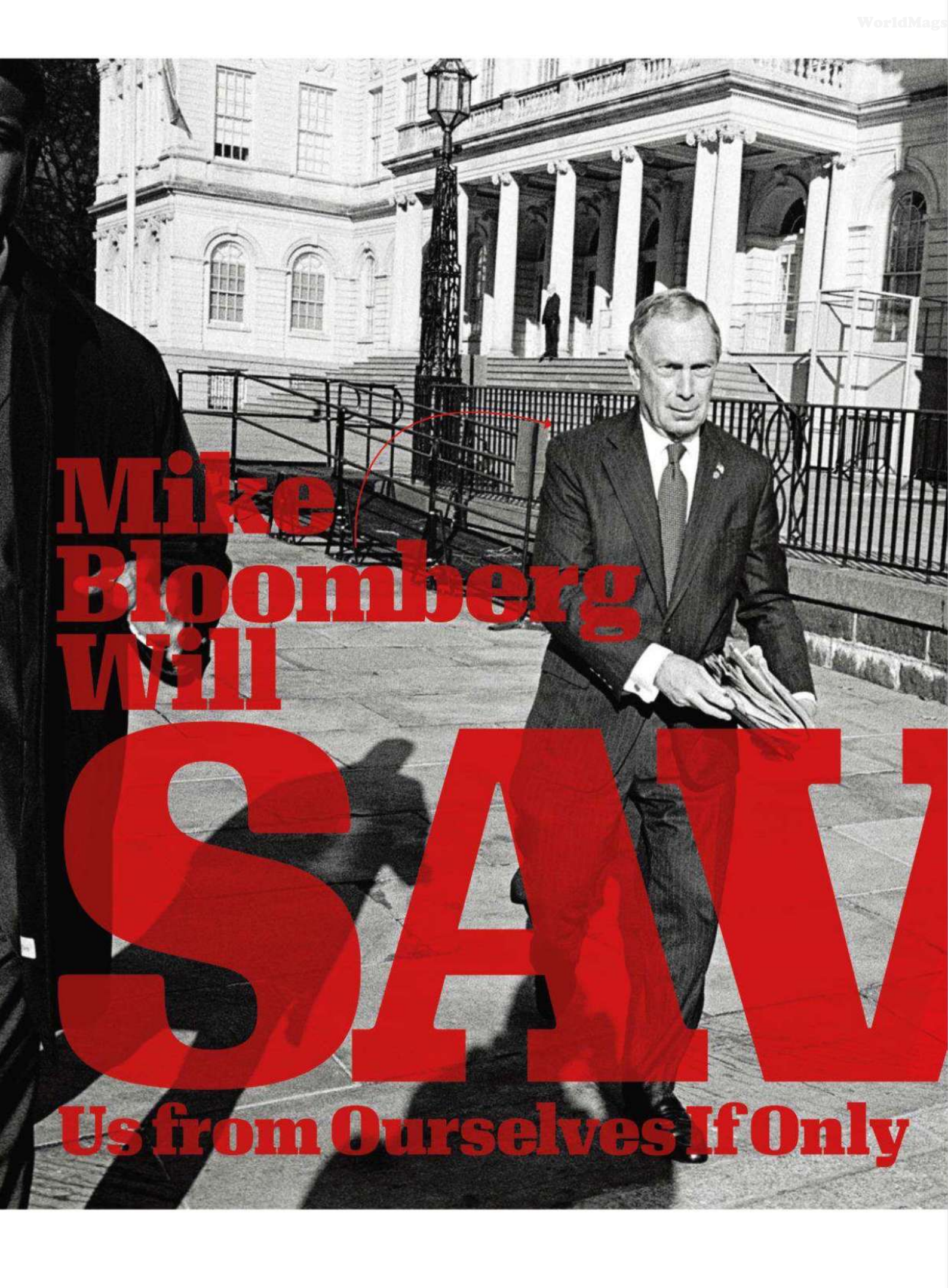
oped by the National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) will be the first computer capable of 10 peta-

flop performance (10 quadrillion calculations per second), opening the door to a new understanding of the Big Bang, complex simulations of weather and bi-

ological systems, and the ability to design all-new materials atom by atom.

→ The **KILOGRAM** hasn't yet been defined by a physical constant, so it

changes in mass over time. But scientists plan to use silicon atoms and a watt-balance experiment to redefine the kilo permanently. The new findings will debut in 2011.



**Mike
Bloomberg
Will**

SAV

Us from Ourselves If Only

HE'S LIBERAL.
HE'S CONSERVATIVE.
HE'S IDEALISTIC.
HE'S PRAGMATIC.
HE'S EGALITARIAN.
HE'S THE ELITE OF THE ELITE.
HE'S NOT RUNNING
FOR PRESIDENT.
BUT HE JUST MIGHT
CONSIDER A HOSTILE
TAKEOVER.

**BY JOHN H.
RICHARDSON**

Photographs by
EDWARD KEATING

EXACTLY FOUR MINUTES after the appointed time, which is so on time it's actually a bit early, in a drab room in the diabetes center of a Brooklyn hospital, Mike Bloomberg steps to the podium. Just like that, the governor of New York takes a place at his elbow and a chorus line of city and state officials array themselves behind him. They're facing an audience of TV cameras and twenty reporters on folding chairs. "Good morning," Bloomberg begins, his voice crisp and direct. He thanks his hosts—

But stop. Let's focus on that voice for a moment: reasonable, plain, confident, firm, measured—the voice of authority stripped of all the obnoxious trappings of the voice of authority, no booming echo, no bombast, no deep sonorities intended to lull you back to childhood awe, a tone so deliberately flat it elevates the unadorned to the level of life philosophy. When Bloomberg cracks a joke, it's always dry and usually seems to be aimed at amusing himself. Sometimes there's a hint of impatience or disdain.

And what is he saying? *Obesity rates, sadly, are especially high in low-income communities, and the latest studies show...*

When he was a young man, Bloomberg had a bullet-headed strength and cocky energy that translated as good looks. Now he's just shy of seventy and his public expression often borders on cigar-store Indian, his face a narrow expressionless wedge with high cheekbones and no upper lip at all. Is he aloof? Serene? Detached? Determined? It's hard to tell, which is a little unsettling, so it's tempting to trust his voice instead and take him for how he sounds:

Research shows that drinking just one sugar-sweetened beverage per day can increase a child's risk of obesity by 60 percent...

He's talking about his latest push to improve the habits of New Yorkers, this time by making it illegal to buy sugary drinks with food stamps. If passed, this rule will join the rule about no smoking in restaurants and bars and the rule about requiring that homeless people have saving accounts if they want to stay in city shelters and the rule about—this is a man who spent half his autobiography listing his rules for conducting business and donating to charity with barely a page left over for his wife and children. He seems happiest when he runs through the data—more than 50 percent of adults are overweight, 40 percent of children, 6 percent of food stamps go to sugary drinks, \$75

We Let Him

to \$135 million is wasted, obesity-related illnesses cost \$770 a year per New York household, poor adults get diabetes at twice the rate of the wealthy. There is strength in numbers, and he is strong. He's Bloomberg the man and also Bloomberg L.P., the limited-liability partnership that made him a billionaire. He will fix things if we let him. "Let's try it for a period of two years. We'll measure the results and see if it works."

Of course, the yapping dogs of the media try to nip him with their velvety gums. Doesn't he serve soda at Gracie Mansion?

"You didn't ask the right question," he says.

Is he bullying the poor?

"It's not unreasonable and it's not picking on anyone. The numbers are what they are."

The failure of his sugar tax?

"Did it fail on the merits? Come on, it's Albany."

The idea that even people on food stamps should be free to make their own decisions?

"Keep in mind what happened with smoking—everybody said everybody was gonna go to Nassau County to smoke? Wrong. Everybody from Nassau County came into New York City so they wouldn't have to breathe somebody else's smoke."

As Bloomberg often points out, life expectancy in New York City has increased 1.7 years since he took office. How many mayors increase life expectancy? It's *obvious*.

And the upside? As a previous mayor used to say, New York is where the future comes to audition. "If New York does it and it works, the rest of the world copies."

Bloomberg—a man who made his very name a part of the English language—is thinking big again. He's got a coalition with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell on building American infrastructure. He's got five hundred mayors in his gun-regulation coalition, Mayors Against Illegal Guns. He's got his new postpartisan group, No Labels, a coalition of national figures from both parties who preach the primacy of centrism. Plus there's the influence of his charitable spending, well over \$100 million every year, and the increasing impact of an unusual series of political endorsements last year that included politicians as different as Meg Whitman and Harry Reid. Soon he's heading off to Hong Kong to take control of an international coalition of mayors that represents 13 percent of the world's people. He dreams of creating an alternative to the political system as we know it, a coalition of centrist politicians and businesspeople who are good managers and who are focused on the most important problems of our time—a coalition of the practical. In the words of Cory Booker, the mayor of Newark and a Bloomberg disciple: "He doesn't give a damn about party, because he's about progress."

Mike Bloomberg has become important because he represents a great American dream, not the one about owning a home or becoming more successful than your father but the one beneath all of those, the foundational American dream—the dream of freedom from politics. Freedom from the ugliness and corruption and compromise of democracy, with its raised voices and perpetual fights over who is more equal than the others. Bloomberg is the ultimate independent, the calm modern technocrat rooted in metrics and cleansed of ideology, come to drain the swamps of government with his amazing modern business-management techniques... unless he's actually just an old-fashioned autocrat looking down on us from

above and tinkering with our lives like a science experiment, stripping our noisy polis of all its native poetry. Unless the messiness we want to get rid of is actually our soul. We've never tried someone like him before—someone with his beneficence and his highly evolved notions for the rest of us and more money than most countries. Able to spend hundreds of millions out of his own pocket on a mere city office.

In other words, who defines practical?

Bring up the spotlight. The audition has begun.

BLOOMBERG'S UP AHEAD, moving fast through a tangle of tunnels and flyways in central Hong Kong. Bodyguards and deputy mayors bunch around him like tackles around a quarterback. "You wanna move closer to him," someone warns. "When he starts to move, you either keep up or you get lost."

He doesn't slow down at all, or even look around to see if people are keeping up. Photographers run backward, clicking away.

The flyways connect all the downtown buildings at the second floor, creating one vast and luxurious mall. Tunnels open into shopping floors with stores like Chanel and Coach. As Bloomberg bustles past them, the CEO of the transit system feeds him data about the Hong Kong commuter trains. The transit authority retains the right to develop the land around the stations, he says, so they've been turning the stations into giant malls where trains arrive. The customers are delivered right to the mall near their office, and then that mall delivers them back to the mall near their home. "Of course," he says, "there is profit from the development, advertising, telecom services, and so on, and that pays for a third of the fare. So that actually creates an integrated business."

Bloomberg is in China to accept the chairmanship of C40, an international coalition of mayors who are trying to fight climate change. On the side, he's conducting a diplomatic mission that includes a meeting with the mayor of the industrial city of Shenzhen, tours of high-tech factories, and inspections of several train systems because Bloomberg is famous for riding the subway to work, and it fits with the climate-change theme of the trip. But this is almost too perfect—a climate-saving form of socialistic public transportation *that is also a business*. "So you have the ongoing rent from the stores?"

"That's right."

"Is it a competitive tender for that?"

"It is, yes. We own the land but we don't develop the property. We rely on the professionals."

"But the values are different, right? Some areas have a strong market already..."

And they're off, the renowned global supercapitalist and the technocrat from the People's Republic of China, speaking the modern language of business and authority. The Chinese

"Sometimes, number one, things change, okay? So let's not be—I mean, sometimes you change your views. Sometimes the world is different, okay?"





man can't help bragging about the mighty Chinese trains, which go up to 240 miles an hour. And their station malls have the power to turn an entire district from light industrial to commercial residential overnight.

Again Bloomberg pounces. "Do you have the authority to do that? Or did you have to work with the government in terms of changing the zoning?"

The guide smiles. "The government always takes the lead, okay? But we help plan."

Here in the modern China, where the government is in firm control but also mad for unleashing the power of business, everything seems extremely efficient. "The New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority is just starting to look for recurring revenue," Bloomberg kvetches. "People complain about it, but then they complain when there isn't another train or when the rates go up."

The guide nods in sympathy. "Of course, the citizens all do complain."

This guy gets it. No nonsense, ready answers, cool but a little cocky—Bloomberg's kind of guy. "If you ever want a job," he says, "you can come to New York."

Bloomberg loves this—loves moving through the world taking in data and being decisive. This is a fundamental fact about him. And he loves being the man too, his style always superconfident but low-key, unruffled, almost deadpan—*direct* is the word people use most, often followed by *sardonic*, likable qualities that acquire a slightly more aggressive edge when you have \$18 billion in the bank. Does it matter if

Bloomberg meant a job at City Hall or a job at Bloomberg L.P.? The line has always been blurred, more so out in the big world where Bloomberg News is so ubiquitous, it's the first thing the Chinese mention when they meet him, followed by his famous terminals or his vast personal fortune. Then his lil' old job as mayor of New York City.

Plus he has that great American story: hardworking father and tough-minded mom, well-adjusted Eagle Scout, sociable, not particularly ambitious, off to college to study engineering and join a frat—then the early death of his father, followed by Harvard Business School, a swift rise through Wall Street, the invention of the Bloomberg terminal and the creation of a global brand.

