

Holiday



A Festive Holiday Light Show

(Captional magic by Adam Fletcher, Vol. 10, Iss. 4)

Columbus Day

By Sean Hammond and Kelly Gunter. Illustrations by Marc Trzepla, Vol. 2, Iss. 5

Hi, campers! Columbus Day is fast approaching, and you know what that means.... That's right! 503 years of mayhem and mischief brought by the Europeans. I think Kurt Vonnegut Jr. said it best:

1492: the teachers told the children that this was when their continent was discovered by human beings. Actually, millions of human beings were already living full and imaginative lives on the continent in 1492. That was simply the year in which sea pirates began to cheat and rob and kill them.

But let's not give that lucky Italian all the credit. Hell, just about everyone from Europe landed in the Americas. First there was St. Brendan (an Irish monk), but he was only interested in finding the Isle of the Blessed. Then the Vikings came along. The Vikings, the scourge of Europe, those marauders whose name struck fear into the hearts of men got their collective asses kicked when they tried to form a colony in "Vinland." And that was the end for the rock chewing Vikings.

But then Columbus shows up, carrying with him the entire Western ethos, not to mention a healthy approval of the Inquisition in Spain, which was just beginning to find its stride. Columbus brought egocentrism, slavery, oh, and small pox. But what can you expect from the Europeans of the time. It was bound to happen. Hell, the only reason they weren't still living in piles of their own shit was because the Bubonic Plague taught them a quick lesson: Hygiene and You (or how not to die from pollution caused by overcrowding, Part I). For up until that time cleanliness was certainly not next to Godliness, in fact it was considered

an indication of sin. It was just one of those little Christian hang-ups from the good old Roman Empire, for however immoral their system was they certainly knew how to keep clean. And whatever the Romans were, the Christians didn't want to be. So which god would cleanliness be next to?

Yeah, sure, Columbus's landing started a policy of rape and

plunder that lasted up until just after World War II, but there were even worse explorers. Columbus only decimated the islands of the Gulf, but Cortez obliterated entire civilizations.

Yup, the Spanish did a number on Central and South America. Burned books (only one Mayan codex remains. All the others were burned by representatives of the Inquisition), melted down fine gold work (including an entire garden

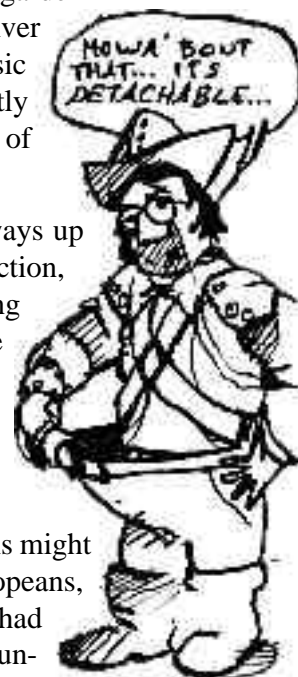
created by the Incansic civilization), and either directly or inadvertently killed millions of people.

And then the English, always up for a good plunder, got into the action, but a little further north. Buy Long Island for a string of beads? Give me a break. Land of the Free? Are you kidding? Does "Trail of Tears" ring a bell? How about "Ghost Dance"?

In a way, I think the Indians might have gotten back with the Europeans, in the long-run. While men who had been at sea for months were running around sticking their dicks into any woman, willing or otherwise, no one bothered to tell them about Syphilis. "Oh her? No. Her fingers are supposed to fall off like that. It's like the leaves in the fall, they'll grow back in the spring. People are just different on this segment of the globe. Sure, go sleep with her and then cough on the other men."

Europeans also got tobacco from the Indians. Used in a reserved manner by the natives, the Europeans predictably overused it, until one individual dies of tobacco related illnesses every ten seconds world wide today. Light up, you black lunged sons of bitches and have a happy Columbus Day.

If you'd like to read more about it, we recommend: Navigatio Sancti Brendani (better brush up on your Latin), The Prince by Machivelli, Helpful Microorganisms by Daniel Lapedes, and The Surgeon General's Warning found on any pack of cigarettes.



Savages

by Sean Hammond *et al.* Illustrations by Marc Trzepla, Vol. 5, Iss. 6

“An Indian tribe is sovereign to the extent that the US permits it to be sovereign.”

—Federal District Judge Russell Smith, 1973

Greetings, fellow settlers. One of my favorite times of year has dragged its scaly ass into the present again. That’s right: Columbus Day is here. Modern historical revisionists have gone out of their way to inundate American society with the fact that Columbus didn’t make the virgin continent bleed. Leif Erikson, St. Brendan, Madoc, Jerry Lewis, Jesus, heck, there’s even evidence that the Phoenicians and Egyptians

stomped their little sandals on our amber waves of grain.[†] Regardless of who it was, they were all uncouth. It wasn’t until the Europeans developed couthness (i.e. gunpowder) that they were able to fight off their red brothers. Time and again, prior to the “mini-ice age” that closed down the Greenland pop stand, the Vikings, with their ranks filled out with rock-chewing berserkers, were out-manuevered and out-gunned by the natives of Vinland.

In come the Europeans (version 7.5.5), outfitted with the newest in blunderbusses, smelling of royal ass-kissing, and generally being nasty to the natives (not that the natives weren’t nasty, too); they brought the newest in pillaging technology to the Pillsbury Dough-boy world (Stab him in the gut and listen to him giggle. “Hee hee.”). After a few years of digging in and fanning out, Shullushama of the Chickasaw summed it up by saying:

It has been a great many years since our white brethren came across the big waters and a great many of them has not got civilized yet; therefore we wish to be indulged in our savage state of life until we can have the same time to get civilized.... There is some of our white brethren as much savage as the Indian.

Well put. But imagine the blow to the European superiority complex when Sequoyah of the Cherokee sat down and created an alphabet for his people. Uneducated, speaking no English, and struggling against criticism from others in his tribe,³ Sequoyah finally settled upon 86 characters for his new syllabic system in 1821. Despite a great deal of initial resistance, the system suddenly caught on.

Within a year of its being proven to work before the Chiefs, entering a Cherokee village must have been like walking into the ghetto: every available surface was covered with the characters of the new system. Trees, sides of homes, fence posts, and bark were used as slate (writing was done with voles. Oh, you can do it...just apply a lot of pressure) as neighbor taught neighbor the basics of the nineteenth century’s version of the information superhighway. Taking only a month for the average Cherokee to learn, 99% of the tribe was literate in their own language by 1827 when the tribe bought a printing press and began to print weekly issues of *The Cherokee Phoenix*.

After years of the Great White Father insisting the natives should become more civilized, the minute they became civilized enough to potentially read what was being

[†] The Cherry Plucker Prize goes to the Mayans, though. Hey, it’s not who’s first, but who does it best.

