THE WRITER'S LIFE

By

STEVEN TRAVERS

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I dedicate this book to Tony Salinn, whose talent and passion for baseball writing will be remembered.

--Steven Travers

DUSTCOVER

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WOLFE IS THE ARCHETYPE

If you are an actor, you look to Brando or Olivier. A politician, if truth is your ally, Reagan or Churchill. High tech, Jobs or Gates. Business, Trump, or Rockefeller. As a writer, there are many examples to choose from, but in the modern world we look to the cutting edge, the men who forged New Journalism. Here is Tom Wolfe, who along with Hunter S. Thompson and to a lesser extent David Halberstam, made himself part of the story, gave us non-fiction that reads like a novel, and provide cutting edge social commentary.

Wolfe was a reporter, a long form magazine essayist, and cultural observer who first made sense of the 1960s, from a slightly conservative, pseudo-Southern point of view. He learned our language and wrote like we thought.

His *The Right Stuff* was what all writers strive for; history, drama, patriotism, and pure excitement, page after page-turning page!

*The Bonfire of the Vanities* had a way, like the sports columns of Jim Murray, of shining a light on the unimpressives of society without naming their names. It left its targets naked in the streets.

After *Bonfire*, the world waited with baited breath for Wolfe’s next work, which came in the form of 1998’s *A Man in Full*. The critics may not have gotten it. This book did not resonate as *Bonfire* had. But it was was a Best Seller. In this reviewer’s humble opinion, *A Man in Full*, like Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*, is a monumental work that only those smart enough to understand it . . . understood.

It excoriates liberal society and stupidity without being obvious about it, but in between cutting line after cutting line, the knowing reader nods his head and says, “right on . . . so true . . . say it.”

The story is not the message. It tells the tale of divergent personalities seemingly without much in common who eventually find each other. There is the former white Georgia Tech superstar football legend, now a respected businessman, living off the legend; the black current Georgia tech star living off a world bound and determined to give him anything he wants – girls, cars, money, corruption – because he is a star, and also to appease latent, in-the-past prejudice. The old legend observes this stupidity with a jaundiced eye. Society run amock, priorities out of whack, a Wolfe specialty. Then we get the poor white fellow trying to make ends meet to support his family, the world’s-turned-upside-down case. In the 19th Century he was the black sharecropper. Now he is the blue collar white, probably the man attracted to the Tea Party, who wonders why so much immorality is allowed to not just exist, but to be rewarded. Every sin and horror committed by whites against blacks in the age of lynching is now completely turned around in slavish a here-have-this world by white football boosters who give-give-give to a
dreadlocked black football phenom who cannot spell his name and despoils willing white girls seemingly happy to give up the last vestige of righteousness in their souls, in order to appease the injustices of their grandfathers. Only Wolfe tells this much better than I can. He gives it you in the best subversive manner.

It is the world in which society, the media, the intellectual elite love to create myths, such as the cutting edge all-knowing black man or family of so many commercials, put-upon while he calmly explains to the dingbat white the latest in cell phone technology, or smart money investing, or the latest in technological gadgetry; all apparently beyond the ability of most white minds to comprehend except for the smart black fellow who steers them in the correct direction. The kind of message that so many people observe and either say out loud, “Hey, that’s a lie,” or never think about, but understand this fact in the back of their minds, inculcating their choices in politics and consumerism.

Wolfe reaches those people who have this nagging suspicion somewhere when they observe the world around them and say, “Something is wrong here!”

But the novel’s message is in its study of stoicism, a mystic, ancient religion related to Christianity, and essentially the attitude of martyrs who were crucified and tortured in the name of the One True God.

This is Wolfe’s way of saying that while all this immorality and all these lies may indeed surround us, we still know the truth and the truth shall make us free. It is not necessary to explain the truth to others, to justify ourselves, to even make it popular. It is a manifest truth that the righteous know. Whether the unrighteous know it is immaterial. God knows it, and that is all that matters. The world is just window dressing. The righteous look at the unrighteous and just pray for them. All their money and gifts of this world mean nothing, and the righteous man knows it. Thy righteous man suffers for his knowledge and his goodness. He does so without complaint, stoically.

Wolfe has chosen a subject he must surely have known would go over the heads of most except for . . . the righteous. We get it.

Whether anybody else gets it is . . . immaterial!

BO: AN INSPIRATION

The year was 1973. I was 14, entering Redwood High School near San Francisco. I read Bo: Pitching and Wooing by Maury Allen. Today, almost 40 years later, this is a book I absolutely consider to be one of the five best sports books ever written, and the genesis of my own writing career. What a long, strange trip it’s been.

Reading Pitching and Wooing occurred simultaneously with my befriending Brad Cole. Brad grew up in the Los Angeles area but moved to Marin County when his folks were divorced. San Franciscans despise everything about L.A. I never bought this garbage. I was a huge USC
Trojans fan, thought the music of The Beach Boys to be a siren song, and was fascinated with Los Angeles. Brad painted a glorious portrait of life in the Southland: beautiful girls at the beach, packed throngs at Dodger Stadium, the glories of Jim Murray and the Los Angeles Times. I could practically taste the Dodger Dogs. This came as I read Pitching and Wooing, which probably painted a nostalgic picture of the Sunset Strip, circa 1962, more thoroughly than any other writer with the possible exception of another Bo Belinsky biographer, Pat Jordan (“Once he Was An Angel,” Sports Illustrated, 1972).

Between Brad’s tales and Maury’s book I was transplanted to the Whiskey-a-Go-Go, a swank Sinatra Hollywoodland of gorgeous babvies, hot nights, happening night clubs, and exciting baseball. Everything that made life worth living at that time. For a lonely only-child without a semblance of a girlfriend, it was a vicarious thrill so . . . thrilling . . . that it in some ways was almost better than actual real life. Writing cannot be better than that.

I read it many times, memorized it. I was a heckuva good baseball player and figured some day I would play professionally. To me, Bo: Pitching and Wooing, Ball Four, and Jordan’s seminal A False Spring, were primers on pro baseball and minor league life. I knew what I would find when I got there.

Fast forward to 1981 when indeed I did sign with the St. Louis Cardinals. Yes, minor league life was exactly like that painted by Maury Allen, Pat Jordan and Jim Bouton. I lived it to the hilt. Hedonistic pleasures, girlies in small town Southern bars, fun, fun, fun. No, I was not living within The Word of Christ. I was a sinner. I was a child who had not yet put away, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “childish things.”

That would come eventually. First, there was Bo Belinsky, the next step.

After baseball, I graduated from USC, served in the Army, attended law school, and became a sports agent. I was unfulfilled. It was 1994. Being a sports agent seemed almost like being a pimp. I spent most of my time arranging for my client, a married Pittsburgh Pirates’ outfielder, to meet his mistress flown in, by our firm, to various National League cities. I knew I was not doing God’s work.

Then Bo Belinsky entered my life, in real life. We started representing him, an old-time player popular in card shows and the memorabilia market. We made no money off Bo but it was fun to have him around and hear all his stories.

Bo started bragging about how “Marty and Bobby” and Oliver Stn and this agent and that producer wanted to make a movie about his life. A light went on in my head.

“I shall write the screenplay,” I declared, and I did.

This was basically like stirring up a hornet’s nest, a Hollywood story for a different day. Staying on point, I contacted Maury Allen and Pat Jordan., Amazingly, both completely cooperated with
me, allowing me to write a screenplay based on their two books about Bo’s life without charging me, telling me if it ever gets made we would work out the particulars then. Unbelievable.

So I wrote a script called *Once He Was an Angel*. It was optioned by a producing group associated with Frank Capra III and Frank Capra Jr., and received kudos in a screenwriting contest. Maury Povich wanted to make a movie about Bo. But Bo passed away in 2001 and the movie was never made.

The best news was that Bo, the wild playboy of the 1960s, became a Christian, in large part because of his ex-teammate Albie Pearson, a preacher. He earned his wings in the end. Thsi happened as I, too, turned from my sins and became a Christian.


When I wrote *Angels Essential* (2007), an Angels history, I devoted a large part of the book to Bo and my experiences. Later Bob Case, the Angels’ clubhouse boy in 1962 and a lifelong friend of Bo’s and many Angels, told me of all Angels chroniclers, I captured the ambience of the times better than any other writer. Nice words, but I was only paying homage to Maury Allen and Pat Jordan.

*Bo: Pitching and Wooing* was not a huge best seller. It did not approach *Ball Four*, which came out a few years earlier and probably inspired it (the tell-all sports tome). Bo said he made about 30 grand out of it, but he exaggerated a lot. Nevertheless, as far as I am concerned it stands the test of time as a sports book of monumental greatness. It is simply one of the most entertaining, engaging, fanciful adventures ever committed to the page. Read it now and you will agree.

**STUNNING LITERARY ACHIEVEMENT**

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini was first published in 2003, the height of the War on Terror, and the year the U.S. invaded Iraq (Osama bin Laden was already rendered irrelevant, the Taliban forced to flee in Afghanistan). I knew it was a huge hit, a big seller, and thought to be a big literary achievement. I did not buy it or pay much attention to it. I just figured it was a form of literary “affirmative action.” Because it was written by an Afghani about Afghanistan, it had to be sympathetic to the Muslim view, painting a picture of these poor Third World folk the Left thought we were colonizing. Surely it did not measure up to “real” literature like Joseph Conrad or Charles Dickens.

I was wrong.
I had a gift certificate. After filling my basket with my usual faire - political biographies, war history, sports – I figured, what the heck. It sat on my shelf for a while until I finally said, again, what the heck, and read it.

Great book.

It is not literary “affirmative action.” It is also not some Muslim sop about the poor Afghans trembling at the feet of the American Empire. It in fact is more like a good reason for us to have gone into Afghanistan in the first place. Kosseini came from an upper middle class Kabul family, respected. His mother left and he was left with his stern father. He befriended the son of a family servant. The boy was raped by a sadistic neighbor boy. Hosseini’s character watched, afraid to come to his aid. This haunts the character and propels the book’s theme, which is about the fall of Kabul to the Taliban, and with it the wealth and influence of his father until they are forced out and move to America. It transforms itself to Hayward, California, where the main character falls in love with an Afghani girl who has been ostracized for being too Westernized. Eventually the character must return to Kabul to fulfill a promise and gain some redemption for letting his friend be raped without intervening. He confronts the sadist, who is now a Taliban soldier who idolized Adolph Hitler (a big hero in the Muslim world, a fact the Western press hates to admit, which does not change the fact it simply is true).

Overall, I would almost call *The Kite Runner* conservative, certainly pro-American without being overt about it. It is by no means some kind of Left-wing clap-trap, which explains why it sold well. Liberalism gets no ratings and sits unsold because when people see it they reject it. I know I sure do!

**TO BE OR NOT TO BE PALIN**

The problem with Sarah Palin is that the first requirement of her supporters is to defend her against the putrid unimpressives who dump all over her. This is not necessary with George W. Bush. With Bush, a muscular Republican argument says he found two hells on Earth, gathered all the terrorists into a trap he set in these places at a time of his choosing, and once they were there, killed them. With Ronald Reagan, his stupid detractors are merely irrelevances, tiny men and feminist *pizzants*, in the shadow of Cold War triumph greater even than Caesar Augustus’s.

But Palin is a media creation. I like her a lot. I do not think she will be President, I do not think she will run. I probably would not vote for her in a Republican Primary. I love her as a gadly, a stocking horse, but a stocking horse is not Reagan or even Bush.

I read *Going Rogue*. Nice enough bio. She is a common sense conservative, smart, Christian, a historian, but she is not William Buckley or Rush Limbaugh, either. Hers is an interesting life of purpose, of over-achievement and adventure as befits her Alaska. Had McCain won and Palin served as V.P. for four or eight years, she would have been ready and probably elected. Absent this achievement on her resume, she will not. Perhaps she will be a V.P. candidate again in 2012, or maybe a cabinet member, or maybe win a Senate seat, and in 2016 or 2020 will be Presidential. Not in 2012. She probably could be beat Barack Obama, but the Republican field is
stronger than Acorn Man, and she cannot overcome Mitt Romney, Mike Huckabee or Newt Gingrich.

The book is a nice compilation of rural experience, prep basketball, Alaska insight, and actually strong national philosophy, but I am as well versed and understanding of philosophy and history as Palin (which is actually a compliment to Palin, modesty aside).

I must add this. I knew little about her when I first saw her introduced as McCain’s running mate in 2008. For about 10 seconds I was outraged, yelling at the TV, “What a terrible mistake, this girl, this nobody.” Then she began to speak. I must state unequivocally it all changed in a matter of seconds. Palin’s stunning good looks were a huge asset to her. She looks older now, beaten down by Leftist clap-trap, probably burdened by attacks on her family more than herself, but in 2008 she looked like a rogue Vogue model. I’m a guy, what can I say? She looked great and it mattered. I know history, philosophy, religion, I know this is what matters, not the cut of Sarah’s gib, but I’m sorry, my attraction to her looks made me dig her as a candidate. Just being honest.

This woman was so attractive that a Hollywood hottie portaying her on Saturday Night Live was substantially less attractive than the real thing. A devastating sex goddess spoofed her in an X-rated film, but the difference in their looks was not all that much different, despite Sarah being older.

Palin’s appearance made me listen to her and I liked most of what she said. She was, however, not ready. She was more qualified than Acorn Man, but that means nothing. Everybody is better qualified than the “man” who is the least qualified “man” in every room he enters. But recall this.

McCain trailed in the summer of 2008. After Acorn Man tried to portray himself as a Greek god in Denver, he led by a substantial margin. But after the GOP convention and Palin’s invigorating entrance on the scene, McCain pulled ahead. On the morning of Saturday, September 15, as I drove to the USC-Ohio State game at the L.A. Memorial Coliseum with my friend Kevin and daughter Elizabeth, McCain led by 11 points!

Do not tell me Palin was not a major force. It was all because of Sarah. Then the economy dove and the lead evaporated. A “September surprise” like no other. Personally, some day I think we will discover it was the doing of George Soros (telling Barney Frank how to poison it all), but regardless it was the end of the Republicans. Enter Acorn Man and Socialism.

Now we have post-Sarah, sort of. The prevailing antidote to Obama appears to be a traditional, conservative white male. Change as in back to the way it was. This does not play to Palin’s strengths. But Going Rogue was one of the most successful Best Sellers in years, a true phenomenon. This was no accident. She is still a force. The question is, “To be or not to be” Sarah Palin? The Tea Party movement, the huge Republican blowout of 2010, and the possible further repudiation of Obama could lead to a new America in which Sarah is a leading spokesman. The road to hoe lies ahead.
YOU HAVE TO BE MENSA TO GET “ATLAS SHRUGGED”

As a fan of Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged* who cultivates the opinion of the occasional Randian I rarely come across, I conclude that real fans of Rand’s Objectivist philosophy and truly “get” her *magnum opus* border on genius level intelligence. It takes this kind of intelligence to understand it, to read its 1,000-plus pages, and realize what in fact she is telling the world.

This analysis coalesced after seeing the movie version. I liked it. So did my friend Jason, a huge Randian. Two intelligent people I saw the film with, however, were utterly confused. They needed an explanation, which did no good.

Reviews have excoriated it, as the novel was criticized, but who cares? One called it like reading *Investor’s Business Daily*. It in fact was dutiful to Rand, albeit taking a big chance by dividing itself into parts. We only got part one, with parts two and three, I hope/suppose, slated for the next couple of years. This was not a way to capture a film audience. It should have been a mini-series. We never see John Galt other than as a shadowy figure.

It was not a low rent picture. The movie captures the wide-open Colorado spaces of the expanding Taggart railroad. The acting is fine, although the performers are all unknowns. It details, more or less, what the world will look like if Barack Obama is allowed to stay in office absent the efforts by Republicans to stop Socialism.

But the theme of smart, creative people (think a modern Bill Gates or Donald Trump) going on strike, taking their money, businesses and entrepreneurial spirit with them, like a recalcitrant kid taking his ball and going home, is something that only Randians understand. Others look at me quizzically when I try to explain it. Ultimately, the film will not be a big hit for this reason. *Atlas Shrugged* is like inside trading, available only to those club members worthy of understanding it. What more can I say?

MAYS NOT A BAD GUY, BUT NO PRINCE, EITHER

I just read Jane Leavy’s great Mickey Mantle biography, *The Last Boy*. For many reasons I had to contrast it with an earlier authorized biography, *Willie Mays: The Life, the Legend* by James Hirsch. Where Leavy’s work was a masterpiece, Hirsch’s book was pedestrian. This leads me to analyze Mays, his life and his persona in more in-depth manner than, well, Hirsch did. Hirsch should not be faulted entirely. In getting Willie’s cooperation, he shut off much of the Mays story; basically, the bad stuff. Leavy was not inhibited by such a thing. Her subject is dead, and besides, he never hid his numerous faults.

This is a strange conundrum. By traditional standards of morality, Mays is the “better” guy. He was sober, apparently faithful to his wife(s), and by all accounts a Christian from the Bible Belt. Mantle was a drunk, a womanizer and only at the every end (which is certainly better than nothing) did he realize he was accountable to God.
But Mick was real. Mays was, well, not a bad guy, but no prince among men, either. I have personal experience with him and found him unimpressive. There is something vaguely wrong with the fellow. Start with longtime San Francisco media personality Gary Radnich, who used to specialize in receiving callers with “Mays stories,” which detailed his rudeness to fans asking for autographs on planes and public places, often infused by foul language. Mantle was just as bad.

Then there was the time I, a sports columnist for the San Francisco Examiner, approached the sainted Willie at Pacific Bell Park the night Barry Bonds hit his 500th homer. My theme was to compare Bonds’s good crowd reception with the way Boston warmed up to Ted Williams after Korea, New York to Mantle in 1961, and San Francisco to Mays in 1962 (after worshipping at the altar of the homegrown Joe DiMaggio).

Mays bristled, stating “You can’t compare Joe to me.” He listed Joe D.’s stats compared to his, and gave very detailed analysis of how he, Willie Mays, was so much better than Joe DiMaggio that, well, the “comparison” could not even be made. Now, Willie Mays may have been better than DiMaggio (although in 1969 Joe D. was voted the Greatest Living Ballplayer), but do not tell me there is no comparison. As with Mantle, DiMaggio played on World Championship teams, performing heroics and miracles in the greatest of spotlights. Fair to Willie or not, this elevates both DiMaggio and Mantle beyond the normal career staistiscs that otherwise might favor Willie. Either way, there is most definitely a “comparison.”

I interviewed Willie McCovey that same night and he was totally lacking grace when asked whether Tom Seaver might have deserved the 1969 MVP award he was hosed out of by two writers who failed to list him among their top 10 votes because pitchers already had the Cy Young. My column was titled, “No Humility Here.”

But the Mays persona was a thread that started much earlier. In 1979 I attended one of numerous Willie Mays Days hosted by the Giants. My pal Howard Gibian and I looked at each other dumbfounded while Mays made a bitter speech that sounded like Ruben “Hurricane” Carter excoriating the system for wrongfully imprisoning him. Two years later I was invited to a banquet in Reno, Nevada featuring Willie as the keynote speaker. He was the only black man in the room, as I recall. This was the theme. For some 30 or 40 minutes, Willie stood at that podium and lectured whitey for his racist ways. Not a word about “the Catch,” what Koufax’s curveball looked like up close, the intensity of the Dodger-Giant rivalry, his relationship with “Mista Leo” Durocher, or much of anything else. Instead, we we got detailed descriptions of the KKK, Birmingham, Alabama, circa 1948. The foul acts of white men toward black men in Southern towns was the highlight and lowlight of the speech. He finally concluded to tepid applause and we all departed, supposedly ashamed but rather confused.

As I contemplated the speech, it occurred to me that since I am a white man who is not a racist, this explained why I was not ashamed that other white men were. Then something else occurred to me. Mays described something that sounded like Soviet gulags or the Holocaust. How, I thought, could Willie Mays, against all odds, achieve success, fame, fortune, greatness . . . in America? What odds did he overcome? With white-hooded evil men stopping him behind every
corner, yet he somehow still got to the big leagues, hit 660 homers, and forged arguably the best career ever.

Well, Willie achieved this the same way black jazz artists of the 1920s achieved fame and fortune . . . in America. Against all odds or in part because many white folk of good conscience did in fact support them. The same way Joe Louis earned $360,000 in racist America in 1938, then blamed racism in racist America for his failure to write a check and mail it to the IRS like any other tax payer, only to discover the IRS has a way of coming after such people. The way Jackie Robinson made $100,000 in speaking fees in the off-season of 1947-48, mostly from “racist” white Americans who in fact supported him, mostly through Chrisrtian righteousness (Robinson gained so much weight on the banquet circuit he came to Spring Training out of shape in 1948, ultimately costing Brooklyn the pennant).

Which brings me to Hirsch’s book. Race was, is and apparently always will be the defining characteristic of Willie Mays. Sure, whites want to sweep a lot of their old sins under the rug, but do whites get any credit? Is America a “racist country?” Of course it is not. If it was, Michael Jordan would not be a hero, Barack Obama would not be President. If it was, blacks would have had as much chance to succeed as the Chinese dissidents nobody ever hears about who are killed or made to wallow in Communist prison camps, or murdered by African dictators, or any of a million horrors that happen in places that are not like this beautiful America we are so privileged to live in. Think about this: who are the 100 most famous, successful black people of all time? After Nelson Mandela, the other 99 (give or take) are all American citizens. Think Barack Obama, Colin Powell, Booker T. Washington, Willie Mays . . . you get the point. What a miracle! In racist America.

Back to the book. Hirsch is a good enough author. He is also prominently identified as a civil rights chronicler. Not a sportswriter, or a historian like David Halberstam. This is it in a nutshell. The Willie May story is a civil rights saga. Baseball is somewhat secondary. So what? This somehow places the white fans just a little bit on the defensive. We are not allowed to just love Willie, to admire his greatness, to argue the merits of his career with Babe Ruth, Ted Williams, Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio. No, his story is like an Obama speech, a lecture. Well, as my conversation with Mays in 2001 demonstrated, to “compare” St. Willie with white superstars is to touch on the narrow ledge of racism. You cannot “compare” Ruth or DiMaggio to Mays. They competed only against whites. Shut the door to that nasty concept. Baseball only “started” in 1947, apparently. In the American League it “started” even later, a country club Republican league dominated by the Yankees and Tom Yawkey’s racist Red Sox.

Whites are supposed to take a sort of back seat, to sit aside and let Willie make race the dominant theme of America in the 80 years he has fought so valiantly against all the odds thrown against him while he gaily played games and made a beautiful living and absorbed adoration and fended off lilly-white autograph seekers. Gimme a break.

I do not blame Hirsch. He no doubt had to follow Willie’s direction, his over riding theme. In truth, it would not merely be impossible, but impolitic to write of Mays’s life without making race a large measure of the story. Jane Leavy or Laura Hillenbrand would surely have done so,
but if allowed to work free of Mays’s cumbersome “authorization,” no doubt their take would have been different. But pose this question, if you will. Who has a better chance to succeed in racist America, Willie Mays born near “brutal Birmingham” in 1931, or a black child born in drugg-addled Compton in 2011? It takes political correctness bordering on a pure lie to say the kid born in Compton, in the shadow of the Bloods and Crips wars, has a better chance than Mays, who was born into a two-parent household and raised in a Baptist church on Sundays (when his old man was not starring in the industrial league).

But Hirsch faced further difficulty. I’ll just come out and say it. Mays is boring. I wanted to get ambience, first the New York swank of the Sinatra ‘50s, which Leavy delivered in spades in The Last Boy, then a cultured glimpse of San Francisco sophistication in the 1960s. But Mays never was part of either, so we never get this theme. It lacks. He did not drink, smoke, party. He was not part of the scene. A bio of McCovey or Orlando Cepeda may have been far livelier, as they were men about town, bon vivants. Willie just collected his three hits, a homer, two RBIs, running catch, perfect relay to nab a man at third, then went home to play checkers.

Eventually Willie taught his Godson, Barry Bonds, to blame all his detractors and those who discovered the facts of his steroid use on racism. Typical (YouTube his dugout-lecture-with-son-as-prop during Spring Training a few years back).

I’ll take Jackie Robinson or Hank Aaron six days of the weeks and twice on Sundays. And you can compare Joe D. to Willie Mays!

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

George W. Bush’s Decision Points was not unlike his Presidency: at times brilliant, at times mediocre; at times inspiring, at times a bit infuriating. I am a lifelong conservative Republican who wanted Bush to run. I rooted for him, supported him, and found the liberals who found everything about him to be a fault to be total buffoons. That said, Bush never lived up to my view of what he could have been.

I believed he would be a great President. He had everything at his disposal to achieve this. His family and background were exemplary. I recall the first time I read his biography, around 1987. I said, “This man will be President some day.” His father was totally hosed by Ross Perot, but represented the ultimate class act. Bush’s 2000 election was repudiation of the Left. He was a complete slayer of liberal dragons; Ann Richards, Al Gore, the legacy of Bill and Hillary.

Bush wrote a biography before running for President, so he created a memoir of his White House years that focused on his Decision Points. It was an effort to show he was a decider, a leader, a man of action. A little self-serving, but he was a decider. He made tough decisions, many of which were forced on him.
Bush could have used 400 pages to excoriate those unimpressives who used all their time and energy to unsuccessfully try and bring him down. Bush outlasted them all. History will judge him a winner. I have no problem with his War on Terror. I felt Iraq was a smart strategic war. However, I cannot say it was worth it to kill almost 5,000 soldiers and about 50,000 Iraqis. If I knew ahead of time it would be that bad I probably would have objected, but it is what it is. In the end it led to freedom in Iraq and possibly a freedom revolution in the Mideast. Bush will be an old man when the judgment can be rendered.

But I completely disagree with Bush agreeing to TARP in September of 2008. This opened the door wide open for Barack Obama and Socialism. I seriously doubt we can recover from the damage Obama is rendering us in my lifetime. Bush went against his best capitalistic instincts, and we paid for it in the worst possible way.

Bush led the Republican Party to its greatest popularity since Dwight Eisenhower (and Joseph McCarthy), but like McCarthy also helped usher a short period of unpopularity. The Tea Party has restored the GOP to major heights and a bright future, but Bush has nothing to do with that.

In the end, I am a right-wing conservative and while Bush’s Texas muscularity made me believe he, too, was, in the end he was closer to the moderation of his father. He was maligned by people not worthy to lace his sandals, but failed to achieve the greatness that could have been his.

A MASTERPIECE

Laura Hillenbrand’s Unbroken: A World War Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption, is everything a great book can hope to be. It is why writers write. It is why books matter, the difference between writing, or even journalism, and great literature, even art. It is a tour de force, a magnum opus, ultimately a masterpiece; the kind authors strive their whole lives to achieve and virtually none ever come close to. Whereby a column, even an in-depth magazine article, comes and goes (even with the Internet), the Great Work of a Laura Hillenbrand remains timeless.

Unbroken organically manages to hit all the key elements of great story telling in the most marketable of manner, which makes it rare. If a publisher were to list all the key points needed to make a book sell, this one would surely list an X in every box. It is a historical story that reads like a novel about the greatest event ever, World War II. It centers on a man who is still alive and able to tell his tale, making it timely. It is a story of Christian redemption, an enormous market most mainstream publishers seem unable to tap into, for whatever reason. It is a sports story and a war story with an international angle. Finally, like a good screenplay, it is about the full character transformation of its main character by virtue of events he confronts; this ultimately is why it will be a spectacular movie some day.

Lou Zamperini was an Italian-American troublemaker in Southern California. He appeared to be a “dead end kid” until he discovered he had world-class distance running ability. This changed his life, provinding him first glory on the fabled track teams of legendary coach Dean Cromwell at USC, then an Olympic showcase in front of no less a world figure than Adolph Hitler at the 1936 Berlin Games.
Lou was fun-loving with an eye for the ladies and an occasional sip of liquor. Life was a lark. The Great Depression had little effect on him. Then World War II swept him into its vortex. His college background slated him for the officer corps and flight school. He finally saw action as a bombardier, a singularly dangerous assignment. He seemed to dodge the bullets, literally, until he was shot down. *Whoa, Nellie.*

First came the tale of harrowing survival in an open raft in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. There was little logical reason to believe he and his fellow pilots would be found. One died in front of them. Somehow, Lou and another fellow stayed alive without food or water in the broiling sun, surrounded by sharks.

Finally, he was found and brought to safety. The end. Great story. Except he was found by the Japanese when his raft found its way straight into their hands and enemy prison camps. Then came the duration of the war, as awful a captivity as that found in *Midnight Express, Papillon,* or any other jail story. The degradation, much experienced at the hands of a sadistic prison torturer nicknamed The Bird, broke Lou and his mates. It would break anybody. The title, *Unbroken,* is revealed later. Sure, he fought The Bird and his Japanese tormentors, but small victories were overshadowed by the defeat of the human spirit.

An international track star, Zamperini’s disappearance made for big headlines. He was assumed dead. Perhaps this was the only reason he was not. The Japanese wanted to keep him for potential propaganda.

Finally the war ended and Lou, along with the other prisoners, was freed. The end. Again. A great story. But wait, the story only begins, really. At first Lou ate, drank and made merry, bathed in victory and hedonistic pleasure. Back to Hollywood and girls galore. He married a beautiful actress and lived happily ever after, for a few months or so, until The Bird and the experience infiltrated his dreams and his soul. From there, a man-made hell of alcoholism and despair. He was back in the prison, less hopeful of escape than before.

His marriage was virtually kaput, but his wife tried one last time, dragging an atheistic Lou Zamperini kicking and screaming to Billy Graham’s famed 1949 Crusade For Christ in downtown Los Angeles. Complete and total testimony on behalf of the divinity of Jesus followed. Immediately, miraculously, Lou was healed, his soul restored. Gone with the girlie mags, the bottles of booze, and the hatred. His marriage and life restored, Lou became a man in full, but his final act of redemption was to “forgive those who trespass against me,” when he returned to Japan, forgiving his former captors. The Bird remained hidden, emerging years later after the interrogators stopped searching for war criminals. Amazingly, he became a wealthy insurance exec, but never faced up to Lou or any of the others. He died in his sins a few years back. Perhaps upon meeting his Maker he found salvation through the intercessionary prayers of Lou Zamperini, who harbored no hatred for anybody.

**MANCHILD CALLED THE MICK**
Jane Leavy’s biography of Mickey Mantle, *The Last Boy*, has the vague sense of unreality. From the beginning to the end, it details an unreal story about an unreal man who, in the end, dealt with all the reality he avoided his whole life.

First we see Mickey Mantle growing up in the poverty of Commerce, Oklahoma, but none of that really affected him. He was seemingly, like Bud Wilkinson’s Sooners, put on this Earth to refute John Steinbeck’s ‘Okie notion from *The Grapes of Wrath* that America and capitalism failed. Instead, he spit in the eye of Steinbeck, making his work a lie by virtue of pure, unadulterated, joyous baseball stardom. Mickey was born for greatness. There was no doubt of it. His family, his friends, his environment may have been desultory, the mines of the windswept Oklahoma planes making life a daily test of survival for his dad and uncles; all but him, anointed for future greatness.

No obstacles, nothing to overcome; he did not have to work to support his poor family, he just starred in baseball until he was discovered and immediately, it seemed, deemed to be the Next DiMaggio. Which he was, only better. His father put everything into Mick. His younger brothers got the short end of the stick. If they had their brother’s skills they never developed them. Then Mutt Mantle died. The brothers were left to their own devices, and Mantle was let loose in the fleshpots of Manhattan.

There was no real religion or moral compass in his life. Be a baseball star, period. In New York City in the Sinatra ‘50s at the height of Yankee glory. He was baseball’s Caesar Agustus. How he maintained his greatness with all the alcohol he consumed, women he slept with, and late hours he kept is a miracle of Biblical proportions. Christ spoke of putting away the things of this world. Paul wrote about “putting away childish things.” Mickey Mantle never did, until it was almost too late.

Mick and Billy Martin. Mick and Whitey Fird. Mick and Bill Skowron, Hank Bauer, Johnny Blanchard. Mick at the Copa, the Latin Quarter. Mick with a bevy of blonde sex goddesses, all while his long-suffering hometown wife raised their kids a thousand miles away.

Mantle was as good a baseball player as has ever lived. Arguments can be made: Ruth, DiMaggio, Williams, Mays, A-Rod, you name ‘em. It is subjective, but pound for pound Mantle was right there, on the biggest of all stages, the World Series, so regular an event it might as well have been printed on the Yankees’ schedule, included in season ticket packages.

There has never been a greater hero or icon. Nobody. The combination of his blonde good looks, 1950s glory days, superhuman records; here was the ultimate sports star, a symbol of American post-war victory.

Eventually, retirement, and the time to drink even more, if possible. This drew his kids into the vortex of alcoholism, with disastrous results. Never did the man need to grow up. He became the icon of the lucrative memorabilia markets. He never had to meet a real schedule or work a real job. He just signed autographs, drank with worshipful businessmen, and took lithesome
chicks into his bed (trying for the author as a young lass, only to be turned down, perhaps because he was too drunk to carry out his lusts).

Finally, the inevitable liver disease and death, which was the only shadow he always faced, after thinking he would die young like his dad and uncles, even though he never faced the black lung they did in the mines. Ultimately, he was a man of Shakespearean fate, irony. The Last Boy finally realized the error of his ways and used his fame to warn the world of the dangers of drinking. It is said he had a big impact, worthy of the first truly deserved hero worship of his life, as he faced death in 1995.

Leavy, who wrote a solid Sandy Koufax bio in 2002, is a gifted sportswriter who understands and captures the New York ambience, a key to so many great stories. She writes a different story. Mick’s tale is a well-told one. She does not delve into every game, every friend, every big homer, but rather, like George W. Bush’s Decision Points, concentrates on chosen moments defining Mantle’s life. The title is apropos and does what a great book is supposed to do, which is transfer the reader from a very different modernity into a time and place that is no more, no matter the nostalgic attempt to re-live it. It strips much of the veneer, as well, in particular demonstrating that Mick may have been molested by a female babysitter as a child, perhaps explaining why he could only be described as a sex addict.

“MEN OF KENT” A STORY OF TIMELESS GRACE

In an age of the second rate, the low rent and the unimpressive; of pornography, video games, text messaging and other irrelevancies of the human spirit, comes a beautiful, graceless book, Men of Kent by Rick Rinehart.

It is on the face of it the story of a great private school rowing squad that once won the most prestigious championship outside of the Olympics. This is a mere façade, for it is in fact a gauzy, melancholy story of how in life sometimes we are privileged to be part of something astounding. The beauty of the story, really, is that it is not something wholly unusual. Every year various teams win championships, and Rinehart’s team was not really any more unusual than any number of these champions. The beauty is that in being a story that could be repeated in a thousand places, it speaks to the universal human spirit. One need not be a rower, attend a New England private school, or done much of anything particularly resembling what Rinehart did, in order to relate to it. Personally it brought back vivid, haunting memories of my own membership on the best high school baseball team in America in 1977. We were a public school, our story embued by a sunny California disposition a world removed from East Coast elitism, but that did not matter. My teammates, our camaraderie, our demanding coach, and the thrill of victory; that was the same.

Rinehart was a member of the 1972 Kent School rowers who first won the American national championship, then the fabled Henley Royal Regatta in England. While rowing and
football are two very different sports, the best way to describe this accomplishment would be to imagine, for instance, De La Salle High School of Concord, California, the best prep grid program in the nation over the past two decades, winning the Rose Bowl. Maybe winning the Rose Bowl in a world in which there is no NFL, but the would-be pros also compete on club teams in a play-off format against De La Salle. Thus does the book’s title resonate, for they were indeed men, not boys. The tale, however, describes boys as they became men, and ultimately gentlemen.

Rinehart infuses us with history and back story. He does an excellent job of telling us the history of rowing, its equipment and accoutrement, without making it read like an encyclopedia. He tells us of Father Frederick Herbert Sill, the founder and soul of Kent School. Of such men are countries made great. Sill, a man of Christian faith, may well be regarded as a saint. His story has been told before; the beloved school master, the patriarch who presides over decades of graduating classes at a charming private school. The fact that there are many Father Sills who have influenced the lives of countless young people does not reduce Sills, or any other Father Sills of this world, one iota. These are unsung heroes. These are men of temperance and character, the sort of individuals who an atheist meets and, if he is honest with himself, leads one to God. Certainly he is the sort of man who seemingly (with the exception of sports coaches) have this type of effect only at private schools. Perhaps this is unfair to hard-working public school teachers, but few Father Sillses are found in those bureaucracies.

Sills built one of the great prep schools of New England, but in his image. The standards were rigorous, the admittance difficult, but it was an egalitarian system in which each child’s parents consulted with the school, arriving at a tuition they could afford. Not welfare or affirmative action, but rather a relative payment schedule leaving each family with a sense of ownership. Kent modernized. It was ahead of the curve when it came to opportunities for minorities and eventually became coed, although strict about it.

Perhaps it is just Rinehart’s lyrical style, but reading his descriptions of Kent, its adjacent Connecticut surroundings, and their tony competition (Phillips Exeter, Andover), one is struck by a sense of jealousy. Again, the public school comparison or, more accurately, the fact there is none. The world Rinehart lived in was an extraordinary, gentleman’s environment of tradition and excellence, leaving the impression that such quality is exclusive only to such bastions of . . . exclusivity.

But this is not a stuffy account of snot-nosed rich kids, which has frankly become a tired Hollywood stereotype often meant to deliver the myth that wealth, excellence and tradition are merely unearned privileges of a class of white males responsible for the rape and plunder of the dispossessed through time immemorial. No, not so at a school built by Father Sill, and most definitely not by young fellows under the tutelage of a tough, legendary coach named Hart Perry. The experience they had as teammates and competitors was no different than an extraordinary basketball team at a gritty inner city high school.

Rinehart’s back story begins with his family, an old publishing clan. Indeed, he was “chosen” to write this story, the suggestion made shortly after “that championship season,” because he was their “poet,” a teenage Shakespeare not above using the Bard to try and impress girls into “wasting their time with me.” The fact he was their most literate was not an accident, considering his pedigree, but even in this he throws a few twists and turns our way.

Rinehart was not super rich. His family indeed had founded Holt, Rinehart, but his own father was eccentric, a raconteur, hail-fellow-well-met type with a drinking problem. His parents
specialized in throwing wild shindigs, which young Rinehart ruefully observed, maneuvering
his way around the revelers at a young age. Alas, his father, a talented writer, was not published
and could be considered a failure of sorts, at least up until the time he sent Rick to Kent.

His parent tried to negotiate how much they would pay in tuition as did many of the
middle class Kent parents, but were told this sort of dispensation was not made for their kind.
The Kent administration assumed they were publishing scions of wealth and privilege, saddling
Mr. Rinehart with paying the “full boat.” Mr. Rinehart did not try to argue that, well, yes, the
family had some imprimatur, but he was a drinking man who was not published. He just smiled,
swallowed hard, and wrote the check like the gentleman he saw himself as.