The compound force of all this seems to dazzle the Chinese reporters, who regard him with awe and treat him like a celebrity. Everywhere he goes, they ask him, "Mr. Bloomberg, are you going to run for president?"

As Bloomberg likes to say, that's not the right question. Especially back home, where opinion polls show that he is currently esteemed at roughly the same level as former House Speaker Newt Gingrich. But the polls at this point are meaningless, as are protestations about the possibility of one's candidacy. And in any case, Gingrich doesn't have billions of dollars to move his numbers.

He heads down another gleaming tunnel, this time to a train that

▲
The mayor famously takes the subway to work in the morning and sits in a humble cubicle like everybody else—gestures of commonness, but otherwise Bloomberg isn't a politician of pretense.



has Wi-Fi and luxe padded seats, and arrives at a platform with the feel of an interstellar docking station and returns to the sour preoccupation the Chinese trains have aroused in him. "In America, the ultimate capitalist system, government is getting in the way of everything," he declares.

It's an astonishing moment, and a clarifying one—one of the most successful businessmen in the world, and certainly the most successful executive-cum-politician in American life, the leader of a city so important that its police force is bigger than the armies of most countries, expressing something close to envy for one of the most ruthlessly planned economies in the world, a system that still treats its people as disposable bits of an immense machine, where the government doesn't get "in the way of everything" because the government *is* everything. Can the American government really be that bad? Is the sheer power to do things your way that compelling? Is this where the nonpartisan dream goes to die?

"You may see something familiar here," the guide says.

Bloomberg looks up—high on the wall overlooking the passageway into this latest train-station mall, there's a giant Bloomberg screen. And it's playing a Bloomberg-financed TV show. "Charlie Rose! Bloomberg! Way to go!"

As they walk along, Bloomberg tells a favorite story about a Chinese immigrant in New York who works as a janitor and has a daughter at Harvard, a son at Yale, and another son at Swarthmore. Bloomberg asked the man, "How can you afford it?" The immigrant answered, "Oh Mayor Bloomberg, America's the most wonderful country in the world. My wife and I, *we can each have two jobs.*"

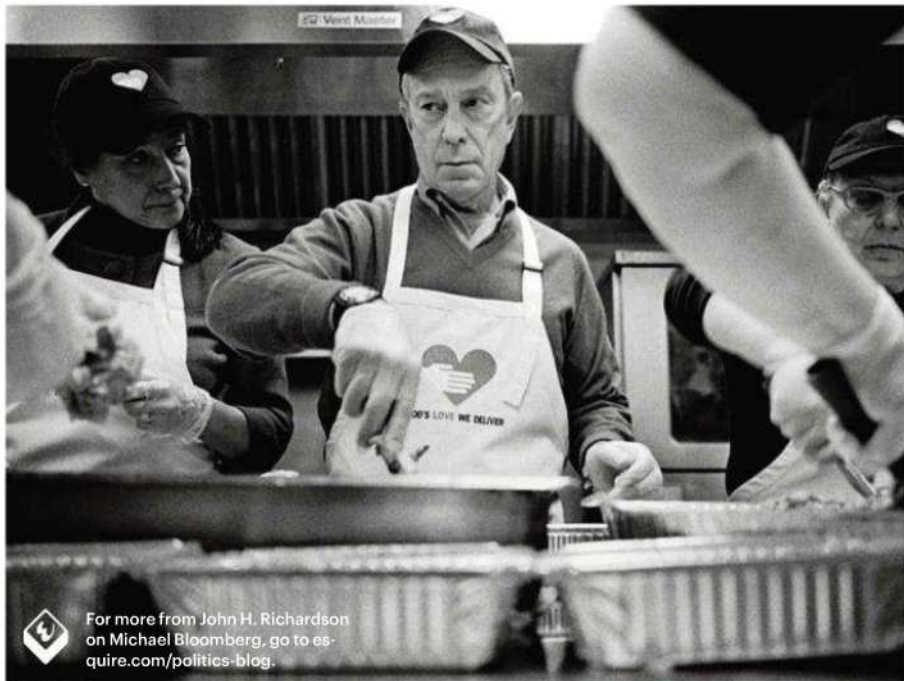
Bloomberg loves the gospel of hard work, but in his case there's a machismo that's more Wall Street than John Calvin. "You've got to come in early, stay late, lunch at your desk, take projects home nights and weekends," he says in his autobiography, *Bloomberg by Bloomberg*, by Michael Bloomberg. "While you're reading this, we're thinking about how our competitors are plotting to take the food from our children's mouths... in life, unlike children's games, second place is first loser!"

He can't get over this mall, resplendent in its futuristic sheen. Back in New York, he tried to build grand projects like the West Side stadium on the west side of Manhattan, which would have cost \$2 billion and been fit for the Olympics. That was to have been built around a train station, too. But the corrupt state pols up in Albany killed it. "Grand Central doesn't bring in nearly this much revenue," he says.

The guide expresses sympathy. "It is odd. The rents for the stores in this station are among the most expensive in Hong Kong."

Bloomberg grunts and delivers his ultimate judgment, which floats free of politics and history to the happy place where laws are absolute. "Listen, capitalism works. If they weren't making money, they wouldn't survive."

BACK IN NEW YORK. frankly, things aren't so great. He's in his third term, trying to recharge the batteries and bring in lots



For more from John H. Richardson on Michael Bloomberg, go to esquire.com/politics-blog.

of new people. His bragging rights on education reform were hurt by news that test scores across the state had been systematically inflated, earning him a rare rebuke in *The Wall Street Journal*: "Mr. Bloomberg spent an additional \$8.5 billion on education, but the scores of city students on the... two national tests not susceptible to local manipulation... remain flat." The fight to change the law on term limits also tainted him in many eyes. "He looked like an ordinary politician trying to hold on to his job," says Randy Mastro, a deputy mayor under Giuliani.

Lots of people are mad at him. "There's a we-never-make-mistakes attitude that makes it hard to fix problems," says Steve Banks of the Legal Aid Society. "I don't get the sense that he hears what I'm saying when I talk to him directly," says city comptroller John Liu. "I believe he's the least in touch with ordinary people of any mayor in modern history," says Joel Berg of the Coalition Against Hunger. Small-business advocate Richard Lipsky says Bloomberg's cigarette taxes are costing bodegas and delis \$250 million a year. "He called it a minor economic issue—that shows the hauteur." In Brooklyn, councilwoman Letitia James is icy. "Ask my colleagues in Brownsville or East New York what he's done in their districts. Ask them when was the last time they saw the mayor out there, or has the mayor ever visited?"

All the news isn't bad. Crime is low, graduation rates are up, the city is bouncing back from the recession faster than the rest of the country. But it's a far cry from the glory days. When he came into

From top left: With Cathie Black, a publishing executive who is his choice to lead the city's schools; a local interview; with police commissioner Ray Kelly; working the food line on Thanksgiving at God's Love We Deliver.

office, a brand-new Republican pushed heavily by his friends on Wall Street and in the media, Bloomberg surprised everyone by raising taxes to protect city services—his very own stimulus program. He said that New York City was a “luxury product” and luxury required polish. “He made a case for the public sector,” says Ester Fuchs, a left-leaning professor of public affairs at Columbia University. “Giuliani wanted to privatize hospitals. Bloomberg said, ‘Every child in New York City deserves a public education, regardless of income and race.’”

Fuchs surprised her friends by going to work for him, joining an elite team of investment bankers and lawyers and other outsiders in a massive effort to reinvent city government. They took control of the city’s schools, centralized leadership at City Hall, launched ambitious development projects and a creative array of pilot programs on education, infrastructure, and the environment—it was an exciting time.

Now even the number crunchers have become skeptical, a real blow to the plexus for the ultimate M.B.A. politician. “What he didn’t do was get concessions out of labor unions,” says Charles Brecher of the Citizens Budget Commission. A schoolteacher with twenty-two years’ experience now makes \$100,000, for example. The last numbers for the city budget showed a rise of almost twice the rate of inflation during the Bloomberg years, from \$41.7 billion to \$63.1 billion. Bloomberg’s reaction is a complete pivot from his earlier stimulus approach to a troubled economy, a reversal a more ideological politician would have trouble defending. “Now we’re in stage three,” Brecher says. “He says he’s not going to return to tax increases. He says he’s going to cut. But we have yet to see how good a budget cutter he is.”

AFTER THE CONVOY comes to a stop, a Chinese border guard rips open the door and points a gun dead at the center of Bloomberg’s forehead. Bloomberg doesn’t even react, just keeps talking to a tall and bony man named J. Michael Evans, the chairman of the Asian division of Goldman Sachs. They’re riding in a long silver Mercedes accompanied by four white vans, the sky is a gray drizzling mist, and the immigration building is a daunting fortress of gray communist cement, but it’s warm and comfortable in the soft leather seats and he’s having a good time chatting with Evans—they just ran down the list of people they have in common and it turns out they’re both scheduled to go to the same birthday party back in New York. Small world!

The gun moves to another forehead, then another and another. It’s some kind of laser thermometer. One second at each forehead tells your temperature. The Chinese are very worried about swine flu.

Twenty minutes later, the convoy passes a new building that looks like a giant bird’s nest and enters the industrial city of Shenzhen, which has a gleaming downtown, lots of drab workers’ buildings with laundry and rust stains, many factories and industrial parks with wide empty streets. Bloomberg is here to meet the local mayor, learn about the Chinese railroad system, and visit a couple of high-tech factories. He’s brought along deputy mayor Patti Harris, a stylish woman in a black jacket with one horizontal stripe, plus a squad of bodyguards, a Chinese handler, an official photographer he calls Artzie, assorted drivers, a small group of local reporters, and New York City comptroller John Liu—who is, oddly, a rival and critic of Bloomberg’s.

The first stop is a modern steel-and-glass building called Citizens’ Center, their pointed translation of City Hall. Bowing ensembles, plus shaking hands and the interesting Asian custom of pre-

sending business cards with both hands, followed very rapidly—it starts before everyone is seated—by a high-speed presentation on their high-speed train system, the speaker’s red laser flitting like a firefly across schematics.

Ten minutes later, the lights come on. “And thank you, Mayor Bloomberg, for listening. We know that you take the metro to go to work every day, and here we want to express our highest respect.”

Never one for superficial bonhomie, Bloomberg answers in his usual dry tone. “Our trains don’t run as fast as your trains, unfortunately.”

With that, they bow him into the Hall of the Honored Guests, where he joins the mayor of Shenzhen and other dignitaries in a half circle of deep chairs decorated with giant white lace doilies and a portion of flowers large enough for a rich man’s funeral. The symbolism of this moment is particularly rich, since Shenzhen is the place where Deng Xiaoping decided that “to become rich is glorious” and launched the modern state capitalism of China. In thirty years this place has exploded from a fishing village to a city of about fourteen million people, one of the fastest-growing cities in the world.

“I bring you greetings from 8.4 million New Yorkers,” Bloomberg begins, launching into a flowery speech about their wonderful hospitality. He makes a point to introduce John Liu, who hails from the heavily Chinese area of Flushing, Queens. (When I ask Liu why the mayor invited him, he answers, “I expect he had his purposes.”) He pitches New York like he’s from Madison Avenue, praising its diversity and cutting-edge technology and fashion and media and medicine, and he’s not shy about strutting his personal mojo. “My company has a big office in Hong Kong, so I used to come a lot. Now I don’t get a chance to travel as much.”

This leads to an almost comical bout of mayoral one-upmanship—the mayor of Shenzhen says he’d love to show Bloomberg his amazing solar grid, and Bloomberg says he’d be delighted to offer him a ride on the New York City subway. Then it’s time for the ritual of photos and gifts, posing in front of a giant painting of cherry blossoms and handing over one of those famous teal boxes from Tiffany’s. Inside there’s a

life-size crystal apple, really a very heavy rock, a gift from the people of New York. “This is also useful if somebody in your office gets out of hand,” Bloomberg jokes.

As he leaves the building, a Chinese reporter shouts out: “Mr. Bloomberg, will you run for president?”

In China, he declares: “In America, the ultimate capitalist system, government is getting in the way of everything.”

HANG ON A SECOND. All these ceremonial visits and urgently efficient assistants rushing things along leave little room for ordinary human functions. So where’s the freakin’ bathroom?

One of the bodyguards points to a door, the kind of door that swings as you push through it, an ordinary brown high school door, and it swings and there’s Bloomberg standing alone, staring at the white tiles on the wall.

This is unexpected. Usually, the bodyguards who protect politicians block off the bathroom when the boss is inside, protecting him from any uncomfortable encounters with cameras or tape recorders.

There’s only one other stall.

No need to violate the man’s privacy. On the other hand, an American bows before no man, not counting ceremonial occasions. He’s not royalty.

Bloomberg doesn’t care. He’s a big skier and pilot, a manly man in his day, and he’s comfortable in his body. As he left the last place,

he says, he realized there wasn't going to be any easy way to stop in the middle of all the handshakes and go to the bathroom. So this was a relief.

He's been going since before 4:30 in the morning, when his plane landed after an eighteen-hour flight, and he seems as fresh as he did eight hours ago.

He zips up and heads for the door. "You just do what you have to do," he says. "You have eternity to rest after you die."