³Not to mention a quasi-myth telling the story of how God had created the Indians and the Whites at the same time. The Indians, being the elders, were given a book. The Whites were the losers and had only bows and arrows. Because the Indians didn’t know what to do with the book, their White brethren stole it when the Indians were looking at their bare feet after the Whites said, “Hey, your shoes are untied.” Hence, the Whites’ success at whipping up a good curry.



written about them, there had to be a crack down. Enter the U.S. Government (stage left), led by a whiz-bang of a guy, Andrew Jackson, defending its moral superiority. Heathens reading in their own language? Hell, no! Move 'um out!

After the dust had settled and the blood dried up, over four K of Cherokees were killed off in that little nature hike...mostly women, children, the elderly, and redheads. Comes from having only granola and diseased blankets to eat.

On the upside, historians have a great name to use ("Trail of Tears," silly) and a really catchy army drill cadence:

*Ship those red de-mons out west
and steal their fucking printing press!*

Sound off!

One, Two!

Sound off!

Three, Four!

Sound off!

One-Two!

Three-Four!



Random Facts

Compiled by Sean Hammond (Vol. 3, Iss. 4)
When the Canarsee Indians sold Manhattan to the Dutch, they sold the land owned by a different tribe.

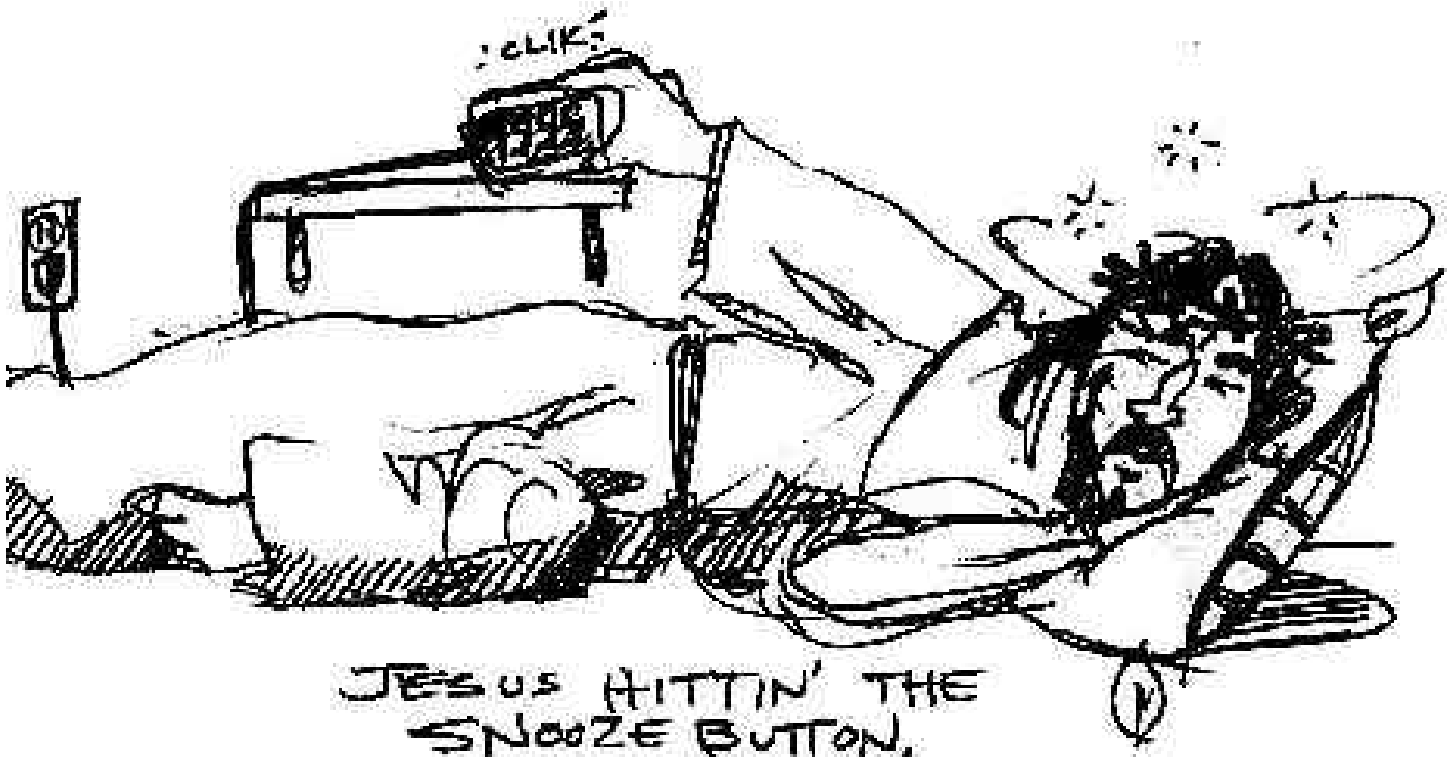
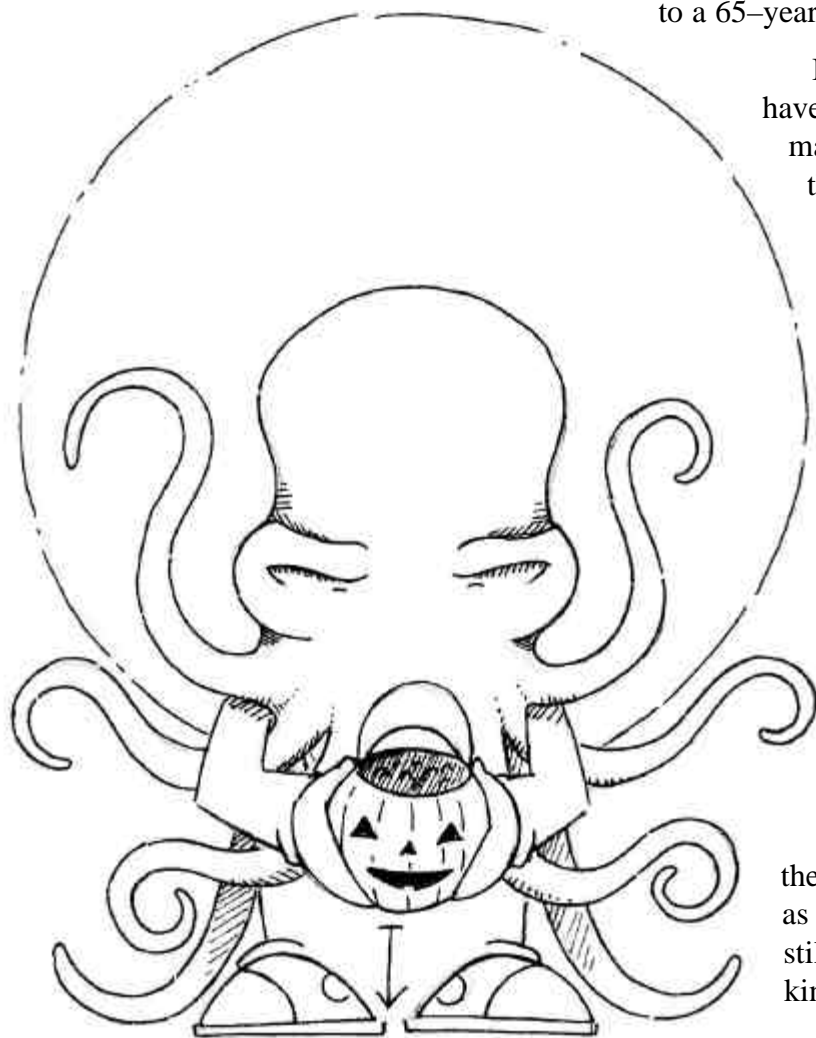