Rick Rinehart arrived at Kent School in 1968. Located in once-rural Connecticut (he
describes it today as a “bedroom community” of New York City), Kent was the leading rowing
tradition among American prep schools, a vision of Father Sills come to fruition. They were
described as the “Notre Dame of American rowing,” engendering letters from the likes of
President Franklin Roosevelt congratulating them on the glory they brought their school and
America via their accomplishments.

But Rinehart had little idea about any of this. He was not from a rowing family. He fell in
love with Kent, wanted to go there, and endeavored to do so, but not to row. His single-minded
focus on getting into Kent, however, led him to rowing with profound consequences. In order to
make the grade for Kent, he had to repeat the eighth grade. With improved grades he was
admitted. This made him a year older. In his last year (1972) the extra time gave him physical
and mental maturity he needed to make the squad and compete. It also played some role in
dealing with the military draft. He ultimately was not drafted as his number was 110, he entered
college and the war ended, but Vietnam and the times play a back-drop to the story.

These were prep school boys of the 1930s. They were of the times, not naïve to the ways
of the world. The year Rinehart entered Kent, the North Vietnamese engaged in the Tet
Offensive, President Lyndon Johnson declared he would not try for re-election, Martin Luther
King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated. It was the age of Richard Nixon, of campus
protest, of hippies, draft dodgers, angst and rebellion. By 1972, America was a fractured country,
having turned to the right as a reaction to left-wing elements, but deeply scarred. That year was
monumental in scope: Vietnam finally nearing its end, China opened up, Israeli athletes
murdered in Munich, and in the same month of their greatest competition, the Watergate break-
in

A telling statement by the author comes when he describes how today he cannot hear The
Doors without being taken back to those days of yore. He fell not for the flashy, big-music sound
of the English giants of the day (The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Led Zeppelin), but
for an Irish-American poet, Jim Morrison, misunderstood then but with the exception of Pete
Townshend, holding up today as well as any rock musician of the era.

Upon arrival at Kent, the author’s mother was struck by the symmetry of the rowers, and
without knowing the skill or sacrifice involved, as if suggesting he take up bowling or checkers,
more or less told him he would row. At first Rinehart tried other sports, all without success, until
an event occurred that shaped his rowing future and life.

On a trip to Colorado, he engaged in a “hike” more reminiscent of Hannibal’s crossing
the Alps. He was not quite on the verge of death, but the combination of physical exertion and
deprivation from creature comforts over some 50 miles of Rocky Mountain terrain left him
spiritually enlightened. It also told him he had the gift for endurance, a major pre-requisite for
rowing. He entered the Kent rowing program. Rinehart is rather modest about his ascendance, but considering Kent’s reputation for the sport, and the fact the 1972 team was probably the best they ever had, his making the squad might be compared with a walk-on starting and blocking for Johnny Lujack of the 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish!

Rinehart’s experience in Colorado, his love of rowing, and his descriptions of the solitude of the water, help to explain his own life lessons. He apparently came from what might be described as “Manhattan dilettantes,” café society which, at the time, was embodied by New York Times film critic Pauline Kael, who said of Richard Nixon’s 49-state trouncing of Democrat George McGovern, “I don’t know how he won. I don’t know anybody who voted for him.”

The Rineharts were like so many fashionable Manhattanites a John Kennedy family, but the survival in the Rockys, the competition of rowing, and his communion with nature, affected Rinehart’s work ethic-based political views and, more important, his lifelong love affair with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, in the spring of his last year at Kent School, the time had come for the author and his teammates, who watched while skilled older rowers lived up to the tradition of Kent, setting the bar high for them. Under Coach Perry, they entered the rowing season believing they could be special. Competition after competition only convinced them they might be a team of destiny, and it is important to note that they did not merely row against local high school squads. They competed against Ivy League schools and programs from other states, like two public schools in Virginia considered among the nation’s best. In many cases they were, of course, high school age kids beating college boys, again drawing the comparison of De La Salle knocking off Ohio State, or Maryland De Matha beating the University of Maryland in hoops.

They won and won and won, eventually capturing the national title, earning them a trip to England to compete for the Princess Elizabeth Cup in the fabled Henley Royal Regatta, scene of two Summer Olympics (London, 1908 and 1948), quite simply the Mecca of rowing, to its sport what Wimbledon is to tennis, Augusta to golf . . . all by high school boys competing in large measure against grown men, many in their 20s!

Think of the “miracle on ice,” Chariots of Fire and Hoosiers rolled into one. They were a team, of destiny, capturing the cup in a series of astonishing victories. Rinehart tells us several of his teammates went on to success in college, but none rowed in the 1976 Montreal Olympics. They were talents, but what apparently propelled this particular team to heights not accomplished by groups of comparable ability was a magic quality of coordination and team chemistry, of which greatness is born. So it was as they won the 1972 Princess Elizabeth Cup in a competition televized nationally in Great Britain, announced by Grave Kelly’s father, Kelly Kelly (one of the great rowers in history), earning for them a letter from President Nixon.

Like the aforementioned films, Men of Kent would make a beautiful movie. It is a coming of age, patriotic, spiritual story of innocence and joy, of boys who became not just men, but gentle men, and I loved it.
THE POWERS THAT BE

Wow. *The Powers That Be* by David Halberstam, written after some seven years of research, in 1979, is the quintessential big book . . . the big American book! It is a masterpiece, a triumph, a work, a *magnum opus* by a superstar of the genre. I do not stand eye-to-eye with Halberstam politically. I am a staunch conservative, he was center-liberal, but unlike so many nabobs of the left, in Halberstam’s case his sheer knowledge, his education, his talent, passion, and the undisputable fact that he was there . . . he saw it happen, he experienced it; well, whether one agrees or disagrees with his politics or not, only a fool would argue his merits, his imprimatur.

Is Halberstam our greatest 20th Century chronicler? The best writer? This is hard to say. He was a historuan, a reporter, so comparing him with Ernest Hemingway, or Eugene O’Neill, or sports writers like Jim Murray, is problematic. He is different from a Tom Wolfe, whose non-narrative written-in-novel style, like Norman Mailer penning a true story, is also different, yet Halberstam’s books are not, as in the case of, say Bob Woodward, not unlike a 300-page *Washington Post* report. He is engaging, forceful, entertaining.

Halberstam and this particular book are of the American Century, a term coined by one of the book’s subjects, Time-Life founder Henry Luce. This is where Halberstam is at his best; the breadth and scope of history, outlined against America . . . or was it the other way around? The big picture, a country, the New Rome, an unlikely empire shaping events, shaping history, changing thousands of years of powerful notions in a red, white and blue image that will stand for the next 1,000 or more. Halberstam is modern, post-Vietnam, post-Watergate, and reading *The Powers That Be* in 2010 is done with knowledge of what he wrote after, how he felt about Iraq and other 21st Century issues before his recent, untimely passing. In so doing he is prescient and, while not outwardly religious (perhaps not religious at all), nevertheless he describes a
story that *is* religious, as all the big stories are. The America he describes in this, in *The Best and the Brightest* (his Vietnam classic written before *The Powers That Be*) is too large to be merely secular, it must be part of a cosmic destiny, like the way George Patton looked at his role in history.

Halberstam’s 745-page classic describes the histories of *Time* under Luce, the Columbia Broadcasting System under William Paley, the *Washington Post* under Phil and Katharine Graham, the *Los Angeles Times* under the Chandlers, and while not headlined on the book’s cover, the *New York Times*. It is a story of the media in the media age. He outlines the shaping of Los Angeles under the Chandlers from the 19th Century on, and in the case of the other empires, after World War I, when they were either consolidated, bought or created, as in the case of Luce and Paley out of a sheer American vision.

It concludes with Watergate and the corporate re-structuring demanded by Wall Street stock values of the 1970s. It was a fitting time to end the story, then. It is sad that Halberstam is not here to write the much-necessary volume two: the fall of the papers and magazines, the question of liberalism in the mainstream, the rise of conservative talk radio and media, the politicization of the dominant culture – movies, music, comedy - and of course an explanation as best one exists for the Internet. Alas he is gone and some other giant must step up and take on this challenge, but does such a giant live amongst us still?

*The Powers That Be* describes giants like Dwight Eisenhower and George C. Marshall, near-giants like John F. Kennedy, and disappointments like Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson; how they used and were shaped by the media. It is a constant struggle. Does the tail wag the dog? Who has the power, the control? An Eisenhower comes and goes, a Luce stays. The book is filled with wonderful anecdotes and personal stories, but the overriding theme is the notion of seismic struggle, of the shaping of the empire by forces of politics, journalism, mass communications; how military maneuvers are effected by coverage, how the American mind is formed.

Perhaps Luce’s role is the most extraordinary. While the Chandlers were almost accidental king-makers, separated by geography from the action, they were happy to invent Southern California in their own WASP image. But the building of Richard Nixon, as like Frankenstein, thrust them into the new age. Otis Chandler responded by re-making his paper from a Republican rag to the world’s greatest. But Luce was not accidental. He was a Calvinistic force of destiny and knew it. He was convinced he was a prophet of God. He coined the term “American Century,” laughed at first as provincial, but after World War II the most *apropos* of expressions.

The son of Chinese missionaries, devoutly Christian, he rose by dint of sheer will and excellence to his place in the world of power. He determined to use the images and power of both *Time* and *Life* magazines to promote a propagandist view of American Exceptionalism that was vitally necessary to defeating the Nazis and Japanese. After victory was attained, his jingoism became a source of liberal irritant, exemplified by his role in “selecting” Ike over the popular Senator Robert Taft as President in 1952, then Nixon’s rise, amid much consternation.

But the book’s theme, or argument, where one falls in the political litany, can be summed up by response to an argument between Luce and his star reporter, Theodore White after World War II. Luce made China his special project. White’s writings about Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Tse-tung and the Nationalist-Communist civil war were brilliant, but he started to report that Chiang
was corrupt, his leadership poor, his military ineffective, while Mao, to Luce’s horror, was making gains.

Luce flew out to China on several occasions, to “straighten out’ White. They finally had a confrontation in which White told his boss his commitment was to honest journalism. Luce said no, the stakes were too high. A little propaganda, not the word he used but what he felt was needed, as in the battle with Adolf Hitler, was what was needed. To lose China was too horrible to contemplate and could not be risked by honest journalism.

All normal considerations would seem to favor White in this argument. The truth, after all, shall set ye free. In the end, White got his way. He wrote it his way, then detailed it in a book called Thunder Out of China. It dismayed Luce, but he was too honest and decent to censor his people. Righteounses prevailed, right?

Not so fact. China was lost to Communism in 1949, causing enormous political hatred and more than any factor McCarthyism. Mao murdered 55 million human beings. Communism killed 100 million worldwide in the century. In light of that knowledge, if it was at all possible Luce could have kept Chiang and his army together enough, through American popular support, to stop such a thing from happening; well, was this not worth just a little bit of jingoistic propaganda?

This was the nexus of much angst over the years, and could be found in conservative anger towards liberal media during the Iraq War. Was the honesty and “integrity” of a liberal, yet safe, reporter more important than the life of a soldier in the field, fighting an enemy aided and abetted by his reporting? This argument does not appear to be going away any time soon.

SHOULD PORNOGRAPHY BE BANNED?

Last night on Fox News. Bob Beckel said he thought pornography should be banned. Let me go on the record. Finally, I agree. It should be. It never will be. Constitutionally, it is by and large free speech. The ACLU and the courts would never allow it. While conservatives give lip service to it, the fact is it is popular across the board, with conservatives as with liberals. It is a pervasive evil that has permeated our society from top to bottom and cannot be stopped. It is Original Sin unloosed. Only Jesus Christ, triumphing over dark forces in the End Times (which may happen according to some Bible scholars on May 21, 2011) can beat it. We cannot. Not with courts, laws, or self-serving “morals.”

I am no prude. I love beautiful women. I have seen all the images. I have not lived in a cave. It is precisely because I have seen it, and know first hand the destructive, soul-threatening power of porn, that I say if it could be eliminated (which man cannot do), we would be better off.

The decision to look at porn is ultimately man’s free will. When we deny free will and make men live in stir, we cause more sin. Just look at the nut jobs in the Middle East. I knew a soldier in Afghanistan during the early years of our war there. He told me local villagers offered all their worldly possessions for the porn they knew the soldiers possessed. Such is its power.

Hugh Hefner unloosed much of this permissiveness on our society. He wrapped it in a seductive pose of power and glamour, but he was doing Satan’s work. I know. I was seduced by it all of it. In high school I idolized Hefner’s Playmates like pagan gods. Only upon maturity,
after reading the Bible some eight times, do I realize what was done to me, and only now have I begun to, as as Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians, “put away childish things.”

But even the Reagan Administration’s lackluster efforts to take Playboy out of 7-11s was met by a howl of protest. Ultimately Reagan could not protect us from sin. Only God can. We can pray and meditate, but only of our own free will, and asking God to perform miracles in our lives, can we hope to turn from our sins. His will be done.

**THE WORLD IS ENTERING A NEW AGE**

You heard it here first, but we are in the first year of a new age. History is replete with “ages”: the Persians, Greek philosophy, the Roman Empire, Christianity, the Crusades, the Dark Ages, the Reinaissance, the age of revolution, and now Conservatism: the winners of history.

The age of revolution began in 1762 with the publication of French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract*. That book placed forth the notion that governments owed a duty to their citizenry: to feed, clothe and provide basic needs to them. The average human no longer owed fealty to a monarch. The monarch, or government, now owed a certain responsibility to his citizenry. Previous “benevolent” Kings may have done this on their own, but Rousseau’s thesis was that they owed this duty.

Thus was born revolution. In America, a revolution not based on Rouseau’s thesis but on the rugged, individualistic relationship of man with God, but in Europe a philosophy based on the idea that “huddled masses” were incapable of taking care of themselves unless the government did it for them.

Throughout the 19th Century, as Alexis de Tocqueville pointed out, the American philosophy was winning, but in the 20th Century two world wars, while won by the U.S., making us an empire stronger and more powerful than all previous political entities, the European model took root.

This concept was fought tooth and nail by the forces of American conservatism, but always it was a struggle. Europe, its empires destroyed, weighed down by centuries of baggage – racial hatred, inquisitions, genocides, religious intolerance, reformations, world wars – lost all vestige of greatness. We stood alone.

The election of Barack Husein Obama in 2008 led pundits to declare conservatism to be over. Incredibly, the truth is the exact opposite, Obama’s election marks the beginning of a worldwide conservative age.

Reaction to Islamic Jihadism, the realism that “global warming” is a hoax, and the steady understanding that European Socialism is a failed model has led to riots in the streets among citizens who cannot be taken care of by governments following the Rousseau model anymore. From one end of the globe to another, right-leaning governments are winning in Great Britain, Germany, France, soon to be Australia, and most everywhere else.
The American Tea Party Movement is the most powerful political entity seen in decades, probably in more than a century or even two centuries. It is impervious to attempts to discredit it because it simply emanates from People Power, the single unstoppable, inexorable force which, like Christianity, cannot be stopped because it simply places forth Truth.

The result will be Republican mid-term victories in November unseen in the lifetime of a single living American citizen. In two years, Barack Obama will be repudiated as thoroughly as any political figure ever has. Thus will the age of revolution be over and Conservatism: the winner of history will begin. A new age for the next millennium.

God bless America. The Truth shall set ye free.

THE SAVAGE EFFECT

Michael Savage is a conundrum. Michael Savage is both a trend and uniquely different. Michael Savage both represents the success of modern conservatism, and is in an odd way responsible for the unbridgeable divide between left and right. Michael Savage is America.

He rose during the giddy period 1994-95, when conservatives believed – incorrectly, as it turned out – that America had adopted Reaganism wholesale and only needed a dose of Bill Clinton to realize it.

The succeeding years were a mixed bag. Indeed, Reagan had changed the landscape and the Republican Party with it, but there was too much hubris to the notion that the entire country simply “saw the light.” We are a center-right nation, not a right-wing one.

Today, we face a replay of 1994-95. This time the boogeyman is Barack Hussein Obama, and as of this writing it looks as if this man is singularly doing as much to consolidate the forces of conservatism as any previous entity. But mistakes were made in the past, and the attempt herein is to avoid those mistakes. We need analyze further. Which leads us to talk radio.

Michael Savage is neither the first of the big talkers of the right nor the face of the genre. Indeed, he is an outsider, and perhaps here we see that he may represent the forces of change currently afoot more so than the men he may be ideologically aligned with, yet has anywhere from mild disdain to outright aversion to: Rush “the golfer” Limbaugh, Bill “the leprechaun” O’Reilly, Sean “wall banger” Hannity, and Mark Levin (who he despises). To listeners of talk radio, one of the current parlor games is the “read between the lines” war of words between Savage and some of his competitors. Seemingly all wanting the same thing: a more right-leaning America absent President Obama, they most assuredly have not come together and do not appear ready to.

Herein is the rub of the thing, because the difference between Savage and the others symbolizes the differences between mainstream Republicanism and true conservatism, or more obviously for the moment, the Tea Party movement. Savage is Everyman, the American from the East who journeyed west to re-invent himself, the conservative who thrives in and amidst the liberalism of
Marin County-San Francisco, the deeply religious Bible reader who tells millions of people on the air of his occasional crisis of faith.

The stereotype of the right is Southern Man, the post-George Wallace, Lynyrd Skynyrd-Toby Keith militarist who drops to his knees in prayer to Jesus Christ and enthusiastically endorses the death penalty. This man is real and is indeed a voting bloc, but alone he will not transform the Republican Party to anything close to the permanent majority Karl Rove thought was within his grasp if only George Bush was right when he declared aboard that aircraft carrier the mission was accomplished.

In order to win big and win consistently, we need a larger swath, and herein do we find Savage. Just as the Tea Party often emanates from disenfranchised Americans surrounded by leftists they cannot stand, so too does Savage. Unlike Limbaugh, who lives in a limousine-and-country-club world, Savage walks the streets of San Francisco like Sam Spade. He eats in its restaurants, hikes its trails, sails its waters, drinks in its pubs. No doubt he is recognized and often not in pleasant manner, but he is tough, resilient, and lives for the cut and thrust of it. So too with the Tea Partiers. They gather in big cities surrounded by Democrats and declare themselves. “Here I am,” they say, “deal with me.” So too does Dr. Savage.

Savage has an unusual audience. It is not the normal conservative crowd. He gathers people like Ted Williams once did, regular guys; cabbies, firemen, soldiers, cops, New Yorkers who recall halcyon days of long gone. Once an ex-Mafioso called his show and kept the audience rapt for an hour with stories of Mob “honor” in radio so fascinating as to be beyond belief. This is just one example of why Savage’s program is the single most interesting in the world.

But it proves more than that. The left wishes to place forth the fiction that conservatives are a bit on the dull-minded side. Yet Savage manifestly dispels this notion daily. Here is a man who has a Ph.D., who speaks with total authority of child nutrition, botany, Socrates, Shakespeare, the Old and New Testaments, global strategic thinking (how Vietnam was really a Pyrrhic victory ultimately costing the Communists the Cold War), 200-year movements (like the Chinese who say it is too early to analyze the effects of the French Revolution), Renaissance art, classical music, and a million other intellectual pursuits. Somehow, he is able to speak of these things while the minds’ eye pictures him regaling not a class of Manhattan socialites, but truck drivers at a local dive called the Silver Peso, who have been secretly listening to Mozart during the long haul from Frisco to Salt Lake for years.

But all this is secondary to his real effect, and this he is not alone. To understand the power of Savage and conservative talk radio, one must understand history. It goes back to the Venona Project when, during World War II, Naval code-breakers came across information that high-ranking Democrats in President Franklin Roosevelt’s administration were paid Soviet spies (as Savage would call them, “enemies within”). Thus was born the Alger Hiss case. Sides were taken. The scruffy, over-eager Richard Nixon vs. Harvard and the Eastern Establishment. Hiss was defended with every ounce of intellectual and emotional energy they had. When he was convicted, it was too much. Human psychology does not allow such types en masse to admit they were wrong (as the current Republicans are doing in admitting they lost their way under
President George W. Bush). They hunkered down. For decades the New York Times declared
Hiss innocent. Step by step – McCarthyism, Vietnam, Watergate – the sides became more
entrenched. Then came Clinton. The left again put all their energies into defending him, but
when the Soviet archives were opened we saw that indeed Hiss was guilty just as Clinton was a liar.

Again, the power of conservative talk radio. It has the same effect as the Hiss conviction,
Clinton’s Impeachment. As different as the disparate talk hosts all are, they collectively have this
in common: they are right in defending the Constitution, extolling American Exceptionalism, and
exposing the left as anywhere from incompetent to un-patriotic. They are in a business where if
they lied, their lies and personal failings would be blown up beyond all proportion, their careers
ruined. Each is exposed to scurrilous personal attacks. They have all survived because, as Jesus
Christ says, “The Truth shall set ye free.” Sometimes they exaggerate, sometimes they
propagandize (Savage even extols the virtue of propaganda, as in the case of Hollywood’s Why
We Fight documentaries of World War II), and sometimes they make mistakes, but by and large
for three hours a day five days a week and more they are right on the money. Each in his
different way, no one more so than Savage, the odd one out who loves it that way.

Savage is really different in that he is quite sensitive. The others let it slide right off. Savage gets
his back up in the manner of his Bronx upbringing. He is also blatantly egotistical. This is the
kind of thing Savage would dispute, shouting me down for suggesting such a thing, then thinking
of it for a second and changing his tune, admitting not only that he is egotistical, but that it is
essential to his work. One cannot put up with the Shakespearean “slings and arrows of
outrageous” fortune as he does without a big ego. He says so on the air. Yes, he is self-centered
and concerned with his own affairs. Who is not? Savage would philosophize that such an
emotion is really the product of Original Sin, Mankind’s ultimate corruption. He is flawed as we
all are, and has no patience for the likes of a Barack Obama, who shows zero agreement with the
possibility that he may be flawed, too!

But, again, talk radio has cornered the left like caged animals, shining the cleansing light of fact
on their lies and failures until they have no choice but to lash out, criminals in a final shoot-out,
unwilling to extend their hands for the cuffs. It is no wonder that today’s discourse is brutal with
invective. In this the right can be “blamed,” if such a word is appropriate, because they have
exposed who these people are and it is not pretty. Again, human psychology does not lend these
people to give up power easily, to go “quietly into that good night.” So Savage and his like-
 minded warriors keep fighting, legions of supporters cheering them on.

Compare Savage to the Tea Party movement and its candidates. He is them. They are he.
Scruffy. Street fighters. Passionate. Compare Savage to the Fox News “talking heads,” perfectly
coiffed in their $2,000 suits, or the old school Republican candidates slowly being phased out,
with every hair in place, every statement carefully prepared. Not so Savage. Imagine him battling
the Sausalito winds and the long lines at a local Starbucks, only to fight his way back home,
disheveled, to his studio where he advances his agenda, “God’s lonely man” backed up by
millions screaming, “Right on.” The conundrum.
Savage is a best-selling author. Unlike many media mavens who sell books simply because they have the platform to do what thousands of great, starving writers only wish they could approach, Savage actually is a writer. He started out that way and has fought the fight: the research, the blank page, getting a publisher, the vagaries of editing. His books are literate, not “cut-and-paste” sound bites. They are what a man who has read Charles Dickens, Tom Wolfe and David Halberstam would produce, and his latest blockbuster is intended to knock back the Socialist stench of B.O. It is called *Trickle Up Poverty*, and is right down his alley. Savage is a common sense economist, learned of the ways of Friederich Hayek, Ayn Rand and George Gilder. Due this week, it will approach number one on the *New York Times* best seller list, which begs the question, “Why does the *New York Times*, who hates conservatives, still have a best seller list when it more often than not glorifies those they despise, whether it be Michele Malkin, David Limbaugh . . . or Michael Savage?”

REPUDIATION OF THE CRIMINAL BARACK HUSSEIN OBAMA
By STEVEN TRAVERS

http://redroom.com/blog/steven-robert-travers/repudiation-of-the-criminal-barack-hussein-obama

A Complaint of Tyranny and Impiety

O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O god, to whom vengeance shew thyself.
Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth; render a reward to the proud.
Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?
How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?
They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.

- Psalm 94: 1-5

January 20, 2010 marks the one-year anniversary of the criminal Barack Hussein Obama's Presidency. January 19 marked further repudiation of all he stands for. It started at the All-Star Game in St. Louis, when half the fans booed the Acorn Man. It continued in November when Republican Chris Christie roundly won the Governorship of New Jersey and Republican Bob McDonnell wiped the floor with the Democrats in Virginia; both after Dumbo made personal appearances on behalf of his chosen minions.

On Tuesday Republican Scott Brown defeated Democrat Martha Coakley for “Ted Kennedy's Senate seat” in the “Boston Massacre,” winning by six points. What we are seeing is a conservative revolution. It is an astounding event. In 1994 the Republicans pulled off a similar political tsunami. This will make 1994 look like a mere blip on the radar screen. The Democrat Party may not survive what is about to occur.

First and foremost we are seeing what will be, by the end of 2010, the complete and total American:

- Repudiation of the incompetent “Ears” Obama.
Repudiation of the immoral Kennedys.
Repudiation of the impeached Clintons.
Repudiation of the hooligans Nancy Pelosi, Barbara Boxer and Harry Reid.
Repudiation of the illegal ACORN, the “black hand” of the Nazi-collaborating George Soros, the absurdity of MoveOn.org, the lies of Michael Moore, and the stupidity of Code Pink.
Repudiation of the unpatriotic works of Hollywood, the “lame stream” media, the “blame America first” crowd now indoctrinating our young from grade school to graduate school, and the unimpressives who make up the Left.
Repudiation of the “global warming” mythologists and the socialized health care ram rodders.
Repudiation of the displaced Communists who, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, have found a home in the international Left and made Acorn Man their poster child.
Repudiation of Socialism in America!

A year ago, many worried that the criminal Obama was the anti-Christ. Biblical scholars generally conclude that such a creature is merely a malevolent spirit, and that the concept of Satan coming to fruition as a political or military leader is more a Hollywood construct. Brother Harold Camping is a Biblical scholar operating on a worldwide network called Family Radio. He says Christ will return on May 21, 2011, but offers no worry that our President is the Dark Prince.

For one thing, one might surmise that Satan would be a helluva lot smarter than the bumbling, stumbling Dumbo man with his stilted phrases, his incoherent speech in a lame attempt to “help” Coakley, and his unimpressive arguments on behalf of most everything he advocates.

In Massachussetts, Coakley trailed Brown by four points. Obama showed up and made a speech for her. Immediately afterward she trailed by seven en route to desultoriness. The “Obama effect” was the same in New Jersey and Virginia. It was not unlike previous efforts by Bill Clinton to “help” candidates who lost four or five points courtesy of his appearances on their “behalf;” or the infamous John Kerry. He trailed by a couple points before the 2004 Democrat National Convention. After America got a closer look at what the creatures of the Left were, they decided they should trail by five.

For Obama, as with other Democrat “heroes,” it has come down to an almost mathematical formula, and it works like this.
One observes Obama.
One sees what he does.
One thinks about it.
One uses his God-given common sense in analyzing what he sees.
Therefore, consequently, and as a result thereof, the fact that Obama and the Democrats are loathsome and atrocious simply emanates itself as manifest truth, knowledge of which is possessed by millions and millions of patriotic American citizens. Nobody needs to argue it, spin it or try to make anybody understand it. It simply exists as self-evident fact, which of course is always the best kind. (To put it more succinctly, to know Obama is to despise him.)

Bill Ayers is the unrepentant terrorist who tried to bomb the Pentagon, kill police officers, and was rewarded by the Left with university tenure. He is Dumbo's close friend. He hosted his
political debut, served on boards with him, and is rumored to have ghostwritten his autobiography. He served the Dumbellionite Obama in his ascendency as closely as Karl Rove was the architect of George W. Bush's early career in Texas, but Obama somehow thinks he can persuade us that, like Christ's apostles on the day of the crucifixion, “I do not know that man.” Except the Acorn man does it in that dumb sing-song voice of his: “He's a guuuuuuyyy who lives in my neighborhood,” which is like the Kennedys saying their bootlegging, Nazi-sympathizing father, “Old Man Joe” was “Just, uh, a guy who, uh, lives, uh, in the neighborhood.”

Of course Obama “heard no evil” for 20 years while his pastor was telling a raucous, approving black crowd consisting of his and Ayers' Chicago neighbors that America is not blessed, but rather damned by Almighty God. One supposes Obama's most convincing argument that he disagreed with Reverend Wright might be that he does not believe an actual God exists to damn America, and attended the church as an act of political survival. It's the “Chicago Way.” As for his wife, America ending slavery on Earth or defeating the greatest armies ever assembled in two world wars are not to be admired. Only her husband's anointing is.

Dumbo still has a dwindling group of supporters in the media. They call him articulate. Who are they fooling? Hearing the ignoramuses call Obama “articulate” is a joke. He is neither articulate nor particularly smart. Bill Clinton was both. He rescued his Presidency by working with Republicans after the 1994 GOP sweeps. He adopted Republican economic policies and, as if by statistical formula, the economy revived. The guess hear is that Obama and his hard Left fellow travelers are too stubborn, proud and yes, too stupid to learn this lesson. They will go down with their ship, and the Democrat Party may well sink into oblivion forever. This seems incredible to imagine, but movements do happen that fast. The 1960s are over, baby!

Meanwhile, former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin is called “dumb.” One listens to her speak of a “fallen world,” of man's true relationship with God, and why the Founding Fathers favored limited government because they recognized the inherent corruption of men's souls, and one hears articulation so far and above the yap-yap-yap of the “man” who never stops talking, or getting face time on TV, or showing up at every soiree in which he can honor himself; well, Palin runs circles around Acorn Man six days of the week and twice on Sunday. We are led to believe that the Ivy League elites are so much better educated, yet has anyone noticed that one can attend Harvard and graduate hardly without attending class these days? Everything is on-line there and most everyplace else.

So the angry conservative Right is making a lot of noise, on Fox News, on talk radio, and at the “Tea Parties.” After what the Democrats did to President Bush for eight years, they should simply lack eligibility to complain about ANYTHING! The only thing they should have a right to do after their years of foul lies and perfidy is to SIT THERE AND TAKE IT. To say nothing! It is only the common decency that marks conservative people that prevents them from repeating the foul epithets that the Left vomited upon the public square for years.

Of course this does not stop them from besmirching the “tea baggers” with disgusting comments that more resemble their own “tea bagging,” which in Leftist circles is not a love of the Constitution, but love for a homosexual act too abominable to describe, that they apparently are far too intimately knowledgeable about.

The hooligan Pelosi says the “tea baggers” are not a “grass roots” movement, but rather “Astro turf.” Yeah, sure it is. Just like Hillary Clinton's “vast Right-wing conspiracy” consisted of millions of patriotic American citizens who had the temerity to register and vote Republican!
Call it what you will - “tea baggers” or “vast Right-wing conspiracy” - but this enormous “silent majority” of the American citizenry is about to shock the world.

On the heels of the New Jersey and Virginia Governor's elections, and the Massachusetts Senate victory, these people are at the very beginning of a campaign season that will see the following:

- Harry “the war is lost” Reid's swift deportation to a southern Nevada strip mine town.
- The hooligan Boxer's swift deportation to a Sausalito hippy commune.
- The Republican's taking control of the House and Senate, and
- The criminal Obama's swift 2012 deportation to the neighborhood he shares with Bill Ayers, perhaps a job as “community organizer” of a Chicago thug group, or maybe a vacation to Mecca.

Remember New York Congressional District 23? Somehow, after losing enormous statewide elections in two pivotal races, the Democrats wanted you to believe the fiction that “winning” a tiny district bordering Canada was the news of the November elections. Here is the real news. That district will hold another election in November, and the conservative Dan Huffman will win the Republican primary and then beat Bill Owens.

Boxer's old Congressional seat is in liberal Marin County. It is as safe a Democrat seat as there is, but guess what? The Republicans are about to unveil an actual great candidate, and in this climate, he may win. The anti-American Lynn Woolsey will at least have to defend her territory, and this will be part of the nationwide story come November. It will be one of the most enjoyable, energizing political years in Republican history, and it will presage an even better one in 2012.

And another thing . . . Obama's old Illinois Senate seat, sold by Democrat Governor Rod Blagojevich, and never actually “won” by Obama (he used an illegal court ruling to steal it from Jack Ryan in 2004), will be in Republican hands come November. In other words, the quintessential repudiation of a man and his thug politics, known as the “Chicago way” in his so-called “home” state.

Who could possibly have predicted one year ago that the criminal Obama would be the greatest gift the Republican Party has had bestowed upon it in many a year? Who could have foreseen that the death of the immoral swimming champion Kennedy would be the death knell of his most cherished policy, health care? All of this is happening without any true Republican or even conservative leaders yet emerging. The Left will place forth the lie that this means the Right is rudderless. In truth it is the Left's worst nightmare, since the conservative ascendancy depends not on a single man, not on any “cult of personality,” but on the rising tide of an electrified populace. As anybody who knows anything about history understands, nothing on the face of this Earth is more unstoppable.

Oh, the delicious irony of it all. To watch former Vice-President Richard Cheney disseminating the truth about Obama's dithering, his failures and incompetency, each barb smacking the Democrats who blasted him for so long like, like . . . like “tea bags” across their wimpy faces.

Or to see Karl Rove exact revenge on his detractors every day with words of truth and wisdom in the Wall Street Journal and on Fox News. Or to see Governor Palin elevated to “rock star” status, her book selling in such extraordinary numbers as to be beyond mere phenomenon.
The daily exposition of criminality on the part of the ACLU, ACORN and the corrupt Democrat machines, the history of which goes back to the Confederacy, Tammany Hall, Kansas City's Pendergast machine, Clinton's Arkansas “mafia,” Jim Crow, and the total destruction of virtually every urban center in America, brings the widest possible smiles to the faces of honest Republicans from coast-to-coast.

At the heart of this ascendancy has been a conservative media that simply wins in the great marketplace of ideas. Fox News ate up the ratings like a hungry lion. They featured conservatives like Ann Coulter, Bill O'Reilly and Glenn Beck, day-by-day dismantling the Obama myth. The “lame stream” media that makes up the New York Times, the Washington Post, Time, the now-defunct Newsweek, and news programs on CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN, and MSNBC, all watched and read by nobody, not to mention the zero-ratings Air America; all these outlets of venom and incompetence are failing in one way or another. They want you to believe it is because of the Obama economy, or the Internet, but these business factors do not have an effect on successful operations like the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Times, Human Events, the Weekly Standard and Newsmax. Keith Olbermann, Rachel Maddow and a host of lesser lights simply wallow in their own rhetorical feces.

Michael Moore makes two hours of celluloid garbage and the Left wants to trumpet it as a widespread and “compelling.” It finished behind Lara Croft: Tomb Raider. The first moment many Republicans knew George W. Bush would win in 2004 was when they saw Fahrenheit 9/11. The day after that victory was attained in record numbers a billboard went up on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, depicting Moore and the other Hollywood unimpressives. It thanked them for their “help” in delivering victory to Bush and his party.

None of this stopped Hollywood from making lying movies like In the Valley of Elah, Rendition and Lions For Lambs. None did business, but movies with a Christian, conservative message, like The Blind Side and Gran Torino, did. So did the patriotic Charlie Wilson's War. Finally they made an Iraq War movie that, while not pro-Bush, was at least fair and realistic. The Hurt Locker, unlike the liberal trash, did well.

The conservatives behind radio microphones are simply having a field day destroying Obama. Michael Savage, Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Mark Levin, G. Gordon Liddy and a host of others are at the apex of their power and influence. Amazingly, the only time listeners actually hear the things said by the Dumbellionites of MSNBC, CNN and the like are when Limbaugh or Hannity replay their stupidities on their shows. It is almost a kind of free advertising.

Again, a year ago it all looked so hopeless, but like Winston Churchill in the darkest days of the Battle of Britain, two books emerged to begin shedding light on the Obama White House. Mark Levin's Liberty and Tyranny and Michelle Malkin's Culture of Corruption were enormous best sellers. Ayn Rand's 1957 novel Atlas Shrugged hit the bestseller lists, too. It described a bleak economic landscape that readers immediately identified as Obamaland. Deep, deep down the corrupters of the White House saw this and began to squirm just a little bit.

A timeline of Acorn Man's first year shows a drip-drip of downward spiraling movement, inexorably leading to a tipping point that, incredibly and to their shock and dismay, most likely will not be reversed.

On January 20, 2009, “Ears” was inaugurated. It was more like an anointing, a religious event. He was utterly popular, the Republicans completely beaten, and conservativism declared to be dead. Stories of his “muscularity” (despite his skinny little body) and the “work out
“regimen” that produced wife Michelle's “sinewy arms” were breathlessly written. (Remember those stupid cartoons caricaturing Bush with huge ears? That is actually what the goofy-lookin' Obama looks like in real life.)

- Obama then ordered Gitmo to be shut down and terrorists captured on the battlefield to be read Miranda rights. His Homeland Security chief called terrorism a “man made disaster.”
- In February he signed a bill that socialized the economy and nationalized some of our most precious industries. President Bush deserves plenty of blame for starting us down this road, but where Bush went five percent along this path, Obama went 90 percent further into the oblivion of debt and Socialism. Obama inherited a normal cyclical recession and, by his own hand and on purpose, turned it into the “worst economy since the Great Depression.” Why? Because it was his ticket to the power of Washington bureaucracy.
- Obama engaged in a full throttle attack on capitalism, Wall Street, banking and success. Why? Because in his view America is a racist, immoral nation, our success built on the backs of the dispossessed and the poor. In his view, every dollar earned by a capitalist is a dollar stolen from the poor. American success and righteousness are of no good purpose to Obama's Democrats.
- Obama introduced “cap 'n' trade” and “card gate.” The first was an attempt to impose insane volumes of taxes upon business, mostly small business. The costs of course are passed on to the consumers. The second initiative was designed to see to it that a majority of working people belong to unions that supported Obama and the Democrats whether the workers liked it or not. Both were un-Constitutional.
- On February 27 the fakir Obama announced his “cut 'n' run' policy from Iraq.
- A troubling rumor began to gain momentum; that Obama was not eligible for the Presidency because he had not been born in the U.S. Much so-called “evidence” that he was born in Honolulu surfaced, including a newspaper clipping that may or may not have been real, but none of it was compelling. Certainly no Hawaii birth certificate emerged, even though anybody born in Kapiolani Hospital can obtain one by requesting it in writing and receiving it a couple weeks later. Somehow Obama could not do this act. His college records were sealed. Why? The rumor was that it would show he attended as a foreign student, not to mention it might demonstrate that Bush made better grades (just as he had better grades than John Kerry and Al Gore). A birth certificate showing him to be born in Indonesia was produced. Its authenticity could not be proven, but it could not be disproven, either. The issue was used by his supporters as “proof” that the conservatives were nuts. In the months since, this issue has given way to substantive complaint of his policies, but to date no actual proof the “man” was born in Hawaii exists.
- In March Obama endorsed the use of aborted fetuses in stem cell research. This was in line with his party's general policy, which is to make use of all their emotional energy to make it as easy as possible for slutty women to suck live babies out of their wombs with a vacuum, then puncture their brains to insure death.
- Nancy Pelosi accused the CIA of torture, lying and cover-ups.
- Obama “bowed down” to his Muslim masters in the Middle East and followed that up by bowin' to the Japanese and doing turns on a prayer rug in Turkey.
- Obama nationalized Chrysler.
- Obama nominated Sonja Sotomayor to the Supreme Court. Her only qualification appeared to be womanhood, Latino ethnicity, and liberalism.
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  • National socialized health care legislation was proposed.
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Castro expressed great admiration for Obama. These are not people you want to have as your friends, but the Democrats have always been the preferred party of criminals, anti-Americans, pornographers (Larry Flynt did their PR work for free) and Communists (one American returned from living in North Korea after 40 years in 1996 “to vote for Bill Clinton.”)