AS IT TURNS OUT, his bodyguards have standing instructions *not* to keep people away from him, a rather vivid example of an unusually egalitarian approach to management that forbids titles, private offices, and executive parking spaces. "My rule of thumb with the security guys is anybody coming up and walking to me, I should be accessible," he tells me. "It's the job. You don't like to run the risks, don't take the job."

Put that together with his uncompromising speeches on unpopular subjects—the Ground Zero mosque, gay marriage, gun control, and the need for relaxed immigration laws—and Bloomberg seems to be a liberal's dream, a patrician progressive in the mold of FDR.

Now zoom to a completely different New York, elegant offices on Fifty-seventh Street with a sweeping God's-eye view of Central Park, the headquarters of a global investment firm, Kohlberg Kravis & Roberts, in the mid-1990s. Henry Kravis raised money for the Partnership for New York City, a group of CEOs who promoted various efforts at civic betterment through a network of patrons at the center of the city's elite social world. Michael Bloomberg wanted to start participating in civic events.

He started with a million-dollar check.

"He was very much the same as he is now, a smart, somewhat sardonic guy," says Kathy Wylde, president and CEO of the Partnership. She remembers Bloomberg going out to explore the city and coming back to Fifty-seventh Street rattling off statistics and tales of distant boroughs. So many different kinds of people! So much potential! All it needed was a little work in infrastructure and the education system and it would be the perfect platform for global business. For the first time since the distant days of David Rockefeller, Bloomberg's enthusiasm made civic virtue chic. "Cocktail-party conversation changed dramatically in the city's social circles when Mike Bloomberg decided to get interested in public policy," Wylde says.

By the time he was ready to run for mayor, the CEO of JPMorgan Chase was the guy sponsoring Bloomberg's coming-out breakfast and a virus in the kitchen would have devastated global finance. The rich didn't back off after the election either, helping Bloomberg in the fight for mayoral control of public education, raising \$75 million to fund a school to teach principals how to run schools, whispering in the right ears down in Washington when he was trying to get more money for the new World Trade Center. Later, many of them would join his pro-immigration coalition of CEOs and mayors—cochair, Rupert Murdoch.

He returned the favor after the market crashed in 2008, when Washington politicians poured hundreds of billions into Wall Street and some of them pushed for drastic countermeasures—break up the "too big to fail" banks, ban derivative trading, even dramatically increase political control of the New York Fed. "Our members were panic-stricken," Wylde says. The way they saw it, they had to compete against giant international banks like HSBC, the New York Fed was the key to international trade, and derivatives were the exclusive Russian vodka of commerce, great when not abused by the peasantry.



With the combined authority of New York City and his billions, Bloomberg helped to block the most stringent regulations.

In Hong Kong in November, Bloomberg assumed leadership of C40, an international group of mayors banding together to devise policies to fight climate change.

SO FAR, EVERYTHING Bloomberg has done in China has had an ecological theme—the global-warming conference, the trains, a solar factory. But now he's stopping at Hepalink Pharmaceutical, the world's largest supplier of a drug that stops blood clots, which is owned by the richest couple in China, and the first thing he does is acknowledge the chairman of the Asian division of Goldman Sachs. "We just spent an hour in the car together. It turns out that his best friend is one of my best friends."

The Chinese nod agreeably and move on to formal expressions of regard. "Of course, Mayor Bloomberg, we know your news organization in China."

Bloomberg loves that. "Don't ever talk to any other news organization!"

As the tour begins, comptroller Liu approaches Evans. "What's the Goldman Sachs connection?"

There are so many ways to answer that question. The connection is that Goldman invested \$4.9 million in Hepalink and made more than a billion dollars' profit when it went public last summer. That Goldman is vital to the economic health of New York City. That some of Bloomberg's top appointees came from Goldman's upper ranks. That Goldman leases many thousands of Bloomberg terminals. But Evans just says they had a position in the company, which is interesting because it is operating at a high level of industrial complexity—not making T-shirts or cheap toys, that's for sure. It is the new China, the China of the future.

They come to a stop at a porthole and gawk through the glass at workers dressed head to foot in sanitary white unitards, like extras in a George Lucas movie.

On his way out, Bloomberg does a quick Q&A with a group of Chinese reporters. They're pretty smooth, warming him up with softballs before getting down to business. "So why do you choose these two companies, because there are many companies here in Shenzhen?"

"I wanted to pick the couple of companies that were really ahead of their times, pushing the envelope and making a great difference, and I also depended on Goldman Sachs for advice."

"So they give you this kind of suggestions?"

"Yes, both these companies were picked or suggested by Goldman Sachs. I turn to the experts."

The Chinese reporters turn to the pressing question of the Fed's latest purchase of bonds, which they are alarmed about. They get specialized, talking about firewalls and hot money, and Bloomberg's right there with them, respecting the right of a central bank to engage in quantitative easing but always wishing the best for both na-

tions as they work together to build a better world. Then he thanks the people of Shenzhen and heads for the Mercedes.

On the way out, Evans catches his eye and gives him a little nod: Thank you.

WHEN BLOOMBERG gets back to New York, he plunges directly into a noisy controversy over his surprise pick of a publishing executive for the new school chancellor. His enemies say he chose her because she's part of his superrich social circle, that he's secretive and high-handed and refuses to consult with outsiders.

That's when he invites me up to his sanctum sanctorum on the second floor of City Hall, the central office he designed to look like a trading floor or a newsroom. They call it the bullpen. It's a remarkable sight in the world of politics, where perks are treated with the gravity of mortgages and wills. There's a giant split-screen TV at one end with a digital ticker listing complaints answered and potholes filled, a field of cubicles so low that you can see over into your neighbor's business when you stand up, a line of clocks showing the time in different places except it's Brooklyn and Queens instead of London and Tokyo, and the time is all the same. Opposite the big TV, there's a raised snack bar with three cafeteria tables.

A few moments later, Bloomberg comes up the stairs to the snack bar and holds out his hand. Sitting down at one of the tables, he makes relaxed small talk about problems with eyeglasses. "I get up, I put my contacts on, everything's blurry, and then I realize I forgot to take the ones out the night before. Why do I do that? You want some coffee or something?"

He starts off with a few remarks about the fine people he's been able to attract to city politics, but it's only a minute or two before he arrives at the annoyance of the moment. He had breakfast this morning with the senior staff from the Department of Education and reminded them that 63 percent of the kids get a high school diploma now, thanks to all of them, but the mayor had a little part in it too. "I picked Joel Klein, I supported him, I took the grief, I got the money."

He wants to be remembered for pushing metrics and detailed public accounting, which he calls a "sea change in government." Also the smoking ban, a 35 percent reduction in crime, education reform, and the lovingly detailed twenty-five-year environmental plan he calls PlaNYC. Now people who are running for office on both the national and state levels want to be seen with him.

As he talks, Bloomberg gets charged up and leans in close, putting his elbows on the table, heedless of any conventional assumptions of station. Never mind that the cafeteria table he's sitting at is right out there on display, visible to all and audible to anyone who passes by. There's definitely something about Bloomberg that doesn't like barriers—you see it in the long hours, the high salaries, even his sense of loyalty. There's a joke around City Hall that the best way to ensure job security is to get the newspapers to criticize you, and it's not really a joke. He likes to keep people close.

Down below, there's Bloomberg's desk smack in the middle of the office floor, surrounded by a cubicle exactly the same size as all the other cubicles—really, he has no private office. If he rolls backward, he could bump into the person behind him. Despite a fortune that gives him an unlimited freedom other cubicle dwellers can't begin to imagine, he has worked down there for nine years.

But he doesn't like being questioned, at least not about his efforts

to defeat financial regulation. Immediately, a note of exasperation enters his voice. "Lemme step back. We had an explicit public policy, which I happen to think is the right policy, to encourage home ownership. We did this through Fannie and Freddie. And the way they raised money was by taking the mortgages and packaging them, otherwise it would have been just commercial banks making local loans and no expansion of the economy and spending on transportation and all of the infrastructure stuff. So it went through a downturn. Is it any worse than other downturns? In some places yes. They overbuilt in Florida, they overbuilt in Arizona. Were there abuses? Yes. People pushed on the mortgages. You pay a mortgage salesman to sell mortgages, will they sell them to everybody? Yeah, if somebody lies about their income. So you gotta say, 'a consequence of a very expansive housing market is that there will be a downturn and lead to lots of defaults. But on balance, we're better off because of it.' And by the way, the people that own those mortgages are in these package deals. Mortgage derivatives were sold to professional investors. Now people say, 'Oh but I didn't understand what I was buying.' This is ridiculous. They should have done the research."

He does support regulations to increase transparency, as well as higher reserve standards and more vigorous oversight. Beyond that, he says, we need to accept the ups and downs of market cycles. "We encouraged this. We wanted everybody to take mortgages. Can you imagine Congress saying, 'Let's slow down the housing boom in this country'? Get serious."

What about the fight over term limits? Some say that stained his legacy.

"The law said the city council can change the rule. They voted, nobody put a gun to their head. That's the law. If you don't like the law, change the law. Don't complain about somebody living within the law."

But when other people proposed doing the very same thing, you said it was an outrage.

"Sometimes, number one, things change, okay? So let's not be—I mean, sometimes you change your views. Sometimes the world is different, okay?"

And the ruckus over his giant urban development projects, the West Side stadium in Manhattan and the Atlantic Yards in Brooklyn? The charges of insider dealings and broken promises?

"Okay, there's two out of all of the things! And incidentally, the West Side stadium is a project that should have been built. The West Side stadium denied employment to an enormous number of people starting their way up the economic ladder."

How about education? After the scores went down—

"No no, time out. Scores did not go down, scores went up. We changed the level that we were aspiring to."

And the decision to appoint Hearst Magazines executive Cathie Black (Hearst owns Esquire), which was done in a rather autocratic way?

His exasperation flashes again. "Where are the people manning the barricades? They had a big thing on the steps of City Hall, I don't think they had fifty people. There's no great outcry here! *The New York Times* is on a jihad."

Clearly, it's frustrating having to explain himself like this, especially after all he's done for the city, especially to people who don't understand how the world works. "It's the mayor's decision," he says, "that's what mayoral control means—they serve at the mayor's pleasure, all his commissioners, all his deputy mayors, and you don't do a public search. What are you talking about? [continued on page 118]

"We wanted everybody to take mortgages. Can you imagine Congress saying, 'Let's slow down the housing boom in this country'? Get serious."

PIERS MORGAN

TELEVISION HOST, 45,
NEW YORK

INTERVIEWED BY
CAL FUSSMAN
NOVEMBER 17, 2010

PHOTOGRAPH BY
PATRICK FRASER

> **The idea that I would try** and copy Larry is ridiculous. Why would you do that? A, I'd lose by comparison because he's such a legend. And B, it's kind of insulting to myself.

> **I have kind of an edge in me**, which will be a little bit different for that time slot but probably necessary to combat the O'Reillys and so on who are making all the noise.

> **I remember my first issue** as editor of *News of the World*. I was only twenty-eight when Murdoch gave me the job. The staff was looking at me like, Is Murdoch with his mum? I prepared a great issue—Murdoch reaches me and I talk him through it. He loves it. But then just on deadline, a guy naked from the waist down, who painted his genitalia green, parascended onto the roof of Buckingham Palace. The staff comes to me. Boss, what are you going to do? I froze. Froze. A young guy, who I've got to be grateful to, piped up and said, "Boss, one question. How many times in your life do you think a bloke with green bollocks is going to fly onto the roof of Buckingham Palace? If the answer is never again, put it on the front page." Murdoch was thrilled with the change.

> **Murdoch is** such a ferocious competitor. My desire to impress him as an opponent outweighs my desire to impress him when I was an employee.

> **Half the battle** with confidence is exuding it to other people even when you're not really feeling it yourself.

> **My accent** can be an advantage and a disadvantage. It carries with it to many American ears a perceived assumption of a higher level of intelligence than often exists. But most Americans I know really like the British accent. They find it charming.

> **You've got an emergency.** Who would you call at four in the morning, knowing they would get out of bed and do whatever they could to help you? Those are your friends. That reduces your Christmas-card list a lot.

> **Talk to Paris Hilton** about business and her voice suddenly drops two octaves.

> **The most powerful** tool I've learned is silence.

> **Sometimes** the best question you could ask somebody on TV is "Why did you do that?"

> **Kids** puncture any form of adult pomposity.

> **I'm as happy** talking to the trash guy as I am to the president.

> **My brother** just went back for his third tour in the Middle East. He'll e-mail me from east Kabul where he's in a tent in 120 degree heat in a sandstorm and they've just been mortared for the third time. And you're sitting there whining about the fact that your managing editor hasn't put through your bill for your dinner at Per Se because you ordered the Château Lafite '52. Hey, get a life.

> **You can only fuck up** if you look yourself in the eye in the morning after you've done something and you know in your heart the reason you did it was completely against your gut instinct and principles.

> **I don't care** if they're dancing, singing, painting—eventually you run out of things to say after you've judged eleven pigs.

> **"How many times** have you been properly in love?" is a great question.

> **As long as** I'm right most of the time, I don't mind the off time being an idiot.

> **Everyone scratches** on the back. Jon Stewart goes on Bill O'Reilly. Bill O'Reilly goes on Jon Stewart.

> **If you can combine** misery with celebrity, you've got a number-one *New York Times* best seller.