Image by Mark Trezpla, Vol. 3, Iss. 2

Cthulhu vs. The Great Pumpkin

by Janis Lilly. Illustrations by Gil Merritt and Matthew Weaver, Vol. 11, Iss. 9

It's that time of year again, folks. The leaves change, the days get shorter, and 50 million little kids dress in plastic icons, ring your doorbell and thrust bags in your face looking for sugar. Yes, it's Halloween, that magical mystical holiday that makes public begging a family function. Now, normally we would grab these kids, kick 'em in the ass, and lecture them on the value of a buck, but since they're dressed as Teletubbies and Barbies, it's okay. Maybe the homeless should look into theme begging. You may say it's shameless exploitation of the underprivileged, but I think you'd fork over cash quicker to a 65-year-old drunk if he was dressed as Dinah Shore.



I was reminiscing about the various costumes I have had over the years... clown, hooker, harlequin, madam... you could say I have a sex-and-humor thing going. They were the easiest costumes to come up with on short notice; it just depends on how many layers of make-up you put on. I called my son the other night to see what he was going as this year. He replied:

“Cthulhu.”

“Cthulhu? Could you go as something else? Batman perhaps?”

“No, Batman sucks. Why not Cthulhu?”

“Because I don't know where I'm going to get 700 meters of fabric and a few tons of chicken wire. Besides, you won't fit in the classroom.”

“Oh Mom, you're no fun...” (Click.)

Now, I don't know what disturbs me more, the fact that he's only 6 and he wants to dress up as humanity's most basic nightmare, or that I am still trying to figure out a pattern for Cthulhu. I kind of doubt JoAnne Fabrics will have one.

“Excuse me Miss? I was wondering if you had a Cthulhu pattern available in child sizes?”

“No. Please back away from the pinking shears display and may God have mercy on your soul.”

To me Halloween was always and will always be about two things, tricks and treats. Treats were the easiest. Ring a bell, get a prize. A little Pavlovian I suppose, but it works. Now, as far as the treats go, there were always three types of neighbors (with the exception of those assholes with their lights off who pretended they weren't there):

- 1) Regular candy from regular neighbors. Your standard-issue Snickers, Almond Joys and peanut butter cups.
- 2) Freaky ass neighbors, weird ass snacks. You know what I'm talking about, the cookies from your 87-year-old neighbor that appear to be rolled in cat hair. The tofu cuties from the guy who owns the rusted out '67 VW bus, that has the “Visualized Whirled Peas” and “I'd Rather be Transcendental” bumper sticker on it. The couch change and Band-Aids from the bachelor down the street. The porch with the empty

bowl and a sign that read "Please take ONE!" Remember these people, they will be the victims later on.

3) The Urban Legend, or Chocolate Shangri-La. The story about the mythical street, just one block away from the place you had to stop because your brothers M&M costume was chafing. The people that gave out REAL candy bars. Not the Lilliputian goodies everyone else did.

The trick section is a little harder to pull off, especially if you don't have older siblings or a strange, vindictive mother like I did. They are also broken up into three sections:

- 1) Annoying: Soap, eggs and toilet paper. Steal pumpkins.
- 2) Misdemeanor: Lick one side of a gummi bear's place in upper corner of windshield. Pray for rain. When the water melts the gummi bear, a crystallized stream of sugar will flow across the glass, scratching the crap out of it. Or toss bologna on cars. It's easy to conceal and it will strip the paint off wherever it lands. Try making Halloween designs with it; bats, moons, headless horsemen.
- 3) Felony: Take a squirt gun filled with lighter fluid. Spray front door. Ring bell. Throw match and laugh maniacally in bushes. (Thanks, Mom!)

Two words: Graveyard; shovel. Use your imagination.

All in all, Halloween should be about two things, sugar and fire (at least that is how it was at my house.)

However, when you get too old for trick-or-treating you might consider throwing a theme party. It's easy to expand on old themes like the haunted house or the graveyard. With a few new twists on an old theme, you will be rolling the bones out the door come the next morning. Here are a few to help you get started:

Theme: Haunted Whore House

This as far as I can tell would be the simplest one to get off, uh, pull off...

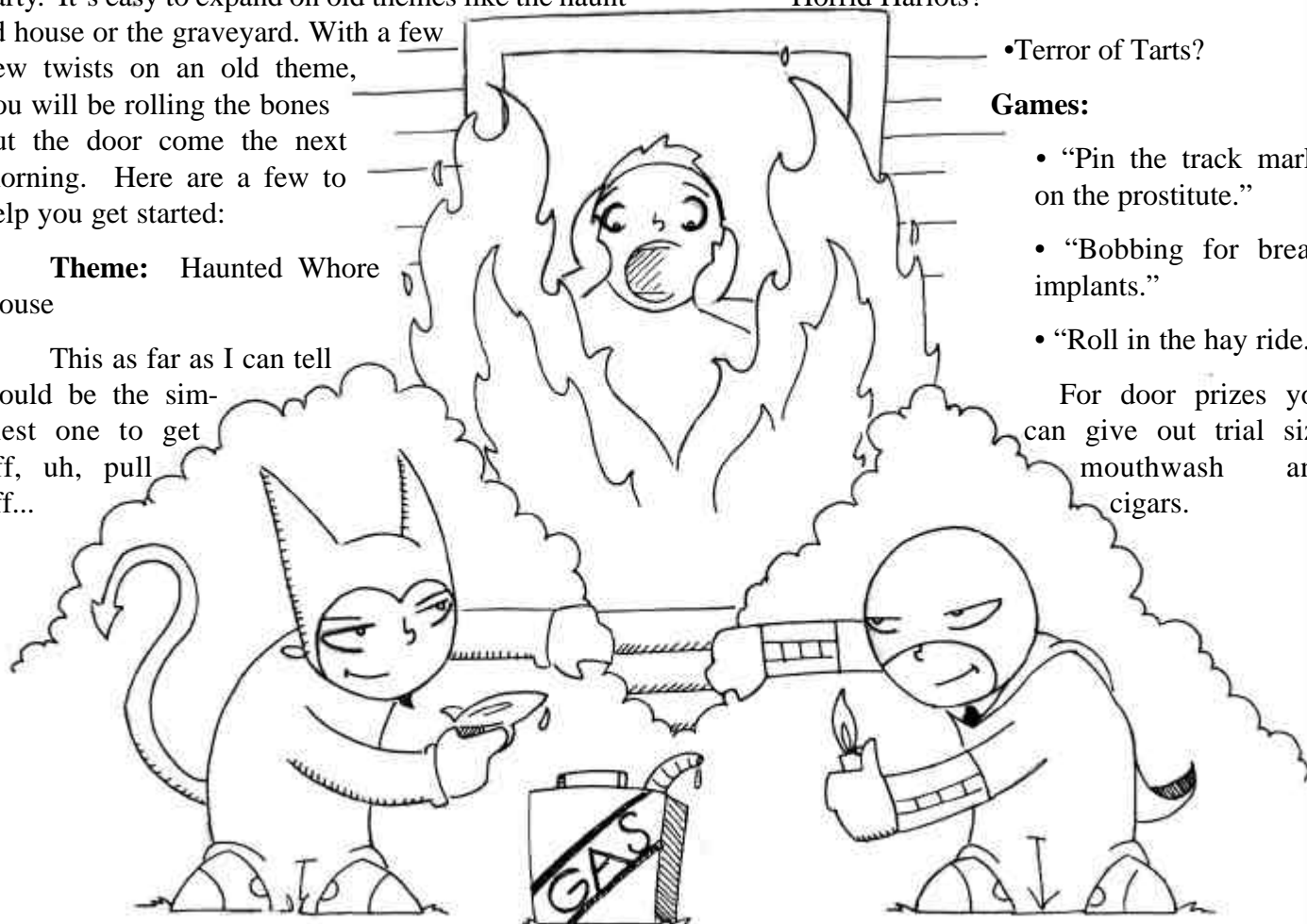
Title:

- Bordello of Blood Suckers?
- Harem of Hags?
- Horrid Harlots?
- Terror of Tarts?

Games:

- "Pin the track marks on the prostitute."
- "Bobbing for breast implants."
- "Roll in the hay ride."

For door prizes you can give out trial size mouthwash and cigars.



Costume ideas:

Come dressed as your favorite STD (“AHWMI GOD, someone else came as syphilis!”).

Historical Whore: Jezebel, Monica or Mary Magdalene (crucifix optional).

If whores and gore aren’t your taste, how about a good old fashioned witch burning?

Theme: Easy Bake Covens

“Nothing says fun quite like the smell of burning oppressed flesh.”

Decorations:

- stockyards
- dunking tanks
- nooses
- funeral pyres

Games:

- “Satan’s Stain:” Everyone disrobe and search for the third nipple or mole that Satan drinks out of. Once you have found one, strap the luck guest to a table and stab him repeatedly with salad forks until he confesses to whatever you want!
- “Deal with the Devil:” Promise your guests mortal riches for their souls! Have them sign their souls over to you. At the end of the party, surprise your guest by telling them those weren’t phony contracts after all: you are now their new lord and master!

Other tips: Hand out Bibles to kids instead of candy. Tell them God hates pagan idolatry, even if it is in the form of nougately goodness. Costumes are easy... just come dressed all in puritanical black!

Just remember, dearies, when you’re hocking up beer and candy corn, that Halloween is traditionally the witch’s New Year when the world of the dead and the world of the living are closest. This means you can piss off more people tonight than on any night of the year.

So stay safe, have someone check your candy before you eat it, and just remember: If you find a rather short Cthulhu on your porch, send the pint sized master of evil on home. It’s past his bed time.

Tourist’s Movie Review presents Tourist’s Costume Review

Sean Stanley, Vol. 11, Iss. 9

Costumes....

Ah. We’ve come to my favorite holiday season. Tis the season to venture forth to various specialty boutiques, thrift stores, K–Mart, and your local supermarket to find the makings of a boffo Halloween costume. Before you spend dime one however, there are a few things you need to keep in mind. First off, what is the goal of your costume? Now what I mean by goal is either one of two things:

- A. You want your costume to scare small children into violently expelling the lower half of their intestinal tract into the sweaty interior of their vinyl Beetle–Borg outfit, so you can watch their parents desperately try to shove it all back into their anal cavity with popsicle sticks.
- B. You want to get laid.

That’s it. Unless you’re some sort of frotteurist, in which case you want a costume that allows for ease of movement, as well as genital exposure in crowded subways and busses. So let’s start with the first goal, to scare. Forget getting goth. Vampires do so little these days, as do most of the scary masks. You need to go for something a bit less trite. How about a leper? Or perhaps a vagrant. Think about it. People are not scared of some guy who jumps out wearing a *Scream* mask. Ok, maybe for a second or two, but if you want to create an overwhelming sense of uneasiness that lasts for YEARS to come in the children you wish to scare, a vagrant is the perfect example. Just dress up in tattered army surplus clothing, wear busted shoes and fingerless gloves, then down a cheap fifth of vodka. You’ll also need to pick up some Syrup of Ipecac to induce vomiting at the proper moment. When the children approach a house, stagger out from the bushes, asking for “hedalla” and then

stealthily down the bottle of ipicac. Here's the beauty of this maneuver. Be sure that your booze-laden vomit (you may want to fortify it with a Taco Bell 7-layer burrito to give it some kick) lands directly in the molded plastic pumpkin that contains all the child's candy. Fill it to the rim! See, now the kid has a tough problem to wrestle with. As the children who were scared by the *Scream* character walk off in search of more candy, you will have left your particular victim with several questions in his or her little head. "Does vomit eat through Tootsie-Roll wrappers?" "Does this count as a stranger's candy?", "Will mommy make me wash my candy off...", "Is that a Mary-Jane?" If you really want to freak the little bastard out, yell "Time for a shower!," then urinate all over the child, the nearby bushes, the mailbox, and yourself. I guarantee you that this kid will NEVER TRICK OR TREAT AGAIN!

Another common misconception is that blood is the scariest bodily fluid, and that red is a color of terror. Now

anybody who's been on the business end of a blowjob knows that the scariest body fluid is white. Come to think of it, a close second to semen is pus. Pus is a very underrated bodily discharge.

Believe you me, it's one thing to have a bloody wound to the neck, it's a completely different matter when you've got oozing, pustulous sores on your hands.

Sheer terror, folks.



Eating gags are also great. I remember how for a haunted house on year, I strung up lambskin condoms end-to-end, filled with apple butter to simulate intestines. One would merely slice open a condom (non-lubricated) and eat the inside. For fun at your Halloween party,

get some tin foil and mold it into the shape of an aborted fetus. Don't forget to leave relief in the foil for afterbirth and other connective tissue. Now take this mold and pour some Jell-O 1-2-3 into it (remember that shit?? You can still find it at the dirt supermarkets around the country). Who wants "eyeball punch" when they can have "Pro-choice Jigglers"? Use your imagination, and you can freak out the most unfreakable. I guarantee it.

Now on the other note, you may want to get laid on All Hallow's Eve. Ladies, no matter if you're going as a vampire or Little-Bo-Peep, I've got two words—THIGH HIGHS!!! Us men, we don't know why we like em', but they drive us nuts and you'll have us under your spell in two seconds flat. Gentlemen, sadly we must be more resourceful in our costuming endeavors. There needs to be a certain sensitivity to the outfit. Take Ghandi, for instance. What girl could say no to him? Two dollars worth of makeup (a bald cap and some dark pancake) and some dishrags; and you've got it. Best part about this costume is that it provides easy access! Be passive-aggressive in your conquest and you will no doubt be hearing "You may not eat meat, but I sure do..." before the evening's out. What girl wouldn't want to say "Hey, I got fucked by Ghandi last night"? Other sure-fire costumes include

Lenny from *Of Mice and Men*, Harry Connick Jr. from *Hope Floats* (*Poop Floats*), a Teletubby with a special antenna, and my personal favorite, Willy Wonka (but if you go as him, be sure to have some lickable wallpaper and edible grass, if you know what I mean). If you get that big purple hat cocked to the side just right, rest assured my man, you'll be puttin' "Willy's Wonka in her Chocolate Factory". No Doubt. True dat.