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"Diplomacy without force is like music without instruments." - Frederick the Great

"The best form of defense is attack" - Karl Von Clausewitz

"Let your plans be dark and as impenetratable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt." - Sun Tzu, The Art of War

"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." - George Orwell

"I would rather play Rugby and lose, then play Softball and win." - Cheyenne Misfits Rugby Club

**REPUDIATION OF THE CRIMINAL OBAMA**

*A Complaint of Tyranny and Impiety*

O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O god, to whom vengeance shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth; render a reward to the proud. Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.

- Psalm 94: 1-5

January 20, 2010 marks the one-year anniversary of the criminal Obama’s Presidency. January 19 marked further repudiation of all he stands for. It started at the All-Star Game in St. Louis, when half the fans booed the Acorn Man. It continued in November when Republican Chris Christie roundly won the Governorship of New Jersey and Republican Bob McDonnell wiped the floor with the Democrats in Virginia; both after Dumbo made personal appearances on behalf of his chosen minions. On Tuesday Republican Scott Brown defeated Democrat Martha Coakley for “Ted Kennedy’s Senate seat” in the “Boston Massacre,” winning by six points. What we are seeing is a conservative revolution. It is an astounding event. In 1994 the Republicans pulled off a similar political tsunami. This will make 1994 look like a mere blip on the radar screen. The Democrat Party may not survive what is about to occur.
First and foremost we are seeing what will be, by the end of 2010, the complete and total American:

- Repudiation of the incompetent “Ears” Obama.
- Repudiation of the immoral Kennedys.
- Repudiation of the impeached Clintons.
- Repudiation of the hooligans Nancy Pelosi, Barbara Boxer and Harry Reid.
- Repudiation of the illegal ACORN, the “black hand” of the Nazi-collaborating George Soros, the absurdity of MoveOn.org, the lies of Michael Moore, and the stupidity of Code Pink.
- Repudiation of the unpatriotic works of Hollywood, the “lame stream” media, the “blame America first” crowd now indoctrinating our young from grade school to graduate school, and the unimpressives who make up the Left.
- Repudiation of the “global warming” mythologists and the socialized health care ram rodders.
- Repudiation of the displaced Communists who, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, have found a home in the international Left and made Acorn Man their poster child.
- Repudiation of Socialism in America!

A year ago, many worried that the criminal Obama was the anti-Christ. Biblical scholars generally conclude that such a creature is merely a malevolent spirit, and that the concept of Satan coming to fruition as a political or military leader is more a Hollywood construct. Brother Harold Camping is a Biblical scholar operating on a worldwide network called Family Radio. He says Christ will return on May 21, 2011, but offers no worry that our President is the Dark Prince.

For one thing, one might surmise that Satan would be a helluva lot smarter than the bumbling, stumbling Dumbo man with his stilted phrases, his incoherent speech in a lame attempt to “help” Coakley, and his unimpressive arguments on behalf of most everything he advocates.

In Massachusetts, Coakley trailed Brown by four points. Obama showed up and made a speech for her. Immediately afterward she trailed by seven en route to desultoriness. The “Obama effect” was the same in New Jersey and Virginia. It was not unlike previous efforts by Bill Clinton to “help” candidates who lost four or five points courtesy of his appearances on their “behalf,” or the infamous John Kerry. He trailed by a couple points before the 2004 Democrat National Convention. After America got a closer look at what the creatures of the Left were, they decided they should trail by five.

For Obama, as with other Democrat “heroes,” it has come down to an almost mathematical formula, and it works like this.

One observes Obama.
One sees what he does.
One thinks about it.
One uses his God-given common sense in analyzing what he sees.
Therefore, consequently, and as a result thereof, the fact that Obama and the Democrats are loathsome and atrocious simply emanates itself as manifest truth, knowledge of which is possessed by millions and millions of patriotic American citizens. Nobody needs to argue it, spin it or try to make anybody understand it. It simply exists as self-evident fact, which of course is always the best kind. (To put it more succinctly, to know Obama is to despise him.)

Bill Ayers is the unrepentant terrorist who tried to bomb the Pentagon, kill police officers, and was rewarded by the Left with university tenure. He is Dumbo’s close friend. He hosted his political debut, served on boards with him, and is rumored to have ghostwritten his autobiography. He served the Dumbellionite Obama in his ascendancy as closely as Karl Rove was the architect of George W. Bush’s early career in Texas, but Obama somehow thinks he can persuade us that, like Christ’s apostles on the day of the crucifixion, “I do not know that man.” Except the Acorn man does it in that dumb sing-song voice of his: “He’s a guuuuuyyy who lives in my neighborhood,” which is like the Kennedys saying their bootlegging, Nazi-sympathizing father, “Old Man Joe” was “Just, uh, a guy who, uh, lives, uh, in the neighborhood.”

Of course Obama “heard no evil” for 20 years while his pastor was telling a raucous, approving black crowd consisting of his and Ayers’ Chicago neighbors that America is not blessed, but rather damned by Almighty God. One supposes Obama’s most convincing argument that he disagreed with Reverend Wright might be that he does not believe an actual God exists to damn America, and attended the church as an act of political survival. It’s the “Chicago Way.” As for his wife, America ending slavery on Earth or defeating the greatest armies ever assembled in two world wars are not to be admired. Only her husband’s anointing is.

Dumbo still has a dwindling group of supporters in the media. They call him articulate. Who are they fooling? Hearing the ignoramuses call Obama “articulate” is a joke. He is neither articulate nor particularly smart. Bill Clinton was both. He rescued his Presidency by working with Republicans after the 1994 GOP sweeps. He adopted Republican economic policies and, as if by statistical formula, the economy revived. The guess hear is that Obama and his hard Left fellow travelers are too stubborn, proud and yes, too stupid to learn this lesson. They will go down with their ship, and the Democrat Party may well sink into oblivion forever. This seems incredible to imagine, but movements do happen that fast. The 1960s are over, baby!

Meanwhile, former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin is called “dumb.” One listens to her speak of a “fallen world,” of man’s true relationship with God, and why the Founding Fathers favored limited government because they recognized the inherent corruption of men’s souls, and one hears articulation so far and above the yap-yap-yap of the “man” who never stops talking, or getting face time on TV, or showing up at every soiree in which he can honor himself; well, Palin runs circles around Acorn Man six days of the week and twice on Sunday. We are led to believe that the Ivy League elites are so much better educated, yet has anyone noticed that one can attend Harvard and graduate hardly without attending class these days? Everything is on-line there and most everywhere else.

So the angry conservative Right is making a lot of noise, on Fox News, on talk radio, and at the “Tea Parties.” After what the Democrats did to President Bush for eight years, they should simply lack eligibility to complain about ANYTHING! The only thing they should have a right to do after their years of foul lies and perfidy is to SIT THERE AND TAKE IT. To say nothing! It is only the common decency that marks conservative people that prevents them from repeating the foul epithets that the Left vomited upon the public square for years.
Of course this does not stop them from besmirching the “tea baggers” with disgusting comments that more resemble their own “tea bagging,” which in Leftist circles is not a love of the Constitution, but love for a homosexual act too abominable to describe, that they apparently are far too intimately knowledgeable about.

The hooligan Pelosi says the “tea baggers” are not a “grass roots” movement, but rather “Astro turf.” Yeah, sure it is. Just like Hillary Clinton’s “vast Right-wing conspiracy” consisted of millions of patriotic American citizens who had the temerity to register and vote Republican! Call it what you will – “tea baggers” or “vast Right-wing conspiracy” – but this enormous “silent majority” of the American citizenry is about to shock the world.

On the heels of the New Jersey and Virginia Governor’s elections, and the Massachusetts Senate victory, these people are at the very beginning of a campaign season that will see the following:

- Harry “the war is lost” Reid’s swift deportation to a southern Nevada strip mine town.
- The hooligan Boxer’s swift deportation to a Sausalito hippy commune.
- The Republican’s taking control of the House and Senate, and
- The criminal Obama’s swift 2012 deportation to the neighborhood he shares with Bill Ayers, perhaps a job as “community organizer” of a Chicago thug group, or maybe a vacation to Mecca.

Remember New York Congressional District 23? Somehow, after losing enormous statewide elections in two pivotal races, the Democrats wanted you to believe the fiction that “winning” a tiny district bordering Canada was the news of the November elections. Here is the real news. That district will hold another election in November, and the conservative Dan Huffman will win the Republican primary and then beat Bill Owens.

Boxer’s old Congressional seat is in liberal Marin County. It is as safe a Democrat seat as there is, but guess what? The Republicans are about to unveil an actual great candidate, and in this climate, he may win. The anti-American Lynn Woolsey will at least have to defend her territory, and this will be part of the nationwide story come November. It will be one of the most enjoyable, energizing political years in Republican history, and it will presage an even better one in 2012.

And another thing . . . Obama’s old Illinois Senate seat, sold by Democrat Governor Rod Blagojevich, and never actually “won” by Obama (he used an illegal court ruling to steal it from Jack Ryan in 2004), will be in Republican hands come November. In other words, the quintessential repudiation of a man and his thug politics, known as the “Chicago way” in his so-called “home” state.

Who could possibly have predicted one year ago that the criminal Obama would be the greatest gift the Republican Party has had bestowed upon it in many a year? Who could have foreseen that the death of the immoral swimming champion Kennedy would be the death knell of his most cherished policy, health care? All of this is happening without any true Republican or even conservative leaders yet emerging. The Left will place forth the lie that this means the Right is rudderless. In truth it is the Left’s worst nightmare, since the conservative ascendancy depends not on a single man, not on any “cult of personality,” but on the rising tide of an electrified populace. As anybody who knows anything about history understands, nothing on the face of this Earth is more unstoppable.
Oh, the delicious irony of it all. To watch former Vice-President Richard Cheney disseminating the truth about Obama’s dithering, his failures and incompetency, each barb smacking the Democrats who blasted him for so long like, like . . . like “tea bags” across their wimpy faces.

Or to see Karl Rove exact revenge on his detractors every day with words of truth and wisdom in the Wall Street Journal and on Fox News. Or to see Governor Palin elevated to “rock star” status, her book selling in such extraordinary numbers as to be beyond mere phenomenon.

The daily exposition of criminality on the part of the ACLU, ACORN and the corrupt Democrat machines, the history of which goes back to the Confederacy, Tammany Hall, Kansas City’s Pendergast machine, Clinton’s Arkansas “mafia,” Jim Crow, and the total destruction of virtually every urban center in America, brings the widest possible smiles to the faces of honest Republicans from coast-to-coast.

At the heart of this ascendancy has been a conservative media that simply wins in the great marketplace of ideas. Fox News ate up the ratings like a hungry lion. They featured conservatives like Ann Coulter, Bill O’Reilly and Glenn Beck, day-by-day dismantling the Obama myth. The “lame stream” media that makes up the New York Times, the Washington Post, Time, the now-defunct Newsweek, and news programs on CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN, and MSNBC, all watched and read by nobody, not to mention the zero-ratings Air America; all these outlets of venom and incompetence are failing in one way or another. They want you to believe it is because of the Obama economy, or the Internet, but these business factors do not have an effect on successful operations like the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Times, Human Events, the Weekly Standard and Newsmax. Keith Olbermann, Rachel Maddow and a host of lesser lights simply wallow in their own rhetorical feces.

Michael Moore makes two hours of celluloid garbage and the Left wants to trumpet it as a widespread and “compelling.” It finished behind Lara Croft: Tomb Raider. The first moment many Republicans knew George W. Bush would win in 2004 was when they saw Fahrenheit 9/11. The day after that victory was attained in record numbers a billboard went up on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, depicting Moore and the other Hollywood unimpressives. It thanked them for their “help” in delivering victory to Bush and his party.

None of this stopped Hollywood from making lying movies like In the Valley of Elah, Rendition and Lions For Lambs. None did business, but movies with a Christian, conservative message, like The Blind Side and Gran Torino, did. So did the patriotic Charlie Wilson’s War. Finally they made an Iraq War movie that, while not pro-Bush, was at least fair and realistic. The Hurt Locker, unlike the liberal trash, did well.

The conservatives behind radio microphones are simply having a field day destroying Obama. Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Mark Levin, G. Gordon Liddy and a host of others are at the apex of their power and influence. Amazingly, the only time listeners actually hear the things said by the Dumbellionites of MSNBC, CNN and the like are when Limbaugh or Hannity replay their stupidities on their shows. It is almost a kind of free advertising.

Again, a year ago it all looked so hopeless, but like Winston Churchill in the darkest days of the Battle of Britain, two books emerged to begin shedding light on the Obama White House. Mark Levin’s Liberty and Tyranny and Michelle Malkin’s Culture of Corruption were enormous best sellers. Ayn Rand’s 1957 novel Atlas Shrugged hit the bestseller lists, too. It described a bleak economic landscape that readers immediately identified as Obamaland. Deep, deep down the corrupters of the White House saw this and began to squirm just a little bit.
A time-line of Acorn Man’s first year shows a drip-drip of downward spiraling movement, inexorably leading to a tipping point that, incredibly and to their shock and dismay, most likely will not be reversed.

- On January 20, 2009, “Ears” was inaugurated. It was more like an anointing, a religious event. He was utterly popular, the Republicans completely beaten, and conservativism declared to be dead. Stories of his “muscularity” (despite his skinny little body) and the “work out regimen” that produced wife Michelle’s “sinewy arms” were breathlessly written. (Remember those stupid cartoons caricaturing Bush with huge ears? That is actually what the goofy-lookin’ Obama looks like in real life.)
- Obama then ordered Gitmo to be shut down and terrorists captured on the battlefield to be read Miranda rights. His Homeland Security chief called terrorism a “man made disaster.”
- In February he signed a bill that socialized the economy and nationalized some of our most precious industries. President Bush deserves plenty of blame for starting us down this road, but where Bush went five percent along this path, Obama went 90 percent further into the oblivion of debt and Socialism. Obama inherited a normal cyclical recession and, by his own hand and on purpose, turned it into the “worst economy since the Great Depression.” Why? Because it was his ticket to the power of Washington bureaucracy.
- Obama engaged in a full throttle attack on capitalism, Wall Street, banking and success. Why? Because in his view America is a racist, immoral nation, our success built on the backs of the dispossessed and the poor. In his view, every dollar earned by a capitalist is a dollar stolen from the poor. American success and righteousness are of no good purpose to Obama’s Democrats.
- Obama introduced “cap ‘n’ trade” and “card gate.” The first was an attempt to impose insane volumes of taxes upon business, mostly small business. The costs of course are passed on to the consumers. The second initiative was designed to see to it that a majority of working people belong to unions that supported Obama and the Democrats whether the workers liked it or not. Both were un-Constitutional.
- On February 27 the fakir Obama announced his “cut ‘n’ run’ policy from Iraq.
- A troubling rumor began to gain momentum; that Obama was not eligible for the Presidency because he had not been born in the U.S. Much so-called “evidence” that he was born in Honolulu surfaced, including a newspaper clipping that may or may not have been real, but none of it was compelling. Certainly no Hawaii birth certificate emerged, even though anybody born in Kapiolani Hospital can obtain one by requesting it in writing and receiving it a couple weeks later. Somehow Obama could not do this act. His college records were sealed. Why? The rumor was that it would show he attended as a foreign student, not to mention it might demonstrate that Bush made better grades (just as he had better grades than John Kerry and Al Gore). A birth certificate showing him to be born in Indonesia was produced. Its authenticity could not be proven, but it could not be disproven, either. The issue was used by his supporters as “proof” that the conservatives were nuts. In the months since, this issue has given way to substantive complaint of his policies, but to date no actual proof the “man” was born in Hawaii exists.
• In March Obama endorsed the use of aborted fetuses in stem cell research. This was in line with his party’s general policy, which is to make use of all their emotional energy to make it as easy as possible for slutty women to suck live babies out of their wombs with a vacuum, then puncture their brains to insure death.
• Nancy Pelosi accused the CIA of torture, lying and cover-ups.
• Obama “bowed down” to his Muslim masters in the Middle East and followed that up by bowin’ to the Japanese and doing turns on a prayer rug in Turkey.
• Obama nationalized Chrysler.
• Obama nominated Sonja Sotomayor to the Supreme Court. Her only qualification appeared to be womanhood, Latino ethnicity, and liberalism.
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THE FIRST HERO

THE GLORIOUS, TRAGIC LIFE OF AMERICA’S FIRST SPORTS SUPERSTAR, CHRISTY MATHEWSON

By STEVEN TRAVERS

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According to legend, an Army officer named Abner Doubleday in 1839 invented baseball in Cooperstown, New York. Over the next 61 years, the game grew and gained in popularity, but the men who played the game were considered roustabouts, bums, drunkards; the kind of
nefarious fellows who associated with gamblers, were not allowed in better hotels and restaurants; and most assuredly were off limits to the daughters of good families.

Then, as the new American century turned, in 1900 arrived Christy Mathewson. A rookie pitcher, he came to New York to pitch for the Giants and manager John McGraw. His career co-existed with, and symbolized, the growth of the United States into a modern superpower.

35 years after the end of the Civil War, America was Manifest Destiny personified. Despite botched Reconstruction, the country was finally healing its wounds between North and South, in large measure because of baseball’s popularity. The nation had survived panics and economic downturns, riding the crest of the Industrial Revolution, and was about to embark on a whirlwind competition with Germany, Great Britain and France for global superiority; with Biblical results that, 45 years later, would see the young country rise to heights above and beyond all previous powers, empires and armies. But in 1900 America was still a young nation, full of promise as embodied by a new, vigorous young President named Theodore Roosevelt.

While the Gold Rush had expanded the borders to California, the Indian Wars having made it safe to travel, the “center of the universe” was still New York City. Ellis Island immigration was not yet in full swing, but the promise of the country had already attracted millions of Irish, Italian, Jewish and German émigrés, most of who settled in the Big Apple and found in baseball the great link to Americanization. Roosevelt, who was trying to root our corruption, had exposed the old Democrat-controlled Tammany Hall but baseball was still filled with below-the-surface scandal.

While most colleges had baseball clubs, the professional game was a hardscrabble link of disparate leagues and towns. Kids generally grew up in rural settings and did not play in high school, if indeed they even attended such a formal educational institution. They played what was called “town ball.” These were generally teams sponsored by some local company that played on weekends, traveling from town to town in Kansas or Texas or California. Their families and their churches usually excoriated the kids who chose to pursue the game much beyond the rudiments of town ball. Such a thing was to refute decent society; to take on the life of a bum, a train hobo, a rambling man, instead of pursuing a preferred life of marriage, children and hard work.

The average citizen fails to understand the nature of rural American circa 1900, thinking that somehow when the Sioux defeated Custer in 1876; when Geronimo surrendered in 1890; and when the century turned amid modernity’s such as railroads, aqueducts, and telegraph services, the 19th Century West was a thing of the past. Not so. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were still robbing banks in the West, which was still a “wild, wild” place of much lawlessness, whiskey saloons and fallen women. This was the world of town ball. Many young men came from those teams to play in organized, professional leagues, and if they had the stuff, the big leagues. Most of the first famous Californians were not war heroes or politicians, but ball players.

In 1900-01, baseball’s popularity had expanded to the point where a second “major” league, the American League, was added to form a world championship opponent against the National
League’s best in what would become the World Series in 1903. Popularity at the turnstiles and in the newspapers, however, had failed to propel the game beyond its rowdy, town ball image. The players traveled by train from New York to Boston to Philadelphia to Washington; as far west as St. Louis. On those trains they chewed tobacco, spitting out the windows and literally breathing soot. Drinking and jocularity were the order of the day. They played cards in earnest and fell prey to gamblers who paid them off to blow a game here or there; maybe just an error in a key situation or a strikeout or a walk. Loose women were passed around. A ballplayer went from town to town, often having his way with the “local talent” and moving on without regard to any consequences.

The players were uneducated rubes, oddly out of place in expensive suits that their salaries afforded them; money they never could earn outside of the game. If not for baseball they would be back on the farm, or hustling pool halls, or worse. They were seen as thieves, reprobates, and drunks disreputable among decent women. The better hotels refused them. A father was horrified if one approached his daughter.

Enter Christy Mathewson, who came not from a rural farm or pool hall or gambling den. Rather, Mathewson had played football and baseball at Bucknell, and when he arrived in New York to play for the Gants, he immediately established himself as the best pitcher in baseball. Fictional characters like Jack Armstrong and “Baseball Joe” were based on Mathewson.

He was tall and strong. Real-life heroes are often depicted in movies by actors better looking than they, but in Matty’s case if a young Robert Redford were to have played him, it would have been a toss-up who was more handsome.

Photos of baseball players generally show elongated strides, strange swings, pitching styles that more resembled a windmill or horse shoes, but Mathewson is shown driving, using his back legs to power his body low to the ground, his arm in perfect place to deliver heat.

Matty was happily married, a perfect family man who lived his life with temperance, observance and faith; an American hero for a new century, a perfect symbol of the rugged cheerfulness of Teddy Roosevelt’s hopeful country.

For the first time, parents were not horrified that their daughters might be fans of a baseball player if that player were Christy Mathewson. For the first time, well-dressed, well-coiffed women could attend games at the Polo Grounds without being branded as “Baseball Annies” and floozies. Teachers used Matty as an example of how children should conduct themselves and aspire to be.

He was well spoken, polite and respectful. The writers adored him. His manager, John McGraw, honed out of the most rough-hewn core of the baseball world, the hardscrabble Baltimore Orioles of the 1890s, worshipped the ground his young star walked upon. His teammates treated him more like a deity. He was loved, respected and admired by opponents.
In 1905, Mathewson’s legend was made in the World Series when he threw three shutouts against Connie Mack’s Philadelphia A’s. In the entire history of the game, this performance is still rated the single-greatest in Series history. Before Babe Ruth’s Yankees and the “Boys of Summer” Dodgers, McGraw’s Giants were baseball royalty; the greatest dynasty in the game. Mathewson was involved in the greatest of all pitcher’s duels; in 1908 against Chicago’s Mordecai “Three-Fingered” Brown in the infamous “Merkle Boner” game at the Polo Grounds; and in 1912 against a young Mathewson-redux, Boston fireballer “Smokey Joe” Wood, who promised to fill Matty’s shoes until an arm injury cut short impossible greatness.

Mathewson defined the game. Other stars lacked his charisma or appeal. Ty Cobb was a racist with a chip on his shoulder. Grover Alexander was a drunkard subject to seizures. “Prince Hal” Chase was in the pockets of gamblers, and “Shoeless Joe” Jackson’s Hall of Fame career was cut short by similar associations. Walter Johnson was an affable oil field worker and Chief Bender was an Indian when bigotry still prevailed. But Matty was the ultimate national hero, and not subject to the bigotry of so many. His catcher was a California Indian named Chief Meyers, and Mathewson took him under his wing. Matty’s light made Meyer part of the “in crowd” and was a major advance in social progress through sports.

The term All-American suited him better than any college football player. College football was a Harvard-Yale thing, an upper crust activity for the fur-coat crowd. Mathewson was everybody’s favorite.

For more than 15 years he was the greatest athlete in the world. His pitching record holds up today. A comparison of his statistics and accomplishments rates him at the very top. To say today he is still the greatest ever to grace the mound is not an outlandish comment and among baseball’s intelligentsia garners no real dispute. His 373 career victories are still the National League record. His “fadeway,” now known as a screwball, is perhaps the most unhittable pitch ever devised.

Mathewson approached the waning years of his great career with grace. He would manage, or perhaps coach in the Ivy League. His post-playing days would be a repose of remembered glories, generations of future stars paying homage to his stardom, politicians coming hat in hand asking for an endorsement. Then World War I came around.

When President Woodrow Wilson entered the U.S. into a European “war to end all wars” that would “save Democracy for the world,” Mathewson heeded the call. His collegiate background and leadership skills earned him a commission, and he became Captain Christy Mathewson. Off to war he went, and like so many he did not return whole. A mustard gas attack exposed his lungs to the deadly fumes, and led to his untimely demise. A young man cut down in his prime, a symbol of lost innocence.

Babe Ruth, an imbiber and libertine, replaced Matty as hero of Our National Pastime. Year by year, the foibles of superstars were exposed, but Christy Mathewson remains the single unsmeared figure of all-time greatness and heroism.
THINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATISM; MEET CHUCK DEVORE
By STEVEN TRAVERS

MARIN COUNTY, Calif. (Aug. 4, 2009) - I attended a revival meeting last night. I saw a resurrection. Thine eyes have seen the future, and the setting for this particular miracle was an upscale living room in Kent Woodlands, a woodsy epicenter of the modern environmentalist movement; a place where 40 years ago elite liberals refused to dam a nearby lake that constantly flooded the “little people” who lived in the lowlands below because a mouse or a tree might have to be sacrificed, while commoners navigated their streets by rowboat.

Kent Woodlands is part of a town called Kentfield, which is part of Marin County, which is part of the San Francisco Bay Area, which is a “coastal enclave” of Northern California; all of which are appellations for a 21st Century brand of Left-wing liberalism that has become so vociferous as to resemble a religion. To live in Marin often means to be enmeshed within this mindset, and to be surrounded by the notion that other ways of thinking are so far off, and have so little chance of electoral success, as to stifle any hope. It is an Alice in Wonderland world and, while it is a beautiful, marvelous place, escape from this world, whether literally or philosophical, is tonic for the soul.

Thus did some 150 conservatives from Marin County descend, or ascend as the case may be, to this private hillside home with its view of San Francisco Bay framed by Redwood trees; the sound of ravens and hawks flapping and cawing in the all-encompassing woods. These conservatives live in this strange little world, an existence in which they possess knowledge that approximately 40 percent of the American populace thinks like them, yet here they make up less than 20 percent of county humanity. The liberals make up well over 50 percent of the county in a nation in which only about 20-25 percent of their fellow citizenry identifies with them. There are only two ways to process this knowledge; to realize they are out of touch (they never do) or simply be snobbish about it (the chosen path of virtually all of the liberals).

The conservatives of Marin County, however, are a particularly notable case study, because they live, breath, exist and even thrive in the “belly of the beast.” The locals newspapers and electronic media; the public access stations; the schools and their neighbors; all treat them as
non-existent, yet they do exist. A silent majority? Not a majority, yet right here in the San Francisco Bay Area two completely conservative talk radio stations, KSFO and KNEW, thrive and have done so for years, like a newfangled Voice of America reaching a witness protection program located behind enemy lines. They take a peculiar pride in their minority status, because it requires a sharpness of intellect to survive the slings and arrows mostly unnecessary in Newport Beach, or Iowa, or Kansas. These people slog on day after day like the Christian martyrs of old, spurred by a simple truth surrounded by lies: they know they are right. Not just on the Right, but actually right. The truth, as it says, shall set ye free, and by gum these folks can handle the truth!

Enter Chuck DeVore. I first met Chuck in 1988. I was a USC graduate living in Orange County. Chuck was a few years removed from Claremont-Mudd College, and in his mid-20s was on the fast track. He had gotten knee deep in G.O.P. politics at Claremont-Mudd, then joined the Army, was assigned to the Pentagon, liaised with the Ronald Reagan Administration and Republican Congressmen like San Diego’s Duncan Hunter. A true wunderkind, young DeVore literally dictated a letter Congressman Hunter used to initiate a key arms deal with the Israelis.

In the mid-1980s, President Reagan observed that international Communism was still very much in the murder business; as in the murder of 100 million human beings in the Soviet Union, Red China, Vietnam, Cambodia, North Korea, Cuba, Central America, and other areas of “adventurism,” roughly between 1917 and 1989. He decided to do something about it in Afghanistan and Central America, but in Nicaragua Democrats blocked his efforts. The fact that the Communists were at the high end of their 100 million-murder spree was not yet verified by the Venona Papers later made available after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of Soviet archives, but the Republicans certainly were aware of it, if not every last detail. So too were the Democrats, yet despite the evidence placed squarely before them chose not only to ignore it, but to oppose Reagan’s efforts at stopping it. Thus did emerge the Iran-Contra scandal, and out of that a kind of bewilderment by Republicans in which they ask themselves, almost as if in a trance, “Is it possible that the Democrats are really unpatriotic?” For years after this Republicans have desperately tried to give Democrats the benefit of the doubt on this issue, despite decades of evidence to the contrary.

Young DeVore saw the same kind of Democrat obstructionism when it came to American efforts at defending little Israel, at the time in a bare-knuckles brawl against all the Soviet client states of the Middle East. He and Congressman Hunter worked diligently on an end-run around hill opposition, managing to craft an arms-protection deal with the Israelis with lasting benefits to this very day.

In 1988, a coveted Congressional seat representing the wealthy environs of Newport Beach and outlying communities opened up. A mad scramble among many qualified candidates ensued. DeVore threw his hat in the ring, ostensibly for name recognition and experience. This was when I met him. We were both in military Reserve units located near each other, and had that in common. Everything about the guy was impressive. Ultimately C. Christopher Cox emerged the winner, and from there he forged a successful career in Congress followed by a stint at the SEC.
DeVore was able to make the best use of a unique aspect of military service, that of the “citizen-soldier” who serves in the National Guard while pursuing a lucrative career in the private sector. For two decades he was practiced in the arts of military intelligence, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel. All the while, he made excellent money as a high-ranking aerospace executive. Living in wealthy south Orange County, Devore had a perfect family life and surely did not need the rough n’ tumble of politics, but he was drawn to it like a moth to a flame.

DeVore says he has “a perfect face for radio.” He may not be Robert Redford in *The Candidate*, but he is very youthful, pleasant-looking, at 6-4 very athletic; somebody who one imagines looked every bit the part of a lieutenant colonel. He explains that he looks so young because he keeps the vices to a bare minimum, combined with “good genetics.” Energy exudes from him.

He was elected to the California Assembly at a time in which it was good to be a Republican. President George W. Bush was riding high in the White House and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was riding high in Sacramento. Since then, the Republican brand has suffered one debilitating blow after another. If Assemblyman DeVore harbored designs on the U.S. Senate, it seemingly was dashed by the events of 2008-09, but as the great enthusiasm of his Kentfield crowd on August 3 attests, a “sea change” is in the offing and, as the assemblyman states, “Timing is everything.”

Barack Obama is the President and under his leadership, the United States of America increasingly looks to be a cross between Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged* and the Charlton Heston movie *Soylent Green*. Health care has gone from, “Hey great, it’s free” to “I now know the facts and, upon analysis, realize what a farce it is.” Obama’s poll ratings are dropping precipitously. Pollster Pat Caddell is a rarity, an honest Democrat, and he is shocked at the numbers he sees. He calls them unprecedented. The Republicans benefit from a peculiar syndrome in which the Democrats, so flush with victory as recently as November of last year, are almost immune to the facts. Nobody is better prepared to take advantage of this than the military intelligence expert Chuck DeVore, who knows that a field commander, a football coach, a CEO . . . or a politician, simply must be told the truth instead of relying on false assumptions and hoped-for projections.

He has entered the race for California’s U.S. Senate seat, held by Marin County’s own Barbara Boxer. Boxer is no dummy and is acutely aware that as of this writing she trails by four percentage points in a projected match with DeVore. Knowing is one thing; overcoming is another. These are harsh facts for a liberal Senator from a “blue state” who has seen most of what she spent her life working for come to fruition in the past year, but like a football coach of a team that blows a 20-0 halftime lead and now trails, 24-20, the psychology of the thing is a bigger challenge than a mere four points.

Senator Boxer has led a remarkably charmed political life. A failed stockbroker from Brooklyn, she came to Marin, like so many venturing west, trying to re-invent herself. A stint as a writer for a free weekly publication somehow led her to election as a county supervisor. Then the Congressional seat opened up like manna from Heaven. Early 1980s gerrymandering assured a Democrat victory, and the cocaine addiction of Phil Burton opened a position in the infamous “Burton machine” (1982). Enter Barbara Boxer and a decade of uninterrupted House rule. In
1990 I managed the campaign of her Republican opponent, Bill Boerum, and in a sign of just how ineffective the woman is, we managed to get the San Francisco Chronicle to endorse Boerum, but getting the district’s Democrat citizenry to vote like decent Americans was by then an exercise in futility. She won.

In 1992, the “Year of the Woman,” Boxer ran for the Senate in the wake of Pete Wilson’s ascendancy to the Governorship. A wonderful Republican candidate, TV commentator Bruce Hershenson had her beat until, as if through sheer self-immolation, the man allowed himself to be photographed entering a Hollywood strip joint. In 1998 the economy was humming and there was backlash against Republicans for impeaching Bill Clinton. Barbara Boxer has never faced a true challenger. Her opponents have been luke-warm at best. I am a political junkie and for the life of me I can only remember the names of a couple of them. Some guy named Matt Fong, I think (???). You have got to be kidding!

Now, Chuck DeVore may go to strip clubs, and in the age of cell phone cameras and the Internet this means instant infamy. He may have skeletons in his closet. Disaster may await. He is a human and, like all humans, corrupted by Original Sin. Boxer and her minions are experts at exploiting, lying about or inventing scandalous personal destruction of Republicans, but if I am in any way a decent judge of character, Chuck DeVore is simply a white bread family man who may quaff a cold beer during the occasional ball game, and that looks to be about it. Boring, however, he is not. He is quick-witted, almost a political comic, very capable of holding a crowd or reacting to one. He is “in the arena,” as Theodore Roosevelt once said, and he is comfortable there. Furthermore, he is a military strategist who has studied “asymmetrical warfare” since there really was a Cold War going on, and when he begins to hit Senator Boxer with all this stuff it could be a major shock to her system. Some free advise, dearie: read Sun Tsu’s The Art of War.

I am an author and a reader. In my library are about 1,000 titles, and they are not comics or paperback romances. My collection is heavy with the classics, politics, history, war annals, biographies and autobiographies of the world’s great movers and shakers; in short I have stored a wealth of knowledge, read 90 percent of it, and have convinced myself that I simply am the Western world’s font of knowledge. Chuck DeVore within an hour disabused me of that notion, big time. His quick, easy references to Plato; verbatim quotations of the Federalist Papers; perfectly nuanced comparisons between our successful Founding Fathers and France’s failed “terrors”; the creation of the German civil service system of the 1840s and its implementation in 1880s post-Reconstruction America; the relationship of man to God and the rights endowed therein; and the distinct differences between the Left and the Right on these issues; all lead one to the conclusion that he has out-read, out-studied, and out-comprehended me by embarrassing lengths.

But Chuck DeVore is not some stuffy bookworm. He is a modern man and apparently at the cutting edge of information technology. His use of satirical songs, YouTube videos, Facebook, Twitter, and all other New Age endeavor has earned high placement among the various “most viewed” lists, “most innovative” awards, and a cover story in the Wall Street Journal detailing how he is creating new paradigms in campaign technique. Barbara Boxer simply looks at this
“creeping terror” like the 1969 Chicago Cubs watched the New York Mets get closer . . . and closer . . . and closer.

All of which bring us to the August 3 meeting in Marin. Assemblyman DeVore was a hit from the moment he arrived until the moment he left, and while this story is about him, it is also about the 150-plus people crowded into that house, and what they stand for. Within that room was the Left’s worst enemy. Jim Morrison once shouted, “They got the guns, but we got the numbers,” and indeed we still have the guns and they – the Left – still have the numbers. Nobody can overcome the masses, the illegals, the homeless, the dispossessed. This is the Democrat constituency. They represent a world that, because Eve bit of the apple from the tree of knowledge, has been cursed with poverty, racism, slavery, war, ignorance, pestilence, disease and all other forms of inhuman suffering. The Democrats are experts at identifying this suffering and, like all demagogues through history, blaming it on a small group of successful haves. To offer their Faustian bargain that man wishes not freedom, but rather security.

In this nation for the first time an enormous dent was made in the mass of have-nots. A rising tide lifted all boats. An utterly unique trident of Christianity, capitalism and Democracy made it possible to reject the age-old class notions of “place” or caste. America was the place slavery came to die. Still, the Democrat’s public relations gurus have, with a pliant media, engaged in a campaign of placing forth the fiction that, no matter how improved your situation generation by generation, unless you are a white Republican, remain a have-not. This despite the election of a bi-racial man, along with his black wife, who seems to have been given every opportunity in a blizzard of Affirmative Action handouts beginning his freshman year at Punahou High School and continuing to the present minute. This despite the increasingly obvious knowledge that not only is being black no longer a disadvantage, but by gum since the mid-1980s or so it is an advantage.

There is a portion of the population that will always need to hear the Left’s drivel. Health care advances, free education, scholarships, programs, handouts, integration, free market entrepreneurialism reaching into every aspect of society; ghetto denizens accessorized with expensive Nikes, cable TV, DVDs, iPods, CDs, pricey chains and hats and Raiders jerseys and warm-up suits; somebody has more, and as Gordon Gekko lied in Oliver Stone’s Wall Street, “It’s a zero sum game, pal.”

Enter the 150 conservatives of Kentfield on August 3. They made their way into the house, and after a few hellos and mingling about the snack table or the wine bar, set forth on a collective thought, a universal truth which can be summed up:

1. The Left is full of crap, and
2. They know this fact.

This has always been the case, but now there is urgency within these truths, maybe even a kind of tragic, Shakespearean knowledge that no matter what, the damage has been done, and that hard as it is to admit, they have nobody to blame but themselves. President Bush and the Republicans dropped the ball. Assemblyman DeVore freely admitted it. He said they “lost their
principles,” that getting elected and collecting power became more important than sticking to their convictions. With Bush re-elected in 2004 and the terrorists on the defensive, the G.O.P. turned the Great Victory and the Big Opportunity into a boondoggle: failed Social Security reform, botched Supreme Court judgeships, massive debt, big government programs, lousy deals, wretched immigration policy, and the attempt to make the Democrats “like” them by adopting some of their bad ideas. Therefore, the Right got what they deserved and the only thing the Democrats did was stab them in the back. Aw heck, as Richard Nixon once said, “I’d have probably done the same thing.” The kind of honesty the Republicans offer, and the Democrats (with the exception of a few Pat Caddells) do not.