> **The thing about Bush 43** that I'll say in his defense—you know, reprehensible though the Iraq war was in my view—is I believe that he genuinely believed in the reasons he was waging it. Whereas Tony Blair didn't. That's the difference.

> **I enjoy** watching Bill O'Reilly and Glenn Beck. I enjoy watching Rachel Maddow and Keith Olbermann. I have great respect for all of them as television performers. Part of CNN's problem is that it hasn't been able to perform well enough on center ground. It has a lot to scream about. CNN right now is vitally important. The independent vote is crucial as America gets more and more partisan because of the screaming cable-news networks. It's vital that CNN screams loudly from a position of nonpartisanship.

> **If a lady** gets up from the table, stand up. When she gets back, stand up. Manners make a man.

> **Arrogance** is a total lack of self-awareness.

> **My dad only gave me** two bits of advice. One was: Always be nice to police officers. Second was: Always drink the best French wine you can afford. It was brilliant advice. If you work really hard, you've got to have pleasures. And there's no greater pleasure as you get older than a great glass of wine.

> **You can measure** success in red wine, but not white. ■



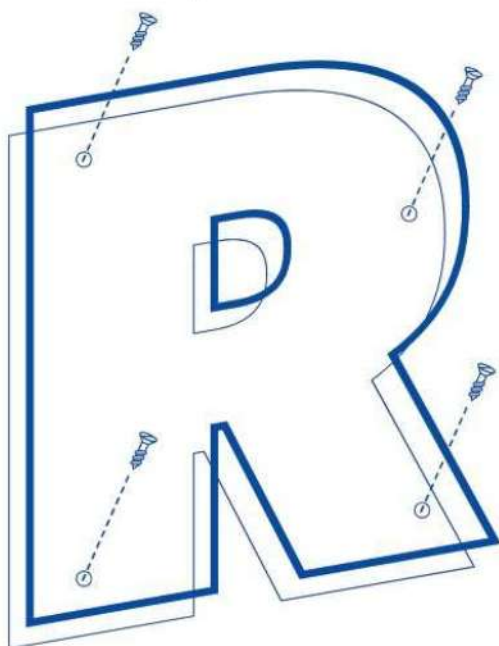
Best known as a judge on *America's Got Talent*, Morgan is the former editor of *News of the World* and the *Daily Mirror*. His new show, *Piers Morgan Tonight*, replaces CNN's *Larry King Live*.

BACK TO THE STUDS

BY CHRIS JONES



When the author decided to rehab an old house, he knew two things: Building is about design. And demolition is about the truth.



RIGHT NOW, IN THE LATE MIDDLE of my demolition, the dust is everywhere. Plaster dust is probably the worst of all the dusts, because it's so fine and has almost no weight, which means it hangs in the air for a long time before it finally decides to settle. Hours after I've torn down an ancient plaster wall or ceiling, a thick white cloud still hovers over the old pine floors like fog in an ice rink. Plaster dust slips through cracks. It digs tunnels. I've found plaster dust deep inside my ears; there's a small white explosion of it behind the screen on my cell phone, a tiny celestial body, somehow trapped under glass. It doesn't smell too bad—not like the black plastic leftovers from a cut-through shitter pipe or the disintegrated newspapers that were shoved into the walls for insulation—but plaster dust tastes bad, like chalk, and it's murder on your eyes. I'll wake up the morning after spending yet another day smashing down my house and little balls of pulp will have worked their way to the corners of my eyes in the night. A couple of weeks ago, I even had to shave my head, because each time I showered, the plaster dust would become a little more like cement rather than wash away. It was as though the plaster dust had made up its

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FINN O'HARA



READ MORE ABOUT CHRIS JONES'S
REHAB OF HIS HOUSE—AND OTHER
THINGS—ON HIS BLOG, "MY SECOND
EMPIRE," AT ESQUIRE.COM.

mind to take down some of me with it.

Next come the tiny flecks of fiberglass from the occasional uncovered pad of pink insulation. They're nearly as bad as the plaster dust, because they're nearly as insidious. Old, blown-in cellulose also makes a hell of a mess, but at least its particular brand of smoke-colored dust settles. Cellulose falls to the ground with a thud. In the kitchen ceiling, I somehow tapped into a forgotten pocket of vermiculite—just a little, maybe enough to fill a shoe box, but its nasty dark-gray dust is terrible for you, and I sprayed it down with water before I vacuumed it up. A few crumbled bricks from the fireplace left behind a pretty red dust that made my future den remind me of a golf course in Georgia. Up in the attic, the ancient tar-paper roof had dissolved and sneaked through the cracks in the wide weathered planks, coating my buddy Phil and me with a fine black powder until we looked like chimney sweeps. Fiberboard from the 1960s leaves behind a brown, bread-like dust, like crumbs. Copper shavings look like we should use them as currency. Sawdust is probably the least offensive of all the dusts, because it's easy to clean up and it smells good, like granddads and hamster cages, but in the end, it's just more dust. It still shows up mysteriously in a room three floors away from where it was made, waiting for me to sweep it up and carry it out to the dumpster.

I've filled up two thirty-yard dumpsters with dust and its antecedents so far, and I'm halfway through a third. I'll fill it and probably most of another one before I'm done with the demolition. In the three months since we took possession of our house—a beautiful Second Empire built in 1870, with an ornate mansard roof and a desperate need for some love—I've carried eighteen thousand pounds of unnecessary shit out of it, mostly by myself. The ceiling in Charley's future bedroom alone—acoustic tiles, strapping, plaster, lath, and mountains of that blown-in cellulose—took me sixty-one trips up and down the stairs. The ceilings in our bedroom, in Sam's bedroom, and in the upstairs hallway are gone, too. Maybe forty rolls of wallpaper, stripped. Every scrap of carpet, lifted. Most of the attic, gutted. The den. The first-floor powder room. The kitchen. The maid's room. All of them, vanished.

I've learned a lot in the last three months. Most important: Houses are made out of many things, and at their essence, all of those things are dust.



This is the second time I've tackled an old house. I made too many mistakes with the first one to be happy with it. We lived there seven years, and I never could turn off my brain in that house; I could never stop thinking about what I should have done differently. It became a great unhappy weight on

my shoulders, a symbol of everything I'd done wrong. We had to move, or I would have gone crazy. Wherever I stood or sat, my eyes would inevitably fall on some bruise or blemish. Even after they had been erased, I could still see them. I needed to start again.

Our first house was a big city house that had been converted into three apartments; we set about converting it back into a house. Unfortunately, all its charm had been stripped out of it over the years, replaced by layers and layers of linoleum and chipboard. I did my best with it, I like to tell myself, but for all sorts of reasons—time, money, inexperience, the birth of our sons, and the pressures of real life—that house always felt like a collection of half measures.



1.

We were living in it as we renovated it, and that was our biggest mistake. Worst of all, living in the house while we worked on it made us reluctant to demolish anything as completely as we should have. We never once started with a clean slate. We tried to pick around things instead, a nudge here, a jangle there. Tearing something out meant putting something else back in. It also invariably meant there was yet another thing wrong with our already very wrong house, and we were scared of what else we might find. There was always another nasty surprise, another reminder of how far we had left to go, and sometimes it seemed easier not to take anything down in the first place and hope that everything would somehow magically knit itself back together behind the crumbling walls, under the creaky floor.

Of course, nothing fixes itself, except for us.



It's too much if I think about everything I have to fix. It becomes too monumental. Sometimes, late at night, the inevitable list making happens—new roof, restore the windows (there are thirty-four of them, with wood sashes and rippled glass), plumbing, new electrical (it's 90 percent knob and tube), new ducts and returns, insulate the attic, re-finish the floors, drywall (maybe eighty sheets), plaster, paint, tend to the foot-high trim, new kitchen, new bathrooms (three



1. The tower with portholes, atop the author's 140-year-old house, will be his office. 2. Pulling down the walls in the first-floor hall. 3. An Edwardian-era fireplace he's keeping; the wallpaper, no. 4. A dislodged fixture hanging by ancient knob-and-tube wiring.



of them), run natural-gas lines and install two new fireplaces (in addition to the two coal-burning ones we're keeping), lights and switches, new front door, new garage, landscaping, white picket fence outside, and a Christmas turkey in the oven—but then I try to shake it all away and concentrate on what I have to do now, what I have to do first: Job one, always, is demolition.

Building is about architecture and design. It's about the surface of things. Demolition is about engineering. It's about biology and mechanics. It's about what's inside. These last three months have been an exercise in truth seeking. This morning, specifically, I have to finish stripping the first-floor hallway down to its frame, down until I uncover hand-forged square-headed nails and timbers that we couldn't dream of finding anymore. More specifically, I have to pull down this six-foot stretch of plaster-and-lath ceiling between these two gigantic joists. Even more specifically than that, right now, at this very moment, with winter's first snow falling outside and empty tree branches tapping at the windows, I have to hook this four-foot length of lath with the claw of my hammer and pull it down.

A single piece of lath? I can do that.

And now the first-floor hallway is about to become so much dust, starting with this doomed piece of lath right here.

I can do that.



hat was the other big mistake we made the last time around. I hired out a lot of the work. I think, like a lot of people, I was scared of messing up, of losing all that I'd already invested. I believed each tradesman who told me that if I did it myself, with my tender, inexperienced hands, I would only ruin every-

thing. So I paid people to ruin it for me. I was rarely happy with the work of others; they talked much better games than they played.

I felt beholden to smirking plumbers and carpenters who billed three hours for every one they worked. It made me feel like less of a man, and I began feeling as though my life weren't my own anymore. No one cares about your love as much as you do.

The second time around, I'd tend to my own love, and I'd be happier for it. I decided that I wanted to become competent. I wanted to become experienced. I wanted to *know*. I wanted to see broken things and know how to fix them; I wanted to see working things and understand why they worked. Most of all, I wanted to be able to stand in my own house and know, in my heart, that everything was as it should be, because I had made it that way. I didn't want to have to wonder about what lurked behind the walls, whether paper coffee cups and cigarette butts had been stashed under my bathtub. (That actually happened in our first house.) I didn't want to have to trust that these strangers and straw dogs had come into my home and fixed it. I wanted to see to it myself.

Early on here, during my first gentle forays into our Second Empire, I was pulling down walls in the kitchen. The former owners had told us that they'd paid an electrician to convert the first floor, including the kitchen, from sinister black knob and tube to modern white wires. Knob and tube is dangerous, a fire hazard. It's bad enough that no one will insure a house with knob and tube. It has to come out.

And in the kitchen, when our home inspector pulled off a switch plate or took down a light fixture, sure enough, shiny new wiring poked out. It looked perfect. But then I took down the walls and saw what that electrician had done: He'd simply tied two feet of new wire into the old knob and tube—fumbling together nasty little splices as far as he could reach up and inside the walls. Not only had he not fixed the wiring, he'd made it more dangerous than it was in the first place—and then he collected his money off a lovely old couple and walked away, knowing full well that he risked turning their house and everything in it, including them, into ashes before they had a chance to become dust.

I swore a lot at the time, but now I'm glad I found those splices. Each one of them, another ugly knot behind the scorched plaster, strengthened my resolve. This time, I'd do it myself, and I'd start the way I should have started the first time around. I'd made up my mind to take everything back to studs.



y favorite tool is my reciprocating saw. Sometimes, reciprocating saws are referred to as Sawzalls, but that's actually a trademark of the Milwaukee Electric Tool Corporation. Mine's a DeWalt. But I did buy a variety pack of Milwaukee blades to snap into it. They have hilarious