As for movies, yeah yeah. You really want my expert o-pinion? Allright. These films are guaranteed to seriously fuck your shit up if you watch them late at night, alone, and with nothing but fluorescent lighting to soothe you afterwards:

1. The scariest movie I've ever seen in my entire

^oDo not watch on acid.

³Really do not watch on acid.

^o Are you fucking crazy? Did you hear what I just said? Oh well, not my fault if you tear your eyes with your bare hands.

Putting the X back into Christ's Mass

by Sean Hammond *et al.* Illustrations by Gil Merrit, Vol. 12, Iss. 3

"Jesus, will you shut up!"

Sage advice from little Bobby on Big Daddy's Biology Show

Though much of the East Coast of the United States is dreaming of a white Christmas in loo* of the unseasonable weather they've been experiencing, the holiday spirit is definitely in the air. As early as mid-October, businesses tentatively began placing holiday bric-a-brac in remote corners, as though sensing that consumers could openly rebel at the sight of a set of three-foot-tall plastic reindeer meant to be placed on one's lawn. Once the carcasses of Turkeys

Present disappear into landfills, any inhibition that might have held businesses back disappears. Meme infections reach epidemic proportions as "Jingle Bells" spreads from one host to another, using the insidious vectors of whistling and humming^a. No matter where you turn, the duality of Red and Green^b (the animal and the vegetable^c) confront us and demand that we buy. "Drive the economy!"

* Yes, we mean loo. X-Mas is in the shitter!

^a Both of which have speed and direction.

^b Sworn enemies since the Blue-Yellow wars of ought-eight!

^c Both of which have speed and direction. And get it on with the lamb.



whispers aisle after aisle of merchandise trapped behind plastic and cardboard...sealed for our protection.^d

Inevitably, the voices of the dissenters can barely be heard against the maddening cacophony of carols on the radio. "Christmas has become too commercial," They™ say, with genuine concern in their voice, ready to go tharn if the headlights of consumerism should swing around the corner and pin them out in the open without their credit card. "We've forgotten that Christmas is about the birth of Christ."

Give me a fucking break.^e

Christmas hasn't been about Jesus since AD 335 when Pope Julius I decided the Christian churches, crawling out from under the toppling colossus of the disintegrating Roman Empire, would celebrate the birth of their god. Instead, Christmas represents the Christians' greatest marketing scheme in history, paralleled only by De Beer's "Diamonds or Eternal Damnation" brainwashing.

Prior to AD 335, mainstream Christians didn't celebrate the birth of Jesus.^f In fact, the date of his actual birth is unknown. Assuming the accounts of his birth in the Gospel are accurate^g, Jesus could not have been born in the winter. The Gospel of Luke talks about shepherds out in the fields watching over their flocks when they had the bejeebers scared out of them by an angel telling them the King of Israel had been born in Bethlehem.^h As far as historical records indicate, the flocks in the area of Jerusalem to Bethlehem were reserved for temple sacrifices at the Jewish Passover and the sexual gratification of the shepherds. The sheep were brought out to the fields in late February or early March and sodomized, since the lambs had to be loosened up 30 days before the Passover meal. From November to February, the sheep were not out in the fields, but in the barn nursing their torn anuses. Thus, no shepherds would have heard the word in December over the



"baa-ing" of a virgin sheep being violated.ⁱ

We get the magic date of December 25th from a convergence of several traditions and bad mathematics. For humans who exist with the world rather than in it, December 22nd is significant in the northern hemisphere; it represents the shortest day of the year. On the 22nd there is the least amount of sunlight in the year and the chill of winter surrounds the homes of people who wonder if they stored enough food to last until the spring. Predictably, several traditions arose around this idea, all of them symbolically welcoming back the returning sun.

In the Roman Empire, around the time Christians were fighting a political guerrilla war for supremacy, there were two main celebrations in December, both falling on the winter solstice: Saturnalia, in honor of Saturn, the god of the harvest, and a celebration of Mithra^j, a sun god from the Holy Land introduced into the Roman Empire by mys-

^d Like bagging a 12-point caroler up at your uncle's hunting lodge.

^e Break me off a piece of that Christ Kat Bar™

^f They didn't even care. Poor, poor Jesus. No presents for the Jes-Man.

^g Jupiter, Mars and Kevin Bacon came together in a triple conjunction the like of which was not be seen until Salior Moon.

^h "Do you see what I see?" "A bunch of shepherds, freezing in the snow, hiding in their sheep..."

ⁱ Virgin sheep are kosher sheep.

^j Who also served as a template which Christians used to make their god more appealing, as Mithraism, was out-competing

tery religion loving Roman soldiers.

By AD 335, errors in the Roman calendar had caused the solstice celebrations to be held on the 25th of December. At the same time the Christians, realizing that their religion wasn't very sexy when compared to pagan traditions, decided it needed some holidays. Assuming Jesus was born and died on the same day of the month, fixed at the 25th of March (capitalizing on the return of spring and the symbolism of rebirth and resurrection), a nine month pregnancy would put Jesus' birth in December. What a happy coincidence that there just happened to be other celebrations held in the same month and, wow, on the 25th. Neat.

This policy of shifting made-up holidays around on the calendar became the Christian's greatest weapon of subverting pagan traditions and Christian heresies (next to killing them, that is).^k Spreading North through the activities of

the missionaries,^l the Christians carried Christmas to the Germanic tribes where it recombined with local traditions. There, evergreens were a powerful symbol used in the Solstice, as they were one of the few plants which stayed green and promised the return of the sun. Holly was also used, and it became a powerful Christian symbol, the red berries representing the blood shed by Jesus at his crucifixion and the green being the promise of a bountiful marijuana crop in the spring.^m

So Christmas was celebrated, but it didn't have quite the right spin yet. Enter a fourth century Turkish saint named Nicholas (c245–350AD). Depicted as a tall, dignified, and austere man, St. Nicholas was best known for his kindness to children,ⁿ but is also the patron saint of pawnbrokers.

Ok, kids. Can you see where I'm going with this?^o

His feast day, held on the 6th of December, came to be celebrated throughout Europe until the 16th century. Thereafter, the Dutch still held him close to their hearts. By that time, St. Nicholas, AKA Sinter Klaas, and his sidekick Black Peter, would gallop from housetop to housetop on the 6th of December. Children would leave their stupid wooden shoes next to the fire and make sure a snack was left for Sinter Klaas' housetop hopping horse Dick. The saint and his sidekick would then kick into action. While the saint left candy for the wee ones, Black Peter left gifts. Though candy was good, gifts are better, and gifts came to be the dominant practice of the tradition. This tradition shifted dates from the 6th to the 25th^p and took on the symbolism of the Magi giving Jesus ridiculously expensive gifts that he couldn't possi-



Christianity. If you can't beat them, steal their ideas (See *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*)

^k Ayuh, them city folk come through here regular, jes' slaughtern' the kids an' messin' up the calendar.