Thus did the Republicans nominate a wonderful man and a terrible candidate, John McCain. Thus did they give America to Barack Obama, and on a silver platter. Thus, when America took a cyclical downturn in the economy – the kind that used to happen every five or seven years but thanks to Republican free market principles had been over recent decades reduced to every eight or 12 years – and most likely on purpose, rejecting the Reagan model of 1982-83 in favor of a destruction more resembling the Great Depression, within a matter of months . . . weeks . . . Obama did more damage to this beautiful nation than any man in history. The damage already committed by Obama, even before health care and the power grabs of U.S. “czars” and bureaucrats who now make this a European Socialist state, as explained by DeVore in his detailing of how pencil-pushers created the warlike German federation giving rise to Adolph Hitler, is generational. If true conservatives provide a filibuster-proof House and Senate in 2010, and a President in 2012, the damage already done by Obama, by the unions, in the schools to our kids, in the culture by the dominant media ethos; it cannot be overturned. This kind of generational destruction has been wrought on America by Franklin Roosevelt and the Great Society, now by Obama. A Reagan can roll some of it back, but it is a losing battle. The Kentfield conservatives sensed this, yet like Rhett Butler in *Gone With the Wind* are a noble breed who still believe “the only causes worth joining are losing ones.”

That being said, a recent poll concluded that the happiest people in the world are “old, white Republicans.” The American conservative is girded by a faith in God. There is a growing Apocalyptic vision within its ranks, based on the notion that Christ will return, some say as early as 2011. The return of Christ gives rise to speculation of an anti-Christ, and some have found Obama to fit that bill, but none of this talk surfaced in Kentfield. The anti-Christ does not seem to have a Biblical foundation in the Book of Revelation or elsewhere; Satan is a malevolent spirit, not a man, but either way the believer is comforted that no matter the destruction foreordained by the Final Days, it is God’s will, and whatever that is, is perfect, to be accepted in its perfection. It’s a Christian thing.

The Kentfield conservatives were not focused on Obama, anyway. There was no hint of racial bigotry, the usual lie of the Left. When asked about Latino outreach, DeVore essentially indicated that good ideas are good ideas and anybody can recognize them, regardless of ethnicity. He did say that as an Army officer, “I have commanded and been commanded by Latinos,” citing their penchant for military service. There was certainly no bashing of “illegals,” and the recent question of Obama’s birth, which the Democrats would have you believe makes
them a bunch of kooks and fringe nuts, was never mentioned formally or among the cocktail gatherers as best as I could hear.

What really had them going was George Soros. Soros is a mysterious character who, like Joseph P. Kennedy before him, seems to control financial markets with blatantly illegal inside information (for which he is apparently insulated enough to avoid prosecution, much less real investigation) and is the money behind everything on the Left. An overriding premise carried the day, and this premise is that Soros (who helped the Nazis during World War II) is not simply a guy whose politics they disagree with; or a bad or even immoral man; but rather that he is an actually evil human being; that this is not a contemplated possibility but an accepted fact; and that if a major political party in a nation as great as America is controlled by such a creature, this reflects so pitifully upon that party as to be almost beyond redemption. It is people like Soros who infuse the God-fearing conservatives with the notion that this is not merely a Democratic political contest, but a battle between good and evil. It is that same belief in God, however, that prevents most of these types of people from going over the edge; that since God is in control He will handle business in the end regardless of the lies and perfidies of Soros and his minions.

Assemblyman DeVore was asked about investigating Soros and the malevolent market manipulations he has orchestrated in Europe and, as the ultimate “September surprise,” the 2008 humdinger. Like Joe Kennedy, he has made his fortune on the misery of others. In this most recent downturn he has enjoyed his greatest gains. What this means should seem obvious, but somehow the national will to punish lies only within these small gatherings. We live in a world in which a blatant criminal and Nazi sympathizer is allowed to shadow-run the Democrats, whereby if he had anything to do with the Republicans, he would be banished so far from the G.O.P. as to beyond any blip on the radar screen.

Despite Senator McCain’s shortcomings, after he nominated Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, then held the Republican National Convention, there were some polls that had him up by as many as 10 ½ points. RealClearPolitics.com averaged him with about a four point advantage when the “economic tsunami” hit, and many see Soros’s dirty hands all over this, just as Joe Kennedy orchestrated a “tombstone vote,” pushing John Kennedy into the White House in 1960. The Kentfield conservatives were of a certain age and therefore resigned by a lifetime of observation that this is the Democrat way. Thus, a lifetime of resentment towards them permeates their being.

DeVore’s one fault was dismissing the investigate-Soros-and-Goldman-Sachs notion as “too complicated” an issue, but in this he failed to understand the methods of his hero, Reagan. In 1972 Governor Reagan advocated California Proposition 2, a groundbreaking tax-reduction ballot initiative that failed when he himself said in a Bay Area TV interview that it was so complicated “I cannot explain it to you.” In 1978 he came again, this time as a private citizen campaigning for Proposition 13. This time he said, “there are simple answers, they just are not easy ones.” He endeavored throughout that successful campaign and his two terms in the White House to simplify his communications successfully.

DeVore is convinced his timing is perfect. First he must defeat Carly Fiorina in the G.O.P. primary. Fiorina, the former head of Hewlett-Packard, is a moderate Republican with a multi-
million-dollar war chest. She has not yet declared, and cannot be disregarded, but among the crowd at DeVore’s event, the possibility that a moderate Republican is the answer to Obamanomics was given zero credence. I have been around politics a long, long time and I firmly believe DeVore is the man, regardless of Fiorina.

Europe has recently voted in “conservative” governments with Great Britain probably next to go that way. The speed with which Obama’s politics have hustled in his potential demise are shocking, and certainly part of DeVore’s sense of timing, but beyond that Devore-the-historian senses the conservative spirit. He has a committed following already, and it is growing. The Left has developed their Saul Alinsky techniques, methods of personal destruction, race-extortion and intimidation under the guise of “community organizing,” using charismatic men like Obama, illegal groups like ACORN, and thug methods described as the “Chicago way,” because actual ideas never favor them.

That said, no matter whether “they got the numbers,” as Jim Morrison said, righteousness and truth somehow prevail. Why this happens is a mystery unless one reads the Bible. Then it becomes a simple fact. Honest, committed conservatives, fired up and motivated, cannot be beaten. They succeed whenever they try. The only time they lose is when they are discouraged. Never have they seemed so down and out as after the Obama victory, and the Democrats wanted them to stay in their houses with the shades drawn, but the Kentfield crowd was a . . . . revelation. That the Right is fired up again, indeed more fired up than they have been in years, is nothing less than a miracle. Less so when one simply makes daily observation of the Left, whether on TV or in the movies; their supporters and their strategists. They tend to range from foul to stupid to unimpressive to cowardly. Either way, the Right is fired up to see to it that these people go anywhere on the face of the Earth other than in charge of our most precious institutions.

20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a truth has somehow finally filtered into their collective conscience. This nation has taken on empire, slavery, nationalism, the Great Depression, Nazism, Communism, colonialism, and terrorism. One by one the evil that men do has fallen as God’s country, this Promised Land, has prevailed time and time again, rising to a position of power, influence and greatness above and beyond all previous empires. With the fall of Communism, many failed to recognize a central fact, which is that the psychosis behind it did not die. Its institutions, its doctrines, its armies and empires, may have fallen, but evil never dies. It can never be “salted over,” as the Romans did to once and for all vanquish Carthage. A hatred of God, of righteousness, of morality, of the “choice” of life over abortion, of traditional values, of patriotism, of impressive military valor, of hard work, of greatness . . . of a thousand things unique to the American way . . . will always exist. Perhaps it tried to manifest itself in the form of Islamic Jihad, but George W. Bush, for all his faults, recognized that and nipped it in the bud before it could spread much beyond the borders of a few Arab hellholes.

The conservatives of Kentfield are just one of thousands of gatherings this summer, as Congressmen return to their districts and discover why Rush Limbaugh is right when he says conservatism succeeds “every time its tried.” They are gathering, not as Alinsky acolytes, bused in to agitate on behalf of their race or class, but as American citizens showing up by their own
free will to “tea parties” and forums. They are the worst nightmare of the liberal class. This is an object lesson not just for the health care Democrats, but wishy-washy G.O.P. moderates who are about to see their chances at “success,” i.e., compromise, replaced by Right-wing victory.

This feels like 1994, the year of Newt Gingrich’s Contract with America, a wonderful document the immoralist Bill Clinton called the Contract on America. Oddly, that very document got him re-elected in 1996 because, after the Republicans gained their huge majorities, President Clinton adopted their ideas and used them to create a good economy. The Republicans could have balked at helping Clinton, but as patriots they helped America regardless of the end results. This is something they do that Democrats do not do. If the G.O.P. takes the House and Senate back in 2010, will Obama do a Clinton and use them to make himself look good, and if so will the Right let him get away with it? Probably. It’s an “America first” thing.

2008 is increasingly appearing to be an anomaly. For years, liberal media bias actually helped the Right. People saw it, recognized that it was wrong, and voted against it. Certainly, the likes of war protesters, store-smashing anti-capitalists, Code Pinkers, draft dodgers, cowards, Cindy Sheehan types, race extortionists, drunkards and gay whorehouse owners (Ted Kennedy, Barney Frank) would have their actions exposed and, when the public made observation of what they were all about, chose of their own free will to reject them wholeheartedly. Until 2008. In 2008 Code Pink won. In 2008 Al Sharpton won. In 2008 the nuts who break windows in cities hosting global economic summits won. But it appears to have faded, and it appears to be a one-time, one-election phenomenon. They elected the Kenya-Kansas man. A feel good, a makeover. Reparations. But man did it come with a price tag, and man oh man is there ever buyer’s remorse!

Perhaps never in this nation’s history has such a political chasm existed. At least Union and Confederate soldiers of the Civil War respected each other’s courage and valor. In 2009, the Right does not have the slightest scintilla of respect for the Left, and the Left utterly despises the Right. As it stands, people seem to be able to co-exist in schools, supermarkets, restaurants and bars. That said, life’s choices increasingly are fraught with political symbolism. The choice of one’s car, food, school, clothes, hair, entertainment, and a myriad of other items, often reveals partisan leanings. In Marin County, a Republican bumper sticker or sign hung in the front yard is almost sure to be torn down with vandalism to property, even in wealthy neighborhoods. This appears to be the kind of crap Democrats do to Republicans that Republicans never do to Democrats, and this fact crystallizes in very simple order the superiority of conservativism over liberalism. One side shows class, the other does not. It is not even an opinion, but more a set of facts that leads to a logical conclusion, the kind of argument Plato would make. If this gulf keeps widening, 50 years hence there could be violence. It is, after all, in man’s nature. It would be a Leftist violence. If the Right gets shut out they will turn to Christ. If the Left gets shut out they will break things like in Berkeley and Seattle and many other scenes of liberal protest over the decades. This is a fact Alinsky, Sharpston and Obama have played to for years; intimidate and extort from the other side in order to avoid said violence.

What the Right is now coming to grips with, and perhaps the brazen Obama should be thanked for exposing the Alinsky rules and the Left’s immorality so completely, is that evil is trying to
make a stand, maybe its final stand, right here in America, using this greatest of all nations by hi-jacking a political party within our very borders. This is the challenge we face, the enemy within, and somehow the Right, shaken like a woolly mammoth discarding the ice age from its long-frozen carcass, finally senses it.

To para-phrase George C. Scott as George Patton, “We will be allowed to fulfill our destiny. His will be done.”

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**THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE US FREE**  
By STEVEN TRAVERS

For the very first time in my life I have become pessimistic about America. All my life I looked at the radical Left, the biased media, the unpatriotic Democrats, the Hollywood unimpressives; and I said, "That's okay, they're only hurting themselves." All my life I've been Right. Time after time they're rantings and ravings resulted in Republican electoral success. When Dan Rather made up George Bush's National Guard story in 2004, it only helped Bush. When I actually saw Michael Moore's FAHRENHEIT 9/11, it was then that I knew Bush would win. But 2008 turned everything on its head. I now live in an America in which Code Pink has won. I live in an America in which a President is friends with a terrorist, an America in which the Weather Underground got what they want, in which William Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn won. I live in an America in which gangbangers arrested by the cops smirk at them and say, "I'm gonna have you're job, man, we won." I live in an America in which Jeremiah Wright won. I live in an America in which the Inaugural convocation officially sanctified the notion that white people doing "what's right" is only a contemplated possibility, but not in any way an accomplished past act. I live in an America that elected a man probably born in Indonesia, probably ineligible for the Presidency in the first place, and nobody seems to give a damn! I live in an America that has possibly elected a MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, an unpatriotic Socialist bent on radicalizing and nationalizing our most precious institutions. I live in an America in which a man has done more damage to this country in a month than any President ever over any period of time; an America which if they elected conservative majorities to the Congress, Senate, and White House in 2010 and 2012 probably would need 20 years to undo what Barack Obama has done from January 20 to April 4. I live in an America in which the Left has become so foul and unworthy, so dastardly, that writing a negative review of Obama on Amazon is tantamount to putting one's name on the Declaration of Independence, thus incurring the wrath of the British.
The heck with the unimpressives. I was ready to give in. Now I'm back on my game. I'm energized, and I'm energized because I listen to the likes of Mark Levin, and because men like Levin have the courage to stand up to this tyranny and oppose them with Truth. It is easy to dismiss Obama as a dunce, unaware of the stupidity of his actions. Neither Levin nor I believe that. He WANTS to destroy our economy, to re-make it in a Socialist image. Levin knows that Communism never really died. Evil remains a malevolent force in the world. It is no longer a full frontal assault as it was when personified by the Nazis and Joe Stalin. Now it has morphed into a Leftist laundry list of complaints about racism, of economic Socialism that makes Europe look like Reaganites, lecturing us on how we are paving the road to hell... and they are right! Evil has now taken on the form of class envy, hatred of American Exceptionalism, worshipping the false gods of environmentalism and baby-killing. In 1981-82, Ronald Reagan faced worse economic disasters than Obama. His actions were the exact opposite of Obama's. The result: more than a decade of economic success. Reagan let capitalism thrive. Obama wants to re-model it as soft Communism/Socialism. Levin leads a hearty band of patriots who will not let the bad guys win. I'll take to the hills with Levin to defend this great nation if I have to. God bless America.

MEMO TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

By STEVEN TRAVERS

President Barack Obama is a true political phenomenon. Republicans and conservatives who oppose his views are frustrated and face a major uphill battle in trying “defeat” him, or his policies, or his legacy.

In order to deal with Obama’s charisma and popularity, the Right will have to be disciplined and smart. They must adhere to the lessons of history. There are templates in literature describing who and what Obama stands for, and the Right needs to cull knowledge and plans from these works. Sun-Tsu’s The Art of War offers strategy. Democracy in America by Alexis DeTocqueville tells us what makes us strong and can keep us strong. Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged effectively describes the times we live in, although it is not necessarily instructive in terms of getting us out of it.

First and foremost, the Republicans needs to be realistic. They are in a struggle for the future of their party and country. The stakes are high, but not desperate. America herself will overcome bad leaders and bad times. Barack Obama is constrained by American institutions from destroying our way of life. The Constitution, term limits, Congressional “checks and balances,” party politics, the media; these are factors that work against dictatorship. The kind of total control that a Joseph Stalin held in the Soviet Union; Adolph Hitler in Nazi Germany; or Kim Jong-II in modern North Korea; an American President cannot “rule” in this manner. That is the good news.
However, for the four (or eight) years that a President holds office, he is more powerful and influential than any despot. The United States is the single most powerful empire in the history of Mankind, stronger than the Romans, the British, Alexander’s Greece, or any other historical power. Therefore, an American President is capable of effecting greater change and influence than anyone else in the world. Obama understands this reality and is taking full advantage of it. Unless something truly unforeseen takes place, the G.O.P. must resign itself to this reality, as well.

An example is President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Republicans of the mid-1930s were aghast at the makeover of American, and the role of government, that he instituted. Try as they might, they were unable to prevent FDR from changing the very nature of the people’s relationship with their government. Even when Dwight Eisenhower and the Republicans took over in sweeping manner in the 1950s, Roosevelt had instituted sweeping changes that could not be rolled back. Indeed, FDR’s blueprint dominates government worldwide to this day.

World War II had an enormous effect on the body politic, ultimately solidifying the conservative base, but it is extremely unlikely such an event will happen in our lifetimes, much less for the next 1,000 years. Furthermore, nobody would possibly “wish” such an event take place. World War II was of incredible, ultimate benefit to this nation, but this was only something we could focus on in hindsight. Nobody would have predicted this result, much less hoped for such a thing.

Youth schoiols academia
Republicans have nobody to blame but themselves Rush operation chaos social ism bailout security vs., freedom anti-christ

OBAMA’S BIRTH
OBAMA AS SPY, MANCHURIAN, conspiracy

ATLAS SHRUGGED
European riught

Obama’s personal charisma
Obama fatugue
Democrats try to use it quickly before fade away
Stay conservative,m do right thing freedom toi be oursels

Don’t focus on 2012
LIES OF THE SECULAR LEFT

Mel Gibson just announced he is getting divorced and having a child by a woman, not his wife. This comes on the heels of his incredibly embarrassing drink driving video/arrest a few years ago. His case has been used by the secularist and atheist Left as an example of why Christians and conservatives are hypocrites. Turn that around. The Left are the liars. Herein is the explanation.

In 2004 Mel made THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST. It was beautiful and successful. It peeved the Left, mainly because he had the temerity to actually quote Scripture; parts that were not flattering to the Jewish Pharisees and showed the ambivalence of Pontius Pilate. I guess Mel could have used “literary license” with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but he chose to tell the Truth instead.

This of course turned him from a Hollywood superstar to a super-rich outcast. Then he went on a self-destruction rampage. Powerful Hollywood Jews went after him with all he had, but Mel’s movie was so huge it made him “bullet-proof.” That is, against Hollywood; not against the devil.

So his enemies said Mel was a drunk, a womanizer, a hypocrite. Of course he is. We all are. This is where the Left has no clue whatsoever.

When Mel fell, his enemies said it was proof that Christians are hypocritical, judgmental, wrong-headed. As if Mel had been saying, “I’m a Christian, therefore a great man, and those who are not are less than me. Ha Ha.”

By STEVEN TRAVERS

Let’s get this out of the way off the top: I loved Charlie Wilson’s War. It was patriotic, funny, sexy, well-acted and great drama. Fabulous movie. Five stars. Kudos. Love it.

That said, just wanted to let it be known that the message of this film, at least one of the sub-texts of it, did not get past me. It was made by a liberal and meant to espouse a Democrat agenda.

Hollywood is not about to make conservative movies now or in the future. Charlie Wilson’s War looks like a conservative movie at first, but watch closely and you will see it is something else. Yes, it is about how America, led by the CIA under the Reagan Administration, helped
bring Communism, at least the Soviet variety, to its knees and end the Cold War in victory for the U.S. Hooray.

Hollywood is about promoting Democrats and down-grading Republicans. Take for instance the recent spy thriller *Breach*. Since the beginning of time it seems, every spy who committed treason against America and the West was a Left-wing radical or sympathizer. Hundreds of spies over decades of time. Alger Hiss, Kim Philby, Franklin’s Roosevelt aides, the Rosenbergs; the list is long. What is not long is the number of movies about them. Those movies virtually do not exist. Instead they get lying portrayals of Joe McCarthy accusing innocent Jews and Democrats. After the Venona archives opened in the Soviet Union in the early 1990s we discovered that many of those accused actually were Communists and spies. The poor, disgraced filmmakers, instead of living in abject poverty caused by mean conservatives, more often than not moved to the French Riviera or Cote d’Azur and made *avante garde* European movies with Luc Goddard. Such imprisonment!

Then along comes *Breach*. Holy cow, after 200 or 400 consecutive liberal spies, none of whom seemingly by law or mandate are allowed to be portrayed on screen, *Breach* highlights the single conservative, Catholic man ever found to be a spy. Good movie but you can’t fool me.

Now comes *Charlie Wilson’s War* by Left-wing screenwriter Aaron Sorkin (*A Few Good Men, The American President, The Left, er, West Wing*). Like *A Few Good Men, Charlie Wilson’s War* was honest enough that it almost killed Sorkin’s liberal message in a stream of conservative triumph. *Patton* was a similar movie, originally planned to portray the general as a warmongering lunatic, except that America fell in love with the idea of beating Nazi Germany and George C. Scott’s portrayal of the maverick hero.

Charlie Wilson, played by Tom Hanks, was a Texas Democrat. The kind, which the movie does not tell us, who became a Republican when they saw how disgraceful the Democrats had become. A patriotic cDemocrat, which unfortunately is an exception to the rule.

The movie would have you believe that Wilson worked against the Reagan Administration to fund and lead the Afghan resistance that ended the Soviet empire. Then it would you believe that Wilson alone warned Reagan that unless they funded schools and cultural life, “crazies” like Osama bin Laden would make us rue the day later.

Wilson deserves credit and he found some resistance here and there, but the idea that Ronald Reagan won the Cold War in Afghanistan kicking and screaming against his own policies is, well, not true. His CIA chief, Bill Casey, was wildly enthusiastic about the Afghan operation. I’ll give Wilson his credit; the credit Sorkin never gives to Reagan and Casey.

Watch the little messages in the movie: Wilson tells Julia Roberts (who plays a conservative matron and never looked better in the process), “I’m a liberal.” He’s about as liberal as Tom DeLay. He also tells her she owes him because she “helped me out with the pro lifers,” which of course is Sorkin’s way of getting his vote in favor of abortion.
But the most obvious stuff concerns Charlie’s drinking, drugging and womanizing. He does good things, the movie informs us, and should not be held back by indiscretions and immoralities. Who is this supposed to remind us of? Bill Clinton, who was out there making the economy hum, keeping abortion legal, doing “good work” while those evil Republicans fought him at every turn. Lying, cocaine use, drunkenness; who cares?

Sorkin gets a knock in at Rudy Giuliani. The movie was made in 2007 when Rudy was a front-runner for the 2008 GOP nomination which he eventually failed to capture.

Hey, loved *Charlie Wilson’s War*, but it did not get past my antennae.

“MARIN’S G. GORDON LIDDY”

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

- *Ten Commandments*

Michael Woodson avoided Watergate, ostensibly because he got on H.R. Haldeman’s bad side. His more heralded friends from the University of Southern California were caught up in the vortex. Several of them did time; mostly short terms in an easy detention center dubbed “Club Fed.”

G. Gordon Liddy, who carried out most of the planning and execution of the “Plumbers,” refused to cooperate with authorities. His “code of honor,” so to speak, was to protect his superiors at all costs. It cost him years of hard time in the toughest Federal prisons in this nation. Liddy survived the ordeal. Like Friedrich Nietzsche's quote, “What does not destroy me, makes me stronger,” he resembled that remark.
Michael Woodson had no intention of following in the path of G. Gordon Liddy. He was not cut out for that kind of hardship, and cooperated with authorities in order to avoid it, but his life became a slow motion train wreck in which his worst, most impossible-to-conceive nightmares, became the reality he was forced to live with.

Now, after avoiding Watergate and the jail sentences imposed on his old TRG pals Dwight Chapin and Donald Segretti, he was forced to become “Marin’s G. Gordon Liddy.” There would at first be an “honor farm” for Woodson, but eventually that would be replaced by the dangerous nightmare known as San Quentin. This was no “Club Fed” for the “dirty Republican.” Like Liddy, he would face hard time for a long time.

What were his crimes? He had operated “The Permit,” a special loophole in state insurance law that gave him a leg up on the mortgage-lending competition in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He made numerous people rich. Many of them lost their money, but according to all available records, eventually were paid back beyond their original investments, with no tax consequences. Had Woodson’s trial been held to completion, with a good defense he may well have been declared “not guilty,” and those investors may well have been on the hook for those un-paid taxes.

On June 6, 1990, Woodson was driven from the Marin County Jail and through the imposing gates of San Quentin Prison. For the next 32 months this would become the most bizarre period of his life. While incarcerated in dorm number four at the jail, and just prior to the revoke hearing that ended on June 4, 1990, Michael wrote to the Marin County Grand Jury requesting an interview. He heard nothing.
Woodson was now employed at the inmate law library where, for the first time, he had unfettered access to almost every law book, both state and Federal. He was allowed to come into the library anytime he wanted, and thus 60-70 hours a week was not uncommon.

The library now became Michael’s sanctuary in more ways than one. Not only did it provide him safety since he was behind a raised chest-high counter, but it was his own personal rest area with a window to an outside grassy area.

The most important issue, however, was that since his mother was able to send him approximately $100 a month, and with his $.20 cents an hour salary, he was able to purchase everything he needed each month from the inmate store.

Michael then decided the best way to stay safe was to provide legal services to any and all inmates in order to “obtain” their friendship and protection. As with any prison in California there are multiple gangs in a constant state of an internal power struggle. The last thing anyone with any brains would want to do is get involved with any one of these violent groups.

The black gangs of the Crips and the Bloods, the Mexican gangs of the north-south and southern brothers, a white gang called the Aryan brotherhood, and many other groups were all represented at Vacaville.

Every inmate in prison has legal problems and if one can provide them the service at no charge, where other inmates demanded lots of money, he suddenly became a contact of necessity for these violent groups. This stroke of luck, by obtaining this position, probably saved Michael's life over the next 32 months. In performing these “legal services,” Woodson did the exact same thing described by G. Gordon Liddy as a key to his prison survival in Will.

The head law clerk for the library was Richard Lauranzano. Unbeknownst to Michael, Lauranzano had been sentenced to 25 years-to-life for murdering his 14-year-old daughter,
chopping her into pieces, and putting her various body parts into dumpsters around Los Angeles.

He was also categorized by the CDC as a “CAT J,” or a psychotic in remission, which meant he was also on very strong anti-psychotic medication. Lauranzano charged every inmate for his legal work. He was able to maintain total control of the law library by hiding all of the legal directories that would assist inmates in their own legal research.

Therefore, the only way Michael could research a case was to read everything cited in a legal statement that seemed close to supporting his multiple situations he had stumbled upon. It was a very long and arduous procedure, but in doing so Michael read a lot of law cases, becoming an expert in “Shepardizing,” which is the act of finding newer cases where they cite an existing older case that is “on point” to appeal.

During the first week of his new employment at the law library, Michael sat down with Lauranzano to explain his case and why so many things had legally gone wrong. Lauranzano realized that he had a huge meal ticket and over the next 22 months charged Michael almost $7,000 to file various appeals.

What Lauranzano did, however, was to lie to Woodson that he could not file a writ of Habeas Corpus in pro per until he had his court-appointed appellate attorney, Ford Greene removed from the case. Then the court would allow him to proceed in pro per.

Inmate Lauranzano then sent Woodson on a 22-month “wild goose chase,” trying to discharge Greene. When Woodson found out the truth he confronted Lauranzano, who then threatened Woodson’s life by having other terminal inmates who were also his legal clients, and were infected with AIDS, infect Michael by having him “beaten and bitten.”
Woodson was terrified by this death threat and lived in fear of this indefensible attack even after his release from state prison. It is very well known that inmates routinely ordered “hits” on people outside of prison, and with a large homosexual population in the Castro district of San Francisco just 10 miles away, Woodson did not feel safe until he was released from parole in 1997.

Woodson was unaware that he had no automatic right to proceed in pro per on direct appeal. What transpired over the 22 months were attempts in the court of appeals, the state Supreme Court, and the Federal district court. He was denied each time.

The courts, in denying Woodson's prayer for relief, never cited In re Walker (1976). The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals did not rule on this issue that any appellant has a Constitutional right to be their own lawyer on appeal until Woodson was released from prison in Hendricks vs. Zenon, (1993).

On June 4, 1991, exactly one year to the day that he revoked probation and sent Michael to state prison for 5 years, J. Christy Wareham, Woodson’s probation officer admitted that he had simply “forgotten” to send to the 147 “victims” of the Woodson “Crime of the Decade” the $24,968.90 in collected restitution.

Wareham and his other probation officers, starting in April 1987, had extorted over a 31-month period from Woodson, when he demanded and received $800 a month whether Michael earned it or not from his work furlough paycheck. California Penal Code Section 1203.1 states, "That any money recovered for restitution that is due to multiple victims must be disbursed within six months of receipt." This money was simply left and forgotten in a non-interest bearing account at Bank of America in San Rafael.
The constant demands of the *Marin I.J.* and the outspoken Woodson “victims” seeking their revenge, wanted Judge Smith to revoke Woodson’s probation with only 16 days left on his five-year county jail sentence, to send him to state prison for five more years. They wanted his suffering, epileptic 10-year old son be sent to a special foster home for the next nine years.

This probation revocation, at a cost to the Marin County taxpayers of over $300,000, was over the single question of restitution. It was so important during the *Independent Journal’s* five-day front page coverage of the hearing to revoke probation, but it was now important enough for Christy Wareham to send this “blood money” to the multiple victims/tax cheats.

On November 6, 1992, Michael Woodson’s bankruptcy attorney, Sheridan Downey III, after over eight years since the filing date, finally authorized the cash disbursement of $1,043,255.60 from his bankruptcy estate.

On August 26, 1993, William Grover, the Federal bankruptcy trustee, after almost nine years since the filing date, finally authorized the cash disbursement of $1,480,274.97 from the Woodson corporate estate.

At the end of all litigation, the Woodson investors would receive $83,620,881.58 from multiple sources; $13.6 million more than their original investment. Woodson would also have an additional $15 million dollar judgment hanging over his head for the next 15 years.

This investor recovery would be the largest ever in the history of the American banking system.

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On December 21, 1990, Patrick Hallinan entered the San Francisco courtroom of Judge Roy Wonder in the civil case of *Hallinan vs. Keller Ladder Industries*. He received $891,280.10 plus 10 percent interest
from his 1985 injuries, for “permanent mental and physical injuries” and his stated, “inability to function as a lawyer” that he suffered from his fall in his home. His “representation” of Mike Woodson occurred right after the injuries were sustained. Throughout the entire Woodson case, Hallinan was preoccupied with this very case.

Woodson was still incarcerated in Vacaville when he read a story in Herb Cane’s San Francisco Chronicle column that Butch had received over $900,000 from the Keller Ladder Company for his permanent mental and physical incapacitation from his fall.

When Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony White brought charges against Ciro Mancuso in 1990, it was hailed as one of the largest drug conspiracy cases ever brought in Reno, Nevada. The indictment alleged that Mancuso used a multi-state cocaine- and marijuana-smuggling operation to buy ranches, mountaintop retreats, beach-front estates and anything else he might want. White, a decorated Vietnam veteran, was acclaimed once again as a hero for taking down Mancuso, who was known not only as a drug smuggler, but also for the cagey ways he had avoided arrest and prison time for nearly two decades.

Mancuso was a Squaw Valley developer and mastermind of the $140 million marijuana-smuggling ring. He would come close to succeeding again. He had information that tempted prosecutors to cut him a break. Mancuso could lay out the intricate smuggling network he used to bring drugs from the far reaches of South America into this country via Mexico. He knew the names and the roles of dozens of insiders in the operation, many of them big-time and longtime smugglers.
But providing such information involved risks. Snitching against these people could get Mancuso killed. Instead, he laid out a deal implicating his lawyer, which involved far fewer risks. White bit on the proposal.

In an article headlined “A blood feud,” the Reno Gazette-Journal described how Patrick Hallinan, “a prominent defense lawyer and an accomplished archeologist from San Francisco,” the son of the notorious atheist and Communist Vincent Hallinan – who had argued vehemently that dangerous narcotics not be illegal, and whose own brother was head of The City's law department – had been in cahoots with Mancuso but then “turned” on him.

Mancuso was one of the wealthiest of Hallinan's longtime clients. Hallinan “filed a flood of paperwork after Mancuso's indictment, citing what he considered to be illegal and unethical actions by White.” The “animus” between the two lawyers grew. Hallinan forced a deal in which Mancuso would be granted leniency for informing on others.

Then Hallinan became the unlikely target after Mancuso re-negotiated his deal to include, he said in court papers, a probationary sentence. He would walk free instead of doing the 10 years he had been promised earlier. Within months, Hallinan and 11 Mancuso confederates were indicted for drug smuggling, money laundering and racketeering. All of Mancuso's colleagues ranked below him in his drug ring hierarchy.

White and other prosecutors in Reno had a history of trying to get high-powered lawyers disqualified from criminal drug prosecutions. This was the first time a criminal defense lawyer had become the subject of an investigation because a client had turned on him. In letters, the Post-Gazette sent specific questions about the Mancuso case to the U.S. Attorney in Las Vegas and to Justice Department officials, without response.
"My perspective is that, when you lie down with dogs, you get fleas," John Keker of San Francisco, who was Hallinan's lawyer, said in an interview. "In Reno, that prosecutor had been running so wild for so long that they just lost all track of what's important and what the truth was.

"It was like the inquisition. It didn't matter what you'd done. You could be the devil, but if you confessed in this case, you'd get the sweetest deal. And if you could give them someone like Patrick Hallinan, you could walk."

From the start, Hallinan and his lawyers accused Mancuso of lying to “weasel out of his prison time.” Hallinan and Keker quickly found out White had just begun. Less than a month before the trial, White moved to oust Keker from the case because he had once represented Mancuso's wife in a minor criminal matter.

"Anybody who would try to disqualify me at this late date is a chicken who is afraid to try a case against me," Keker told the local media.

An article ironically titled, “Wrath of vengeance: Giving up his clients” further described what the great Hallinan was doing while representing Michael Woodson. For two decades, a drug-smuggling operation was underway. Defense attorneys and their clients, including operators of the largest marijuana smuggling operation in the region, handled it. The operation involved a full range of illegalities, including money laundering and assistance in bringing freighter loads of marijuana into the United States.

Federal agents caught up to the operation in 1990, resulting in deals cut with prosecutors. Attorneys “ratted out” clients in exchange for his freedom. One lawyer allowed the Feds to wire his office, but wore electronic surveillance equipment himself as he met with various clients to
discuss legal work, violating the most important tenet of Bar Association ethical standards; the confidentiality of the lawyer-client relationship.

Then federal prosecutors went one step farther. They began steering defendants or potential defendants to the criminal acts themselves in order recorded their conversations. Eventually, many cohorts were arrested, and everybody “turned” on each other. Defense lawyers argued that prosecutors in steering new clients, then taping them, should suppress all evidence because of the violation of the attorney-client privilege, and the misconduct.

In 1993, a Federal judge decided that simply suppressing evidence in the matter was insufficient. He dismissed all the charges against defendants. Keker responded in court with a scathing petition to dismiss the Hallinan indictment because the prosecutors filled it with misconduct. As motion after motion was filed showing the weaknesses of the government's case, Federal prosecutors tried another tack against Hallinan. In 1993, Hallinan was indicted by a Federal grand jury in Reno on drug-conspiracy charges and obstruction of justice. In June of 1994, Federal agents raided his San Francisco home, hoping to find evidence that Hallinan had smuggled Peruvian artifacts and was illegally trafficking in ancient art. Hallinan had been an art collector since his undergraduate days at the University of California-Berkeley, when he studied for an archaeology degree.

No charges were ever filed against Hallinan based on the search warrant. After an intense six-week trial, he was acquitted of all charges in March 1995. After his acquittal, Hallinan accused Federal prosecutors of abusing their power in the war against drugs. He said the prosecutors were using him as an example to warn other lawyers who vigorously defend their clients.
In early 1996, Hallinan was acquitted when he faced Mancuso in court. His lawyers were able to prove that the government had coached Mancuso's testimony and he was lying about Hallinan's direct knowledge of his drug activities and money laundering.

Mancuso was sentenced to a 10-year prison term. In November of 1996, Mancuso's lawyers filed an appeal of the sentence, contending that White had promised him "little or no jail time" for testifying against his lawyer. Mancuso's attorneys said the government breached its plea agreement with Mancuso.

A 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals panel disagreed with Mancuso's lawyers. He was sentence to the Federal penitentiary in Yankton, South Dakota.

On August 2, 1999, Harriet Chiang of the San Francisco Chronicle wrote an article headlined, “Hallinan Sues Ex-Client For False Arrest!” The lawyer sued a former client who, he said, falsely implicated him in an international drug-smuggling operation that led to Hallinan's arrest. Hallinan was tried and acquitted of all charges in 1995.

Hallinan said he was not looking for revenge against his former client, who was serving a nine-year sentence in a Federal penitentiary. He said he was suing him to send a message to informants and the government that if they make shady deals, they should be held accountable.

``(Informants) are going to be held civilly responsible for trying to buy their way out of hell with someone else's soul," Hallinan the atheist said.

Hallinan sued his former client for false arrest and malicious prosecution. Hallinan said the government also should shoulder some of the blame, although he noted that it was immune from being sued.

The case was tried in San Francisco Superior Court before a jury of six men and six women. The jury heard the 64-year old Hallinan testify in detail about his relationship with
Mancuso. As part of a plea bargain, he agreed to cooperate with Federal officials when Hallinan was accused of helping to suppress evidence and launder money.

In exchange, Mancuso, 51, received a reduced sentence and was allowed to keep $4 million in assets. Hallinan estimated that Mancuso had as much as $9.5 million in assets. Robert Moore, Mancuso's lawyer, denied that his client was instrumental in Hallinan's arrest, noting that 34 people testified against Hallinan at his 1995 trial. "But if it comes down to that, we'll re-try Pat Hallinan," Moore said, adding that it would be up to Hallinan to prove that Mancuso was lying.

"Not only did Hallinan know, but he helped plan the money laundering part of it," Moore said. He also said Federal drug agents set their sights on Hallinan long before they talked to Mancuso. "The decision to prosecute was the U.S. attorney's," Moore said.

He said Mancuso paid Hallinan $1.2 million for services he provided from 1974 to 1990, which included helping launder $180,000 in drug proceeds through a bogus land sale in Mexico. Moore said he would call to the stand many of those who testified at Hallinan's 1995 trial, including Mancuso, who was at the Federal detention center in South Dakota.

In his suit, Hallinan said Mancuso assured him in 1977 that he was no longer involved in any drug smuggling. In ensuing years, Hallinan handled some tax and real estate matters for Mancuso. He was "surprised and dismayed" when Mancuso was arrested in 1989 for running an international marijuana-smuggling operation.

He negotiated a plea bargain for his client, but then, he said, Mancuso turned on him. The developer, who was facing a life term, implicated dozens of people, including Hallinan. Hallinan said he went through "a two-year period of virtual hell" during which he was unable to practice law. The "nightmare" ended with his acquittal.
Hallinan sought $900,000 in compensatory damages, including the $400,000 in legal fees he spent defending himself, as well as an unspecified amount in punitive and emotional distress damages.

His brother Terence Hallinan, the District Attorney of San Francisco, told him to, "Hang in there, Patrick."

"I think what he is doing is the right thing," he told the press.

On August 6, 1991 the San Francisco Chronicle ran the headline ‘Captain Left Many on Sinking Ship.' One of the few luxuries that Woodson was able to have in state prison was that his mother paid for a subscription to the paper, which was delivered to his bed every day. Even though the newspaper was one or two days old, it did allow Woodson to stay in touch with what was happening in the outside world.