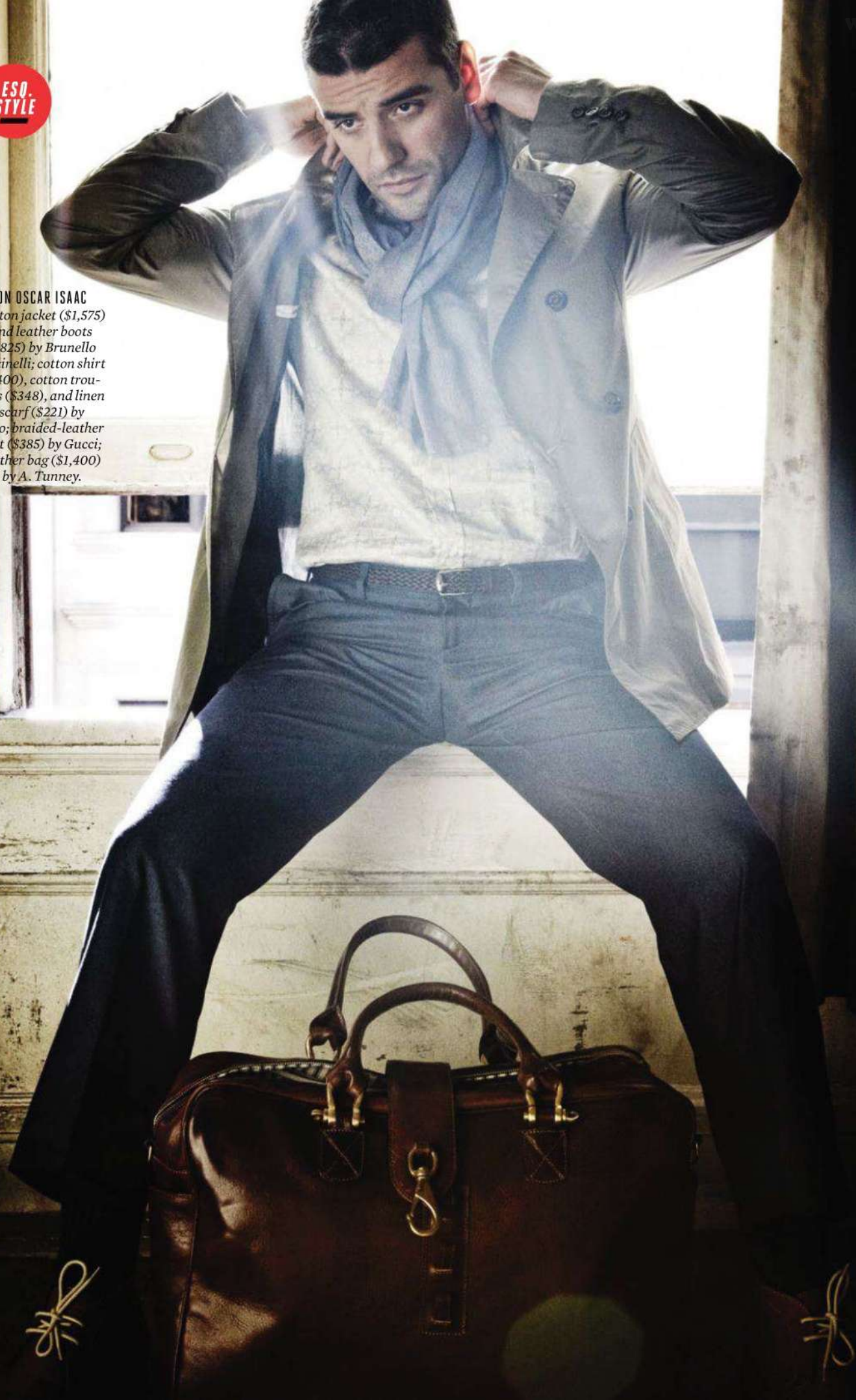
names like the Ax or the Wrecker or the Torch. I usually go for the Wrecker, which is designed for all-purpose demolition, but sometimes the Ax or the Torch come in handy, because they're particularly well suited to cutting through wood and metal, respectively. Sometimes it's better to employ a specialist.

When most people think about demolition, blunt instruments come to mind: sledgehammers, steel-toed boots, wrecking balls. I have a sledgehammer, but I've used it only once on the house, to take out a resistant bit of framing that *needed to be taught a lesson*. A local contractor loaned me [continued on page 119]



ON OSCAR ISAAC

Cotton jacket (\$1,575) and leather boots (\$825) by Brunello Cucinelli; cotton shirt (\$400), cotton trousers (\$348), and linen scarf (\$221) by Etro; braided-leather belt (\$385) by Gucci; leather bag (\$1,400) by A. Tunney.



IMPACT

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN EMERGING ACTOR TO WANT TO BREAK OUT FROM THE PACK THIS YEAR. HERE, SIX GUYS ON THE VERGE OF SOMETHING BIG SHOW HOW TO MIX UP LOOKS AND LABELS AND TAILORING AND SPORTSWEAR TO REENGINEER YOUR STYLE FOR 2011.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT ISWARIENKO

BRANDON T. *JACKSON*



AGE: 26 ("But I look mad young.")

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:

Tropic Thunder, as the rapper-actor Alpa Chino who keeps a certain black-faced actor in check. He also contributed the instant classic "I Love Tha Pussy" to the film's soundtrack.

YOU WILL DEFINITELY REMEMBER HIM FROM:

This month's *Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son*—yes, seriously—opposite Martin Lawrence. Jackson plays Lawrence's stepson, an aspiring rapper who goes undercover in a performing-arts school...as a girl. (Hey, it worked out okay for Lawrence.)

AND FOR THIS MOVIE:

Jackson has recorded a track with T-Pain. "And for me," Jackson says, "2011 is going to be a big year. An impact year."

Two-button cotton-and-viscose jacket (\$895) and cotton shirt (\$250) by Burberry London; cotton-twill trousers (\$195) by Burberry Brit; suede boots (\$100) by Clarks Originals.





Two-button cotton-and-silk jacket (\$2,050) and silk henley (\$355) by Gucci; cotton shirt (\$315) by Thom Browne; cotton trousers (\$295) by Burberry London; leather boots (\$825) by Brunello Cucinelli.

CHARLIE DAY



AGE: 34

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:

It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, the cult basic-cable show. "I mean, we're the biggest scripted comedy on basic cable, and we're in syndication. But sure, if you want to call it cult, that's fine."

**YOU WILL DEFINITELY
REMEMBER HIM FROM:**

July's *Horrible Bosses*, costarring Jason Bateman and SNL's Jason Sudeikis as three guys who wreak havoc on their employers. Day terrorizes Jennifer Aniston.

ROLE MODEL:

Bill Murray. "He's been funny. He's been quirky and serious. I really do enjoy comedic roles, and then if America permits me, I'll do some more serious roles after that."

PABLO SCHREIBER



AGE: 32

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:

Season two of *The Wire*, playing dockworker-turned-drug-dealer Nick Sobotka.

**YOU WILL DEFINITELY
REMEMBER HIM FROM:**

Happythankyoumoreplease, one of last year's Audience Award winners at Sundance, which hits theaters next month. There's also *Lights Out*, the new boxing series on FX in which he plays "yes, another morally ambiguous character. It's becoming something of a calling card for me."

One-button wool jacket (\$995), cotton shirt (\$245), and wool trousers (\$425) by Emporio Armani.

ESQ.
STYLE



ON CHRIS HEMSWORTH

Wool cardigan (\$1,045), cotton shirt (\$295), and wool trousers (\$525) by Dolce & Gabbana.



RAMI MALEK

→
AGE: 29

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:
The Pacific, HBO's World War II epic, as the glassy-eyed sociopath Snafu.

YOU WILL DEFINITELY REMEMBER HIM FROM:
This summer's *Larry Crowne*, as a stoner college student opposite Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts. (Hanks also wrote and directed.) And, if you're so inclined, you can catch him as an Egyptian vampire in the final installment of the *Twilight* series.

ON THOSE TWILIGHT FANS:
"My brother was like, We're going to have to change the locks and put bars on the windows! But I thought about it for a minute and I thought, Here's a role I could look back on and say, Man, I played a vampire. In, like, *Twilight*. I mean, how many people get to do that?"

Cotton shirt (\$745) and cotton trousers (\$525) by Prada; leather shoes (\$315) by Grenson.



ON PABLO SCHREIBER
Silk-and-linen
sweater (\$495) and
cotton trousers
(\$295) by Ralph
Lauren Black Label;
suede boots (\$278)
by Coach.



**OSCAR
ISAAC**



AGE: 31

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:

Ridley Scott's *Robin Hood*, as a slithery, hilarious Prince John to Russell Crowe's Robin.

YOU WILL DEFINITELY REMEMBER HIM FROM:

Sucker Punch, Zack Snyder's latest CGI exercise in teenage-boy wish fulfillment, which comes out in March. ("There are five ass-kicking girls trying to break out of jail," Isaac says, "and I'm the guy that stands in their way.") He'll also star along with Ryan Gosling, Carey Mulligan, Christina Hendricks, and Albert Brooks in the upcoming heist thriller *Drive*.

Two-button wool jacket (\$950) and cotton trousers (\$450) by Calvin Klein Collection; cotton shirt (\$585) and cotton tie (\$140) by Brunello Cucinelli; suede shoes (\$725) by Giorgio Armani.



ON RAMI MALEK
Two-button
cotton-and-linen
jacket (\$1,770) by
Salvatore Ferraga-
mo; wool-and-cotton
cardigan (\$437)
and cotton tank top
(\$98) by Dries
Van Noten.

CHRIS HEMSWORTH



AGE: 27

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM:

Depends. If you're from Australia, you know the Melbourne native from his role on the prime-time soap *Home and Away* or from his stint on that country's *Dancing with the Stars*. (He lost.) If not, then the first ten minutes of *Star Trek*. (He plays James Kirk's father.)

YOU WILL DEFINITELY REMEMBER HIM FROM:

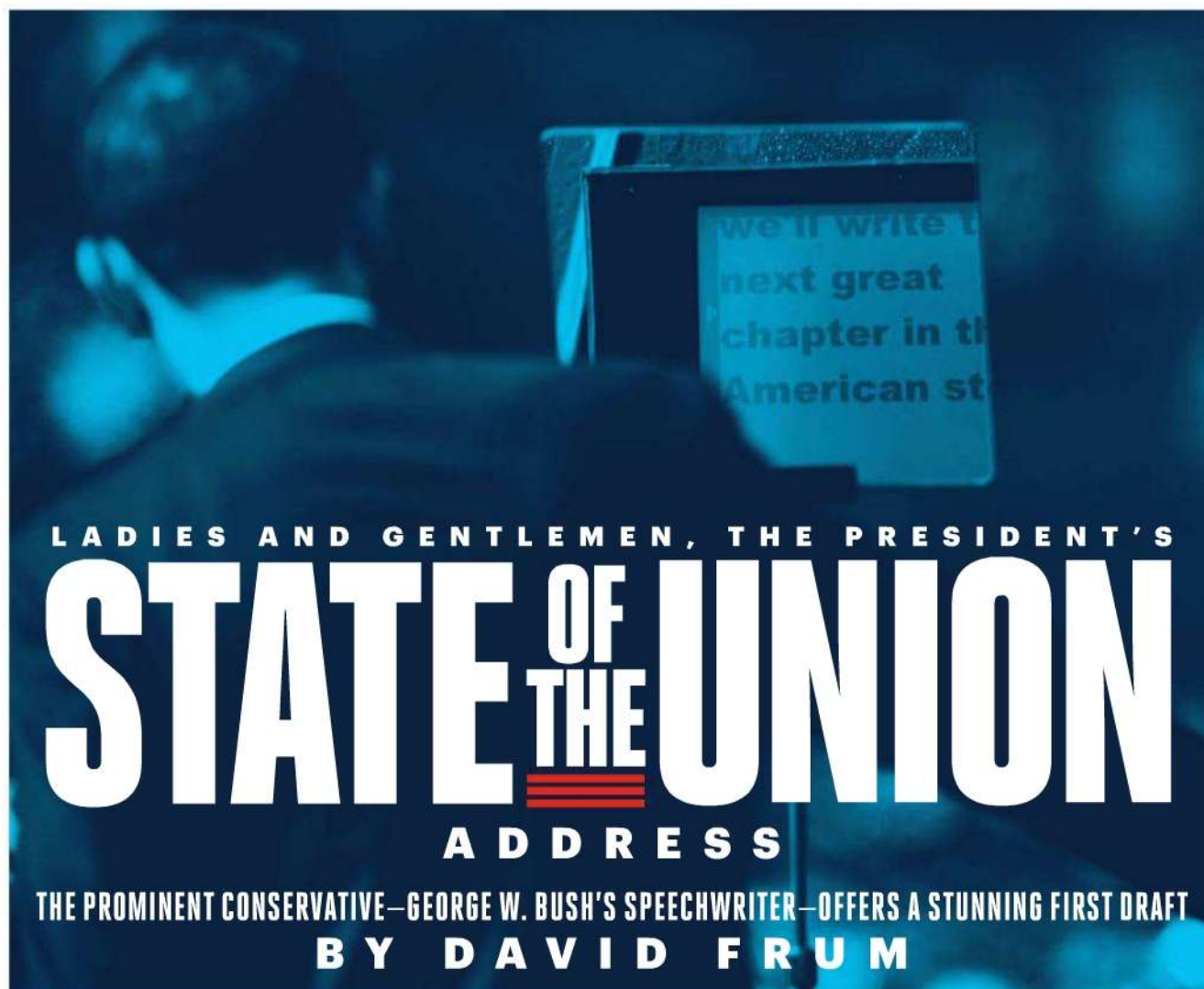
Thor, the Marvel Comics adaptation directed by Kenneth Branagh and due out in May. Hemsworth plays the title character opposite Natalie Portman and Anthony Hopkins, and next year he'll reprise the role in *The Avengers*, opposite Robert Downey Jr. (as Iron Man/Tony Stark) and Scarlett Johansson.

"OH, SHIT" IS RIGHT:

"I went from being recognized in Australia to being a fresh face in America, and for now there's that calm-before-the-storm feeling. I still have some 'Oh, shit' moments, though, about what's coming."

Two-button wool-and-mohair jacket (\$1,720)
and cotton shirt (\$495) by Louis Vuitton.