^l All the cool kids were missionaries.

^m The green was also a reminder of the gangrene one gets after being stabbed by a Roman spear.

ⁿ Lewis Carroll type kindness. Catholic priest type kindness. Michael Collins type kindness.

^o Uh... no.

^p Except in Germany, where they sing stupid drinking songs in Foreign.

bly appreciate.^q Besides, it makes more sense for the patron saint of pawnbrokers to leave material gifts rather than transient sucrose and oranges.

The final transformation needed to make Christmas what we see today started with Wal-Mart and “A Visit from St. Nicholas” by Clement C. Moore. When Sinter Klaas emigrated to the United States, his name was Americanized^f, but he still looked the same: a skinny whip-pet of a man who seemed perfectly adapted to chimneys. Still, he was an ethnic figure and hadn’t permeated the culture yet. The poem “A Visit from St. Nicholas” and the illustrations by Thomas Nast brought Santa to the masses. Oi.

Soon, the early marketing boys (read: “memetic engineers” or “wetware programmers”, whichever you prefer) began to see potential in using this guy. The Coca-Cola Company, best known for its cocaine laden drinks, hired Haddon Sundblom (AKA Mr. Smith) to devise a way of using Santa to peddle their drinks. What Mr. Sundblom created in 1931 was a fat git in red and white, wearing suspenders and possessed of a friendly face.

So I don’t want to hear any of this crap about Christmas becoming too commercial. Christmas has always been about commercialism, whether it’s a religion that’s being sold to pagans, soda being pushed on a populace, or businesses wondering if they can get away with starting to hang Christmas decorations around September in hopes of selling more. If anything, I think Christmas has become too Christian. Let’s get rid of all this savior-being-born-on-this-holy-day crap that we both know isn’t true. Don’t get me wrong: I love Christmas. I just think it’d be better off without this Jesus guy. Some Jew gets nailed to a tree two thousand years ago and I need to celebrate his birth? Hell, I think it’s enough that I have to use a calendar system based on his birth. Every time I write a date I’m forced to celebrate his birth. That’s enough.

Bring on Xmas: the generic gift giving holiday. Justified by the solstice symbolism of the sun’s rebirth, we can give as many gifts as we want. Happy birthday Sol! I’d even be willing to let businesses start pushing their Xmas w4r3z just after the summer solstice.

Santa would have to be revamped, however. He’s just too jolly for a pawnbroker. I envision a return to the more traditional looking Santa, but imagine him with a furry clerks uniform making him look like a plush Bob Cratchet.^t Instead of sitting on his lap and telling him what you wanted in malls, you’d enter his office. There, seated across from the Man with the Means, you’d wheel and deal for that NoFriendo game system you’ve been itching for.

Mr. Claus would look deep into your soul for a few minutes, his ice blue eyes looking like frigid Norwegian girls, and he would then write down a figure on a slip of paper and solemnly pass it to you. If you didn’t like what would be required of you, you could negotiate to get the value down.

“I have to be nice for 283 days out of the year? Mr. Claus, this is unreasonable. I might be able to manage 180...”

“Too few. I suppose I could go down to 250 days if you left a whole plate of cookies out for me and my boy Pete.”

The shadows of the office move of their own accord, taking on a shape for a moment, then returning to their prior state of lifelessness. A dry chuckle fills the room.

“It’s a part of his way of psyching me out,” you tell yourself, “be strong.”

“250 days of niceness plus a plate of cookies? I’m sure your reindeer must get hungry. If there were a stack of carrots there I could see 200 days.”

“Hmmm. Well, Santa gets awful thirsty delivering all those gifts—”

“225 days of niceness, a plate of cookies, stack of carrots, and a glass of Wild Turkey 101.”

“Make that Johnny Walker Black Label and you’ve got a deal.”

“Done.”

“Ho, ho, ho. Just sign at the X, kiddy, and you’ll have yourself a very merry Xmas.”

^q 4 out 5 doctors don’t recommend smoking frankincense until the toddler stage.

^r “Name?”

“Ivan Zovanovitzch.”

“Here you go Mr., ah, Smith.”

^t Or a Dostoevsky character.

Tetrodotoxin Week

Sean Hammond and Kelly Gunter. Illustrations by Marc Trzepla, Vol. 3, Iss. 1

“What I’m saying, in sum, dear friends, is that it is all hopelessly artificial. that people are no better at X-mas time than any time, and by spouting platitudes in the name of a scrawny prophet who got hammered in place for saying stuff a lot more radical than what I’m saying here, none of those yule-nuts become brighter or more sanctified or even a lot kinder.

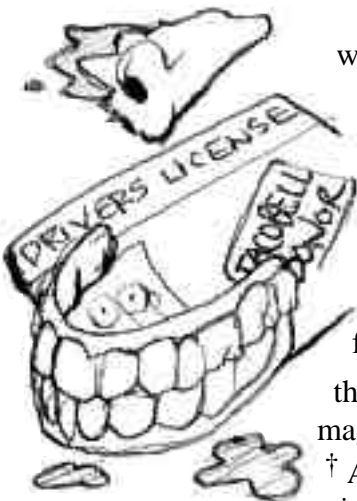
“And weighed against the people who suicide out of loneliness and misery, all the sales of Timex watches don’t mean a goddamn thing.”

—Harlan Ellison

Christmas time is drawing near, and along with it, the increase in that wonderful seasonal ailment: holiday depression. Yes, suicides will steadily rise as people open their veins like crimson advent calendars. Heck, a splatter of red corpuscles next to the mistletoe can look downright festive if done right.

Sure there are always those who really mean business. Those people who kill themselves quickly and efficiently; hell, they’re even polite about it. They don’t tell anyone, leave little mess, and usually aren’t really missed for long. But then there are the “cry for help people.”

You know who we mean. They’re the ones who try to overdose on children’s Tylenol and laxatives...the ones who think about slitting their wrists in a manner that won’t leave a permanent scar[†]. They don’t actually want to kill themselves. Hell, all they really need is a good stage. By the time one of these guys figures out a feasible plan of an “attempted suicide” that guarantees at least twenty concerned onlookers, or just a small gathering of the most important family and friends, any self respecting suicidal maniac has already splattered themselves all over somebody else’s vehicle registration.