In a front page article was the incredible story describing how Captain Yiannis Avranas and his senior officers abandoned their posts and left on the second South African Air Force rescue helicopter that arrived at their ship, the 7,554-ton cruiser Oceanos (Greek registry). The South Africans came to rescue the 571 passengers and crew that was floundering and on the verge of sinking in 15-foot waves.

The ship left Johannesburg, South Africa in bad weather, and just off-shore began to take on water. The 51-year-old Avranas, a seafarer for 30 years, acknowledged leaving passengers on board but rejected the criticism, saying he “went ashore to supervise rescue operations.”

Captain Avranas, in an interview with ABC news, also said, “When I order abandon ship, it doesn't matter what time I leave. Abandon is for everyone. If some people like to stay, they can stay.”
The ship's owner, Epirotiki Lines, defended Avaranas: “We are proud of the way the captain and officers and crew performed their duties under the most difficult weather conditions and took the correct decisions in doing so . . . We consider the complete success of the rescue operations speaks for itself.”

Frank Brayaard, a maritime historian, and curator of the American Merchant Marine Museum in Kings Point, New York, called the captain's decision “completely wrong and cowardice of the first-order.”

“The captain is not expected to go down with the ship, but is expected to be the last to leave. It is very much an accepted tradition that the captain is responsible for the lives of everyone on board.” Passengers who watched the captain leave were incensed. They said, “Neither he nor his crew gave any instructions.”

Reading this story, Woodson was struck by the fact that, in 1983 he had a meeting with his attorneys. They did not give good legal advice. If they had, he would have declared bankruptcy then and there. It was technically the “right” thing to do, but if he done that, he would have been the “captain abandoning a sinking ship.” He would have abandoned his investors. Instead, he rode it out. His investors were eventually paid. Nobody ever thanked Woodson. The press, the investors, the community reviled him, but in his heart he knew that he had not “abandoned ship,” and in so doing he had saved the investors whether they ever knew it, admitted it or thanked him for it.

“Well, so what does the sinking of the cruise ship Oceanos have to do with the sinking of the Woodson Company?” he asked. “Personally, by actions later deemed criminal by a vindictive D.A., I saved everybody aboard this financial vessel. Just think of the outcry from the 1,850-plus permanent investors, when they found out following the bankruptcy, that ‘Woodson had
abandoned them’ and had made absolutely no attempt to find outside capital, or to sell the
priceless ‘Permit’ that allowed me to operate like a private bank, or did not make any effort
whatever to save them.

“It would have been very simple indeed and the prudent thing to do, and what the
California Penal Code Section 504 demanded, for me to simply file for Chapter 11 Federal
Bankruptcy protection and to just walk away.

“Had I done so, I could have spent the last year with my dying wife, the $1 million in life
insurance would have been completely exempt under Federal bankruptcy law from any and all of
my creditors and I’d not have been charged with any crime.

“But instead, I did everything humanly possible to save everybody on board this financial
ship and for my good deeds, I now stand convicted of 13 felony counts of embezzlement, was
sentenced to 10 years in state prison, emerged in 1993 penniless, with a $48,000 California tax
lien, when my bankruptcy attorney ‘just forgot’ to pay the ‘priory tax claim’ from a $1 million
bankruptcy estate, and with a $15 million dollar judgment hanging over my head.

“Now just ask yourself, who would you rather go to sea with, Captain Avranas, or
Captain Woodson who never forgot his responsibilities to the 2,000-plus investors who had
entrusted his family with over $70 million of their hard-earned savings?” Woodson asked.
Woodson did so even while he attended to his slowly dying wife and mother of his four young
children. The answer should be very clear, but the Marin Impendent Journal very likely will
never give him one iota of credit. If he were a Democrat politician, a gay rights activist, a “global
warming” alarmist, new age artist, a Left-wing actor, radical anti-American polemicist; anything
other than a WASP Republican former millionaire and USC Trojan; he would get the benefit of
the doubt. He was down to a about $100 upon his 1993 release. He had been incarcerated from February of 1987 to January of 1993.

“But as Murphy's Law so states, “No good deed ever goes unpunished, ever,” says Woodson.

In today's world, it seems that the only thing that matters is crushing the other guy. But the Donald Trump's of this world and the many pernicious characters in the classic film by Oliver Stone, Wall Street are clear examples of "greed run amok" in today's “win at any cost” society.

It is important to look back on certain situations and ask candidly, what would you do in the same circumstances? The classic 1998 movie Saving Private Ryan, directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Tom Hanks as Captain John Miller (ironically the name of Michael Woodson’s uncle in Tacoma, Washington), depicts the unselfishness of the World War II combat veterans.

In the movie, Private Ryan's four other brothers have been killed in different theaters of operation. By a fluke one of the ladies in the War Department that sends out that the dreaded telegrams that state, “It is with our deepest regret . . .” noticed these four telegrams were going to the same mother in the Midwest.

Up the chain of command went this bizarre coincidence, and at the very top General George C. Marshall, the President's chief of staff, calls into his office his aide the camp, and reads to him a letter from Abraham Lincoln that he had handwritten to a mother who had just lost five of her sons amid the countless bloody Civil War battles.

General Marshall then instructed his subordinate to somehow find Private Ryan, who had dropped in behind the lines with the 82nd Airborne Division and was somewhere near the
Normandy beachhead in France. General Marshall then ordered that Private Ryan be removed from the combat zone, returned to the safety of the beach and sent home.

Captain John Miller was tasked with that command from the top. With his platoon, they set out to find this enlisted man, wherever he might be on the battlefront. After three or four harrowing engagements with the Germans, where two of their own squad were killed, they finally found Private Ryan.

Captain Miller then took Ryan aside, informed him of the death of his four brothers, and that he was heading home immediately. Private Ryan played by Matt Damon, after composing himself tells Captain Miller that his fellow combat troops in the 82nd Airborne were now his only brothers.

Ryan said that he had no intention of leaving them behind to defend a bridge without him from the counter-attacking Germans. Captain Miller and his men gathered together and had to make one hell of a choice, with no time to think about the ultimate consequences of their collective decision.

Captain Miller knew that if he withdrew from the upcoming battle with Private Ryan and his squad, the odds were that the remaining 82nd Airborne troops would be slaughtered at the bridge that they were ordered to hold at all costs, until the advancing Americans relieved them.

Captain Miller also knew that he was given a direct order from General Marshall, the highest ranking officer in the 15-million man United States military. Against this direct order Captain Miller and his men decided to disobey General Marshall and to stay with the 82nd Airborne to defend the bridge, which they did at the cost of several of their lives, including that of Captain Miller.
This decision by a small squad of men, under the ultimate stress of combat, clearly signifies the strength and the ingenuity of the U.S. military fighting men, and what so many people have stated was indeed America's “greatest generation.”

However, what would have happened to Captain Miller if they had stayed to defend the bridge and Private Ryan had been killed in the firefight? What would General Marshall, through the chain of command, have done to Captain Miller when he returned safe and sound to Omaha Beach?

“I'm of the opinion that if this had happened, Captain Miller would have been shot on the spot, for he violated a direct order from the highest level,” said Woodson who claims he never pays to see Hollywood movies anymore since they gave the Academy Award to Shakespeare in Love over Saving Private Ryan. “In combat, a violation of a direct order is subject to the penalty of death. What would you have done in the same circumstance? Would you have stayed or would you've have left?”

In 1984 Woodson faced a set of circumstances and decisions, although obviously not in combat. He refused to abandon investors and for this act, he was rewarded with 10 years in state prison. “All I had to do was to simply walk away,” he said.

Dr. Roger Freed, a good friend of Woodson's and board certified in adult, child and forensic psychiatry, wrote to him on June 27, 2001. He included a copy of page 553, chapter 13 from the Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, Fourth Edition that stated:

"The death of a spouse, which received the highest rating on the Holmes and Rahe scale, is commonly followed by a change in financial state, a revision in personal habits and social activities and so on."
"If in this same year the bereaved spouse undertakes changes in residence and work that can be postponed, then an unnecessarily high accumulation of life-change units occurs, with frequently disastrous medical and psychiatric consequences.”

The fact was that Michael Woodson, during 1983-84, the times that he was accused of committing 857 felonies, was experiencing the agonizing and protracted duel deaths of not only his wife of 19-years but that of his family business of 35-years.

This constant maximum stress, of the two looming failures, also included the financial welfare of not only his 39 employees and their family members, but also that of over 2000 investors, that only Michael could possibly save.

Michael was completely dependent on his multiple lawyers and accountants to provide him with an honest evaluation of the many problems he was attempting to cope with simultaneously. But that was not to be because they all placed their future "billable hours" ahead of their client's personal welfare.

“Let's say you that you were are once again Captain Miller, and a platoon leader in charge of 60 combat troops advancing through the rice paddies in Vietnam,” Woodson theorized. “Let's say that suddenly, with your men spread out, that one group of 15 men on the right flank comes under fire from the Viet Cong.

“A firefight ensues, and your other 45 troops close to defend their comrades. However, over your field phone, Major Wilson, your commander, tells you that the V.C. have overrun the position to your left and you are ordered to immediately move your troops 500 meters to the rear to defend his flank.
“If you follow this direct order, you know that 15 of your men are going to die on the spot. If you do not follow this direct order, maybe a couple hundred men are going to die if Major Wilson’s company position is overrun.

“As a platoon commander and more importantly as a man, you have about 30 seconds to make a critical decision under the maximum stress of combat. What in the hell you going to do? Are you going to stay and save your men or are you going to leave and let them die and simply comply with this direct order.

“You know, that Major Wilson doesn't really care about your troops. He only cares about his company and protecting his rank. At this time in the war in Vietnam, the U.S. is losing about 500 combat troops a week. So what the hell if 15 of your troops are killed? It is just another set of body bags going home.

“Are you going to stay or are you going to leave? Whatever decision you make and no matter what you do, it will be wrong. The decision to stay and save your troops can end with a court-martial by Major Wilson and you could spend the next 10 years in Leavenworth Federal Prison if you are lucky. In some extreme cases the refusal to follow a direct order in combat, as an officer, could result in a decision of "summary judgment" or the firing squad.

“The decision to leave your men in the field to be slaughtered would probably end up costing you your life with your own troops shooting you in the back as you were vacating the field of combat. Some decision huh?

“What would you done in the same set of circumstances?”

On July 10, 2006, the following headline appeared in the Marin Independent Journal: "‘Biggest Crook in Marin County’ Wanted To Be An Appraiser.”
Nancy Isles Nation reported that Mike Woodson was seeking to have himself declared “rehabilitated in order to gain a real estate appraisers license.” Woodson, the “one-time investment whiz,” asked a San Francisco judge to postpone a hearing so he could respond to objections filed by the Marin District Attorney's Office. In opposing the certification of Woodson's rehabilitation, district attorney Ed Berberian said many residents of Marin were victimized.

“Many thousands, if not millions, of dollars were diverted by his activities,” Berberian said. “We don't see, based on the way he presented his request, that he shows any signs of real rehabilitation.”

Woodson said accusations made by the district attorney were false. “They really want to shame me again,” Woodson said. “I don't get it. The case is 22 years old, everybody has gotten their money back, I'm living in the community - they are making me out to be the biggest crook in Marin County.”

“Prosecutors charged that, as the company faltered, Woodson padded the stated value of property and siphoned new investors' money to pay earlier investors,” the article read. “Woodson admitted he shifted money from one investor group to another but said he did so only in hopes of selling the company and paying everyone off.”

In 2008 a “Watergate reunion” was held in Reno, Nevada, “With all of my old and tired USC buddies,” said Woodson. His old friend Mike Paulin extended the hand of friendship along with many from USC’s class of 1963. Paulin called it, “Your fan club.”

Dwight Chapin started a Facebook network called Trojan Ballers and they got together for a terrific time. Mike and Bart Leddel became actively re-united. In Reno, Donald Segretti
regaled the crowd with a “tell all” account of “everything I did working for President Nixon.”

The crowd was reportedly beside themselves, laughing hysterically.

“All life is memories, and these are the great ones . . . you are welcome here anytime, our guest, no problem but you gotta call and then be here . . .” Paulin, who runs a resort on the Hawaiian islands, wrote him, alleviating any concerns that maybe his past had made him persona non grata. Not so.

But Woodson had to reconcile some hard feelings, too. After 20 years, his “former best friend,” a KA frat brother, who sat next to him at graduation in 1964, who "abandoned my ship" when his financial and legal problems did not fit into his perfect "super rich" lifestyle in Hillsborough, inquired through Paulin how to get hold of Mike.

“For over eight years for every major holiday, Christmas, the Fourth, Thanksgiving, New Year’s, you name it, our families were together,” said Woodson. “They even drove up to Sacramento many times when I was with Reagans and they stayed at our house multiple times at Tahoe for skiing. We were together in Sacramento for the ’74 SC-Notre Dame 55-24 game when the police came to the house because we were all yelling so loud.

“His wife was Trisha's best friend, then they refused to take in Sarah so she could finish the eighth grade, even with a $150,000 trust for her and who was their Goddaughter, when they locked me up in jail, prior to sending me into San Quentin, with 16 days to go on my five-year county jail sentence. Now he wants to say, ‘Hi.’

“If the reverse had happened to our two families and his wife had died, his two children, now both SC grads, would have been in our house in four hours for Trisha and me to raise. I never would have abandoned him or his children.
“I wrote to them multiple times from prison but they could not be bothered. They and their two children drove right by Vacaville on their way to Lake Tahoe many times over those three years, but they could not be bothered. I stopped by his financial printing business on Brannan Street in San Francisco when I got out in ’93, when I was dead broke and where he could have employed even me as a lowly delivery man, but he could not be bothered. His wife’s brother has stopped by the store many times over the years and he said that he would pass on my hellos to them, who now have a winery in Napa, but they could not be bothered.

“Talk about betrayal. They are the absolute worst. Now he wants to say, ‘Hi.’ I don’t think so.”

“I’m sure that when somebody tries to analyze why I would be so stupid as to trust Patrick Hallinan with only a verbal agreement of the most important contract that was never in writing, they’d say ultimately I have nobody to blame but myself,” said Woodson. “But I trusted him.” In 2008 the cover of Sports Illustrated magazine titled, “The best game ever” slapped Woodson in the face with the reality of that moment in the parking lot at the Marin County Civic Center.

The magazine did a large retrospective of the 1958 Baltimore Colts-New York Giants NFL championship game, where Woodson sat at Patrick Hallinan’s feet watching the game in the Hallinan’s Ross mansion. America, California, and Marin County saw profound changes since December of 1958.

At that time, Woodson’s politics, his worldview, his patriotic outlook; was the mainstream of his country, state and county. The Hallinan’s were “Communists,” jingoistic neighbors painting a “hammer and sickle” on their driveway.
Over the next 40-plus years, things changed. For the most part, Woodson’s America would prevail, but seemingly – for the most part - in “fly over country,” in the heartlands of the Midwest, the farm country of Fresno, the South. But coastal California; big cities of the Northeast; in New York and Boston; in union-dominated metropolises; the Hallinan worldview became more and more accepted. In the San Francisco Bay Area, and particularly in Marin County where they both grew up, the Hallinan view was now the prevalent one. Mike was now a total, distinct minority. If three Republicans met in the same room, they joked they had a “quorum of the Marin Republican Central Committee.”

Nobody called the Hallinan’s “Communists” anymore. Ronald Reagan had supposedly defeated Communism, when the Berlin Wall crumbled in November of 1989, but that was just a façade. It still lives, only in softer, Socialist tones, found in the big government solutions of President Barack Obama; the writings of Noam Chomsky; the “community organizing” of Obama’s hero, Saul Alinsky; the “black liberation” theology of Obama’s pastor, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright; and the view of Obama’s pal, Weather Underground founder and domestic terrorist Bill Ayers; which essentially is that America is too big, too powerful, too successful, too great.

These people represent a distinct worldview that America needs to be taken down every so often. We need to lose a war every now and then. We need a Great Depression to knock us off our high horse and force us to accept more government dependence. It is not fair that we win our wars, have so much influence, so much money. This attitude is the political parallel of a native New Yorker who hates the Yankees because, well, they simply win too much, which is not fair.

It is instructive to note what happens when a region goes Republican, or goes Democrat. When the South was a Democrat voting bloc, it was ignorant, poor and racist. When it went
Republican it became an economic juggernaut, drawing millions of transplants to burgeoning cities like Atlanta, Charlotte and Nashville.

When cities like Oakland, Chicago, and Detroit became totally Democrat-controlled, they became corrupt, debt-ridden and more dangerous than the streets of Baghdad. When the state of California was “Reagan country,” it was the in place to be, a land of glamour and panache, an economic machine and cultural touchstone. When it went “blue,” its cities went the way of Chicago and Detroit. Taxes were raised and businesses went bankrupt or left. People got tired of failing school systems and departed for greener pastures. “White flight” was replaced by hordes of illegal aliens invading its borders, turning urban centers into gang battlegrounds. These are simply facts, to be observed with the eyes God gives us, and the conclusions reached thereof simply emanate therefore.

A sage philosopher once said, “History does not repeat itself; it rhymes.” George Santayana famously said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In 2009, the difference between Presidents Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama were starkly shown, to the great benefit of Reagan’s legacy and the continuing shame of Obama’s. Reagan inherited a real estate crisis from President Jimmy Carter. In 1981-82 he broke the unions, “crashed” the economy, and allowed free market capitalism to prosper. The result was the longest uninterrupted run of economic growth in a century. Unfortunately, Woodson’s hero Reagan, along with his Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, set off a chain of events that bankrupted his company.

Sandy Weill, who ran American Express, the owners of Fireman’s Fund, and in so doing chose to let Woodson twist in the end, escaped accountability. He continued to feed from the Wall Street trough, eventually taking over Citicorp. He ran them into the ground, too.
President Obama chose the exact opposite of the proven-successful Reagan model. He socialized and nationalized American industry. In the process, he turned the kind of normal, cyclical recession that used to happen in the U.S. every five to seven years – then the Republicans improved the economy to the point where it only happened ever 10 or 12 – into the worst disaster since the Great Depression. What is most fearful is not that he is incompetent and failed to see it coming, but that he conspired to do it on purpose in order to create the “opportunity” for liberal Big Government to assume power above and beyond all previous assumptions.

Generations of books, some thought to be paranoid, have for centuries described precisely what Obama is doing: *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu; *The Prince* by Nicolo Machiavelli; *The Social Contract* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau; *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith; *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville; *Animal Farm* and *1984* by George Orwell; *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand; *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley; these and other books are either cautionary tales prophesying the rise of Barack Obama, or manifestos, handbooks guiding his strategy.

In 1993, when Mike Woodson was released from prison, the *Marin Independent Journal* covered the story. Woodson told them he was broke and had no prospects. They expressed no sympathy and snidely implied that he had “stolen money” stashed away somewhere. He did not. He still had civil suits and tax liens hanging over his head. His situation was precarious. He was being set up to fail, to end up back in the slammer.

In 1995 Woodson applied for a certificate of rehabilitation. Judge John Sutro said to his clerk, "Why did I get this one?" in quotes Woodson overheard. He was told "it is a simple
rotation of judges." Sutro refused to recuse himself even though his children were at Branson with Woodson's. He was a senior partner at Pillsbury, Madison and Sutro, the lead law firm suing Woodson. His firm received hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees going after him!

The certificate was denied.

Woodson borrowed on his mother’s Tiburon condominium. His mom owed $50,000 and it was worth $800,000, allowing him to get equity lines of credit. The tax liens and debts were eventually dispensed with, leaving him – finally – free and clear. He does not have a real state license and cannot have any California license, business or professional, without a certificate of rehabilitation. He cannot be an insurance agent, work in banking, or have any kind of fiduciary relationship to any customer.

He can work in food service, so that is what he does. He opened up Woody’s Yogurt Shop in the Strawberry Village Shopping Center, located in between Mill Valley and Tiburon. In 2007 Woodson was sued by a Marin County agency over his shop's lack of bathrooms. He believes they were just trying to "stick it" to him. When he opened Woody’s he was hassled by every state and county bureaucracy. He is convinced it is payback for what happened in the 1980s.

Against all odds, his little business is a thriving success. It is a clean, pleasant environment offering healthy food at reasonable, recession-proof prices. His employees appear to be the eight or 10 nicest-looking blonde teenage girls in Marin County; all cheerful and eager. He employs no illegal aliens.

He is utterly paranoid. He does not attend USC game-viewing parties of Trojan football and baseball events shown at local bars because he believes that if the police stopped him with so much as one beer in his system, it would be used to re-incarcerate him. He lives in the Tiburon
condominium willed him by his mother. It offers quiet solitude and a spectacular view of San Francisco Bay, with The City lights twinkling beyond. He is “serene” in his thoughts. He did it, as Frank Sinatra said, “My way.” He made mistakes and has regrets, but they do not consume him.

In opening a public business a few miles from where he went to high school and operated a multi-million dollar real estate investment firm that supposedly “embezzled” $70 million from his friends and neighbors, Mike Woodson made a statement about himself and the veracity of the case against him. It was in his own little way like the American reconnaissance mission into the heart of Baghdad in 2003, when after heavy fighting a convoy boldly drove the streets just to prove the U.S. had won the war. When nobody fired at them and they were given free run of the place, it proved their point.

Woodson could have moved to another part of the country. He could have changed his name. He could have run and hid. He did none of these things. Instead, he opened a business with glass windows that anybody could throw a rock through; doors anybody could walk between; and stood before customers who could freely hurl invective at him at a time of their choosing. None of this has ever happened.

No “jilted investor” or heir, their inheritance “stolen” by Mike Woodson, has ever approached him to confront him about his “crimes.” The reason is because they all got their money back. It was not easy. They had to sue and it took time, but they were paid back. If not, they would still be hounding Woodson.

“I felt it would be impossible to represent to the court that full restitution had been made to the final 142 investors,” he said resignedly. “The ‘bottom line’ is the fact that it would have been completely impossible for me to return to the ‘scene of the crime,’ open an ice cream store,
operate from behind the counter for 50-plus hours a week for the past six years, if all of these statements were not honest and true.”

His “enemies” are not the investors, but the political class who will never forgive him, not because he is so very guilty, but because they are part of the professional “victim class” Ann Coulter writes about in her aptly-titled book, Guilty. They sell their newspapers and gin up their political support on the basis of a nebulous concept, which is that people like Mike Woodson, i.e., “wealthy” white Republicans, conspired to bring them down. But the world has changed. The old victims now benefit from professional extortion rackets designed to leach off the Woodson’s of this world. Woodson and his type are the real victims, except these people do not choose to participate in this ideology. They instead go forth and produce excellence, allowing that to stand as their monuments. The little people, the petty uinimpressives, howl and bay away. In the end their words carry no meaning, like farts in the wind.

In 2009, Woodson was preparing to submit another application for certificate of rehabilitation. It is very important to him. He would like to get his old licenses back. He is also doing the political and legal preparations for an application of pardon to California’s Republican Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Actor Jon Lithgow, in the film Cliffhanger said, "If you kill a hundred people, you're a murderer. Kill a million people and you're a conqueror." In 2008 Bernard Madoff was arrested after reportedly embezzling $50 billion from a wide variety of investors in what is known as a “Ponzi scheme.” His crimes are so much greater than Woodson’s as to be almost impossible to comprehend. Woodson’s were much easier to understand; localized within the Marin County community.
Madoff’s ultimate punishment has not been revealed as of this writing. It is my prediction that it will not be nearly as harsh as that experienced by Mike Woodson.

In 2009 a Tiburon man named Malcolm McVickar admitted to stealing $200,000 from elderly victims, including his 92-year old father. After a plea deal he faced up to nine years in prison. He received little fanfare in the press. He never worked for Ronald Reagan and, like Madoff, will likely get less ultimate punishment than Woodson received.

In 2008 a local San Francisco talk show host named Bernie Ward was arrested and pled guilty to child pornography. Among other things, Ward was secretly masturbating in an adjoining room while watching his son’s male friends play video games, and told an on-line sex fantasist he planned to do more. The fantasist alerted authorities and Ward was arrested.

Ward was a radical Left-winger. He hosted a nightly radio show in which he lambasted Christianity, the Republican Party, and President George W. Bush. He was a close ally of U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D.-California). Senator Boxer attempted to intervene on behalf of Ward, but conservative talk show host Michael Savage exposed it, so she could not get away with it.

The San Francisco press completely hid Ward’s case. Whatever mention of it was relegated to the back pages with only the most cursory legal descriptions. But Savage . . . savaged Ward, in part because they had once worked at the same station. Ward, hating Savage for his opinions, told his listeners what Savage’s home address was, suggesting they go there and do him harm. Savage never even learned this until Ward’s child porn case went public. He provided all the details, including tape recordings provided by law enforcement, that the liberal media refused to air.
Savage posited the notion, *What if I had been arrested for child porn?* The frenzy, the pure adrenaline of Left-wing . . . *savagery* would be Satanic in its proportion. Mike Woodson had seen it. It had happened to him.

Savage knew the Woodson case well. Savage, a native New Yorker, had long lived in Marin County, an oddity in that his politics are Right-wing, but he loves the scenery, the weather and the sense of intellectual liberation there. Some years ago his topic was, “Scandalous figures that got caught and paid a public price.” Woodson heard the show and called in. Savage remembered the case well and had Michael on for the better part of 20 or 30 minutes to speak of the ravages of the Bay Area liberal media, among other profundities.

In 2000, coverage of the George W. Bush-Al Gore Presidential campaign was quite fair. In 2004 it became out of control in favor of John Kerry over President Bush, but it was so obvious - Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 9/11* and the Dan Rather “National Guard story” – that it probably helped Bush.

But 2008 was the most biased media coverage in history by a long shot, in favor of Barack Obama. It was astounding. So-called mainstream newspapers have become *de facto* public relations pamphlets for the Democrats. The direct result of this is that they are going out of business. The *San Francisco Chronicle* will probably be out of print by the time this book is published. U.S. Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (D.-California) proposed that the Federal government bail it out. She was quite serious. The *San Francisco Examiner*, for all practical purposes, went out of business years ago, although its masthead is used on a free paper that still sits in corner bins in The City.

The *Marin Independent Journal* has been reduced to a thin reed of paper resembling one of those auto trader rags. Mike Woodson’s fantasy that some day they will re-print retractions of
their lies and deceits will never come to pass because the paper will probably die first. Generations of readers tired of reading these deceits, applied to a thousand Mike Woodsons of various (conservative) stripes.

In the meanwhile, conservative talk radio thrives as never before. Rush Limbaugh is probably at the peak of his power and popularity. G. Gordon Liddy freely spears his former antagonists daily, and to add injury to his insults has been made a millionaire for it. The Democrats, unable to compete in the marketplace of ideas, propose only the Fairness Doctrine. Ann Coulter’s books, excoriating the Left with literary wit, humor and cutting truth, continue to make Best Seller lists. When President Obama’s “stimulus package” turned a normal cyclical recession into the worst economy since the Great Depression, Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged* (1957) sold more copies in January, 2009 than Obama’s celebrated memoirs.

In American society, we honor those that we deem to be heroes. Whether it is John Wayne in the classic movie *Iwo Jima*, or Audie Murphy in *To Hell and Back*, America loves a hero. We also honor those in sports such as Joe Montana, who orchestrated winning drives in the Super Bowl with the San Francisco 49ers.

In one classic story, Queen Elizabeth of England was watching the America’s Cup yacht race. The British were a close second. She turned to her aide de camp and said, “Well at least we are second.” As the story goes he replied, ”My dear Queen, there is no second place.”

In the world of national politics and national championships, there also is no second place. All one has to do is to look back at those who have run for the Presidency and failed. Many are still reviled by their own political parties, in some respects immediate outcasts. Just
look how we collectively regard those football teams who finish second in the Super Bowl. They are not regarded as great teams but as losers who failed to win no matter how close the score.

Michael Woodson entered this bizarre world, where days before he had been considered so very successful, and from this moment on he was to be summarily vilified as the ultimate failure, and very soon even worse; a despicable criminal who had stolen millions to feed his lavish lifestyle.

Until this writing, not one word has ever been spoken by any of Woodson's seven criminal lawyers in his defense. Not one of them has ever attempted to explain to any court of law, why he did what he did. With the exception of his closest friends, people from his past only know of “Woodson the crook.”

“When he got in trouble a lot of those people were my neighbors,” recalled his old high school coach, Bob Troppmann, who retains a fatherly fondness for Woodson, but has never heard anything to dissuade him that his old running back went bad, at least for a time.

You are, for the first time, 25 years after the fact, seeing the real story of what actually happened before, during and after Marin's "Crime of the Decade." Mike Woodson lived a charmed, and cursed, life. He avoided Watergate, a “blessing in disguise,” but when his company went down the jackals all wanted their “pound of flesh.”

He was raised amongst the Hallinans, one of the nation’s most famous atheist families, and never had particular religious convictions. Even his jailhouse days did not lead him to The Lord, although he was never averse to Christianity. His political conservatism led him in that direction, and his associates in the Republican Party tended to be more Christian than on the average, but this did not have a profound affect on him.
Winning national campaigns; making millions of dollars; having more than “the Joneses”; then sheer survival, financial and physical, dominated his concerns. But in finally achieving serenity, he is able to look back and ponder deeper questions. The question was posed to Mike regarding the quotation in Scripture in which Jesus Christ says, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven.” Could he have had his wealth taken from him because he has been elected for Salvation, and the Good Lord knew he needed this humility in order to be prepared for it?

“Maybe,” he says. “I do believe everything happens for a reason, it’s not a random turn of events. It’s too weird and too crazy to be random.”

Finally, Michael Woodson is confronted with those who have wronged him. In considering the attorneys – Hallinan, Downey, Bjorklund, Greene – Fireman’s Fund; the vindictive Judge Smith and district attorney Josh Thomas; the foul headlines of the Marin Independent Journal; political enemies and opponents out to personally destroy him; his USC graduation friend who “abandoned” him; he must also consider that he, too, has wronged others. He was no angel. Regardless of whether the investors were paid back, his hubris and arrogance led him to believe he was “bulletproof,” and in so doing he fell short of his responsibilities to his investors, employees and associates. He did drugs, drank too much, was no Mother Teresa. He snorted coke at San Rafael Joe’s and went on stag boat parties with loose women who knew how to get what they wanted by giving men what they “need.” Woodson did not “respect” his father.

He must take responsibility for all of his life, good and bad. He swam with the sharks and survived. He ran with a fast crowd and lived in the rarefied air of Ronald Reagan, of Presidents, college chancellors, and corporate titans; of celebrities and beautiful women. He is a product of
his own environment, of his own actions. He has much to be proud of, and plenty to be ashamed of. All of us do.

Like G. Gordon Liddy, Mike Woodson outlasted his enemies. Try as they might, they could not destroy him. But in the end Michael Woodson is more than willing to extend the hand of reconciliation to those who wronged him, and ask those he too wronged extend the same charity. He freely lives by the tenets of The Lord’s Prayer:

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

AL ENDRISS

Al Endriss is going into the Redwood High School Hall of Fame on April 23. It is the 50-year anniversary of my alma mater and I have many friends - coaches, teammates – who make up the first class of honorees. These include coach Bob Troppmann, an old family friend; Jim Peters, whose brother Bill was a close pal of mine; Pete Carroll, who coaches my college alma mater, USC; Darrell Elder, who went to USC ahead of me and told me how great it was; Buddy Biancalana, my teammate on the 1977 Redwood national champions; Chad Kreuter, who along with Carroll is a USC head coach (baseball); and Patti Gibian, whose brother was also my teammate.

But to my way of thinking it was Endriss who casts the largest shadow over this event. When I was in the eighth grade, I saw Redwood win the old TOC at Albert Field. They looked like superstars; short hair, traditional uniforms, disciplined, baseball fundamentalists, men among boys. I wanted to be part of that.
Al Endriss was a daunting, indeed even a scary figure. Playing in his program for four years, I cannot say it was “fun.” It was hard work and required total commitment. He did things then I disliked, but later in my life I found that if I could “survive” Endriss as a mere teenager, no adult challenge was an obstacle that could not be overcome. I played on scholarship in college and made it to the professional level. I do not know that I would have gotten that far had I played in another Marin prep program.

Today, I still see Coach Endriss. He is 80 and still slightly scary, but we deal with each other as men, and it feels good. He was not cut out for Marin, with its “I’m okay, you’re okay” mantra. Endriss said his program was a totalitarian dictatorship, and it was. Man, were we good. My freshman year (1974), the varsity team was simply unbelievable, but my senior year (1977) we might have been better. Ranked number seven in the pre-season, the Independent Journal said our goal of a national title was a little arrogant, but after taking the NCS title the Easton Bat Company and Collegiate Baseball magazine indeed did name us mythical national champions. I am a Marin prep historian, and with all due respect for the 1952 Tamalpais football team and 1982 Drake basketball squad, I think the 1977 Redwood Giants are the the best in MCAL sports history.

Never in a million years would we have ascended to such heights had a winner named Al Endriss not pushed us; made us reach above ourselves; and be the very best we could be, collectively and individually.

BCS DECLARES GERMANY WINNER OF WORLD WAR II

December 04, 2008
US Ranked 4th

After determining the Big-12 championship game participants, the BCS computers were put to work on other major contests and today the BCS declared Germany to be the winner of World War II.

"Germany put together an incredible number of victories beginning with the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland and continuing on into conference play with defeats of Poland, France, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands. Their only losses came against the US and Russia; however considering their entire body of work--including an incredibly tough Strength of Schedule--our computers deemed them worthy of the #1 ranking."

Questioned about the #4 ranking of the United States the BCS commissioner stated "The US only had two major victories--Japan and Germany. The computer models, unlike humans, aren't influenced by head-to-head contests--they consider each contest to be only a single, equally-weighted event."

German Chancellor Adolph Hitler said "Yes, we lost to the US; but we defeated #2 ranked France in only 6 weeks." Herr Hitler has been criticized for seeking dramatic victories to earn 'style points' to enhance Germany's rankings. Hitler protested "Our contest with Poland was in doubt until the final day and the conditions in Norway were incredibly challenging and demanded the application of additional forces."

The French ranking has also come under scrutiny. The BCS commented "France had a single loss against Germany and following a preseason #1 ranking they only fell to #2."

Japan was ranked #3 with victories including Manchuria, Borneo and the Philippines.

STEVEN TRAVERS
SPEECH AT PASADENA QUARTERBACK CLUB

INTRO:

*Steven Travers is a USC graduate and ex-professional baseball player in the St. Louis Cardinals and Oakland A's organizations. He is the author of 15 books, including the best-selling Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman, nominated for a Casey Award for best baseball book of 2002. He has written four books about his alma mater. His current book is Trojans Essential, and in 2009 What It Means to Be a Trojan. His books have been the subject of the College Sports TV/CBS documentary Tackling Segregation and a major motion picture now under development. A former Hollywood*
SPEECH:

I would like to thank my old friend Bob Case for inviting me to speak before this August group. Thank you also to Nancy Shaw, the program chair, and let me also point out my daughter, Elizabeth, who is with us today. I must say that I am extremely honored to be invited to the Pasadena Quarterback's Club, especially in light of the 2006-2007 roster of speakers, which includes such sterling sporting characters as Pete Carroll, Ronnie Lott, Hal Bedsole; and three of my friends and fellow Trojans, Tom Kelly, Manfred Moore, and the late, great Craig Fertig, may God bless his soul. I have had the privilege of interviewing many of the above-named legends and can attest to their imprimatur.

Bob Case told me one of the things this group likes is to hear a little about the speaker; specifically, how I came to do what I do, which is by extension the reason I was invited here in the first place. I am a fifth- or sixth-generation Californian whose family journeyed west during the Gold Rush. I played professional baseball in the Cardinals and A’s organizations, graduated from the University of Southern California, coached at USC, Cal-Berkeley and in Europe. I started a family, bought a house in Orange County, and also went to law school. Before I was 30 I thought I was pretty hot and contemplated a political career, but my plans did not materialize.

I became a sports agent, representing Al Martin of the Pittsburgh Pirates. I quickly determined that doing the bidding of man-child athletes was not my calling, but God led me to my destiny using a one-time "fallen Angel" named Bo Belinsky, a former no-hit lefty of the Los Angeles Angels.

Bo was a client of our agency. He was still in demand for old-timers days and card shows. We made no money off him but it was worth it just to hear his stories. Within this audience no doubt many of you know those stories. Others ask, "Who was Bo Belinsky?" Trust me, and I hear knowing laughter and see nodding heads, he had some stories. To shorten this anecdote, Bo told us Robert DeNiro and other Hollywood heavyweights wanted to make a movie about his life. I wrote the screenplay, Once He Was an Angel. The sports agency folded, but my writing career was born.

The script made it to the semi-finals of a screenwriting contest and became noticed. A producing group that included Frank Capra Jr. and Frank Capra III, son and grandson of the famed It's a Wonderful Life director, optioned it, but it was never made. During this time, I befriended Bob Case, who was the Angels’ clubhouse attendant in those Dodger Stadium years. Through Bob, Charlie Sheen became enamored with the idea of playing Bo on screen, but it never happened. Maury Povich gave it a shot, but again, no-go. The screenplay remains unproduced but would be as entertaining today as it was then. Yesterday at USC, Professor Dan Durbin hosted a retrospective on the old Pacific Coast League and the early pre-Anaheim Angels of the Wrigley Field and Dodger Stadium years. Bo, who eventually found Christ, died in 2001 but remained the star of the show.
I did "script doctor" work for Hollywood for the better part of six years and wrote one version of the World War I movie *The Lost Battalion*. I could talk about that experience, which involved the actor James Woods, producer Edgar Scherick, and the Creative Artists Agency in Beverly Hills, but it would require an hour and several beers. I eventually moved into sports writing, first covering preps for the *L.A. Daily News* and the *Los Angeles Times*, then as a columnist for a magazine in Marina Del Rey which went out of business, a victim of the dot-bomb era.

I moved to San Francisco to become a columnist for the *San Francisco Examiner*, but that publication, while there is still a free paper that uses its masthead, became for all practical purposes the second employer of mine to go out of business in two years.

I landed on my feet because in 2001, while working as a columnist, I was on hand regularly watching Barry Bonds break Mark McGwire's all-time home run record. Bonds and I hit it off, probably because he hated all the Bay Area writers and I was the only one without any baggage with him. He agreed to authorize me to write his autobiography, but when proposed publishers heard he wanted two million dollars they did the book version of collusion, dropping the idea. Bonds then dropped me, and I wrote his unauthorized biography, *Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman*. It became a best seller and I entered the next phase of my writing career: author of what will soon be 15 published books.

If you favor Bruin blue, then I will ask you to bear with me, although before I get started on my Trojan propaganda, let me give kudos to UCLA. First, I am an enormous admirer of John Wooden. I wish to extend plaudits to a previous Quarterback's Club speaker, Donn Moomaw, a Bruin whose true allegiance transcends school loyalty, in that our shared Christian faith bonds us as brothers above all others. But most importantly, let me cheer the sons of Westwood for being on the right side of history. UCLA, along with USC, are the two schools most responsible for providing progressive opportunities to black athletes long before it was the "accepted" thing to do. Integrated football games played before close to 80,000 fans at the Coliseum in the 1930s, starring the likes of Pasadena's own Jackie Robinson, were nothing less than social statements of the first order. Indeed it was UCLA's willingness to recruit great black athletes that elevated them to our level and, at least for a time, above us.