FOR STORE INFORMATION
SEE PAGE 121. PRODUCED
BY SHOTSIE FOR FIRST
SHOT PRODUCTIONS.
STYLING BY ARIANNE
TUNNEY, GROOMING BY
LINA HANSON, BOTH FOR
TRACEY MATTINGLY.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE PRESIDENT'S

STATE OF THE UNION

ADDRESS

THE PROMINENT CONSERVATIVE—GEORGE W. BUSH'S SPEECHWRITER—OFFERS A STUNNING FIRST DRAFT
BY DAVID FRUM

IT'S A WEIRD FEELING OF gender bending to imagine writing a major speech for a president of a different party. It's tempting to treat the whole exercise as a joke: "First of all, I'd like to express my apologies to Prime Minister Netanyahu for treating him so rudely." Or—worse—you insert into the president's mouth words that he'd never say, and the whole thing degenerates into political wish fulfillment. ¶ Yet there can be a real purpose in the exercise. After the Democratic defeat of November 1994, President Clinton telephoned the neoconservative Democrat Ben Wattenberg and wondered aloud how he'd ended up the manager of the government, and not the leader of the country. That one question propelled President Clinton's return to the political center. A supporter may have better insight into what an embattled president would wish to say. An opponent can offer better perspective on what such a president needs to say. ¶ So here's one conservative Republican's attempt to imagine what a liberal Democratic president should say if he wished in his next State of the Union to speak to the whole nation, adversaries as well as supporters, independents as well as partisans:

THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES the president to address Congress on the state of our union. But the American people already know the answer. These are difficult times. More Americans have been out of work for longer than at any time since World War II. Homes foreclosed, retirement savings lost, dreams deferred. You don't need a man in a blue suit in a remote capital to appear on your television to tell you the story of your life.

What you need from your political leaders are solutions to our shared problems. You are not asking for miracles, and I understand that. But you are insisting that your government listen to you—work for you—and deliver some realistic plans to make your life better. And I understand that, too.

For a decade now, almost everything you've heard from your federal government has been bad news. From the failure to prevent 9/11 to the disappointing results of the economic stimulus, it seems that government has again and again failed to deliver the results the American people had a right to expect.

Government is supposed to regulate the financial institutions so that they do not take dangerous risks. Government did not do that.

Government is supposed to avoid wars, but when we do fight them, to win them rapidly and decisively. Government did not do that.

Government is supposed to create the conditions for job growth and income growth. Government did not do that.

Government is supposed to defend our borders. And government did not do that.

No one person, and no one political party, is responsible for these failures. We are all responsible. In the heat of campaigns, we fix all the blame for all our problems on the other team. But whether we wear a blue jersey or a red jersey, we know inside that we made these problems together.

From the point of view of the people watching tonight, we in this chamber look a lot alike—look alike and act alike—and very different from the people at home.

We play political games that seem all-consuming to us—but irrelevant to hard-pressed Americans who are looking to their government to revive the economy and bring our troops home in success from Afghanistan and Iraq.

A practical example: The Federal Reserve is our most important tool to fight recession. In April I nominated MIT professor Peter Diamond to the Federal Reserve's board of governors. There's no question that Professor Diamond is outstandingly qualified: In fact, just this past October, he won the Nobel Prize for economics.

Yet ten months after I named Professor Diamond, his nomination has not come to a vote.

Incredible as it may seem, any one U.S. senator can stop a vote on any nomination by the president—even a nomination that would otherwise pass the Senate 99 to 1. This power to stop votes is not found in our Constitution. It's not found in any act of Congress. It's not even found in the written rules of the Senate. It's a custom that has grown up over the years—and that has now grown out of control.

Some may say: "Well, that's fine for you to say now that you are the president. Where were you when Democratic senators were blocking votes on Republican nominations?"

My answer: I agree. The process was abused under President Bush as well.

So let the change start with me and with my political party. In the Bush administration, two outstandingly able lawyers were nominated to appellate judgeships but rejected by Democratic senators without a vote: Peter Keisler and Miguel Estrada. Mr. Keisler went on to become acting attorney general, Mr. Estrada to become one of the country's leading advocates before the Supreme Court. I want to see them now get the vote they were denied: When vacancies appear in the courts of appeals, I will renominate these two jurists myself.

These secret processes of obstruction should end. And so today I call on the leaders of the two parties in the Senate to end the custom of single-senator "holds" on presidential nominations. Presidential nominees should receive an up-or-down vote within thirty days of their nomination.

Improving the functioning of our institutions—and reform of this Congress—is not merely some tidying-up measure. Rather, it is fundamental to our ability to serve the American people in this time of economic distress.

Let me give you another very practical example of the harm done by the paralysis of our politics.

When my administration arrived in office in January 2009, we confronted the worst economic collapse since the 1930s. We did our best to estimate the depth of the crisis ahead. We got it wrong. As bad as we thought the recession would be, it was worse. We prepared for a fifty-year flood. We got a hundred-year flood. We thought our measures would cap unemployment at about 8 percent. Despite our measures, unemployment has reached almost 10 percent. Unemployment remains almost 10 percent.

The economists tell us that the recovery measures instituted by this administration have achieved dramatic results. Two of America's most esteemed researchers—one an advisor to John McCain's presidential campaign, the other formerly a top advisor to President Clinton—have crunched the numbers. They agree that our recovery plan stopped the free fall in the U.S. economy, saved the world from a new Great Depression, and added 2.7 million new jobs.

These are powerfully positive results. But not positive enough. So we need to do more—and we need Congress to join with this administration as partners in the all-important mission of economic recovery.

We can see the future of a better economy already emerging.

Over the past twelve months, we have created more than one million net new jobs in the private sector—while government employment has shrunk by more than 250,000.

Corporate profitability has reached record highs, meaning that companies can afford to hire as demand revives.

Including dividends, the stock market has gained more than 10 percent this year.

If this is "socialism," what would capitalism look like?

As our private economy expands and government cuts back, Americans are rediscovering savings and thrift.

Through much of the past decade, our national savings rate neared zero. Today, American households are saving \$6 out of every \$100 they earn. As Americans save more, they are paying down debt. At the beginning of the recession, out of every \$100 earned by the average household, almost \$18.50 was consumed by financial obligations. Today we are down to \$17—and still dropping.

Hope is in the air, change is within our reach.

Yet we face two great economic challenges:

In the near term, we must do more to accelerate job creation and economic growth.

Then, as our economy recovers, we must put the U.S. government back on the path to a balanced budget.

Job creation begins with monetary policy.

Already, the Federal Reserve is injecting more money into our economy. When the Federal Reserve stopped creating new money in April of last year, our recovery stalled. As it resumed creating money in November, our recovery has revived.

The Federal Reserve board is our most important recession-fighting tool. I am disturbed by recent attacks on the independence of the Federal Reserve. Like all the presidents since the creation of the Federal Reserve a century ago, I will defend the

**"CORPORATE PROFITABILITY
HAS REACHED RECORD
HIGHS . . . IF THIS IS
'SOCIALISM,' WHAT WOULD
CAPITALISM LOOK LIKE?"**

independence of the Federal Reserve.

Job creation continues by reducing the tax burden on individuals and enterprises.

In December, Democrats and Republicans agreed to extend the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003.

I urge that we do even more.

In addition to the Social Security payroll-tax holiday which I signed into law late last year, we should accelerate hiring by reducing our rates of corporate tax, the highest of any major economy.

The right kind of focused, temporary government spending can also be a powerful job creator. Over the next generation, we desperately need to improve our road, air, and rail networks and to modernize our systems for distributing electricity. We should be doing as much as possible of this work now, to spur recovery.

Unfortunately, infrastructure investment has been a victim of our broken politics. The money does not go to the best projects. The money is earmarked by the most powerful politicians. We need a new tunnel under the Hudson. We get a bridge to nowhere.

I propose that all revenues from gasoline taxes, aviation fees, and other similar sources be placed in a fund directed by an independent infrastructure bank. The bank would be permitted to issue bonds up to a certain level, too. Instead of Congress writing a highway bill every five years, the bank would develop a list of priorities—no politics allowed. I'd suggest we have seven directors of the bank. Three would be nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Two would be nominated by a conference of the Republican state governors, two more by a conference of the Democratic state governors. The directors would serve fixed and overlapping terms. When we're balancing the budget, we can move slowly through the list of bank infrastructure priorities. In a year like 2011, when it's cheap to borrow and workers need jobs, we can bring projects forward faster. Congress would always have the last word, in an up-or-down vote. And Congress would decide whether to increase or reduce the flow of future tax revenues into the infrastructure bank.

Every American will have the reassurance that these new infrastructure projects are not pork barrel. They were not chosen to reach some political deal. The money you pay at the pump or at the airport or in future taxes on carbon dioxide and other pollutants will be reinvested toward faster travel, more advanced telecommunications, and cleaner water.

I don't expect much applause from mentioning the *tax* word. But when the time comes to move toward balanced budgets, some new revenues are going to be essential. I know there is a Republican proposal that claims to reach balance without taxes—in 2063.

I think we need to move toward balance faster than that. Our principal reliance should be reductions in government spending for those who need government least, while protecting those who need support most.

We must push for new efficiencies in government health-care programs. Between Medicare, Medicaid, and care for our veterans and service personnel, government spends more than half of all the dollars in our health system. It was already true before

the health reform of 2010—before I was elected president—that American governments state and federal spent more government dollars per American on health care than Canada's governments spent per Canadian. And again—that's just government dollars, it does not count private-sector dollars.

Yet all our extra health spending is not buying extra health. We spend more money on health care than any country on earth: seventeen cents out of every dollar of national income. The runner-up is Switzerland: 13 percent. Let's put it this way: If we spent the same as Switzerland, it would be the near equivalent of getting our entire defense budget for free. Yet the average Swiss lives almost four years longer than the average American. We pay far more and get far less.

Still, even after squeezing all the waste we can—even after slowing the growth of future government health-care spending—without new revenues it will take us far too long to just grow our way to a balanced budget. New revenues will be needed.

Yet we have to be careful. The wrong kind of tax changes can weaken our future economic growth. We don't want to return to the days of 50 percent income-tax rates.

Instead, we should reform our tax code to lower taxes on work, saving, and investment. We should move to a new kind of tax code, with higher taxes on consumption and pollution.

Imagine this future: Every dollar you save is untaxed. Period. The first \$15,000

you spend on basic necessities—that goes untaxed, too. The next \$15,000 pays a low rate of tax. Each additional \$15,000 of spending is taxed at a slightly higher rate.

What this means is that the successful entrepreneur who earns \$1 million from his or her business will face no tax on any money he or she reinvests in the business. If that entrepreneur can get by with a modest lifestyle, they'll pay a modest rate of tax. If they want to spend the whole \$1 million, that's their business, but they'll pay a higher rate of tax.

Savers pay less, spenders pay more—we reduce our debt and invest in our future.

In the same way, we should tax the emissions of carbon dioxide that are changing our climate, then use the money to reduce our national debt, fund infrastructure improvements, and lower the taxes paid by working people.

As our economy recovers, it will also change. The future belongs to the nations with the most highly skilled workforces.

Between President Bush's No Child Left Behind law and the Race to the Top program enacted by the Democratic majority in the previous Congress, we have seen this decade dramatic improvements in federal support for education reform.

If we are to continue to upgrade our schools, we must work together to address the controversial topic of immigration.

Our immigration policy is distorted by three key flaws: too few highly skilled migrants, too many migrants without skills, and the humanitarian and national-security challenge presented by the estimated ten million undocumented and illegal aliens within our borders.

If there's any area of our politics where agreement should be possible, this is it.

We need to make more visas available for scientists, health-care workers, and computer specialists.

"FOR A DECADE NOW, ALMOST EVERYTHING YOU'VE HEARD FROM YOUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN BAD NEWS. WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE."

We need to cut back the number of low-skilled entrants who will need more help from government than they can ever pay in taxes.

We need to enforce immigration laws at the workplace, to remove the incentive to immigrate illegally—and to encourage those people who are here illegally to take their savings with them and return home. The federal government has created E-Verify, a reliable system for checking the legal work status of job applicants: 99.5 percent accurate. More than 196,000 employers now use the system, more than 1,400 more join every week.

With this new system in place, I will ask Congress to raise the fines for employment of illegal workers—and to change the law so that employers can no longer use “I didn’t know” as an excuse. It’s the employer’s responsibility to find out.

At the end of a period of effective enforcement, we need a humanitarian solution for the relatively small number of illegal aliens who have sunk deep roots in the United States and who have demonstrated their commitment to this country: serving in the armed forces, paying back taxes, and learning English.

Enforcement first, compassion next. But always our immigration policy should serve the interests of the United States. Nobody gains a right to American citizenship by breaking the laws that define American citizenship.

Let me turn last to the subject that should unite all Americans: the security of our nation.

For ten years, we Americans have divided on some vital subjects, from the Iraq war to terrorist detainees. But tonight I’d like to put these divisions into perspective.

9/11 was not just the deadliest-ever international terrorist attack on the United States. It was also the most complex and sophisticated. To infiltrate nineteen people into this country—maintain communications between them—coordinate them onto four different airplanes: That was an undertaking as ambitious as it was hateful.

In the years since 2001, we have seen more terrorist attacks and attempts against Western countries, including the attack on the Madrid train station in 2004, the attack on the London Underground in 2005, the 2006 plot against targets in the Canadian province of Ontario, last year’s underwear bomber, and the just-foiled plot to bomb Christmas season festivities in Portland, Oregon.

Now notice something: Each of these attempts and plots is less sophisticated than its predecessor, involving fewer people, less communication, and earlier detection by our police and intelligence professionals. Terrorists find it ever more difficult to train, to communicate, and to move money. We will never achieve perfect security. But this is what success in the war on terror looks like: a steady degradation of terrorist capability to do harm.

Presidents make foreign policy, and during elections the major-party candidates stress their differences. In between elections, however, what is most striking are the continuities.