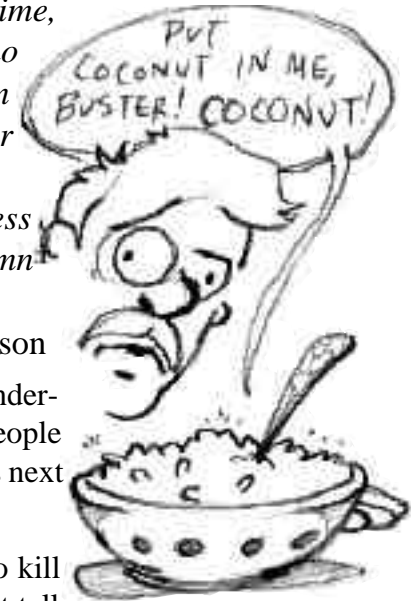
In honor of these proud individuals who are so lame they use suicide as a great way to make friends, Gracies Dinnertime Theatre and the Judas Corp. (a subsidiary of Hell Inc.) proudly present: National Tetrodotoxin Week; the ultimate way of finding out just how much they care.

Ever wondered how much your family and friends would miss you if you died? Ever wanted to know what they really thought of you? Want to be dead or just look like you are? Yes, you too can now enjoy all the advantages of dying with none of those harmful side effects (like being dead). This miracle drug, derived from the livers of puffer fish, can bring your life functions down to a point where they are virtually undetectable by modern medical science[¥]. What the Haitians use as magic and the Japanese eat as a decidedly dangerous delicacy, you can use to satisfy

[†] A little hint: if you ever do really want to slit your wrists, do it length wise. Start at the wrist and run the cutting utensil down to your elbow. This will ensure that you’ll be a goner;

no one will be able to close a wound like that easily. The only problem is that the wrist has less nerves than the rest of your arm, so laying your whole arm open will hurt a lot. My advise is: don’t. Hell, we all die soon enough. Are you really that impatient?

[¥] There are actually four stages to tetrodotoxin poisoning. The first is a slight numbness in your body. This is the desired effect when the Japanese eat it. The second stage is vomiting and overall discomfort. The third is paralysis in which the victim appears dead. All metabolic functions nearly cease, though consciousness continues. The fourth stage is death, but by the time the third stage is reached, most people are already planted six feet under anyway.



your own insecure drives (“spooky noise” musical tie available for additional effect...and additional price). You can rest confidently (or be laid to rest) knowing that your brain functions will still be operating and for a period of forty eight hours, while you’re cold on the slab, you will be able to hear every thing that goes on around you.

Imagine the hilarity that ensues when your nerves finally begin to work correctly and you can move![§] You’ve heard everything at the wake, now sock it to ‘em! Will your cousin Mel, who still owes you \$50 pay up? Will your “significant other” pack up and leave town “like they should’ve done 10 years ago?” Will anyone look you in the eye?

Here’s your chance to really realize that the world won’t stop without you.

If you’d like to read more about it, we recommend the following books: any good dictionary, *The Serpent and the Rainbow* by Wade Davis (don’t watch the movie) and *Esh-kish Org-ib Bork Bork Bork*, by the Swedish Chief.



[§] Don’t try this prank around Easter; people are touchy enough (like we don’t know). Plus you don’t want a horde of “believers” following you around, eating your bacon and trampling your petunias.

Cry for Help

Sean Hammond *et al.* Illustrations by Scott Peterson, Vol. 4, Iss. 2

Have you ever noticed that just about everyone has some official day named after them? National Secretary’s Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Hairy-Man-in-an-Old-Moth-Eaten-Overcoat-Who-Smells-Like-He-Runs-With-the-Yaks Day. How do people get days assigned to them? Draw straws? Pick numbers (“This week’s Lotto jackpot is up to one national holiday”)? Is there actually some lame government agency whose sole purpose for eating our tax dollars is to hand out official days? If there truly is such a useless agency, GDT has a suggestion: We would like to honor that proud and exclusive crew who boldly call themselves the “cry for help”-ers. Hell, they shouldn’t just be given one day, there should be an entire month...“National Cry for Help Month” when all the closet call for helpers come out and show the world the true meaning of their pseudo-suicidal tendencies.

Why shouldn’t we honor the growing number of “it was a cry for help” people? You know who the “cry for help” people are. They’re the ones who try to overdose on children’s Tylenol and laxatives. The ones who think about slitting their wrists in a manner that

won’t leave a permanent scar. They don’t actually want to kill themselves. I mean, by the time one of these guys figures out a convoluted plan of “attempted suicide” that would make any member of *Mission Impossible* weep with joy from the subtle intricacies included any self respecting suicidal maniac has already shown the world just how long their entrails really are after committing hari-kari with a number two pencil while dangling out a twenty story window (lead poisoning and disembowelment...what a way to go. “Do not colour outside the circles!”).



In my middle school, suicide attempts seemed to be a rite of passage. If your voice hadn’t changed and you hadn’t pierced a major artery in the presence of a friend, (somebody had to know didn’t they?), you had not yet experienced the true trauma that is adolescence. People used to brandish their war wounds as signs of honor, as if surviving, not five, but six attempts on their own life could show the significance of their life’s inner struggle. All that shows is that they are incredibly incompetent.

Those people who couldn’t find a handy friend on location at the time would call them up to tell them,

sometimes on a weekly basis. They would say such things as, “Don’t tell anyone.” (Well, aren’t they going to know after the fact?), “Don’t try to stop me.” (Why did you call?), “I just wanted you to know “ (and the other half of the seventh grade. It’s not as if you’re not going to notice that your friend is dead).



Meanwhile the person sitting at the other end of the line is running through another rehearsal of the lines they have to recite at least once a month while calmly meandering through the latest issue of *Seventeen* magazine. The steady monotone droning on: “No. Don’t do it. I’ll miss you. Please, don’t do it. We all need you.” All of this emerges with about as much emotion as an airline stewardess marking the nearest exits...but with fewer hand signals. They sit there checking their watch wondering, “How much longer is this going to be? Don’t they know I have practice at three?”

When I was growing up my parents taught me a couple things:

- You don’t have to like it you just have to eat it.
- If you’re going to do something, do it right.
- And when I’m speaking sarcastically to my father it’s called being “sassy”; when he does it, it is his god-given right.

Most of this is unimportant with the exception of, “if you’re going to do something, do it right.” Much like the incomprehensibility of thousands of foiled assassination attempts on a moose named Bullwinkle, you have to stop and wonder: just how incompetent do you have to be to successfully survive six suicide attempts? Then again, I suppose they wouldn’t call it attempted suicide if it was actually successful.

So to sum it all up dear friends if you are so lame that you can’t even manage to kill yourself, ask a friend to do it, or better yet, contact the professionals at the Church of Euthanasia care of Rev. Chris Korda, coe@netcom.com. The next time you call for help, check their credentials and their attempt:death rates. Chose only the best.

Oh, and keep your local coroner amused...die strangely.





Happy Valentine's Day

(Vol. 15, Iss. 6, <http://www.crimelibrary.com/capone/caponesaint.htm>)

THE US ARMY WISHES YOU A HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY.

PLEASE DO NOT SHOOT ANY BELLIGERENT,
THIRD WORLD REFUGEES ON THIS DAY OF LOVE.

WE WILL TRY NOT TO EITHER.

THANKS.

GO ARMY!