I am a sports historian, and my area of expertise is college football. Next year Taylor Trade will publish my book *Pigskin Warriors*, which ranks the top 25 historical collegiate football programs. It is a tall order and required much research, which was for me a labor of love. I have concluded that Southern California is the greatest of all programs from 1869, the year Rutgers played the first game, to the present day. Undoubtedly there are those who will say that I am biased in favor of my team, and perhaps I am, but I am also logical enough to assess the data fairly. I offer this: I may be biased, but I have done the research and know what I am talking about. I may be wrong, you may disagree, but my points are based on merit, not emotion, and herein do I speak.

How does one "rank" college football histories? Let me first say that if national championships are the main criteria, then the argument would not entail USC, Notre Dame, Alabama,
Oklahoma, Michigan and the like, but rather Harvard, Princeton; perhaps even Chicago, Penn and Columbia. With apologies to Ivy Leaguers who may grace this room, Harvard and Princeton may be the powerhouse of the Supreme Court judicial pool and the White House record books, but they are not the greatest historical college football teams of all time.

With all due respect for Oklahoma, Ohio State, and Michigan, there are three main contenders. If you log onto certain Alabama web sites and blogs, you will be told that the Crimson Tide have won as many as 13 national championships. They are in the Bible Belt and, as they say down yonder, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away." So it is with 'Bama's titles. They actually have nine and this includes asterisk seasons.

On January 1, 1965, the unbeaten Crimson Tide lost to Texas in the Orange Bowl. The photo of a dejected Joe Namath leaving the field in tears, later quoted saying it was his "worst disappointment" in football, is not a photo or quote of the 1964 national champions, but both the AP and UPI insist they are. Alabama hangs the plaque as if it’s the real deal, but keeps the score of the game in a janitor’s closet somewhere. Jimmy Johnson and Jerry Jones of Arkansas are the deserving, accorded-by-history national champions of 1964.

Alabama also would like you to believe they won the 1973 national title, since the UPI awarded it to them before they lost to Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl. That game gets enough play on classic sports stations to keep the Tide a little more quiet about it.

Alabama has a relatively low number of All-Americans and Hall of Famers, and are well down the line among teams producing pros. I will leave discussion of their long-held segregated practices out of this as the general point is made using numbers and logic.

So, as you all suspected, it comes down to the two giants of the college game, the two heavyweight titleists, the two glamour schools, the two greatest rivals; one polished by Hollywood, the other by the Vatican, yet both remain traditional, patriotic and righteous. I speak, of course, of the University of Notre Dame and its cross-country opponent for the ages, the University of Southern California.

Now, to say that USC has "passed" Notre Dame, or "tied" Notre Dame, as the greatest of all historical football traditions, is subjective commentary. That said, should the Trojans beat the Fighting Irish again in a few weeks; should Mark Sanchez or Joe McKnight win the Heisman in the next couple years; and should Southern California win the BCS national championship game; well, the issue becomes less subjective and more like an accomplishment.

Entering this season, Notre Dame had won 11 recognized national titles. In addition, there are several other seasons in which they could have won, or indeed were named by some source as the number one team. Unlike many of their competitors, the Irish are honest in assessing which of their titles is real and which is not quite up to snuff, and it comes out to 11.

They won three titles under Knute Rockne between 1924 and 1930; four under Frank Leahy between 1943 and 1949; two under Ara Parseghian between 1966 and 1973; then their last one
under Lou Holtz in 1988. Of those 11 titles, they shared top billing with Alabama in 1930 and 1973. Seven of them, from 1929 to 1966, came in years in which they did not play in a bowl game. Their bowl game, for all practical purposes, was the season-ending match-up with Southern California. Beating the Trojans to cap these seasons was deemed as worthy of a number one ranking as beating, say, Georgia Tech in the Sugar Bowl. Logic tells us that of those seven no-bowl title years, some good team would have upset the apple cart in a bowl game once, or twice, or three times?

At one time, the 1924 "Four Horsemen of Notre Dame" was considered the best team in history. At a later time, the 1947 team was considered the best ever. Notre Dame has won seven Heisman Trophies, six between 1943 and 1964. For lack of a better demarcation point, call 1960 the beginning of the truly modern era, in which the game became national, televised and in color; an integrated game in which recruiting became an art form, a game of big business and ultra-competitiveness; when training methods, diet and equipment improved by leaps and bounds. The game went from leather helmets without facemasks to what we see today. Since then, Notre Dame has won three national championships and two Heismans. In that same time frame, the modern era when the game changed, USC has won seven titles and seven Heismans. Since John Huarte in 1964, the count is USC seven Heismans, Notre Dame one. Since John McKay stated that "a billion Chinamen could care less" that the Irish beat the Trojans, 51-0 in 1966, USC has won six titles compared to the Irish with two.

I love and respect Notre Dame, but if you take away Knute Rockne and Frank Leahy, their numbers pale in comparison to Alabama, Oklahoma, Ohio State, Miami . . . and USC. Rockne and Leahy coached one heckuva long time ago, and a lot has changed since then.

Entering 2008, the Irish had been ranked in the top 20 703 times, number three on the list. At 739, they trail only Michigan in winning percentage over 119 years, and their 824 wins is second to the Wolverines, who had nine more years to compile them. Their record vs. USC is an impressive 42-32-5. They have the most All-Americans and the most players in the National Football Foundation College Hall of Fame. Their 1947 class at one time had the most players drafted in one year, a record accentuated by the fact the draft included both the National Football League and the All-American Football Conference. The record has since been broken by USC in 1953 (an all-time best 15), in 1975 (with 14) and in 1977 (again with 14). Notre Dame is tied with USC for most overall number one draft choices, with five. When Reggie Bush dropped to number two in 2006 it denied Troy their sixth number one guy. Joe Montana of Notre Dame was three times the Super Bowl MVP. Montana and Joe Theismann have elevated Notre Dame near the top among schools with the most NFL Most Valuable Players.

Of Southern California's 11 national championships, all except the first in 1928 came in a year in which they won the Rose Bowl, with the exception of the 2005 BCS Orange Bowl national championship win over Oklahoma. These bowl wins have not come against UNLV in the Frito-Lay Bowl. They have come in earth-shaking "death struggles" between John McKay and John Robinson, with the likes of Ohio State's Woody Hayes and Michigan's Bo Schembechler. It can be argued with great validity that the reason I do not stand before you now extolling why the Buckeyes and/or the Wolverines are the greatest of all traditions is because they each
consistently failed to beat USC. Each is Gaul to USC's Roman Empire; the Washington Generals to Troy's Harlem Globetrotters. It is also true that in 16 seasons, somebody somewhere called USC the national champion. Like Notre Dame, but unlike Alabama, Oklahoma, Ohio State and others, the school does not recognize five of them.

If USC wins the 2008 national title, it will push the Trojans ahead, 12-11. Absent a Vince Young touchdown run with nine seconds left, this accomplishment would have been a past act in 2006. 

If Sanchez or McKnight win the Heisman, USC will have eight to seven each for Notre Dame and Ohio State. If the NCAA had not penalized USC in 1956; if the 1974 Trojan-Irish game had been played a week earlier; and if Rodney Peete had not been hurt in 1988; Jon Arnett, Anthony Davis and Peete may well have been on a list of what could in the next two seasons be 11 Heisman Trophy recipients at Heritage Hall.

If USC wins any bowl game this season and Alabama does not, the Trojans will tie the Crimson Tide with the most all-time bowl victories. At 30-16, they already have the best bowl record of any program. Their 23-9 record in the Rose Bowl is by far the best any one school has in any one bowl, and this is the "granddaddy of 'em all." The 49 points they laid on Illinois in 2008 tied Michigan in 1902 for the most points scored in the game's long history. Their eighth straight BCS bowl game this year will break their own record for most, as well as most consecutive, BCS bowl appearances. Their 5-1 record in BCS games marks the most games and the best record since the Bowl Championship Series began in 1998.

Notre Dame did not play in bowl games from the 1925 season through the 1968 season. When they have played, they compiled a losing record and currently hold the NCAA record for most consecutive defeats. Is my argument becoming an established fact yet? Let's keep going then.

USC broke the record for most consecutive 11-win seasons under Coach Pete Carroll with six from 2002 to 2007, and will extend it to seven this year. Their 34-game winning streak from 2003 to 2006 is the second longest in modern, post-World War I history, tied with Miami from 2000 to 2002. Had USC beaten Texas in the 2006 BCS Rose Bowl, they would have entered the next season with a clear shot at tying Oklahoma's all-time 47-game streak in the regular season, and breaking it in their bowl game. The 1928 and 1932 Trojans were considered the best teams of all time until somebody else came along, such as the 1944-45 Army Black Knights. The 1972 Trojans are still generally considered to be the greatest single-season college football team in history. The main contenders in the argument include the 1947 Fighting Irish, the 1971 and 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers, the 2001 Miami Hurricanes, the 2004 USC Trojans, and the 2005 Texas Longhorns. Among the greatest teams not to win national titles, include the 1979 Trojans, 1983 Cornhuskers, 2002 Hurricanes and the 2005 Trojans.

USC's 151 All-Americans are the second most behind Notre Dame. 28 Trojan players, two head coaches, four assistants and one athletic director, plus Bill Redell of Occidental, who played at USC as a freshman, are in the college football Hall of Fame. A laundry list of great Trojans are currently waiting in the wings for induction over the next few years. Only Notre Dame has more but USC is catching up. 74 Trojans have made the Playboy Pre-Season All-American team, followed by Michigan with 40.
USC with 71 has the most first round draft picks. In 1968 they set the record for most first round selections in a single year with five. They are the only school to have the number one pick two years in a row with Ron Yary (1968) and O.J. Simpson (1969). They have surpassed Notre Dame for most overall NFL draft picks with 446 and most pro football players with 414 since 1920. They have had the most All-Pros, Pro Bowlers, and Pro Football Hall of Famers with 11, plus three ex-assistant coaches. A Trojan has appeared in all but three Super Bowls, the most of any college, and the Trojans have been on the winning team the most.

USC from 1962-82 had the greatest two-decade run ever. They were probably the team of the 1930s, 1960s, 1970s and unquestionably the 2000s. Howard Jones, John McKay and now Pete Carroll stand shoulder to shoulder with any legends worth mentioning. Carroll's record is perhaps the most mind-boggling. Consider that he enters the weekend 83-15 prior to the Arizona game. They are approaching a 100-game record that almost equals USC's own 92-12-5 mark from 1971 to 1980, but consider that since the Trojans started the 2001 season 2-5 they have gone 81-10 before the Arizona game, bested only by Miami (81-9 from 1985-93) for the greatest 90-game run ever. When USC was ranked number one the first three weeks of the 2008 season, according to my sources that tied them with USC for most times ranked first in the AP poll with 89. There were reports that Oklahoma is first with 96, but my study of the OU media guide indicates some "fuzzy math."

It does not end there.

On October 20, 2001 USC trailed Notre Dame, 20-16 late in a game at South Bend. The Irish scored a late touchdown to clinch it, 27-16. In Pete Carroll's eight years at Troy, this marks the only game he has lost by more than a touchdown. Nobody - not Knute Rockne, Frank Leahy, Bud Wilkinson, Bear Bryant, Joe Paterno or Bobby Bowden - can even sniff this accomplishment, which means that but-for a few good bounces, Carroll's teams could be a John Wooden-like 97-1 with eight straight national titles. Those losses include an overtime road defeat, all road games between the 2001 and 2007 Stanford games, and losses courtesy of missed chip field goals and extra points.

Lastly, the movie version of my book One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, is under development. My friend J.K. McKay has been lobbying Kevin Costner, who shares a Century City office building with J.K.'s law firm, to play his father. I personally am rooting for Jon Voigt as Paul "Bear" Bryant and for the tag line to be, "Finally . . . USC's Rudy."

So I conclude by saying that I know I have gone on and on about USC and its football history. There's only one thing about it: each word is true. God bless America, and may the Trojans continue to . . .

*Fight On!*

I'm happy to field any questions, hostile or friendly.
WHY IS MARIN SO LIBERAL?

By STEVEN TRAVERS

The recent election and articles about the paucity of Republicanism in Marin Country leads me to the question, Why is Marin so liberal?

I was born in San Francisco and grew up in Marin beginning at age four, graduating from Redwood High. My family has been in the Bay Area since the Gold Rush and the county since the mid-1920s. We are staunchly Republican and my uncle, Col. Charles T. Travers, was an advisor to Vice-President Richard Nixon, U.S. Senator William Knowland, and Governor Ronald Reagan. I was a GOP political consultant in Orange County and managed Republican Bill Boerum's 1990 Congressional campaign against Barbara Boxer.

I am well educated (USC graduate, law school), well read and a historian of sports and culture. I wrote a book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, that details how the South both integrated and went Republican. I am currently working on a book called The USC Mafia: One Man's Journey From the Frat House to the White House to the Big House, about Marin's Mike Woodson, a Republican operative under Richard Nixon who fell from grace in a mortgage-embezzlement case of the 1980s. Woodson's story seems to be a metaphor for the question, Why is Marin so liberal? in that when he graduated from Redwood in 1959, the county voted GOP. His best friend, James Hallinan, became a powerhouse attorney with ties to the American Communist Party. The county certainly turned away from Woodson's politics and closer to Hallinan's.
California was very Republican, the home of the conservative revolution started by Barry Goldwater and embodied by Ronald Reagan. As recent I.J. articles have revealed, Marin went for Nixon in 1960, 1968 and 1972; Reagan in 1980; and gave Walter Mondale the vote vs. Reagan by only one percent in 1984. When I managed Boerum's 1990 campaign, Belvedere, Tiburon and Ross were nominally Republican. Novato was Republican, too, considered an affordable, family-friendly place where police officers tended to buy homes. Since then, no Republican President stands a chance here and all those "Republican enclaves" are solid Democrat majorities. California is now a blue state, but there are still Republican areas.

But why is Marin so liberal? It is incredibly affluent, and in that regard a conundrum, in that most wealthy folks vote to protect lower tax rates, a GOP staple yet seemingly a case of Democrats going against their self interests. Marin is quite unique but can be compared to a few other locations. Its basic demographics are similar to Left-wing bastions in Los Angeles County. This includes Malibu, and a corridor starting in Brentwood and continuing to the Hollywood hills. The San Fernando Valley has a relatively affluent-yet-liberal base, too. However, much of L.A. liberalism can be attributed to the entertainment industry, which contains a set of dynamics found almost no place else. A secondary influence is the large Jewish population there, which reacted to decades of country club Republican anti-Semitism. Unless I have missed a large recent shift, Marin is not heavily Jewish; it is certainly not as Jewish as, say, Encino.

To some extent, these factors explain New York City, particularly the upper East Side, the West Side, and Greenwich Village, although these places are more resembling the urban environment of San Francisco (and the Castro district) than Marin County. Some of the wealthy Connecticut suburbs look more like Marin than New York City or even Long Island and one-time Republican strongholds such as Duchess and Westchester Counties. The northern Virginia suburbs are beginning to turn blue; Austin, Texas is a liberal college town in the middle of a red state; and there are other pockets here and there; but finding the kind of all-out liberalism of Marin County in a place with remotely similar characteristics is largely an exercise in futility.

For the most part, the wealthy suburbs of America vote Republican, even in blue states. The urban cities are where Democrats mine for most of their votes. Take Blackhawk, a wealthy section of San Ramon that looks a lot like Marin except in the voting booth, where they tend to be moderately Republican. I personally have lived in Orange County and L.A.’s south bay (Redondo and Hermosa Beach). In terms of weather, racial patterns, affluence, lifestyle, environment and other factors, both these places have much in common with Marin. Hermosa/Redondo are probably moderately Democrat but can go to the GOP. Orange County has moderated towards the Democrats here and there, but Newport Beach and Palos Verdes Estates are two wealthy Southern California towns that in many ways mirror the Marin lifestyle, yet are polar opposites in the voting booth.

Both Newport and Palos Verdes are remarkably similar: income, real estate prices, weather, topography, environmental concerns, low crime rates, lifestyle; as a Marinite I have found incredible commonality with these luxurious places. The only non-political difference is the
surfing and "beach boy" persona of the Southland, which is replaced in large measure by a mountain bike culture here, but there is not much to read into that.

Take also Pacific Palisades, a section of Los Angeles tucked in between liberal Santa Monica, Malibu and the westside, yet it is considered competitive for Republicans. Further south, La Jolla is generally Republican and the Navy town of San Diego considered conservative-friendly.

So what does all this tell us? What is it about Newport Beach and Palos Verdes Estates that causes its citizenry to be so conservative, and what is it about Marin County that causes its people to be so liberal? A mere 400-plus miles separate the two areas. Both share the California experience and vote in the same elections for U.S. Senate, Governor and President.

Let me start with some totally un-scientific, anecdotal observations. As a sports fan I have discovered this odd fact: places that produce great high school football teams and a plethora of star athletes tend to vote Republican, whereby places that are not gold mines of sports talent are more likely to go Democrat. Why? What does this tell us, if anything? Could it be that a sports haven like Orange County is more family-friendly, with parents more supportive of their kids and schools; young people more disciplined and respecting of authority (coaches)? Marin supports academics, but in Newport Beach and Palos Verdes Estates, for instance, there is nothing I can glean indicating its students are less accomplished in the classroom.

Furthermore, the student population in Marin seems to have decreased markedly over the past 30 years. The 1960s and 1970s saw steady family growth and were the golden age of Marin prep sports, with Redwood capturing the 1977 national championship in baseball and Drake setting a state record for consecutive basketball wins in 1982-83. The number of athletes earning sports scholarships has grown smaller in succeeding years.

The 680 corridor between Concord and Dublin arguably produces more top athletes than any section of the Bay Area, and not incidentally, it occurs to me, they trend Republican more than any other part of the region.

Some more really anecdotal evidence: places with lots of friendly, good-looking girls and hot nightlife usually are more conservative. Perhaps this goes against the "traditional values" argument Republicans make. Relatively Republican Scottsdale, Arizona, for instance, is a bar haven with women so attractive they seemingly have been recruited to live there by the Chamber of Commerce. They smile at guys more than Marin women and way more than San Francisco women. There is no comparison between Scottsdale and any place outside of possibly Walnut Creek, which again goes to the "athletes and chicks" factor favoring the GOP.

Consider that Orange County, south of L.A., is a sports gold mine and conservative. Ventura and Santa Barbara, to the north of L.A., are not nearly as sports-crazy and vote Democrat with heavy environmental emphasis.

Colleges with great football traditions also tend to have more girls worthy of Playboy's yearly pictorial, fun campus life, and less liberal rhetoric than, say, Ivy League universities that have
not competed for the national championship since the Woodrow Wilson years. The Left will state that this means they are smarter, but all the post-graduate factors such as income and general success in America dispute this notion but-for a small few who stay in academia. Athletes themselves tend to vote Republican by wide margins, which is partly explained by self-interest (low taxes), but is more likely a result of strong family support systems helping them in their formative years. Rockers and movie stars also make big incomes, but similar athlete-family support is mainly absent. They vote Democrat.

History probably tells us more than partying and sports prowess. Abraham Lincoln insisted that the railroads be connected with San Francisco, not Los Angeles, despite an easier road to hoe through the slave South. Ex-Confederates thus chose the Southland; Bostonians and Union sympathizers preferred foggy San Francisco. This resulted in a more conservative, Christian populace in the south as opposed to The City's Barbary Coast reputation.

The rugged individualism of Western frontiersmen tended to infuse both the north and the south with conservative values, but the Industrial Revolution, immigration and World War I brought an anarchist element. Oil wildcatting in Southern California tended to make for a more entrepreneurial populace less interested in environmental issues. Fresh water was plentiful in the north, but man had to manipulate the land in the south in order to pump water from the Owens Valley and the Colorado River.

A lack of natural harbors in the south compared to San Francisco Bay's excellent waterways meant that the dock movement was stronger in the north, and out of this grew a union and labor movement that found natural sympathies within the Democrat Party. The writings of California authors Upton Sinclair and John Steinbeck painted dire portraits of America.

The University of California-Berkeley was a traditional campus, but began a shift to the Left when one of their top professors, Robert Oppenheimer, head of the Manhattan project, leaked atomic secrets to the Soviets out of some sense of egalitarian fairness. In the late 1950s, a recruiting scandal, probation and a lawsuit filed against the University of Southern California for rough play led to a downgrading of athletics at Cal. Once a sports powerhouse, winner of national championships in football, baseball, basketball and track, Berkeley fell by the wayside while USC and UCLA became powerhouses. Stanford, also a one-time football champion, followed suit and neither school has ever really recovered (Stanford maintains excellence in most sports but is a far cry from the days of Pop Warner and Clark Shaughnnessy on the gridiron).

In the 1960s and 1970s, both Berkeley and Stanford became radicalized. Cal became the home of the Free Speech Movement and epicenter of the anti-war movement. Berkeley came to symbolize campus radicalism. USC remained traditional, conservative and a sports factory. UCLA leaned Left and even hired the Communist Angela Davis, but never approached the anarchist elements found in its northern neighbors. They far surpassed Cal and Stanford in sports achievement. Getting back to the "chicks and nightlife" factor, USC and UCLA are famed for beautiful coeds and fun times. Cal in particular is something of a grim picture when it comes to guys looking to hook up with the fairer sex, although it should be noted that "free love" was a tool of the Communist Party going back to "Red Emma" Goldman.
A strange sense of inferiority and superiority complex crept into the rivalry between the north and the Southland, which Southern Californians paid little attention to, making Giants, 49ers, Cal and Stanford fans jealous. Cultural differences were embodied by Hollywood, "plastic" caricatures of the acting industry (who conversely vote like San Franciscans), musical choices (The Grateful Dead vs. The Beach Boys), and the sporting scene, featuring capacity crowds at sports palaces in Los Angeles; dismal attendance at a lousy stadium in San Francisco.

The Vietnam War seems to be the dividing line between the way it was and the way it is. Moderate GOP voting patterns in Marin County morphed over two decades into enormous Democrat majorities. It is also interesting to note that there are a large number of areas that vote huge Democrat majorities, while there are few Republican strongholds of similar size and bloc constituency. Rather, the Republicans tend to be spread over large geographical regions, mostly in the rural "heartlands."

The 1992 "year of the woman" election that ushered in President Bill Clinton, Democrat majorities in the Congress and Senate, and two Jewish Democrat women (with homes in Marin), Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer in the Senate, was the turning point in a state that once gave America Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan.

So, again, why? A look at Marin industry is confusing. This county has no single employment base. There are many lawyers and doctors, although a lot of them work in San Francisco. Real estate is big business here, but income from this goes as much to the landowners/investors as the brokers. Many bankers and stock brokers live in the county, but again most work in The City, and this is traditionally a Republican business with little evidence that the trend is radically reversed in this area. Computer and technology innovation is big here, but the real base for this industry is located 60 miles to the south, in the Silicon Valley, and that has traditionally leaned to the GOP, as well, although by thin margins.

It would seem that a large portion of Marinites are people of inherited wealth whose income is derived more from held wealth than 9-to-5 job income. The cost of buying a home here is far above most paycheck jobs, even successful professions. A lawyer, doctor or stockbroker needs to ascend to the upper level of their income brackets in order to handle the cost of $1 million-plus homes, not to mention private schools for their kids and "keeping up with the Joneses."

A comparison with Palos Verdes Estates and Newport Beach reveals something. Palos Verdes is traditionally home to executives in the nearby Military Industrial Complex, an industry "created" by Howard Hughes with enormous Republican influence stretching from the Los Angeles airport to the Long Beach shipyards. There is also a quiet FBI, CIA, NSA and TRW presence in nearby Redondo Beach, and many of those people live in P.V. Newport, unlike Marin, is a business center featuring heavily Republican industry in the law, investment banking, technology, and real estate. It is "Ayn Rand country" in which making money is not hidden from view. In Orange County the rich drive BMWs and Jaguars. Marinites are less conspicuous. Orange County also has heavy Christian church attendance. Marin County notoriously sports the lowest religious affiliation of any region of like size.
At the end of the day, it would appear that the campus radicals at Berkeley grew up, moved to the suburbs, and their suburb of choice was Marin. Sausalito and Fairfax were "hippie havens" after the "long hairs" were booted out. The "Summer of Love" in 1967 also drew large numbers of people who chose alternative lifestyles, and as the years passed they settled in San Francisco and Marin. Out of this movement the gay population grew in size and influence, with Marin affiliating itself with it. The protesters of the Cal and Stanford campuses eventually took over the administrations, with attendant Left-wing influence in our schools from kindergarten to Ph.D programs. Marin public schools have not resisted this influence.

I have never known a Marin that was not liberal, although there were pockets of conservatism such as the Sleepy Hollow section of San Anselmo, but today all "resistance" seemingly has been snuffed out. There is now a sense of quasi-danger associated with open Republican affiliation in this county, although I do find being a Republican in such a place to be cause of stimulation that forces me to be on my toes. I find a similar sense in the conservative musings of Michael Savage, a Marin resident whose views are a reaction to the liberalism we both live amongst.

Now, Barack Obama is President and the Democrats are in complete control. Has America come to resemble Marin?

Steven Travers is a Marin native and author of 16 books, including One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation (being made into a movie). He is currently working on The USC Mafia: One Man's Journey From the Frat House to the White House to the Big House, the story of Marin's Mike Woodson, a Republican operative who worked for Richard Nixon and in the 1980s was imprisoned for embezzlement in what the Marin I.J. called "the crime of the decade." Travers can be reached at USCSTEVE1@aol.com.

FOREWORD

What It Means to Be a Trojan

By PETE CARROLL

Back in the 1980s, when I was an assistant coach for the Minnesota Vikings, my hometown newspaper, the Marin Independent Journal, did a story on me. The reporter asked me who I rooted for growing up in the Bay Area: Cal or Stanford? I told him neither. I loved excellence, the kind of excellence embodied by John McKay at USC. I told the reporter that I hung USC banners in my bedroom as a kid, and that I became a fan of the Trojans when Sam "Bam"
Cunningham and his teammates went down to Alabama and ended segregation in Southern football.

Before that 1970 game between USC and Alabama, I spent four years as a counselor at the Diamond B Football Camp, run by my coach at Redwood High, Bob Troppmann. Coach Troppmann managed the San Francisco Coach of the Year Clinic for Duffy Daugherty and Bud Wilkinson, which featured all the big name college coaches. Coach T could have been a national football figure himself. Paul "Bear" Bryant of Alabama lent his name to his camp, stating that when he wanted to learn what the latest innovations in the game were, he sought out Bob Troppmann. Coach remained an unsung high school hero, but his influence on me and countless others, both football players and ordinary students, is immeasurable.

As a high school football player I especially was attracted to USC assistant coach Marv Goux. I wanted to be like Coach Goux. I wanted that fire, that energy. Football requires it, and this lesson was imparted to me early on.

I wanted to attend the University of Southern California. Color television was just becoming popular, and the colors that emanated from national broadcasts of Trojan football games from the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum; against UCLA and Notre Dame; of glorious, warm autumn Saturdays or bright Southland evenings; of beautiful cheerleaders and tanned alumni dressed in beach attire; of the band and the feeling; well, let me tell you, it had a real effect on me.

In 1969, a high school buddy and I drove from San Francisco to Los Angeles. We bought tickets and were sitting high up in the Coliseum stands for a night game in which UCLA led with only a couple of minutes to play. Both teams were unbeaten. The Rose Bowl, and perhaps the national championship, hung in the balance. The giant throng, half rooting for the Bruins, half
for the Trojans, pleaded and begged for victory. The tension was so thick you could cut the November night air, which was already electric with gridiron excitement and hot Santa Ana winds, with a proverbial knife.

Trojan quarterback Jimmy Jones had been bottled up by an unforgiving UCLA defense all evening. He, his team and the USC fans were frustrated. Now he faced one last chance. He dropped back to pass, was chased down, and tossed up a desperation heave that fell incomplete, but before the Bruins could celebrate, a flag fell calling for pass interference against UCLA. Given a reprieve, Jones went deep into the corner of the end zone. In those days, the lights at the Coliseum were not as bright as they are today, and the pass descended into the shadows. There, in those shadows, the ball found the waiting arms of Sam Dickerson for a touchdown and a 14-12 Southern California victory. It sent Troy to the Rose Bowl, where they completed an unbeaten season by defeating Michigan.

So, like I said, I wanted to go to USC. I was a pretty good athlete in high school, but not a superstar, whether it be baseball, basketball or football. Football was my first love. I played quarterback, receiver and defensive back. I was quick but not Olympic-sprinter fast. I was wiry but nobody was going to confuse me with Adrian Young or Tom Rossovich. I wanted to play in college and I was not of USC caliber, so I went to junior college and then earned a scholarship to play at the University of Pacific in Stockton, California. I made all-conference but I was not a pro prospect so I got into coaching. If I had simply been a student I would have loved to go to USC, but football directed me someplace else. Now, it was football that set me on a long, winding path that eventually led me to . . . the University of Southern California.
Now, if you believe in fate, or destiny, which I certainly do, the path that led me to Heritage Hall was one filled with great hope, some glory, and plenty of disappointment. Now I see that it was all just preparation for my ultimate destiny, which as it turned out was not to be a Trojan player, but rather to be the Trojans' coach . . . and what an honor it is.

In the years since I left UOP and came to USC, I learned a lot about what it meant to be a Razorback, a Cyclone, a Buckeye, a Wolfpack, a Bill, a Viking, a Jet, a 49er, and a Patriot. All those organizations had class, great coaches, great players, great fans and great traditions. I learned a lot from all those experiences. I made friends and value my role in the history of those football teams.

After the 1999 season, I was let go by the New England Patriots. We will never really know what I might have done if allowed to build a pro football franchise into my vision of what it should be, instead of the owner's vision, or the general manager's vision. But it turns out that what I thought was a closed door meant simply a new opportunity, an open door and a greater destiny. My true destiny.

When I coached in New York and Boston, the experts said I was too laid-back in a California surfer kind of way. I was not meant for the pro game, the mercenary world of the National Football League, some pundits said. I disagreed with that assessment then and disagree with it now, but the fact is that I was meant to coach at the college level, and there is no college on the face of the Earth more suited to my temperament, my values, my sense of tradition and loyalty, than the University of Southern California.

When you consider the way things transpired after I left Boston, it certainly is hard to argue that I was not simply meant to be a Trojan, but was destined to be one. It starts with my wife, Glena, and her family. Glena lived the vagabond life of a football coaches' wife while I
dragged her from one end of America to another; from the rural South to the Midwest; to the freezing weather of Minnesota and Buffalo; from the bright lights of Manhattan to the heart of the Red Sox Nation. Briefly, from 1995-96, we came home when I was the defensive coordinator of the San Francisco 49ers. Maybe that was my destiny, to coach the team I had rooted for as a kid, but when opportunity presented itself in New England I went a different way. When things did not work out with the Patriots, I might have second-guessed myself. I might have asked whether I had blown it.

Instead I focused on my family. That meant moving to Palos Verdes Estates, California, the most beautiful community in Los Angeles County if not the entire country. This is an area known as the south bay, and it is where Glena grew up. I love the beaches, the boogie boarding, the sun, surf and sand lifestyle of the South Bay. Finally, we were home. We have a daughter, Jaime. Jaime was a volleyball star. When she chose a college, she chose USC, where her grandfather, Glena's dad, had earned a graduate degree. I had married into a Trojan family before I was a Trojan coach. I was on a path towards my destiny.

So, in 2000 I was on the USC campus a lot to watch Jaime play volleyball. Naturally, I ran into the folks in the athletic department and on the football staff. It is a small fraternity and we all knew each other. By fate, that was the year USC decided to make a change. They needed a new football coach.

There were some good candidates out there, but one by one for whatever reason, a hire was not made. There I was, hanging out on campus to watch my daughter play volleyball. I let them know I wanted the job, and as fate would have it, I was hired. Why? In large part because I had moved to Los Angeles so my wife could come home, and because my daughter was a Trojan.
like her grandfather. Since then, my son Brennan joined my coaching staff. His younger brother Nate entered USC. When they call it the Trojan family, they're not just kidding!

Maybe that goes a long way towards understanding exactly What It Means to Be a Trojan. It has been said that, "You're a Bruin for four years but a Trojan for life!" There is something about the USC experience, whether it be the weather, Hollywood, the alumni connections, the fact that it is a private school, but it is different. It is a family. Just ask Ken Norton Jr., my linebackers coach. Ken was an All-American at UCLA and a star with the 49ers when I coached there in the 1990s. He wanted to get into coaching but Karl Dorrell did not show him any love over at Westwood, no matter how sincere Ken was about it. He came to USC and it is as if this is where he has belonged all his life.

Coach Troppmann knew John McKay, and in my pro career I met a lot of Trojans. Between this and my family connections, I certainly felt that I had a handle on What It Means to Be a Trojan, but when I arrived in the winter of 2000-01, I knew that there was one man who embodied the concept and I would have to learn from. That man was Marv Goux. More than any other man or woman, Coach Goux was the living embodiment of What It Means to Be a Trojan.

Years ago, Coach Goux had instilled equal measures of fear and respect in the Trojan players he recruited, coached and turned into men. Now I was very fortunate to get to know this man up close and personal. He lived in Southern California, had grandkids at the University, and was always around. I spoke to him almost every day for the last couple years of his life, before he passed away far too early in 2002.

When people think of Marv, they think of his "blood and guts" image and imagine that he spoke like George Patton exhorting his troops at the Battle of the Bulge, where Marv's own father gave his life for the country that Marv loved every bit as much as he loved USC. But that
is not how Marv spoke to me. He did not sit in my office, his eyes bulging out, yelling at me to "run the football, stuff 'em." Instead, what I got from Marv Goux was love and wonderful compassion, that once you were a Trojan, you were always a Trojan. He had a love for USC and for Trojan football that manifested itself like water irrigating a barren valley. There was spirituality in his words and feelings. Marv believed in God, he loved God, and there was a connection between his faith and his love for his school. It was undeniable and one of the most inspiring things I have ever seen.

The man had heart, a big, big heart. He was a seeker of truth. He respected his colleagues, his players, and his opponents enough to speak the truth, even if it meant he had to be tough. He talked to me like I was part of his family, because at USC I was. When Marv was recruiting players, he would show them his national championship rings, buy them steak dinners, and show respect to their families, but he never led them down the primrose path. He would tell young men that they had a choice, to either play with the best or against the best; that the road would be hard and they would hate him at first; but that after four years, when they had a degree, a national championship ring and a contract to play in the NFL, that hate would be replaced by love, respect.

That is still What It Means to Be a Trojan, because when we recruit a young man we do not promise him the world or offer him every inducement to come and play for us. We do not have to. We offer him a chance to be part of something special. We are looking for competitors who are not afraid to battle for playing time because in the end that toughness will manifest itself in victories over our opponents. Let other schools take the kids who are afraid to compete at USC. That was Marv's philosophy and it is mine.
So I knew who Marv was from the other side, from the personal side. Marv knew the Trojan family, and his love, his compassion, his presence never left you. In a way, my relationship with Marv Goux mirrors the experience that thousands of Trojans have had over the years, and therefore gets to the very essence of *What It Means to Be a Trojan*. It was not just about football with Marv. It was about life, and this is a big part of why USC is so special.

To be a Trojan is to be rooted to something deep. It is why college athletics is so special and perhaps even more wonderful than the mercenary world of the pros. No city will ever lure the University of Southern California away with a stadium offer, a sweetheart deal that will cause the school to re-locate to Jacksonville or San Antonio.

When a 75-year old Trojan alumni meets a 25-year old recent graduate, they immediately have something to talk about.

Fathers and sons, mothers and daughters who might drift apart find common ground.

Liberals and conservatives put away their political differences and root for the Trojans.

An Oakland A can decide to leave and sign a free agent contract with the New York Yankees. Worse yet, a Cincinnati Red having a great year on a losing team might find himself traded at mid-season to the Boston Red Sox. Today, nobody knows who plays for anybody in the NFL or the NBA from year to year any more. Shaq O'Neal might be a Magic or a Laker or a Heat or a Sun or whoever is next, but a Trojan, even if he or she played just a year or two, is always a Trojan.

Sure, every school has its traditions, its customs and its special qualities. To talk about how great USC is does not require putting down anybody. We have a healthy respect for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish and our cross-town rivals over in Westwood, but there is definitely some quality - hard to define, to really describe or put in words - that separates Southern
California from the rest of the pack. It is not just the fact that we have the most national titles and the most Heisman Trophies; the most pro draft picks, number one picks, Super Bowl champs, or Hall of Famers.

It is not just because our baseball program is historically second to none, or we have the most Olympic champions, or because our athletic department was voted the best of the 20th Century back in 2000.

It is not just because our film school is the best, and every big meeting in Hollywood between producers, directors, agents and writers is dominated by Trojans.

It is not just because for years law students chose USC because in Los Angeles "all the top judges are Southern California men," or that movers, shakers and corporate executives from all over the globe received MBAs from USC.

It is not just because political figures and international leaders from many countries learned to love America at our school.

No, it goes beyond all of that; beyond the numbers and the statistics, beyond the empirical evidence. It is mystical. Spiritual perhaps. When I was a teenager, I felt the pull of the University when I watched USC football games on color television. When I came down to see it for myself, to watch the 1969 USC-UCLA game at the Coliseum and walk the campus, I somehow knew what to expect. What I had seen on TV spoke to me, and when I stood there amongst it, it was like Manifest Destiny. I mean, I was here, man!

The great Trojan quarterback Vince Evans saw the same thing growing up in North Carolina. When he was still in junior high school he watched, awe-struck, while USC played a game on the green plains of the Coliseum; the colors, the girls, the blue sky heralding like a siren song to him: "Come. Come to USC, Vince." He told his dad right then and there he was going to
be a Trojan, to which the old man replied, "Son, you got to be crazy," but the kid was determined. He worked, he slaved, he struggled and he excelled until the day came that he indeed was USC's starting quarterback, leading John Robinson's team to another Rose Bowl victory.

For Rodney Peete, growing up in Missouri, watching Anthony Davis's four-touchdown performance as the Trojans scored 55 points in 17 minutes to beat Notre Dame in 1974; that was his moment, the day he became a USC fan, and therefore dedicated himself to become their quarterback.

For me, it was Sam Dickerson's winning touchdown against UCLA in 1969, then Sam "Bam" Cunningham's performance against Alabama a year later, but for so many Trojans, especially kids from outside the state, it was the allure of the weather, the way it all looked on TV with Keith Jackson seemingly the official announcer of the Trojan Empire. Thousands have seen it, felt it, and when they finally got here, they too knew What It Means to Be a Trojan.

There is a sense of class that permeates every aspect of USC. Of nobility and high-mindedness. Of rising above the ordinary and the hum-drum, excelling, rejecting the slip-shod or the half-hearted way of doing things. Love of country, faith, respect for righteousness, courage; at USC, Trojans are not afraid to display these qualities, indeed to trumpet them, to let everyone know far and wide that this is who we are and what we stand for.