My Iran policy is basically very similar to that of the Bush administration. We unsuccessfully sought dialogue. Now we are building international consensus for ever-tightening sanc-

tions against the Iranian nuclear program. We use unconventional means to disrupt that program. We are developing anti-missile technologies to protect our allies from the program in the worst-case scenario that the program becomes operational. We reserve all instruments of power to prevent Iran from going nuclear if other means fail. My policy toward China, India, Latin America, Africa, and other important regions of the world likewise more or less continues along the lines of predecessor administrations.

Yes, of course presidents make changes in U.S. foreign policy. I have ended combat operations in Iraq, moved to close the prison at Guantánamo Bay, and I have ramped up hunter-killer drone attacks against terrorist enemies on the Afghan-Pakistan border.

But the changes in foreign policy wrought by any one president in any particular year are usually gradual, incremental, and less impressive than the things that do not change. Ironically those changes that presidents do deliver are often very different from the changes they intended.

That’s why President Carter rethought his election commitment to withdraw U.S. forces from South Korea thirty years ago. Why Ronald Reagan took stronger action against apartheid in South Africa than any of his predecessors. Why Bill Clinton first campaigned against George H. W. Bush’s China policy—and then adopted it.

Sometimes late at night in the quiet of the Oval Office, I will light a cigarette, study the portraits on the walls, and ask myself why this is.

Part of the answer is the sheer scope and scale of the global responsibilities of the United States. We can reorient one or perhaps two major policy areas at any given time. The rest of the vast enterprise must inevitably chug forward on lines previously laid down.

Part of the answer is that presidents must often select their policy from a menu of very ugly options. You may not want to leave an army in South Korea, but you want even less to invite a second Korean war. I would have preferred to negotiate a peaceful termination of the Iranian nuclear program. Iran would not negotiate in good faith with me.

But the deepest part of the answer is that once elected, a president must to a great extent shed his or her earlier identity as a party leader. The commitments made by one president become the commitments of the United States. Our friends and allies rely on those commitments—and expect those commitments to endure beyond the administration that undertook them.

We campaign as members of a party. We govern as representatives of the whole nation. My friend, Britain’s Conservative prime minister, David Cameron, put it well recently when he said that “politics shouldn’t be so different from the rest of life, where rational people do somehow find a way of overcoming their disagreements.”

At this solemn gathering of all the component pieces of our national government, let us all recommit ourselves to that bigger and deeper national purpose. We’ve done it before. We can do it again. We must do it again. We will do it again. As we do, we will discover—despite recession and war—that the state of our Union is stronger than ever we knew or dared to hope. ■



Roger Ailes

[continued from page 73]

Okay, then: Is Roger Ailes crazy? Now that's a good question... because Roger Ailes believes that *you* are—or, at the very least, that you think you are. It's his grand theory of human behavior. "Look," he says, "there isn't a day that goes by that everybody doesn't say to themselves, 'Am I nuts?' They do it in their heads. People think that they're nuts." He has such confidence in the validity of this theory that he created a show for his America's Talking network called exactly that—*Am I Nuts?* He's so confident that he built Fox News as a twenty-four-hour *Am I Nuts?* for American conservatives. See, what Roger Ailes has done at Fox is find a way to mainstream extremity for fun and, of course, for profit. He's found out that people need the validating experience of extremity in the same way that he does. And he takes extreme positions and says extreme things because he needs to, because they allow him to make the choice that's at the heart of his power.

"It would be a lie to say that I don't care what people say about me," he says. "Every human being cares unless they're nuts. Am I nuts? But you can't allow that to override your mission. You cannot allow whether someone likes you or not to alter your course of action. Sometimes I think, Sure, that hurts my feelings. But it's not so important that I will adjust what I'm doing because someone is not going to like me."

One day, some bullies beat up Roger Ailes as he walked home from school. His father hated to see him bruised and bloodied, but he didn't want to fight his son's battles for him, so he taught him how to fight, and sent him back to school with the words, "Remember, son, for them it's a fight, for you it's life and death."

You have heard this story before. You might have even told this story before, because it's an average American story, and you, the Esquire reader, are an average American. Certainly, you wouldn't be surprised to hear a man like Roger Ailes tell it, because it's exactly the kind of story powerful men tell to burnish their myths at their coveted tables at Michael's. But what if Roger Ailes is a powerful man because he really is different from other powerful men? What if Roger Ailes really does have to win every fight because every fight is a matter of life and death? So listen again to an average American story from an average American childhood, and ask if Roger Ailes is an average American after all:

When he was a baby, he fell out of his crib. He split his lip and he bled. A lot of babies do the same thing. But Roger kept on bleeding. Remember, this was seventy years ago. There was hardly anything known about hemophilia back then. And there was certainly not much that could be done about it, except transfusions of whole blood. "Well, you died. That's what you knew about it. I was told many times I wasn't going to make it."

The closest he came to dying was when he was seven or eight. He bit his tongue when he jumped off the roof of the garage. His mouth filled with blood and the blood would not stop, the blood soaked the sheets of his bed, and he heard the doctor tell his father that there was nothing he could do. Roger Ailes was going to bleed out through his tongue. But his father was a fighter; that is, he got into fights, and Roger admired him for it. Now he fought for his son's life. He picked Roger up, swaddled in bloody bedclothes, and drove him to the Cleveland Clinic with a police escort. At the factory where he worked, the old man tracked down everybody who had type-O-positive blood, and now he called upon all of them to come to Cleveland for his son. They did, and Roger can still remember their names, Dirtyneck Watson and the rest, men filthy from work who lined up one after another to give Roger their blood, arm to arm. "Well, son, you have a lot of blue-collar blood in you, never forget that," my father said after I got through it, and I never have. A lot of what we do at Fox is blue-collar stuff."

But he was never that kid, not really. He couldn't be. The disease he had was the Royal Disease, the disease of Queen Victoria's progeny, a disease considered effete, a mortal taint. He used to have to sit on a pillow at school. He wasn't able to go out at recess. And so one day he asked his parents to let him walk to school, like the other kids, and they let him. "And some guys beat me up. I went home a little beat up and my dad, I saw tears in his eyes for the first time. I'd never seen it. And he said, 'That's never going to happen to you again.' He taught me how to fight. And he told me to stay away from any fight that I could. 'But if you have no options, then remember, son, for them it's a fight. For you, it's life and death.'"

Everybody bleeds. We bleed all the time. We bleed when we move, we bleed when we bump into things. But for many years—there wasn't much that could be done for hemophilia until the sixties—Roger kept on bleeding. That's why he has such bad arthritis: because blood collects in the joints and ruins them. And that's why he labors under the judgment of his bulk and finds it so deeply unfair when people call him fat. Because he can't move. And that's why he found a way to fight so many of his life-and-death battles through the television screen: It was his way of fighting the kids he saw playing outside through the window. And that's why he's so sensitive and so instinctively alert to other people's stuff... why one day, when he was talking about the need for his anchors to have warmth, and the subject of President Obama's warmth problem came up, he responded quickly, instantly, "Well, maybe if your father left you when you were two, your stepfather left you when you were four, and your mother was out of your life when you were ten, you wouldn't be warm, either."

So what kind of man has to win all the time? The kind of man whose wounds are always fresh.

So what happens when a man like... Roger Ailes comes to America and tries to fit in with average Americans? Well, ask your fellow Americans in Putnam County, New York—they know. Of course, to hear Roger Ailes tell it, he is no different from anyone else. He has a wife and a kid. He's trying to protect them. He's trying to give them a legacy. He also probably needed some extra space—a second home where he could mount George Soros's head on his wall. So, like any average American, Roger Ailes bought some land and started working on that dream house—that dream mansion, really—about an hour and a half north of Manhattan, in the sleepy Hudson River Valley village of Garrison, in the township of Philipstown, in the county of Putnam. It's Mr. Ailes's kind of place—the kind of place with history (Benedict Arnold slept there); a view, across the river, of West Point (where Mr. Ailes occasionally lectures on media and the military); a volunteer fire department (where he likes to hang out); and one of the highest per capita incomes in the United States. He thought of retiring there with his wife and son. Maybe writing his memoirs so his son wouldn't have to learn about his father by reading his obituary in *The New York Times*.

Of course, the taxes were too high for Mr. Ailes's taste, and he wanted to have some input into that. So, like any other average American, he bought a couple of newspapers. Bought them for his wife, really, to give her something to do, and for his son, to give the boy a legacy. And then, because he's concerned about his family's safety, and because the problem with America is that there are actually Americans there, he started buying all the houses around him and leaving them empty. Million dollars here, million dollars there, what the hell, it's a good investment. And then he found out that there was actually something called zoning up there, with all sorts of restrictive covenants and all sorts of ways for the government to take land from average Americans out there trying to make ends meet. And then he found out that the town of Philipstown has been working nine years—"twice as long as World War II!"—on something called a comprehensive zoning agreement. Thing's a hundred pages long. The Constitution's only thirty-five! It's like the health-care bill. No one can read it, no one can understand it. There's language in the damned thing that suggests that if you build a fence, you need to put openings in it so wildlife can pass through and an environmental inspector can come on your property. Roger wasn't having it. "I said, I would suggest that you call first, because otherwise I'll shoot him and my dog will eat him." But that's Roger Ailes. "I can fight. The rest of the people up there were having this thing shoved down their throats, and they were terrified." So he hired a lawyer, and then made the lawyer available, gratis, to anyone who wanted to challenge the zoning agreement. And then he got the paper involved, Fox News style. And then suddenly, Roger Ailes really had come to America. He'd come to one small town in

America in precisely the way he had come to the rest of the country. "I had no idea there was any intrigue up there when I moved there. I thought this was a normal, nice community. All of a sudden, we find out, holy shit. It reminds me of the Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam. Remember? In '65, they fly the air cavalry to this field, and they're surrounded by two thousand North Vietnamese troops that are on vacation in an ammo dump. So that's what happened to me. I landed in the Ia Drang Valley. All of a sudden, I got people saying, Oh, my God, Roger Ailes from Fox News is in town. Oh, my God..."

Was he suffering from a flashback from his days in 'Nam? He couldn't have been—he never went to 'Nam because of his bleeding. But he *dreamed* of going and seeing what he was made of. Now they had him surrounded in Putnam County. He had come to hang out with the volunteer fire department and have locals to the mansion for dinner. He had come to drive a car in the Fourth of July parade and to buy the township its fireworks. He had come to help people *fight* who couldn't fight on their own. Now, at a big zoning meeting last April, he brought along his lawyer to speak, and the town supervisor was telling his lawyer to *sit down*. The town supervisor wasn't letting Roger Ailes's lawyer speak! So Roger stood up and went to the microphone. "Civility," was the first word he uttered, but by this time the crowd in the high school gymnasium was either cheering him or cheering the town supervisor who was standing up to him. The people in the gym all knew one another; many of them had gone to school together. But now they were divided, as Roger Ailes stood in the middle of them, quoting George Washington and lecturing on the economy and the Constitution. And you know what? He won again. The town supervisor made the changes in the comprehensive zoning agreement that Roger Ailes wanted, although it hasn't passed yet. If it does—if it passes the way the town supervisor says he wants it to pass—then the town supervisor is a "man of honor," and Roger will go back to his average American life.

And if it doesn't?

"Then," Mr. Ailes says, "there will be war."

In the course of its exclusive and unbiased exploration of Roger Ailes, Esquire had several meetings with him. At the end of the first, he said something that was, like much of what he had to say, seemingly offhand but in the end deeply revealing. It was on a subject he knows well—the subject of people's *stuff*. He was talking about President Obama's stuff. He was saying that he could never underestimate the importance of a person's formative experiences in who that person turned out to be. Your Esquire correspondent said that he, as an adoptive parent, was well aware of this. And Roger Ailes, knowing *stuff* when he hears it, said, "Yes, but your daughter loves you. And this is how you'll know: One day, something will scare her. She'll be scared, ter-

rified, and she'll look to you for protection. And that's how you'll know she loves you."

Your Esquire correspondent was moved, as he often was in his dealings with Roger Ailes. It was a human moment, the kind that Mr. Ailes frequently offers and even insists on. But your Esquire correspondent couldn't help but also notice Mr. Ailes's conflation of love and fear, because it's one of the polarities that defines him and everything he has ever done. Victory and defeat. Weakness and strength. Love and fear. They are familiar to any viewer of Fox News, familiar to any resident who attended the April zoning meeting in Putnam County, familiar to his many friends and many enemies. They are his stuff, or the inevitable consequences of his stuff, and he can't help but see life in terms of them. He's an old dad. He was fifty-nine when his son was born. He has never loved anyone the way he loves his son, but he fears that his love has made him weak in a way he has never been; has made him soft in a way he has never been; has made him vulnerable in a way he has devoted his entire life to rising above. He even uses those words when describing his domestic and paternal happiness: "I have a weakness now. I have a soft spot."

And so he pleads for sympathy. Of all the remarkable aspects of Esquire's exclusive and unbiased exploration of Roger Ailes, this is the most remarkable, and the most surprising. He asked us that certain things not be written about him, because he has a son. Most of these things are unremarkable, and can be found in

his Wikipedia entry. Nevertheless, he doesn't want his son to read them. He doesn't want his son to read them *here*. It is a deeply human request, and deeply manipulative. But that's what makes Roger Ailes who he is. He makes sure that you cannot deal with him without having to *contend* with him. Not simply at the level of his machinations but at the level of his *stuff*—at the level of his bruised and bloodied human core. But the human moment is the most dangerous. He asks for quarter when he has given none, asks for sympathy when he has offered none, asks for fairness when he has been "fair and balanced," asks for consideration while admitting that the only consideration he has ever shown is consideration for his mission, whatever that may be. And so, here, at the end of Esquire's brave, bold, exclusive, and utterly unbiased report on Roger Ailes, we'd like to ask him one last question.