Little Ollie Cromwell

Sean Hammond *et al.* Illustrations by Vinny Bove, Vol. 7, Iss. 1

*“A curse upon you Oliver Cromwell
You who raped our Motherland
I hope you’re rotting down in hell
For the horrors that you sent
To our misfortunate forefathers...”*

—Pogues

The whole sordid story of the conflict between the English and Irish goes back to 1169 when Henry II invaded Ireland with 30 knights (in full armor), 60 horsemen (in half armor), 300 archers (in no armor), and not a single giraffe.^f After four centuries of nose thumbing, thumb biting, and general nastiness all involving thumbs,^δ between the people of Eire and their eastern neighbor, things started to get really pooppy in the mid 1500s.



King Henry VIII I–am I–am of England might be most notorious for his being the founder of today’s common practice of serial monogamy and wife beheading[•] but it was his policies toward Ireland that had repercussions for centuries that really get the Irish figurative long johns to bind up at the crotch. Shortly after marrying his sixth and last wife, the delectable Green–Sleeves herself, he bullied a Parliament consisting entirely of Englishmen to proclaim him King of Ireland. With his convenient break with the papacy and creation of the Church of England, he was able to declare the Catholic (means “universal,” don’t–cha–cha–cha–know) religion null and void.

Unfortunately, Ireland was 99 and ⁴⁴/₁₀₀th Catholic. Already things were getting a bit tense.



For the English, Ireland was convenient for their latest program: world domination and an early alpha release of the white man’s burden. The non–feudal Irish were seen as barbarians and it was the responsibility of the English to feudalize, Protestantize, and generally push aside. With super–duper secret orders, King Henry VIII I–am I–am demanded the capture of all trade and commerce in Ireland. In addition, he began a practice of having the sons of Irish nobles kidnapped and raised as good Englishmen (i.e., dead Englishmen. Oh, sorry. I guess that goes without saying doesn’t it?). Once grown, these puppets to I–am I–am, secure in the superiority of their

English upbringing, would return to Ireland and demand the right to replace their Irish birth–fathers as chief of a territory. More often than not, civil war would erupt in the particular region. The uppity English–raised rug rat would be supported by English troops and often won. Once in place, England would either no longer recognize their claim to power, or trump up some charge of treason. Either way, the result was ^fDid you know that in the 1600s, when China had colonies in Eastern Africa and they discovered Giraffes, they had several brought back to the Emperor’s court because the animal had the honor of looking exactly like their version of the Unicorn? Bet you didn’t.

^δYou wouldn’t believe the atrocities committed. Take, for example, the little known Thumb Rebellion of 1359. Over 17 people stubbed their opposable digits in that foray. Ironically, there were only three pinky casualties...all on the side of the Spanish who just happened to be on holiday. Weird.

[•] Nice try, OJ. You might want something larger than a knife to get her head off, though. Then again, you’ve opened up the market for Nicole Simpson and Ron Goldman PEZ™ Dispensers.

the same: the lands controlled by the Chief were forfeited to the English crown.

In a classic example of differing world views, this seemingly straight forward approach of the English failed. The English were a feudal society in which the Lords owned the land; the Irish, however, never suffered feudalism. The land was not something that could be given or taken from the Chief. It belonged to the people. So after much political wrangling (Hyah! WWWWWCHTTTTT!), Henry VIII I-am I-am was facing a bunch of very snip-pish Celts. In came the soldiers, killing the “rebels” and burning as many homes as possible.

Anyone who has read Chapter 3 of *The Prince* by Machiavelli should recognize this particular tactic. After the land was cleared of the Irish,² good-old *loyal* English, Scots, and Welsh were brought in to resettle the land. From that time the practice of Plantation became a fixed policy to “exterminate and exile the country people of the Irishry,” and to banish that fresh wholesome smell of the Irish spring with their smelly western European corpses. To forward this policy, historians and poets were systematically hunted and killed (often covering their remains with gravy and a side dish of peas), their genealogies destroyed, their beauticians terrorized, and Gaelic banned, all in attempts to end Irish culture and replace it with a more civilized English one.

As Queen Elizabeth took the throne and continued in Henry I-am I-am’s policies, the Irish had finally had enough. Four rebellions took place under Elizabeth. The fourth was the single most important. Called “The Flight of Earls,” it saw the removal of several important Chiefs and the subsequent plantation of their lands.

Despite the serious shit going down in Irish Town, things remained remarkably calm until the 21st of October in 1641 when settlers and Irish both rose up against the English. In one night, all of Ulster was

retaken. Leinster and Munster later joined and the English were all but driven from the island.

The English invented stories of slaughters of Protestants at the hands of the revolting Irish. In this climate, Charles I was executed, and Oliver Cromwell, Lord High Protector of England, entered the scene in a big way, and why not, for he was a big man.

In 1649 Oliver Cromwell, Agent of God the Just, First Friend of the Irish, and his army arrived in Ireland like an avenging angel. Equipped with the newest in savage control (cannons), he rolled across Ireland like a bunch of hicks driving a monster truck. First stop in his Irish tour was Drogheda (“Sunday! Sunday! Sunday!”) where he slaughtered 3000 men. He continued on to Wexford where he helped the crops by killing 2000 more men.[†] In less than a year, Ollie Cromwell and his Ironsides had re-captured Ireland, effectively crushing all armed resistance, and fixed the squeak in the seat-tilt control.

Thanks to the First Friend of the Irish and those that followed him, Ireland was nearly empty by 1652. Close to 5/6 of the entire population of Ireland was killed, either through armed hostilities, famine, plague, or roving packs of wolves preying on the homeless and displaced natives robbed of their lands (“It’s cold and there are wolves after me!”).

What a guy. No wonder the Irish think he’s so cool. Really. Go to any IRA meeting and let them know you think Oliver Cromwell really had his shit together. It’s fun.

Quick to seize their opportunity, England began a massive program of transplantation. Parliament forced all Irish from East of the Shannon River, adding just a little extra misery to an already endangered people. For shits and giggles, they instituted the Penal Laws in 1653. Under them it was illegal for the Irish to do just about anything:

- Exercise religion³.

²It was bound to happen once they cleared the Irish, the topsoil began to erode. Next thing you know you can’t grow enough low grade tobacco for the Polish to smoke.

[†]Full of nitrogen men are.

³If you don’t exercise your religion twice a day, it has a tendency to get crotchety.



- Receive education.
- Enter a profession.
- Hold public office.
- Engage in trade or commerce.
- Live in a corporate town or within five miles thereof.
- Own a horse of greater value than five pounds.
- Hop on one foot and pat their head.
- Purchase land.
- Lease land.
- Vote.
- Hiccup and fart at the same time.
- Keep any arms for their protection.
- Hold a life annuity.
- Be guardian to a child.
- Own any horse of lesser value than five pounds.
- Attend Catholic worship.
- Educate their children.
- Own a Chia Pet™



In short, the only legal option left the upstanding Irish citizenry was to eat shit and die. Dead ones were ok, but those living ones were just a pain. The Penal laws remained in effect in one form or another up until the Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

Cromwell go
Bragh!