I found What It Means to Be a Trojan, oddly, on an Oklahoma web site after we beat the Sooners in the 2005 BCS Orange Bowl national championship game. A fan blogged that the previous year he and his wife had attended the BCS Sugar Bowl between the Sooners and Louisiana State. On the streets of New Orleans, there was much mean-spirited banter, with LSU
fans constantly chanting "Tiger meat"; lots of swearing, too much drinking, and unhealthy comments about each other's women.

The next year in Miami, the OU blogger posted, he found a totally different scene. USC fans, he wrote, were first class and high class; well dressed, professional, courteous, respectful of Sooner traditions, complimentary of each other, their wives and daughters beautiful . . . yet classy. Business cards were exchanged. It was a mutual admiration society, and typical of *What It Means to Be a Trojan*.

At alumni gatherings, Trojans emanate a sense of loyalty, confidence but not arrogance, pride but not hubris. The air is just a little fresher.

Being a Trojan means volunteering your time, giving back to the community and not seeking publicity for it; to be benevolent simply for the sake of righteousness. It means being thankful for what you have instead of lamenting what you do not have. It means lending your time, your talents, your experience and your help to other Trojans; and to their families, all without asking anything in return.

Being a Trojan means resolving our differences like ladies and gentlemen, not threatening each other with legal action or holding some perceived slight over another's head. It means we are not always looking out for Number One with an eye towards making a buck. It means admiration for the success of another, not envy or covetousness. It means compliments, not put-downs. It means that we let our excellence speak for itself and need not downgrade another in a false attempt to puff ourselves up. It means that we respect each succeeding generation of Trojan players, coaches, students, professors, administrators and historians without holding on too tightly, but rather to share and rejoice in the efforts of others.
Finally, in order to understand *What It Means to Be a Trojan*, let me quote athletic director Mike Garrett, a man who knows just how lucky he is to be a Trojan (and we are lucky he is, to be sure):

"'Fight On!' means you fight like Trojans, you never give in. No matter the conditions, no matter who the opponent is, you always play your best."

- Pete Carroll

**PROPOSED JOHN MCCAIN SPEECH**

*Written by STEVEN TRAVERS*

**AMERICA IS NOT A SOCIALIST COUNTRY**

My fellow Americans, I wish to talk to you today about American history, because those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it. Many of you may ask, Why would you wish to dredge up the past when today's issues are so pressing? Because in searching for answers, it is the unique nature of American Exceptionalism where we will find them.

Today, the economy is front and center among our greatest, most immediate concerns. For political reasons, both the Democrats and the Republicans have tried to find quick fixes. The stock market, the housing and loan crisis, took me by surprise as it did you and my opponent. Both sides proposed radical, fast action.

I have long called my campaign the Straight Talk Express. Today it is time to live up to that moniker. I went along with the "quick fix" solutions for votes. I was in a campaign and I needed momentum. Now, I have had time to analyze the situation at greater length. A big man admits when he is wrong. I was not entirely wrong, but the essential nature of the quick fix proposed has changed the direction of this country from its basic nature to Socialism.

My opponent comes from a school of thought that says more government intervention is better. He and this philosophy are wrong. That is why I am talking about history today, my friends, because it is the lessons of history that explain more plainly than my present-day arguments why my opponent's philosophy is not only wrong, but un-American.

Now is not the time for a drastic quick-fix solution that we will rue five, 10, 20 years into the future. I have said in the past the basics of our economy are sound. I was vilified for this by my opponent and placed on the defensive, but upon further reflection, I can say that our economic fundamentals *are* sound. We are, despite my opponent's assertions, not on the verge of another
Great Depression. Sometimes, less is better than more. Sometimes, the turtle gets there ahead of the hare.

My friends, the radical Left is using this October Surprise to force us into a Socialist future. This word may not resonate with all Americans. It sounds benign. What is it? Why is it un-American, and why will I fight to my last breath to save us from it? Why do I feel that my time in the Hanoi Hilton will pale in comparison to the real service God has tasked me with, which is to keep the American Way the American Way. I will explain.

Yes, folks, these are perilous times, but we must not allow them to be turned into a window in which we will move to Socialism. Consider whether it is a mere coincidence that a few agrarian colonies, separated by oceans from the salons of political, military, religious and intellectual power, rose within a short 200 years to become the greatest power in the history of Mankind; greater than Caesar's Rome, Alexander's Greece, or the British Empire. Greater than any previous nation, army, political system, religious institution or empire! How did this happen? My fellow Americans, it did not happen by accident.

Let us first address the unique and exceptional nature of this great nation, which benefited by thousands of years of history to avoid mistakes of the past in order to form a "more perfect Union." Our founding was a reaction to royalism and despotism, fueled by the lessons of Plato's Greece and the Judeo-Christian tradition, uniquely enfused by a puritan work ethic. It was founded as a fresh start, not larded by centuries of tribal or sectarian hatred, historical mistakes, and baggage.

When William Bradford and the puritans arrived at the shores of Plymouth Rock, they endeavored to share the fruits of their farmwork in collectivist fashion. Bradford quickly determined that this produced substandard production and decided that each family, each farm, be allowed to keep and benefit from the toil of their work. Quickly, a rising tide lifted all boats, and this concept became an essential of the American heritage.

So what is Socialism, which was rejected by the earliest Americans and all generations to follow? It was also a reaction by Europe to Kings, to abuses by the Church, and it found a voice in the writings of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It became the impetus for more than a century of revolution.

After the American Revolution, which rejected Socialism in favor of unique concepts of freedom and liberty rooted in private land ownership because we lived in a country of virtually boundless virgin territory, the French launched their own revolution. Ironically it started because their country was bankrupt in part because they helped finance ours, and failed because unlike ours it did not acknowledge that man's rights come from God, not from other men.

Over the next decades, the truly unique nature of America, and the concept that we indeed are a nation of exceptionalism, setting rules and templates unknown or unimagined by all previous civilizations, became manifest truths. A Frenchman, Alexis DeToqueville, came to our shores looking for answers and discovered that our belief in God, our willingness to help our neighbors,
to form community organizations like the Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce, to rally around church and God, had replaced European notions of indentured servitude, criminal family syndicates, and vendettas. His book was called *Democracy in America*.

Then all we had built was threatened by Civil War, but our greatness was not diminished. Indeed, America became the place where slavery came to die. An institution that had thrived as legitimate trade between nations for thousands of years could not survive our Constitution, the rules and laws conceived, written and legalized by Americans. Rules were not imposed upon us by conquering nations bent on embarrassing us for our sins, but rather self-imposed by God-fearing people seeking to walk a path of righteousness, praying not that God be on our side, but that we be on God's side.

Then came Westward expansion, and perhaps no other aspect of the American experience is as unique and different from all previous assumptions of man as was the Gold Rush and the rugged individualism that formed attitudes in the land that I settled in; the great frontier of Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington, and the rest of West. The cowboy, the entrepreneur, the capitalist, the man who lives off the land, who cares for it and cherishes its bounty; these were the mythological figures that captured the imagination of the world.

But the revolutionary ideals of Rousseau would not die. When the United States went to war with Mexico in order to consolidate control over the bountiful West, Henry David Thoreau, author of *Walden's Pond*, began a movement of dissent against American ideals as he saw them. As the industrial age drew people to the teeming cities, as Ellis Island overflowed with immigrants, and as the population grew more diverse, revolutionary ideas sprouted in America.

We see these ideals in the form of "Red Emma" Goldman and Sacco and Vanzetti; in the writings of Upton Sinclair; in the cynical post-war prose of the Lost Generation and John Steinbeck. A rejection of American tradition, of family and God. A search for new ways of thinking in the mistaken belief that while previous concepts were at one time valid, they could not survive post-modernism.

There was a rejection of Biblical notions of sin and the sanctity of life, that life could be an unwanted thing, to be disposed of, that only an elite few should give life, that the poor or the decrepit were not equipped to have families and should be "unburdened" of it, that it was not a blessing but "punishment." There was a belief that the use of mind-altering substances was valid and enlightening, that alternative lifestyles were to be regarded as relative in comparison with previous traditions.

After World War I, sides became fixed. The anarchist, radical view became embodied by Soviet Communism. Its most natural enemy became America, a nation that stood for all they despised: religious freedom, private enterprise, land ownership, and traditional values. Naturally, the Communists endeavored above all other goals to export their hatred of America to our very shores, to plant an army of enemies within.
The Nazis came along, neither Communists nor free capitalists. Adolf Hitler proposed the notion that man does not desire freedom; he desires security. Thus did Germany take that ugly road. Their defeat had the effect of making American freedom and Soviet Communism the two most powerful ideologies on Earth, each pitted against each other in a global death struggle. But the Nazis exposed a fundamental truth often hidden from view but thoroughly exposed by the 20th Century, which was that evil finds a beachhead in the affairs of man. It disguises itself as anarchism, Communism, Nazism, terrorism. A truth just as fundamental is that each time it has been on the march, the United States of America has taken the lead in opposing it. This is not a coincidence. That we have, sometimes in the nick of time, always risen, always been powerful enough to withstand its arsenals, is also not a coincidence. Are we favored by God? Are we the Promised Land? My friends, I am not empowered to know the answer to that question. Perhaps, like ancient Israel, we were but only until God has used us to serve His purpose. I do not profess to know, but I know the evidence points to the strong possibility that we are, and if this is so, it comes with responsibilities.

Evil does not manifest itself as a horned devil replete with tail and pitchfork. It comes as your friend, as good intentions, as a unifier. It comes as anarchy, and it found a beachhead in the United States. After World War II, the notion that we were too powerful, too influential, maybe even too good to be true, replaced previous, more innocent assumptions of our national character. Terrible truths in the form of racism, corruption and venality revealed that we were indeed entirely too human. Hollywood exploited our worst human tendencies and the Communists discovered the power of our media. They exploited our greatest strengths and used it against us.

It all reached its apex during the Vietnam War. Our campuses became embroiled by protest. Our racism and xenophobia were placed in the storefront window, to be examined by a judgmental world. After Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s 1968 assassination, radical, militant elements replaced the "peace and love" theme. "Black liberation theology" was based upon a cancerous replacement of the Gospel as espoused first by the Communist Sandinistas of Nicaragua that Ronald Reagan defeated. Its hateful concepts were hijacked by black churches such as the one Jeremiah Wright runs in Chicago. The Black Panthers, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and the Weather Underground became the faces of that militancy. A man named William Ayers and his "wife," Bernardine Dorn, joined the Weather Underground. They, like many of their ilk, rejected the non-violence of Gandhi and Dr. King in favor of bombings of the Pentagon, in like manner with many similar bombings of police stations, campus ROTC buildings, organizations deemed authoritarian, and so forth.

But the Left was easy to hate. They sympathized with our Communist enemies in Vietnam. They flew Hanoi’s flag and rooted openly against America. Since Communist atrocities were plainly revealed to be the cause of 100 million murders in the 20th Century, it was not hard to despise the Left, the "useful idiots" who aided and abetted their cause on our shores. The Reagan Revolution was in large measure a reaction to the Left, and when the Berlin Wall came down, it ended Communism as an international boogeyman.
But the Left did not go away. Conservatives tended to drift into private enterprise; corporations, the military, the sports and marketing world, the pursuit of excellence in Silicon Valley. The Left gravitated to its natural home, on the campuses, eager to subversively influence our young. They found the law, Hollywood, the media, even political careers; to be places that gave them a platform to air their grievances against America. What they failed to do as Communist abettors, they could accomplish in the courts, the silver screen, by the power of the pen, and by legislative fiat.

What has allowed the Left to pursue their goals so successfully has been the fact that nobody calls them Communists anymore. Because the Soviet Union was dissolved, the Soviet spy, the Communist "fellow traveler," became things of the past. No, my friends; he and she has merely changed tactics. They do not come at you anymore with peace symbols, long hair, and dirty clothes. Today, the ’60s radicals are the leaders of the Left, but they look like "soccer parents." They own homes and hide behind benevolent job descriptions like "community organizers." They are not just the aging men and women of my generation, but a new generation, a new breed of radical that has learned to use the system against us.

They still feed off a cancerous idea rooted in evil, and as I say my friends, evil exists. It is found in all manner of human endeavor, and not relegated to our schools, the media, Hollywood, government, bureaucracies, academe, and the ACLU. They are bold and think this is their shining chance, their window of opportunity to change this nation forever. To lead you into a Socialist world without you even knowing it, like the lobster in a pot of water that slowly comes to a boil before the poor creature realizes what has happened.

My friends, I am just a man; by some standards an old man, enfeebled by injuries suffered in a Hanoi prison camp. I have been called heroic. I do not think of myself as such, but I find myself now in a unique position; the position of herald, hearkening a warning, hopefully just in the nick of time, to my fellow Americans that this notion of anarchy is alive and well and needs to be rejected in November.

The agenda of radical homosexuality, for instance, has nothing to do with gay rights. I support a libertarian's concept that people be free to live as they choose, but they want to go further. They want to make man-boy physicality acceptable. I oppose abortion, but I also know that this nation must be led to oppose it through righteous means, not have it stuffed down its throat, but the Left wants to forever eliminate any possibility that abortion can be opposed, for religious or any other reasons.

Radical feminism, global warming, rejection of God, and the socialization of our military from a force to a static symbol; these are the goals of the Left and they must be opposed. These are sacraments to them. This is their religion, and as such there is a rejection of God inherit in the most anarchist among them. It is perhaps most ironic that I, known for so many years as the man who works with the other side, who respects his opponents, is forced by history to be the man most opposed to the most radical elements that have, I am sad to report, taken over the tentacles of the Democrat Party.
Bill Ayers, Bernardine Dorn; their mentor Saul Alinsky; Noam Chomsky . . . the conceivers of "direct action"; these are the faces of their movement. Couched in platitudes, they are the race extortionists of our time. The haters. Those who disparagingly call married couples "breeders." Those who do even more despicable acts, like attempting to blow up the Pentagon. Those who remain, like Ayers, unrepentant, yet in this bountiful nation are allowed to roam about in free and unfettered manner, employed by friendly academe, allowed to plot, scheme and strategize. This is what the Communists became; the '60s radicals, the Emma Goldman anarchists, the modern enemies of this nation I love and swear to protect.

They cannot come right out and run for office. What they are is despicable. When people learn the truth about them, they subsequently despise them, much less vote for them. So they pick surrogates. Young, fresh faces with good educations. Presentable, well-dressed posers who, for reasons unfathomable to me, are not repulsed by them. Who, for reasons beyond my ability to comprehend, learn about them, and upon reflection and of their own free will, choose to enter their homes, accept their donations, align themselves with them politically, organizationally, and intellectually. Those who, and God help them, want to be just like them.

This is a free nation. People are free to associate themselves with the likes of Ayers and Dorn. I am free to possess knowledge of it, to tell you about it, and reasonably expect that you will choose not to vote for them as a result of it.

These people have been plotting against America for years. Now, the October Surprise that is the Wall Street crash has magically appeared and they offer end-alls and answers to this crisis. Platitudes and feel-good solutions. Condemnation of people, of a crisis of their very own creation, for Heaven's sake. What they offer is Socialism. I have always called myself a conservative. Many in my party say I am not conservative enough, yet I find myself the thin red line separating this nation from a New Deal, a Great Society, a Socialist model such as the one that reduced the great nations of Europe to secondary status. Such is the irony of history.

My running mate, Governor Palin and I, have both used terms like "greedy" and "corrupt" to describe Wall Street excess. Being human beings and thus being of Original Sin, these executives, just like members of my Republican Party, are as susceptible to human failing as anybody else. But I am not going to continue using these terms in a populist effort to grab votes. The reason is because I recognize that among these greedy Wall Street titans are many honest, hard-working people, people whose great talents and dedication, combined with an imperfect profit motive, have produced, to parapahrase Winston Churchill, the "worst economy in the history of Mankind, with the exception of all other economies in the history of Mankind."

Because, good people, this system produces driven people who produce goods and services we all use. Goods and services that benefit this country, indeed the whole world. Innovative ideas, marvelous products. No country matches our skill. No country comes close.

So I have decided that I, Governor Palin, and hopefully the Republican Party, will stop calling for Socialism and nationalization of our industries. Let the Democrats do that. Let them
differentiate themselves from us. Let them be the sole party that opposes America's best, brightest ideals.

We still face a crisis. I do not call for inaction, but I do call for a measured approach to Wall Street regulating that does not adhere to our most base instinct to punish, mandate, tax and nationalize. My opponent comes from a school of thought that says free markets are dangerous. My friends, free markets are messy, but government is far more dangerous. Under my Presidency, we will take a measured approach, not a knee-jerk one. I will be steady and purposeful.

I will sit down the day after the election with a panel of advisors and arrive at a well-thought-out solution. The answers will not come while my opponent and I are campaigning, speechifying, our days and nights a blur of campaign action. After January 20, 2009, now embarked on a non-election year and hopefully with some Republican allies, I will work with my cabinet and with Congress to arrive at an American solution devoid of partisan opportunism.

No, my friends, I will not punish the successful. I will not engage in class envy. I know many of you hope to be wealthy someday, too, and when that inevitably occurs to many of you, you will not wish to be penalized for your hard work, either. You will not want your companies, indeed the industry you choose to thrive in, nationalized like the Suez Canal. Because you do not have a natural tendency to despise the rich; because when you are hired for a job, it is inevitably a well-off person who needs what you have to offer who does the hiring, and the promoting. Because millionaires in America are not spoon-in-the-mouth elitists, but just as likely to be your next-door neighbors, or you.

They are the Korean-American family in Downey, California whose dry-cleaning business has been a neighborhood staple for 30 years years. They are the restaurateurs in St. Louis greeting you with service and a smile since 1980. They are the young computer whiz on Long Island who thought up a micro-chip that you just bought at the tech store. They are Americans, and envy is un-American. It is the province not of America, but of the radical Left, who thinks America is mean, racist and war-mongering. If this is you, don't vote for me. I don't want that vote. But if I make sense, I'm asking for your support.

The Left sees this as a golden opportunity to turn your fears into Socialism that will last decades, the rest of our lives, your children's lives maybe. The Left thinks, as Hitler did, that you desire a security they shall provide, like benevolent oppressors; not the freedom that comes from a loving God. Many of you are not fearful of Socialism because you, at least before you heard this speech, did not understand the true nature of it; its most extreme implications. Now you do. Do not vote for it. It's un-American.

Good night, and God bless America.

PROLOGUE

A SLICE OF THE WRITER'S LIFE
Development hell in Hollywood. The giddy highs and layoff lows of a dot-bomb. The Column is
giveth, The Column is taketh away. The Authorized Barry Bonds Autobiography and the big, bad
world of New York publishing. For seven years, Steven Travers has experienced the up-and-
down world of the Writer’s Life…and lived to tell about it.

The scene that tells more about the plight of the modern writer is the one from Robert Altman’s
1992 classic, “The Player”, when smarmy studio boss Griffith Mill (played by Tim Robbins) is
confronted by unknown screenwriter David Kahane, who says “Whaddaya gonna do when you
can’t cut it at the studio anymore, eh Grif? Huh? Whaddaya gonna do when you can’t do any
more deals? Whaddaya gone do then, man? Me? I can write.”

I felt like saying those very words to Andy Solomon, who as President and CEO had transformed
StreetZebra from a thriving sports magazine to a failed web site, thus effectuating my layoff
from their staff.

As if being able to write is somehow a more beneficial skill than knowing how to raise Other
People’s Money.

Back to “The Player”. About five seconds after getting his feelings off his chest, Kahane is killed
by Mill. Mill, of course, gets away with it. Well, after being metaphorically “killed” by Solomon,
I kept on writing, and kept on getting “killed.” Solomon, if my instincts are right, “got away with
it,” too.

StreetZebra died an ugly death, the details of which are posted for all to see on www.f----
dcompany.com’s web site. All those people were thrown to the tender mercies of unemployment
(with the collateral human costs that go with it). I have no doubt, however, that Andy and his
humanity-challenged brother/partner, Jeff, golden parachuted out of Southern California to their
older bro/benefactor, a Wall Street moneychanger who no doubt rounded up some more OPM
for them to play with.

But let’s go back to the beginning, before I was a writer. I was a Golden Boy. No slacker I,
wasting my youth on a skateboard or some such nonsense. Long before my thirtieth birthday, I
had the resume of a future politician, which is what many thought I was going to be. After
leading my suburban California high school baseball team to the National Championship, I
earned an athletic scholarship to college, where I was an all-conference pitcher. I played
professionally for the Cardinals and A’s (once striking out 1989 National League MVP Kevin
Mitchell five times in one game), and after graduation from the University of Southern
California, did a stint in the Army, coached at USC and Cal-Berkeley, and then lived in Europe
for a year, where I was paid to chase women, lift weights and manage a baseball team. I also
went to law school, married my college sweetheart, became a father, bought a house, and became
the protégé of the partner in the law firm I went to work for.

They call that the fast track.
The law partner was a player in Orange County Republican politics, and I found myself consulting on campaigns and directing “opposition research,” which is another way of saying I found the dirt on Democrats. I was hobnobbing with guys like Pete Wilson, Bob Dornan and John Sununu. Before we could divide the world between us, however, an old friend from little league talked me into going into the sports agent’s business with him.

We represented Al Martin, then a hot young outfielder with the Pittsburgh Pirates. We made enough commission off Al’s appearances and commercial marketing to keep us going until negotiating his multi-year contract prior to the 1995 season. On August 12, 1994, however, baseball went on strike. Martin’s marketing appearances ended, as did our income. Martin did not say, “Show me the money,” but he might as well have, because when we did not he went back to his old agent before we ever negotiated that big deal. It was “Jerry Maguire” without the happy ending.

Aside from Martin, we represented Bo Belinsky, a retired ballplayer who still made appearances at card shows and old-timers days. Bo had been a colorful raconteur, a confidante of Gene Autry, Walter Winchell, Frank Sinatra, J. Edgar Hoover, and Hugh Hefner whose life would make a great movie. Bo regaled us with stories of Hollywood producers who wanted to make this movie.

This got me to thinking. I had studied at the USC School of Cinema-Television and written speeches for politicians. I came from a journalistic family. My grandfather, Charles S. Travers, had covered the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, and then started a Variety-style Hollywood trade magazine during the silent film era. Eventually, he was elected president of the San Francisco Press Club. His brother, Reg Travers, was an acclaimed Shakespearean actor, and the press conference room at Cal’s Memorial Stadium was named after my uncle, Col. Charles T. Travers.

I decided to write the screenplay.

I got Bo’s biographer, Maury Allen, to give me the book rights, and in about a month hammered out a script and caught the writer’s bug. Big time. I discovered that nothing I had ever done – challenging Kevin Mitchell with inside heat, rubbing shoulders with pols, or trying to be Leigh Steinberg – infused me with the kind of passion that writing did.

In that month, time stood still. I found myself writing until two, three, four o’clock in the morning. It was pure joy, unfettered by Doubt or Fear. It was like those commercials for MasterCard: “Discovering your life’s work…priceless.” It was the closest I have ever come to attaining Zen. I knew how Phil Jackson must feel.

The script, “Once He Was An Angel”, was submitted to several screenplay contests and earned kudos. It found its way into the hands of an agent at CAA. Oliver Stone’s guy said, “This is something Oliver might like.” People said it had the “gritty, New York texture of `Raging Bull’,” and suggested that somebody like Bobby or Marty could do it justice.
I was in it up to my elbows. No more law career. No more politics. No more coddling spoiled athletes. I took classes at the Hollywood Film Institute and in the UCLA Writers’ Program. I read every book on the craft I could get my hands on. Screenwriting meant entrepreneurial and creative freedom. It meant money and fame. I pictured explaining myself to the New York literary crowd and a breathless Charlie Rose. I would not let success change me, of course. I would still love my parents and drink in the same Karaoke bar with my buddies. Divorced by this time, though, I had a duty to make myself available to as many actresses, models, Raiderettes, strippers and porn stars as possible. Because I could. Of course, I would still be a great dad, in the raffish style of Rhett Butler.

Dale Crase, who said he was a partner with Frank Capra, Jr. and Frank Capra III, the son and grandson of the famed director, optioned the script.

Then Crase asked me for money.

Cancel the New York trip and put Charlie Rose on hold. The same with DeNiro and Scorsese. Stone? He passed. I still loved my parents and my kid, drank in Karaoke’s with my buds, and the girls, well, they looked like porn stars if you had enough alcohol.

Real producers never ask writers for money. Dale Crase, obviously, was not a real producer. I kept trying to arrange a meeting with the Capras. I finally found Frank, Jr. at a premiere, and when I asked him about Crase and our project I got, “Is he still trying to do something with that?”

I considered it a great experience anyway. I was hooked on writing and films and still had the bloom of youth on my side. Of course I got out of business with Crase, and over the years the Belinsky project has traveled a longer road than Chairman Mao. It is now in the hands of GoodMachine, a New York company that produced “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon”, which is about as different a genre from “Once He Was An Angel” as is possible.

From 1994 to 1999, I wrote 12 screenplays, one teleplay and one stage play. I wrote songs. I wrote treatments. I wrote essays and speeches. Sitting in my little seaside house in Hermosa Beach, California I became a true freelance writer. I earned some more screenplay contest awards, had scripts optioned, wrote some for hire, and managed to stay solvent. I did not make anywhere close to the money I could have made had I stayed with the law or continued to pimp athletes, but I was confident I had made the write choice.

I also discovered “development hell.” Development hell is where scripts in “various stages of development” go, usually to die. I also discovered the vagaries of the Hollywood “packaging” system.

As my career grew as a scriptwriter/doctor,” I landed an agent. Now, there are many different kinds of agents. If you land an agent who never returns your phone calls, you probably have the kind of high-powered individual who can make your career fly. If you land the kind who calls
you the day he receives your query letter, you may have landed a guy who throws nice C-list parties.

I did have fun at some of those parties, though. C-list actresses are more fun than stars, and my script agent is a very nice guy. Running into the “packaging” system is less fun, however.

I discovered some historical material about three World War I Congressional Medal of Honor winners who led the overmatched “Lost Battalion” to victory over surrounding German forces during the Argonne Offensive. Being the kind of right wing super patriot that I am, and considering also that “Saving Private Ryan” was the biggest movie of that year (1998), I was compelled to write the screenplay.

About a year after I wrote “The Lost Battalion”, I was reading an article about actor James Woods in Parade.

“Woods’ next project,” it said, “is ‘The Lost Battalion.’ ‘It’s a story of valor and heroism, set in World War I,’ says Woods. ‘I’m working with my friend, producer Edgar Scherick.’”

Hmm. I called my agent and told him about this.

“I know Edgar,” said my agent. “Let me see if I can set up a meeting.”

I did not exactly hold my breath, but lo and behold, the meeting was set. It seems that Jim Carabatsos, who wrote “Hamburger Hill”, had written another version of “The Lost Battalion”. A buddy of mine with some inside pull actually got me a copy of it, which I read.

My version was better. Edgar thought so, too. Scherick was well into his 70s, but still a well-respected producer with a development deal at Showtime. Talking to him was a challenge, though. He’s a tough New Yorker who started ABC’s “Wide World of Sports” and loves baseball. He would pepper me with questions about why Dodger manager Davey Johnson was playing Jose Vizcaino, or whether I thought Mike Piazza was the best-hitting catcher of all time, or whether I preferred to challenge hitters with my fastball or pitch a more crafty game.

No sooner would I launch into one subject than he would change the conversation. He answers questions with questions, and pretends he does not hear the ones he does not wish to answer. Still, I think he was happy to meet a writer who does not fit the mold. I am 6-6, 220 pounds, and no more intimidated by a Hollywood producer than I was by Jose Canseco.

It was communicated to my agent that Edgar wanted me in on the project. That is when the trouble began. International Creative Management was handling “the project.”

ICM, a venerable talent agency located in a gleaming modern glass and steel structure on Wilshire Boulevard, in the toniest possible section of Beverly Hills, had “packaged” “The Lost Battalion”.
That means that they represented Woods (the star, the director and the co-producer), along
with Carabatsos (the writer). Along comes Unknown Steve Travers and His C-List Agent.
Call it gumming up the works. Throwing a monkey wrench at things. Screwin’ the duke.
Anyway, the lawyers got involved. You can only imagine where it went from there.
Development hell.

Edgar ran from it faster than Ben Johnson’s 100 at the 1988 Olympics. Woods went from “a
story of valor and heroism” to “Dirty Pictures”, which glorified the semi-pornographer Robert
Mapplethorpe. At least you cannot say Woods lacks range. Eventually, A&E produced it,
starring Rick Schroder, broadcast in December, 2001. I was completely aced out of the deal. I
have the letters from lawyers to prove it.

Lawyers in Hollywood are a lovely group. They cannot just let you get screwed. They have to
memorialize it on their stationary.

That experience made me decide to expand my writing horizons. Being a sports fan, I decided to
become a sports columnist for the Los Angeles Times. All I had to do was convince the L.A.
Times.

Being a columnist with the Times is one of the most coveted jobs in journalism. Sports editor
Bill Dwyre informed me that “you’re a very good writer. You do excellent work, but the Times
only hires columnists from within the paper, or from major metropolitan dailies.”

Being an obscure screenwriter did not count. Still, people do not call me Bud Fox for nothing.
Remember Bud Fox, Charlie Sheen’s character in “Wall Street”?

“The kid,” says Gordon Gekko (played by Michael Douglas). “Calls me every day for five
straight months. Your picture oughta be in the dictionary under persistence.”

Dwyre got similar treatment from me. He could not decide whether to hire me or a hit man to get
rid of me. I had the man wavering. I did not have a big body of sports work at that time, but he
had enough eye for talent to see I had it in spades, and he may have just given me my shot except
that I got an offer to write for StreetZebra Magazine instead.

The Internet Revolution was in full swing. StreetZebra had evolved from a magazine started a
few years prior by an enterprising UCLA graduate named Zach Beimes. Hawaii-native Beimes
was smart and a workaholic, with a passion for sports and a knack for publishing.

I like to think I knocked his socks off, but in those days every warm body that could write words
in the English language was being hired by dot-coms as a “content manager.”
Therein lies the problem. StreetZebra did not have to be a dot-com. It was a nice, big, traditional rag that looked like ESPN The Magazine, specializing in all thing sports-related in L.A. – the Dodgers, Angels, Lakers, USC, UCLA, etc. The articles had some of that Jim Rome “edge” to them, we had good photographs, and we managed to get pictures of beautiful women with large breasts liberally sprinkled throughout our pages. Our target audience was males, 16-30.

So one day Zach takes a stack of his magazines across Lincoln Boulevard in Marina del Rey, where our offices were, to this web site company called www.athletedaily.com. He wanted to sell ad space to Andy Solomon, who ran www.athletedaily.com. Solomon decided instead of buying an ad, he would buy the company. Money was plentiful, courtesy of his investment banker brother at Goldman Sachs in New York.

The idea was to create a web site, www.streetzebra.com. The magazine was the perfect marketing tool, something to show investors that was tangible and real, a source of advertising revenue. Never mind that Solomon (or his younger bro, Jeff) knew nothing about publishing. Andy did not even know much about sports, although Jeff did possess some knowledge. They did not know anything about web sites, either, but neither did many of the twenty something sudden millionaires of this giddy period.

I was not about to complain. They gave me a column and made me their star writer. The money was good; I paid off my debts and was promised the editor’s job as soon as we expanded, which was going to be soon.

Great times.

We bought several companies, including the U.S. Sport & Social Clubs, a thriving venture with offices spread throughout America. Solomon flew everybody out to Phoenix for a weekend of drinking and sex. The rule at StreetZebra was that if you were a woman and wanted to work there, you had to be a “hottie.” A typical dot-com.

Solomon introduced all the StreetZebra employees, and when he came to me I swear I saw the man go into genuflection.

“Steve is great, a helluva writer,” he told several hundred people. “This man possesses encyclopedic knowledge of sports and history. He is a poet, an artist who agonizes over every word and works the longest hours in the company, maximizing every phrase until each article is his individual Masterpiece.”

The beginning of the end was a few weeks after our love fest in Arizona, when it was announced that most of those Sport & Social Club employees, who all had jobs before being bought by StreetZebra, were being laid off.

The web producer who explained it to us sounded like Ross Perot when he inanely compared people who no longer could support their families, with looking under the hood of a used car.
I knew we were headed down a bad path after that, and I was right. The thing is, though, it was avoidable. It was avoidable because we had something real and actual, in the form of a great sports magazine. If we had concentrated on subscriptions and advertised what we had, we could have survived. Rather than using the web site to promote the magazine, we used the magazine to promote the web site. This is the single most glaring mistake learned during the dot-com revolution. Not only that, the site was devoted to intramural athletics, not the hard-hitting coverage of pro, college and high school sports that made the magazine popular in the first place.

Solomon dumped piles of dough into hiring shads of new people to do God-only-knows-what. Every Friday afternoon somebody would haul in the beer and we would be introduced to four or five new technicians, web coordinators, and diagnostic traffic functionaries. These were people right out of school who had grown up with computers, and therefore had convinced Solomon (who had not) that they were worth another $70,000. They all formed a kind of Mad Monk Squadron under the auspices of this dude, maybe 27 years old, who kept his dog in the office, and had a habit for alcohol, drugs and sexual harassment.

I observed all these new people, and quickly deduced that this could be a zero sum game in which every dollar these web gurus made was money I would not make. I knew it was only a matter of time before my job was lost, along with any semblance of good journalism.

Of course, I was right, and naturally since I was the highest-paid writer, I was the first to be let go. Ray Charles could have seen it coming, but it was still a shock. My agent had written a letter to Solomon, saying that my review was coming up and I deserved a raise, a private office, and asking for him to honor his promise of making me the editor. The day the letter arrived, I was laid off. Andy spun my newfound unemployment, uncertainty and financial hardship as a chance to “pursue your art.” I felt like punching the SOB in the nose.

I got to keep my stock options, which a few months later, when the entire company crashed, were as useless as tits on a boar. The final joke was on some of our employees on a business trip to Chicago, who had to fly back to L.A. on their own dime because the company abandoned them, like CIA agents on a black ops mission gone badly.

I blame Andy and Jeff, and I harbored some ill will towards them. The “human cost” included the end of my relationship with a woman I had planned to marry. I had finally found true love and wedding bells were ready to chime, until the company folded. At first we decided to postpone the nuptials, but the strain of the situation helped end it for us. As a Christian I am taught to “forgive those who trespass against” me, so I wrote Andy a letter doing just that. I forgive, but I do not forget.

By the time StreetZebra folded, I had accumulated enough body of work and local reputation to have something of a name for myself, which I parlayed into writing for the L.A. Times (not a column) and doing occasional sports reports for San Diego’s XTRA radio.

Then an opportunity arose with the San Francisco Examiner.
Now, Dave Burgin, the editor of the Examiner, is a throwback, an old school newspaper guy, and the chance to work with him is one any young writer should take advantage of. Now in his 60s, Burgin has suffered a stroke that requires him to take steroids, which have puffed up his appearance and left him unable to pursue his other great passion, golf.

A Vietnam vet, Burgin may be slow physically but not mentally. Bob Rose, who headed the San Francisco Giants’ publicity department, calls him the “Billy Martin of the newspaper business” because he comes in to papers that are struggling, in a short while turns them around, and then wears out his welcome.

Burgin realized that, in order to compete with the higher-circulation San Francisco Chronicle, he needed to beef up the sports section. That meant bringing in a top-flight sports columnist. That would be me.

“You’re our Franchise Player,” Burgin said to me. Here was a guy who was a drinking buddy of Pulitzer Prize-winner Ron Fimrite, a confidante of Hunter Thompson who was referenced in several of Thompson’s “gonzo” books; a guy who knew Ted Williams intimately…and he was telling me I was a “great writer. I picked you out. You are truly unique, an educated athlete whose personal story is interesting, who can speak the players’ language and tell their story with intellectuality. When that happens, it’s incredible. You’ll be the best columnist in the Bay Area, a superstar.”

Half of me was puffed up twice my size by the flattery. The other half waited for the other shoe to drop.

A “column junkie,” Burgin had shaped the careers of people like syndicated New York Times’ columnist Maureen Dowd, and now he was going to do the same for me, all while I was paid a big-city columnist’s salary for the privilege.

So I went to work for the Ex, covering all sports in the Bay Area, which by this time has surpassed Los Angeles as a major Sports Capital. After all, L.A. no longer has a pro football team, but the Bay Area has two. Dodger Stadium is an aging beauty, but Pacific Bell Park may be the best yard in baseball. No longer do USC and UCLA run roughshod over Cal and Stanford.

It was one of the best jobs a sports journalist can hope to have. It was too good to be true. In May, 2001, Jim Mohr, the sports editor, informed me that because of a failure to meet budget, caused in part by a downturn in the economy, caused in part by the disaster in the dot-com industry (a major source of advertising revenue), the paper was laying off nine writers.

Being the highest-paid sportswriter, cutting my salary meant saving the most money, so I was one of them. As Yogi Berra said, it was “Déjà vu all over again,” in that I was losing another great job because my employer was not cutting it, and in a roundabout way I was a victim of the Internet bust a second time. I guess being their Franchise Player and The Best Columnist in the
Bay Area was no more a hedge against disaster than being A Poet, An Artist Who Agonizes Over Every Word.

Ya know, professionally I can say that I would have no luck if I did not have bad luck. I am not complaining. God has blessed me with a beautiful daughter, great parents, and a chance to live in a safe environment during great times. I have always been healthy and I think I have my priorities straight.

Still, I have asked myself whether the reason I have not achieved “my destiny,” as General George Patton once called it, was because I had drank too many Long Island Ice Teas, or lusted a little too lustily after those poor, innocent women who found their way in my star-crossed path. Call it paying for my sins. Or Bad Karma. Maybe God was saying, “Look, kid, you might have a chance at Heaven, and you get a great child and good family, but unless you clean up your act you’ll never win an Oscar, or a Pulitzer.”

 Heck, God, I’d just take steady income. Then I think that God probably has more important things to worry about than punishing me because I feel a particular way about big-busted women in lingerie.

When things get tough, I think of the words of G. Gordon Liddy, who spoke at USC when I was there. Liddy described his darkest early days of prison as “the beginning of the most interesting period of my life. I still had my intelligence, my will, and my education.”

I, too, still had all those things. Richard Nixon (sorry about all the Republican references) once said that the world was full of intelligent failures, educated failures, and failures with great ideas. The person who doggedly pursues his goals, who never quits (“…because that’s when they win,” said Nixon) is the one who succeeds.

My attorney father used to tell me that “Quitters never win, and winners never quit.” He and my Mom always supported and encouraged me. I also remembered reading stories about Colonel Sanders, who never got Kentucky Fried Chicken off the ground until his 70s, and Abe Lincoln, who suffered personal and professional failures over and over again until ascending to the Shakespearean Presidency.

So I did what I always do when times are tough. I thought. When Bill Gates was a teenager, his mother called down to his room to tell him dinner was ready, but he did not respond. Annoyed at his silence, she finally confronted him.