You know, Mr. Ailes, there are television executives who are so convinced you *get* television news that they admit asking themselves before they make any decision, What would Roger do?

So that's the question we'd like to ask you now. You have asked Esquire to be sympathetic to your situation. You have asked for fairness. And yet you must have heard these same kinds of requests many times in your life; you must have heard these same pleas, so you, in your heart of hearts, must already know the answer to the question that only Esquire dares to ask:

What would Roger do? ■

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Bloomberg

[continued from page 95] What world do you live in? Did you ever do a search for president of a university?"

Um, no.

"I was chairman of the board for Johns Hopkins, I did two searches, okay?"

He's so forceful, so absolutely certain of himself. His confidence is a thing with texture and size, grown vast in the hothouse of his fortune.

"I'm not certain," he says. "I'm right."

After a small but humiliating compromise, Bloomberg gets his way on Cathie Black and goes back to the daily business of being mayor. He attends the lighting of the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree, accepts some plug-in cars from a Toyota executive, opens a science park, cuts half a million dollars for homeless and runaway kids. He's the most powerful man in New York City, but he's restless in the role, already looking three years ahead. All his life, he's done big things. Consider that 1.7 years he's added to the life expectancy of New Yorkers. Multiply that by the eight million stories in the naked city and you have 13.6 million extra years of life in New York City alone. He did this despite the resistance of Philip Morris, which retaliated by moving its headquarters out of New York. Then he put a sizable chunk of his personal fortune into fighting tobacco all over the world. By this standard, he's the greatest humanitarian in history.

He just wants us to be reasonable. Business is the great engine of progress. This is the theme tying together all his ideas, the reason why we have to keep the borders open, rebuild the national infrastructure, restrict guns in cities, and support cosmopolitan freedoms like gay rights and religious tolerance. We need a modern educated country for the new age of global competition. Is that so hard to understand?

"We see, when it comes to politics, the same way," Arnold Schwarzenegger told me. "We feel like let's just get the job done and worry about it later who'll be smarter to claim that it's their idea. Let's just reform the political system without worrying about Democrats stand for this and Republicans stand for that."

As Cory Booker says, "He's the Obi-Wan Kenobi to all of us young Jedi knights."

Although Bloomberg is preparing the way to power, with alliances and coalitions and political favors, just as he did during the period when he was dissembling about running for mayor of New York, he continuously deflects the question of his ultimate goal, and is plainly dismissive of the national electorate. The way he sees it, "25 percent of the country would vote Democratic even if Sarah Palin were their candidate, and 25 percent would vote Republican even if Trotsky were their candidate." At most, he hopes to nudge the great wheel

of progress and win some friends for the great city of New York.

Honest.

But that's not the right question. There's only one right question in the independent nation of Mike Bloomberg: What does Mike Bloomberg want? The answer comes in the details. We're riding the Airport Express in Hong Kong. He's got his iPad in his lap, flirting with a pretty young reporter from the *China Daily*. He says cheese when the camera snaps. Then he turns to me. "Where do you live?"

I tell him.

"I think kids should grow up in the city," he says. "I'll tell you a great story—when my oldest went to Princeton, the first three weeks, she hated it. I said, 'Emma, why?' She said, 'Daddy, all they do is drink!' I said, 'Emma you've never turned down a drink in your life.' She said, 'Daddy, I did this in the tenth grade.'"

Spoken like a true New Yorker—in fact, the ultimate New Yorker, with the spending power of a state and complete indifference to the petty concerns of ordinary political hypocrisy.

In the conference center where he's officially named chairman of the C40 group, the mayors and technocrats of all the major cities of the world have gathered to hear him speak. He strides onto the stage with his usual confidence and a genial smile. "Jóu sàhn!"

That's "good morning" in Cantonese. As mayor of the most international city on earth, Bloomberg needs to know these things. But he'll continue in English, another language he keeps struggling to master.

But seriously, it's an honor to be selected as chairman, and thanks to David for his passionate work on fighting climate change—and thanks to the people of Hong Kong. Dò jèh! We salute you!

Then Bloomberg launches into one of his startlingly blunt speeches. The data is in. Climate change is the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced. National governments have failed. Cities are on the front lines of rising sea levels and extreme weather. They produce 70 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. The leaders in this room represent 21 percent of the global gross domestic product. They must be bolder, stronger, more ambitious, more collaborative—when London introduced congestion pricing, nine other cities followed. Bogotá showed the way on rapid-transit bus systems. And now New York City has created the most ambitious sustainability plan in the U.S., PlaNYC, which will save \$700 million a year and create seventeen thousand new jobs and reduce greenhouse gases 30 percent by 2030.

His gift to all: PlaNYC in Chinese.

Because government always gets in the way, unless you become a government unto yourself.

At the press conference immediately afterward, he introduces himself to the world with a wry smile: "Mike Bloomberg, I'm not running for president." ■

Back to the Studs

[continued from page 101] a pickax—a giant thing, not far removed from a Pulaski on the tool family tree—because he likes using it for tearing down plaster and lath. I haven't used it. For me, it's like performing heart surgery with a chain saw. I'd rather claw away with my hammer, a crowbar, and my reciprocating saw. It might take me longer, but it seems less risky to me. Swinging a pickax inside your house seems a lot like swinging a baseball bat inside a locker room. Sooner or later, someone's going to get hit in the mouth.

Demolition can be grunt work, that's true. But as strange as it might sound, demolition isn't always about pure destruction. Sometimes it's about physics and leverage and finesse.

In our den, the former owners had covered the walls with that fake wood paneling that was popular when people thought fondue was a great idea. In most places, it popped off pretty easily, lifted from behind with a long crowbar. But sometime after they had put up the paneling, the former owners put a fresh layer of drywall on the ceiling, and the top row of paneling—and the nails that held it in place along its top edge—was trapped behind it. I spent an afternoon trying like hell to pry away a single piece of it, and I couldn't get it down no matter how many times I called it a cunt. I gave up and moved on to other jobs, slowly coming to the grim realization that I was going to have to take down the ceiling if I wanted to take down the walls.

Then my father-in-law, Jim, and my brother-in-law Rob came by for an afternoon to give me a hand. I decided we should tackle the den, because I didn't want to go back in there alone. Rob and I began taking down the plaster and lath where I'd managed to remove the paneling, and Jim began to survey what was left of it, that long course along the ceiling.

Jim is a retired firefighter, and the truth about firefighters is, most of them are better at trades than they are at fighting fires. Jim built a terrific house once with the boys from his fire hall—there were plumbers and electricians and carpenters among them, men who filled their plentiful off days with jobs on the side. Jim picked up tricks from them; he learned how architecture works. Fighting fires in houses and feed silos also colored the way he saw buildings. Fire highlights a structure's strengths and exposes its weaknesses. There were certain elements that would hold even during an inferno, and there were entire sections that would collapse with the slightest lick of flame or touch from an ax. Jim learned that buildings are built from the bottom up, and that's how they usually come down, too.

He looked at the troublesome paneling for a little while before he even thought to pick up a tool. I had just torn at it, but he poked it a little, trying to find its soft spot. And sure enough, with nothing more than a small crowbar, Jim managed to work his way around the room,

somehow lifting each sheet of paneling from the wall without damaging the ceiling. I'm still not sure how, exactly, he did it, but I know that he did it without breaking a sweat or hurting his shoulders or calling anything a terrible name. Jim went with wisdom rather than guns.

That's why I love my reciprocating saw. It feels like the wisdom that I haven't entirely earned yet. If a wall is framed properly, each part holds every other part of it in place. It's a complex combination of forces, of strength and resistance, tied together like a muscle. I've seen guys try to take down walls with hammers, and it's pretty close to impossible. The wood has too much flex, and the nails have too much hold. Hitting it with a hammer does nothing but cut up your hands. But if you zip through the middle of each stud with a reciprocating saw, you can literally pull apart a wall with your bare hands, the way Jim managed to lift away that paneling—no noise, no vibration, no splinters, no mess. Make a few quick, well-placed cuts through a wall's weakest points and the whole thing will unravel like a knot that seems impossible to solve until you find the one strand to pull.

That's how eighteen thousand pounds of our house have come down and been carried out—carefully but definitively, never to return. I can't see any of it anymore. I can see only the original floors, unearthed. I've saved the beautiful trim and plaster moldings. I've found a gorgeous arch made of brick in our kitchen, inexplicably filled in however many years ago. I've discovered the original oak front doors, which I'll restore and put back into place. I've found a lot of things worth saving.

I've also found a few hundred miles of knob and tube. I've dug out a couple dozen buried junction boxes. I've tapped into that smoldering pocket of vermiculite. I've spotted a leak in the roof. I've found a sleeping bat, squeezed into an impossible space. I've found a lot of things that needed removing.

I have that dumpster and a half to go before I can start the rest of my endless to-do list. But already, even through the haze of all that dust, I can see the future perfectly. All the while I've been taking down the house, I've been putting it back together, and in that house, in the house I've imagined myself building, I'm happy again.

And so I'm happy now. ■

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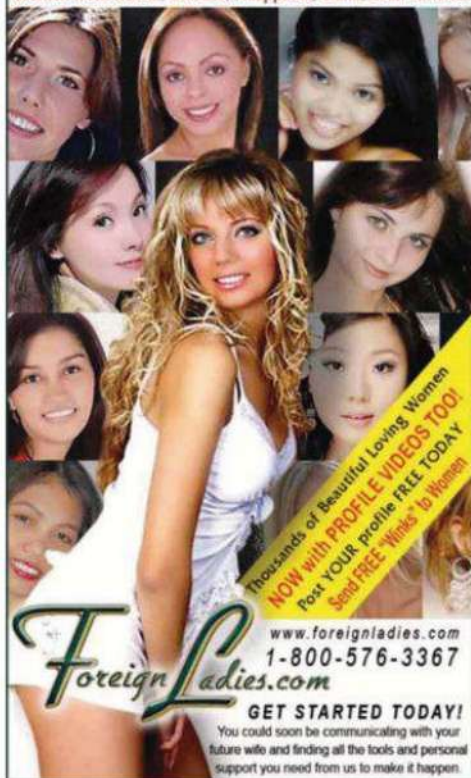
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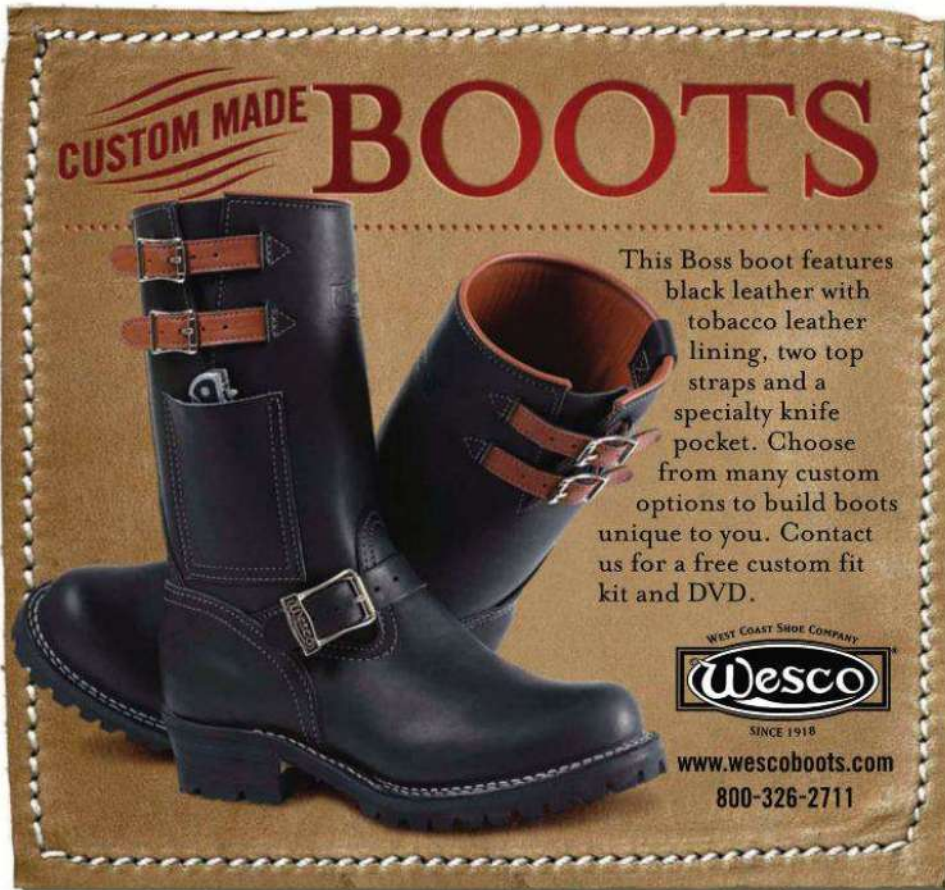
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