“What are you doing?” she asked.

“Thinking,” said Gates, stone-faced.

Thinking is a great thing, a province of Intellect. Long walks on the beach and solo road trips can be fruitful times for The Thinker. So is unemployment. There I was in my hilltop Marin County home, thinking and watching the Giants and Braves on the tube. Thinking.
Barry Bonds was in the middle of a May stretch in which he was hitting six or seven homers in as many games. He was tomahawking homers to left-center, inside-outing balls opposite field, launching rockets into McCovey Cove.

The guy was way ahead of Mark McGwire’s pace of 70 home runs in 1998, and while it was only May, a light bulb went off in my head. The guy would be 37 in July and he was having the best season of his career in a free agent year that might see him eventually sign with the Yankees. He is the best player in baseball, the Player of the Decade in the 1990s, a guy with 500 career homers, which combined with his eventual 500 stolen bases would put him in a category twice removed from the next-best 300/300 elites. He would probably get 3,000 hits, and maybe challenge Hank Aaron’s career mark of 755 homers. His father was Giants’ star Bobby Bonds, his Godfather was Willie Mays, and his cousin was Reggie Jackson. He had grown up in San Francisco and was playing for his hometown team, in a new stadium built for him that was filled to capacity every night. His team has a chance to play in the World Series.

I calculated that if Bonds could win a Series, break McGwire’s and Aaron’s record, get 3,000 hits, and establish the 500/500 Club, that an argument could someday be made that he is the greatest player in baseball history. This guy should have a book written about him, or by him. Age 37, roughly three years prior to an athlete’s retirement, is the most marketable time for sports books. If he broke Big Mac’s record, that would make this an enormous book, but even if he did not he still had earned his shot. San Francisco is one of the top book markets in the country, too.

I had interviewed Barry and written favorably about him, so I went to the man. Every other writer in San Francisco treats him like the Abominable Snowman, because he can be rude, is said to be a jerk, and worse. I had seen him give writers the brush-off with my own eyes, but I also thought about some other things. Yes, he had gotten bad publicity during a messy divorce in the 1990s, but nobody had ever heard about him getting a DUI, doing drugs, getting arrested, hitting anybody - man or woman – or failing to pay child support. He was a loving family man, happily re-married, a college guy. Bonds is smart, articulate, and handsome, an American kid with a story to tell.

Yes, he had grown up a spoiled child. Hell’s bells, so had I.

“Definitely,” Barry said when asked if he wanted to write a book with me.

He decided to authorize me to write his book. It was June 21, 2001, the first day of summer and longest day of the year, and at 100 degrees the hottest. All I can say is that, I do not dispute other writers have had problems with the guy, and he may not be as accessible as Jason Giambi, but I always found a nice, polite, smiling person who was enjoyable to be around. No wonder he wanted to write a book. The world thought he was a jerk, and he figured the best way to prove he is not is to tell his story, unfiltered by daily media interpretation, like Ronald Reagan going over the head of Congress and straight to the public.
Maybe it was just me. Having come to San Francisco from L.A., I was not a longtime part of
the Bay Area media, and I did not carry years of negative baggage with Bonds. Being 6-6, in
great shape, and a former professional pitcher, probably helped. Players like to say to writers,
“How would you know what it’s like out there? Have you ever played?” Most cannot say yes
past the JVs, but I had battled a few stalwarts at the professional level. Maybe that is too
complex. Maybe he just thought it was a good idea.

So, I secured a top literary agent, Basil Kane, and we put together a proposal. I had known Basil
for six years, calling him a couple times a year with ideas for books.

“Nobody reads books,” is all he ever said. The man gave new meaning to Negativity and
Cynicism. Until I brought up the Bonds idea, at a time when Barry was on a pace to hit about 88
homers.

“You’ve got something here,” said Basil in his understated British way. “Congratulations, we
should smoke a cigar in celebration. Bonds may be the biggest sports book of the year, an
automatic best seller. We could command an advance upwards of half a million dollars.”

I looked out my window at the Marin hills, the waters of San Francisco Bay, the Richmond-San
Rafael Bridge and The City skyline. Remember the scene in “Jerry Maguire” where Tom Cruise
secures “the great Frank Kushman” as his client going into the NFL draft? Maguire is so happy
that he gets in his car and searches the radio for an appropriately glorious tune that he can sing
along with, his anthem to success against long odds. That was me singing “I’m freeeeeee…”

I would split $500,000 with Barry and become his partner. I would be the envy of my associates,
a best-selling author, and a wealthy, successful man pursuing his profession at the height of his
career. A man in full, as Tom Wolfe might say.

Charlie Rose would end up breathlessly listening to me after all. Barry and I would travel the
book circuit in the off-season, living it up in New York and Chicago and other media centers that
would roll out the red carpet for us. Whenever ESPN or somebody did retrospectives on the
career of the great Bonds, I would be sought out for interviews, like Bob Woodward when
experts are needed to discuss the role of the press in politics.

Other celebrities would seek me out to write their stories with them. Shaq and Kobe. Condoleezza
Rice, Brittney Spears, Tiger Woods. In between my best sellers I would write serious books on
politics and history, and the Pulitzer would be mine.

My celebrity status would mean old screenplays could be dusted off and produced. Book rights
and new scripts would put me in the Hollywood mainstream. I would have to write an Oscar
speech. I could afford to send my daughter to USC after all.

I would be a multi-media star, with a syndicated column and talk show on radio, television and
the web. Catherine Zeta-Jones would tire of that old guy Michael Douglas and the tabloids would
show us attending premieres together.
Eventually, 20 years down the road, I would run for Congress or the Senate.

In the immortal words of Aerosmith, “Dream on.”

We went to the New York publishers. Mergers, consolidation and a world full of Dumbellionites who do not know Ernest Hemingway from “Ernest Scared Stupid” have reduced the number of important publishers to about six or seven. In the 1960s and ‘70s, before the Internet, cable, video and computer games, sports books were big. Everybody who was a name in the game wrote a book and did well by them.

Despite the diminished market, Basil assured me this was still The One for 2001. Oh, how wrong he was. You may have heard a loud sound. That was the collective New York publishing industry closing their doors on the Authorized Barry Bonds Book Project. I knew there would be New York bias against a San Francisco athlete, and I knew some people would say Barry was not a nice guy, he would not be cooperative, he would be this and he would be that.

Blah, blah, blah.

I still figured that the sheer greatness of his accomplishments would be worthy of a book, and besides, the chance of his breaking the record would push us over the top.

What we got, to quote Al Pacino as Michael Corleone in the Tahoe scene of “Godfather II”, was “Nothing.” No offers. Not even contingency offers, if he breaks the record. Not even a request to talk to Barry, to make sure he would make appearances to promote sales.

Of course, I felt like a certifiable a—hole when I had to go back to Barry and tell him, “Oh, by the way, regarding those half-million dollar offers I said we would be entertaining, well, forget it.”

Athletes are used to “their people” delivering the goods. “Show me the money!” Now it was the scene in “Maguire” where Jerry finds out Kush’s dad, Beau Bridges, has signed with Bob Sugar (Jay Mohr). Name your cliché: “Don’t count your chickens until their hatched”… “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket…”

What also galled me was that, here was a guy, Bonds, who was now mature and wanted to make peace with his past, only no publishers would give him a forum to really do it.

On top of everything, Penthouse and Playboy Magazines wanted to pay me in the three to $4,000 range for exclusive interviews and first-person articles about, and by, Bonds. Bonds, however, was unwilling to do anything unless he had a contract with a publisher. I know that does not make sense, but this did not change the fact that I was caught between a rock and hard place, like the Japanese gal in “Madame Butterfly”.
Sh-t, this is frustrating. I will have to postpone my daughter’s entrance to USC, my trips to New York to meet Charlie, the awards and the film deals and the celeb status. Catherine would just have to stay with Michael.

2001 has turned out to be the best of times and the worst of times, my summer of (dis)content. I landed the greatest world’s greatest athlete (best of times). No publishers wanted to hear about it (worst of times). I did change agents for the better, getting Mel Berger, out of the New York office of The William Morris Agency.

It should be noted that many writers think they have made it, and celebrate by breaking out the champagne and making large purchases, when they secure the representation of an agent. This is a falsehood. It is essential to have a good agent, but this is only one step. A big step, but do not confuse yourself with Neil Armstrong, because Houston, you still have a problem.

So, I am just struggling along, trying to maintain passion for my chosen profession, and finding myself again drawing inspiration from Liddy, Nixon, Lincoln and others who refused to fold when the road had some bumps in it.

It is like what Kevin Spacey says to Frank Whaley in “Swimming With the Sharks”: “Guys like us, we can’t sleep our way to the top. We have to fight, and scratch, and claw our way up the ladder.” Maybe my work will sell after my death, like the artists of the Modernist period. Maybe not.

Hey, if I could sleep my way to the top, I would. But I cannot, so like another historical figure, Patton, I just have to believe that “I will be allowed to fulfill my destiny. His will be done.”

My experiences have led to some soul-searching. I have a better work ethic, am more honest, more arduous, and give more of myself than anybody I personally know, and still all I get for my efforts are hard knocks, hits, ill fortune. Why? You know things are bad when you sympathize with the Douglas character in “Falling Down”, but instead of becoming the Angry White Male, I have to ask if there is some defect in my personality to explain it. Surely one person cannot be the recipient of so much bad luck simply by <i>chance</i>.

I suppose at this point my concern is not that I shan’t succeed. I have too much talent and try too hard to simply <i>indefinitely continue</i> to roll snakeyes. No, my concern is that, like a soldier who has seen too much, lost so many comrades and sustained so many injuries, I may no longer have the capacity to enjoy the fruits of victory when it occurs.

Regrets? I have a few. As much as I love writing, sometimes I have to ask myself if I would do it all over again. If I knew in 1994, when I started the Belinsky screenplay and decided The Writer’s Life was for me, would I have committed to this much pain, rejection, and disappointment? Would I have done it had I foreseen all the tears, waking up in the middle of the night, resigned to a sleepless vigil of self-questioning angst? The feeling of smallness in a Universe where I still do not know my place? Would I have become a writer if I knew then that the economic pressures and uncertainties of this “career” would some day be the main reason
true love would elude me? Would I want a life in which I feel my selfishness and desire to pursue my art has prevented me from fully living up to my parental responsibilities?

Would I have charted a course that has left me full of cynicism? I look at professional athletes who talk about pressure, overcoming hardships, and achieving goals despite a “lack of respect” from experts and opponents who “never gave us a chance,” and I hate myself for the loathing I feel for these pampered multi-millionaire men-children.

Pressure? Try being unemployed without income when your child needs braces and will be in college soon. Try the grinding, day-by-day, stomach-churning agony of dashed dreams. Try facing family and friends when your self-esteem is low and you feel as if you are visibly cloaked in failure, a cautionary tale.

The fact is, I cannot advise anybody to do as I have done. That is because others would simply not be able to handle it. Too many weak hearts would contemplate suicide. The ability to come back, to fight and struggle and refuse to quit, is my greatest asset and something that separates me in a big way from the average Joe. It is why I will succeed.

You see, I am an egomaniac. I believe in my own personal greatness. I have experienced success, I like it, and I want it again like a drug. I am an eternal optimist, so full of myself that I can sustain the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, and in the long run I hold near to me the words of Nietzsche, who said that which “does not kill me makes me stronger.”

POST-SCRIPT: This philosophy sustained me as summer turned to fall. Finally, in mid-November, I landed a publisher for my Barry Bonds’ book. “Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman” hit bookstores in April, 2002. It sold out its first printing in a few short months and made some Best Seller lists. Of course, I did not have smooth sailing, because the publisher held off the subsequent re-print until the damn baseball players officially did not strike. Then we went into re-print and the book was nominated for a cassey Award for Besdt Baseball Book of 2002.

The cream, my friends, rises to the top.

CHAPTER ONE

DISTANT REPLAY

One of my favorite and most popular regular features was a column called Distant Replay, in which I recalled events in sports history.

33 STRAIGHT!

After years of frustration, the 1971-72 Lakers finally exorcised their demons
This latest edition of “Distant Replay” only confirms what some of my loyal readers say is a serious case of “L.A. Homeritis.” I believe that until Michael Jordan’s 1996 Chicago Bulls won 72 regular season games en route to the title, coach Bill Sharman’s 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers were the elite pro basketball team of all time.

The Lakers set a pro sport consecutive game winning streak of 33 games that remains totally unchallenged to this day. They were 69-13 (best in league history until the Bulls), and won their first N.B.A. championship.

The mantel “Greatest Team of All Time” is a heady moniker, and in crowning the Lakers it is only fair to mention a few other contenders. Kudos go out Alex Hannum’s 1966-67 Philadelphia 76ers (68-14), the Bill Russell/John Havlicek Boston Celtics teams of the 1960s, and Pat Riley’s “Showtime” Lakers of the 1980s.

Wilt Chamberlain joined up with Jerry West and Elgin Baylor after the 1968 season, but the team’s attitude changed significantly when Sharman took over in 1971. Interestingly, in a college basketball town in which basketball is spelled U-C-L-A, Sharman was one of three legendary Trojans who made their marks as coaches: Tex Winter and Hannum were the others. Not that Sharman was any slouch as an athlete, himself. He was a good enough baseball player to be sitting on the Brooklyn Dodgers bench when Bobby Thompson hit his “shot heard ‘round the world” in 1951, and was a Hall of Famer with the Celtics.

The Lakers’ problem had never been ability. Their problem was ability—too much of it. With ability comes ego, and LA was not a big enough town for Baylor and Chamberlain to co-exist.

Sharman was a strict disciplinarian, and his early-morning shoot-arounds were anathema to the late-sleeping Wilt (God rest his soul). After Baylor’s injuries forced him into an abrupt retirement after a few games, and the team’s 4-0 start made The Stilt realize they had a chance to win it all, Chamberlain sacrificed his snooze time for the good of the team.

"I approached Wilt," remembers Sharman, "and he explained that he usually slept until noon, but if it would help the team he’d try it. Once we started winning, Wilt gained confidence that the shoot-arounds worked."

Baylor’s departure placed a heavy load on Jim McMillan and Happy Hairston, but they turned out to be the kind of role players Sharman cherished. Ex-Bruin Gail Goodrich hooked up in the backcourt with West, who was still at the height of his game.

Sharman and West both scoffed at the "too much talent" label some placed on the Lakers in the 1960s. "Baylor was one of the all-time greats," Sharman said. "I would have loved to have coached him when he was younger."

West basically felt the Chamberlain-Baylor feud was a "myth" created by the press. "I don't buy that," he said. "Some styles don't mesh, but the reality is that Elgin had reached a point in his career, as we all do, where with injuries you no longer can compete."

After a brief stumble, magic started to happen at the Forum, and it wasn’t named Earvin Johnson. The ultimate luxury arena at the time, it was packed for every game. The Lakers won five straight…nine straight…15 straight…22…27…they just would not lose. Fall passed into winter, and winter was passing into a Southern California spring when Los Angeles took their 33-game winning streak against the Milwaukee Bucks.

That was the year Lew Alcindor changed his name to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. For those who missed the announcement, early-season perusal of the box scores left fans scratching their
head wondering what injuries were keeping Lew out of the line-up...but who is this Jabbar
guy rackin’ up 34 with 19 ‘bounds every night?

By the time of the big showdown, Kareem’s name was not a mystery, but stopping him
was. Abdul-Jabbar made Chamberlain look old and the Bucks won big. It was only a temporary
setback for the Lakers, who cruised to the end, breaking the 76ers single-season win record by a
game. They set a league mark for victory margin over Golden State, 162-100, and never scored
under the century mark in a single contest.

Chicago fell in four straight in the first round of the Play-Offs, but then came Milwaukee
again. In the series’ opener, Los Angeles collapsed, scoring only 72 points in a game that had
everybody convinced that the team would fall apart just like they did at that time every year.
Everybody except the players.

"It was a frustrating game," remembers West. "We tried so hard, yet it seemed we
couldn't even make a lay-up. We had such a terrific road team, though, that we had confidence
we could beat the Bucks."

Sharman was a calming influence. "I just told them that they had proved themselves to be
the best team in the league," he explained. The collapse may have occurred but for McMillan,
who was a scoring machine in a desperate back-and-forth death struggle ultimately won by the
Lakers, 135-134, to even things at 1-1. West, Chamberlain & Co., after catching their breath,
began to play the kind of basketball that had gotten them this far in the first place. L.A.’s
dominance was ultimately apparent in their 4-2 series win.

Still, Walt Frazier and the New York Knickerbockers stood between Los Angeles and
their first championship. The Knicks had broken their hearts two years prior, and ran away with
the series’ opener. Again, the skeptics were out in force..."the Lakers don’t have heart”..."the
Lakers can’t beat an East Coast team." This time, the skeptics were wrong. L.A. flattened New
York in four straight, winning game five in a runaway before an ecstatic home crowd.
In the jubilant winning clubhouse West, the superstar denied glory so many times over the years,
looked far more relieved than ultimately happy.

"That may be true," Jerry told me. "It was enormously frustrating--to the point we felt
cursed after all those years. The difference with that team was not only did we feel we could win
any game, but we could, to be frank, dominate anybody.

So, Jerry, were the ’72 Lakers the greatest team ever assembled?
"You can't compare eras," West answered diplomatically. Sportswriters can, and this
scribe casts his vote for L.A.

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

Penny Marshall's marvelous 1991 film about the All-American Girls Professional
Baseball League, which existed in the Midwest during World War II, is based on the true story
of a small, yet talented, group of women athletes. Many years have passed since then, but those
years have not diminished the delightful effect one of those "girls" still has on those lucky
enough to meet her.

Annabelle "Lefty" Lee came from California, pitched in the league from 1944 to 1950,
and threw the only perfect game in the league's history. There is something vaguely familiar
about her southpaw pitching style, and that last name, Lee, evokes memories, too. Of course!
Annabelle is the aunt of Bill "Spaceman" Lee, a former All-Star twirler for the Boston Red Sox, who credits Annabelle with teaching him how to pitch, in his 1984 autobiography, "The Wrong Stuff".

"I was born near the La Brea Tar Pits and played at North Hollywood High School," says the 78-year old Annabelle. "I played for the Sunland Beauties fast-pitch softball team in 1937, and Phillip K. Wrigley had players recruited for his league.

"What a lot of people don't understand is that Penny Marshall did a wonderful job with the movie, but they tried to show in one year, 1943, what happened over several seasons. We pitched underhand at first, then went to sidearm, and eventually overhand. The distances to the bases were different, and the ball decreased in size every year. Kids ask me 'who portrayed you?', and I say, 'nobody, it was a composite.'"

Annabelle's father had been a semi-pro baseball player in Los Angeles, who played with Don Drysdale's father.

"Little Don would tag along to games," she recalls.

"I played for the Minneapolis Millerettes," she says. "We had to play most of one year on the road. All we had was the clothes we came with, they wouldn't let us return to get our things. In 1945 I went to play for the Ft. Wayne Daisies, and in 1946 for the Peoria Redwings. I was a pitcher/first baseman, and I threw a perfect game vs. the Kenosha Comets on June 6, 1944."

"Lefty" was asked if she recalled whether anything else significant occurred on that date.

"My mind was focused on the game," was her response.

Why would a little event like the Allied invasion of Normandy break her concentration against the Kenosha Comets?

"I was paid $85 week," she says. "I'd been working at the Bank of America for $90 a month, plus it was more fun to play ball. We'd come home from the season, wait a month, then start practicing at Brookside Park <next to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena> with Peanuts Lowry and Lou Novikoff."

Some of the film's anecdotes were made up.

"We didn't have a bus driver who kicked dirt on us," she says. "We did have a chaperone who kept us in line. We'd put Limburger cheese on the lights, dead fish in somebody's bed. One gal I played with in LA would put blackjack gum over her teeth and grimace. There were a lot of funny little things, but I took it seriously. A lot of the girls used to sneak out at night. Tom Hanks' character was based on Jimmy Foxx, but Foxx didn't drink as much as people thought he did. We did have to go to charm school in 1943 and '44, where we learned to sit correctly. It was kind of comical. We'd play the Army teams, but switch batteries to make it fairer. Women just can't compete against men."

"I went to Spring Training in Cuba in 1947, and pitched in front of both Fulgencio Bautista and Fidel Castro. In 1949, Max Carey got together the American all-star team and we barnstormed Central America--Managua, Nicaragua; Costa Rica, Panama, Aruba, Caracas, Puerto Rico and Cuba. All the places had bullrings, and the stands were made of Adobe, hollowed out where the people sat. We mostly played on soccer fields, and there was always a sign reading, 'no guns, no knives.' There'd be guards, and broken glass on top of the walls to prevent people from climbing over.

"In 1950 I got hurt sliding into home. I had a pinched nerve that caused partial paralysis, so they shipped me home. I got my amateur standing back and played softball until 1957, then got married and hung up my spikes."
The league broke up in 1954. What did baseball do for Lefty?
"The Army used to bivouac on the LA River," she says, "and a lot of girls would go down there and get in trouble, they'd be getting pregnant while I was doing something healthy. When we played we had chaperones and curfew, one hour after getting dressed after the game. I met a lot of different people from different parts of the country."

Annabelle's story reminds one of the James Earl Jones character in "Field of Dreams", who says that baseball reminds people of "all that was once good, and can be again." What a beautiful game it is!

**BREAKING THE TROJANS' STRANGLEHOLD**

*In 1979, Cal State Fullerton went to Omaha and won, changing the landscape of college baseball forever.*

In 1979, Cal State Fullerton made their first appearance at the College World Series, but after two defeats the Titans' made a quick return home. "We were out of there so fast we could breathe the fumes of the plane that flew us there," says former coach Augie Garrido.

Prior to 1979, 11-time National Champion USC dominated college baseball. Since 1966, the only schools other than Southern Cal to win at Omaha had been Arizona State (1967, 1969, 1977), Texas (1975) and Arizona (1976).

1979 was a watershed year. Two California schools, Fullerton and Pepperdine, had gained the respect of college baseball insiders, but they remained under the radar screen of the media and most fans. With their funny-looking uniforms and disco-era hair, they would make they mark at Omaha, proving that small schools not known for football could compete with the big boys. They would break the Trojans' CWS stranglehold, one year after SC had dominated a tournament that had become Rod Dedeaux's personal showcase.

The emergence of Fullerton and Pepperdine ushered in a new era of parity in which schools like Miami, Louisiana State and Wichita State would reach for the Brass Ring. This created popularity for college baseball that helped fuel the rise of ESPN.

The Pepperdine Waves' had outstanding pitching, led by Teddy Pallas. Shortstop Tim Gloyd and second baseman Mike Gates formed a great double-play combo, and both players were base stealing threats. Outfielder Jay Schellin and catcher Chuck Fick were top players.

"We were a bunch of cowboys," recalls pitcher Brad Cole, now a popular actor on CBS' daytime drama "A Guiding Light".

"They were crazier than a bunch of loons," was former coach Dave Gorrie's assessment.

"I think we leveled the balance of power in California college baseball," said Garrido of his Fullerton squad. "As far as our breaking their dominant rein, I guess it's like running the four-minute mile. Once it's done, others do it."

Garrido had to adjust after Fullerton lost the opener. They had to use ace pitcher Tony Hudson to save three games. Dave Weatherman failed to survive the first inning against Pepperdine on June 8, and his arm pained him. The Titans' had plenty of power, embodied by third baseman Tim Wallach, who would go on to a fine career with the Montreal Expos. All-American Sam Favata would not be so lucky, as he would see his pro career ended by a beanball that almost cost him his life.
"People were kind of rooting for us," says Gorrie, "we were considered the underdog. Any time we played Fullerton there was always the threat of a problem, we knew they were our enemies."

Pepperdine finally was eliminated on the second-to-last day, leaving a match-up of Arkansas' junior lefty Steve Krueger (10-1) and the Titans' Weatherman (14-2).

"It was all kind of a miracle," said Garrido. "We had a young pitching staff but no closers, so we had to use Tony. Dave started the night before and threw a lot of pitches. The next day rain was predicted, so when the press asked me who would start I said, 'I'm going with the Weather Man.' They took that as meaning Weatherman, which is what I did."

Weatherman remembers his assignment differently from Garrido.

"As soon as the game was over, Garrido said to me, 'Get a good night's rest, you're starting tomorrow,'" says Weatherman. "I knew what I could do, I just didn't want to let down my teammates. Fear of failure was my biggest motivation."

In a classic pitcher's duel, Krueger and Weatherman both went the distance. Fullerton prevailed, 2-1 to captured the National Championship. Garrido's team finished the season 60-14, and the tournament MVP was Hudson, who had a 2.67 ERA.

"Did we have to prove ourselves?" asks Weatherman. "Sure, but internally we knew we could play with anybody. It was, without a doubt the biggest moment of my life, and I'm proud to be part of the start of a great program."

Fullerton would win again in 1984, and the '95 squad that beat USC in the CWS title game may be the best college team ever. One could argue that the 'Titans' have been the top program in the country over the past 21 years. Pepperdine would win in 1992 (beating Fullerton in the final). The school recently honored the '79 squad with membership in their Hall of Fame.

ESPN now broadcasts the whole show from Omaha, with the championship game on network TV. The growth of college baseball can be attributed in part to two little schools who forged a lot of respect and put themselves squarely on the map.

**DISCO DEMOLITION RE-DUX**

"The Last Days of Disco" was a boring film, except for the symbolic footage of Bill Veeck's infamous Disco Demolition.

Today, colorful-shirt-wearing, wig-adorned retro bands are getting 40- and 30-somethings to dance to the sounds of K.C. and the Sunshine Band in lava lounges across the fruited plain.

John Travolta's "Saturday Night Fever" was a by-product of a time when the post-hippie Modernists assuaged the guilt they felt about making too much dough after avoiding Vietnam, by doing toot at Studio 54. Kids, do not let these moral relativist Clintonistas tell you their generation was any better than today's so-called "slackers."

I digress.

To those Searchers a few years removed from the rioters who made the Democrats' '68 Windy City experience so fun, it was also the age of big, outdoor rock extravaganzas. Groups like Led Zeppelin, The Who and the Stones' headlined all-day festivals, and it was these bad-hair buffoons that Veeck targeted on July 12, 1979.
Veeck was baseball's original "shock owner." He spawned the likes of Charlie Finley, who gave us hot pants-wearing ballgirls. The spirit of Veeck was in Cleveland on .10 Cent Beer Night, which spurred a riot on the shores of Lake Eerie.

A riot is what they had in Chicago on Disco Demolition night. The rioters' lacked the intensity of the Chicago Seven, and the cops' were not quite as "aggressive" in breaking things up, but it was a riot nevertheless.

The Chisox of that era were, uh…not good. Veeck dressed them like clowns in faux "old-timers" uniforms. At one point they wore shorts. People were not drawn to Comiskey Park by great baseball, and the kids who came to a double-header against Detroit were not fans of the National Pastime.

The promotion was actually devised by local disc jockey Steve Dahl. Fans were admitted for .98 cents, a figure that teamed with WLUP, a station found at 98 on the FM dial. Part of the gimmick called for each fan to bring a disco record (remember records?), thousands of which were to be burned between games.

50,000 showed up. Dahl brought a "fire goddess" named Lorelei. She was a blonde poster girl known for her obvious assets. The ritual was supposed to be held under fire department supervision in center field. After the incident with Mrs. O'Leary's cow, Chicago officials should have known that anything to do with fire ought to be avoided at all cost, but summer is Silly Season in ChiTown.

The fans could not wait. They began slinging records, Frisbee-style onto the field, causing the first game to be halted time and again. Detroit won it, 4-1.

Moments after Dahl and Lorelei exited halfway through the 30-minute period between games, the first invaders began skipping over the low box-seat railings. In a couple minutes, 5,000 to 7,000 youths had swarmed the field, many carrying obscene banners, which had been allowed to hang from the upper deck during the first game. The smell of marijuana wafted upward.

Veeck, surrounded by security, made his way to the field in a fruitless attempt to convince the youths to vacate. Broadcaster Harry Caray took the mike, but the Pied Piper of Chicago's pleas fell on deaf ears. The mob eventually dispersed because they ran out of things to do.

Helmeted police might have thought it was just like old times, but instead of Tom Hayden stoking anti-war protesters to throw bags of feces at Chicago's finest, they had less than 1,000 to clear away. Still, it was défé vu all over again for some, who could not resist the opportunity to swing clubs at the miscreants. A few were handcuffed, but the entire thing was symbolic of the whole sorry generation. Like their decade, Disco Demolition ended not with a bang but with a whimper.

The players, however, were afraid to go on the field, and their objections, combined with some damage done to the playing surface, influenced the umpire's decision to call off the second game.

Veeck was like the parent who, after finding out his son totaled the family car, dismisses the damage as merely a scratch. "I am amazed, shocked, and chagrined. I think the grounds for forfeiting are specious at best. There was nobody on the field during the playing of the <first> game."

Veeck (as in Wreck) apparently thought a hard vinyl sphere traveling at breakneck speed towards a player's skull was not cause for great concern.
"It's true there was some sod missing," said the Pollyanna Man. "Otherwise nothing was wrong."

The White Sox, in memory of Veeck, plan to host a "Burn Your Old Rap CDs" promotion prior to the opener vs. Texas April 3, despite a threatened protest by The Reverend Jesse Jackson. Reverend Jackson chastised White Sox management for their "insensitive dismissal of the importance of African-American culture, by virtue of this quasi-lynch mob 'event.' I am outraged!"

April Fool's!

THE ANGELS' CURSE

Weirdness and disaster were in the air (and on the ground) in October, 1986.

The Angels and the Red Sox? Oh, man! Talk about a riddle, surrounded by a puzzle, wrapped inside an enigma…

These are the two most star-crossed teams in baseball here. The Curse of the Bambino began when Red Sox owner Harry Frazee traded Babe Ruth to the Yankees in order to fund a 1920 Broadway play called "No No Nanette".

The Angels' Curse started when they moved from LA to Orange County in 1966, losing their character in suburbia. Just a few of the disasters to befall the franchise include:

* Relief ace Minnie Rojas being paralyzed in a car accident in 1968.
* Chico Ruiz threatening Alex Johnson with a gun in the clubhouse in 1971.
* Mike Miley, an Angel from 1975-76, dying in a car accident.
* Lyman Bostock signing an enormous free agent contract in 1978, just before being shot dead by a jealous husband.

The team's mascot should be a black cat. The Curse reared its ugly head in the 1990s.

Can you say Tony Phillips and crack motel? An overturned bus on the Jersey Turnpike? "The war to end all wars" in 1918 is still a more recent development than any World Series victory won by Boston.

So when these guys got together in the 1986 Play-Offs, it was Bad Karma. The Witching Hour. You could just feel it, something had to go terribly wrong. Watch out for that iceberg! Is that a man with a gun in the window of the Texas Book Depository? Is the space shuttle supposed to emit that much smoke?

What did you expect out of a club managed by Gene Mauch? This guy was wrapped tighter than Chef in "Apocalypse Now". You could not pull a pin out of his butt with a tractor. They called him Little Napoleon, and like the French Emperor, he had already experienced his personal Waterloo in 1964, when he pitched Philadelphia's Jim Bunning and Chris Short back-to-back-to-back for 10 losses in a row, allowing St. Louis to win the pennant.

He had been exiled to Elba (Montreal, actually), but now the Fremont High infielder was at home, tanned and relaxed, a new man.

Yeah, like Richard Nixon.

Still, California won the West at 92-70.
Boston cruised the East, led by "Rocket Roger" Clemens, who won his first 14 decisions en route to a 24-victory season that would earn him A.L. MVP and Cy Young honors. The team's split the first two at Fenway, and California won game three.

In game four on Saturday night, Boston manager John McNamara went to the Mauch playbook, pitching Clemens on short rest. Rocket lost it just in time, blowing a 3-0 ninth inning lead, 4-3. This was the beginning of the Clemens' Curse, which he would not end until he switched to Yankee pinstripes in 1999.

Neither team seemed even slightly willing to win on Sunday afternoon at the Big A. Red Sox outfielder Dave Henderson looked like Charlie Chaplin in "Modern Times", stumbling and confused while an innocent popup dropped in for a double, then letting a Bobby Grich drive bounce out of his mitt and over the fence for a homer, giving California the lead.

Ahead 5-2, champagne was brought into the Angel clubhouse in the ninth. Don Baylor's two-run homer made it 5-4.

Boston relief pitcher Joe Sambito said "wait" to the security guards who were beginning to pack the bullpen equipment.

Mike Witt got Dwight Evans for the second out. Gary Lucas came in to pitch to Rich Gedman, who asked that a center field banner--ANOTHER BOSTON CHoke--be removed. Lucas hit Gedman.

Mauch brought the right-handed Donnie Moore in to face the right-handed Hendu. Moore had that "dear in the headlights" look working to Henderson. He got two strikes on him, just for some drama, before sticking a "nothing" forkball in his wheelhouse. Henderson's homer made it 6-5, Boston.

Hey, forget this part? California tied it in the bottom of the ninth, but Moore hit Baylor leading off the eleventh, and he scored. Calvin Schiraldi, another choke artist, got some redemption by stopping the Angels, and the big crowd went home in stunned silence.

The Angels' reacted to adversity like the French Army in 1940, losing at Fenway, 10-4 and 8-1, sending Boston to the Fall Classic.

The Red Sox became the first team to blow a Series after winning the first two on the road against the 108-win Mets. Of course, it had to happen, and to a New York team at that. Boston blew game six when Bill Buckner let Mookie Wilson's 100-hopper go under his legs, and Schiraldi looked like he wanted to be anywhere but on the Shea Stadium mound.

Hey, it was fate. Donnie Moore? The worst Fate of them all. On July 18, 1989, a few miles from Anaheim Stadium, his promising career having nose-dived since the Henderson homer, Moore threatened to kill his wife, then shot himself dead.

Casualties? Moore, McNamara, Buckner, Schiraldi, Clemens, Mauch, et al.

As Jim Morrison once said, "No one here gets out alive."

SOMETIMES A CLASSIC IS REALLY A CLASIC

*The first Wooden Classic lived up to its moniker, making it the prestige event it is today.*

My Bruin colleague at StreetZebra decided to make a Trojan the caretaker of cherished UCLA sports memories this month. I spent a lot of time with John Wooden, Steve Lavin, Jim
Saia and Steve Spencer. The former is the ultimate icon in Westwood, and the latter three are walking advertisements for all things Blue and Gold. I also wonder if our editor, Zach Biemes (UCLA '94) considered the irony of a story featuring his school's last basketball National Championship team in a Distant Replay column.

The date was December 3, 1994. Jim Harrick was in charge of the Bruins. Lavin was a lowly assistant with credit card debt, and the people who run the Arrowhead Pond in Anaheim were counting on the Wooden Classic to make people take notice of their almost-new arena. Everything came together for UCLA that season, and the Wooden Classic was where fans got their first indication that, 20 years since Wooden led the Bruins to their last national title, the banner could wave at Pauley Pavilion again.

Gene Bartow, Walt Hazzard, and all the in-between Caesars of the real Roman Empire of college basketball, had been felled by a variety of Brutuses'. Harrick, in the longest UCLA coaching tenure since the Wizard, was acutely aware that 28-5 makes you a hero at Stanford, but if the twenty-eighth victory at UCLA is not in the Final Four, watch your back!

Harrick would meet his demise two years later, but during the 1994-95 season, like Mediterranean gods of yesteryear, he would need minions to whisper in his ear, "You are mortal!"

Wooden once said, "Be at your best when your best is needed." At the initial Wooden Classic, an 18-year old freshman named J.R. Henderson was just that. He personified the Pyramid of Success by sinking a pair of free throws with six-tenths of a second left to lead U.C.L.A. to an 82-81 victory over Rick Pitino's Kentucky Wildcats. The half-baked notion of bringing big-time college hoops to Orange County suddenly looked like a brilliant decision. A sell-out crowd of 18,307, combined with a national television audience, created the kind of March Madness atmosphere that cannot be duplicated at Pauley.

"I don't know if his eyes were open enough to see the basket, he was so cool," remembers co-captain Ed O'Bannon."It would have been just what everyone expected--'U.C.L.A. folds under pressure. They have no courage.' We showed just the opposite." Ranked fifth coming in against number three-ranked Kentucky, U.C.L.A. rallied from 10 points down with eight minutes left. It was an emotional night, and Pitino was nailed for a technical that he no doubt wishes he could have back.

"The execution wasn't tournament quality," he recalled, "but the intensity was." It was a very physical game, marked by some sloppy play and questionable officiating. In the highly charged, pro-Bruin atmosphere, this worked in U.C.L.A.'s favor, like everything else that magical season. On this night, for instance, Henderson was in the game only because O'Bannon had fouled out. Charles' All-America brother, Ed, popped for 26, and seven-footer George Zidek was good for 16 points and 10 hard-earned rebounds. Walter McCarty scored 12 for Kentucky, and Rodrick Rhodes led his team with 16.

"I thought the game was a little bigger than both teams were ready for, quite frankly," remarked Harrick. "Regardless of the price of admission, I think everyone got their money's worth."

The game had eerie similarities to the fictional season opener of that year's entertaining basketball film "Blue Chips". Coach Nick Nolte gets in over his head recruiting Fabulous Freshmen who can lead fictional Western University (a thinly disguised UCLA) to the Promised Land "right now." His untested troops prove their mettle in a one-point win over Bobby Knight's Indiana Hoosiers.
Harrick rolled sevens all winter and spring, except for one slip-up, a seven-point loss to California. Still, the NCAA Tournament, once the personal playground of John Wooden, had evolved into an uninviting boneyard for UCLA's coaches since 1976. The ghosts of Bartow, Cunningham, Brown, Farmer and Hazzard all were congregated in Boise, Idaho for the West Regional. Bad vibes were overcome when Tyus Edney made a full-court dash for the basket that gave his team a scary victory over Missouri. Bill Clinton, nursing the wounds of the recent Republican landslide, was the Curse of Doom rooting for an outmatched Arkansas team that fell in the championship game, 89-78 at Seattle. The 32-1 Bruins had planted the seeds of that victory on a December night in Anaheim. Like the Nolte character, Harrick's mistakes would catch up with him, but not before he earned the Brass Ring. Maybe UCLA really should have put somebody by his side telling him he was human. Meanwhile, USC fans making the trip to The Pond this year hope some of the excitement of five years ago can be re-captured by Henry Bibby's Trojans.

GLORY DAYS

They'll pass you by.

In the wink of a young girl's eye! Just ask Tom McGarvin, Bill Sharman, Alex Hannum, or Tex Winter. It seems like it was only 50-plus years ago when these guys were basketball stars at the University of Southern California. That's right, USC Before John Wooden turned Pauley Pavilion into Hoops Mecca, SC was a national power on the hardwood!

"The teams I played on," says Hall of Famer Bill Sharman (1947-50), "produced 19 NBA championship rings between myself, Hannum and Winter. Plus, we had Bob Kloppenberg, who coached in the pros."

The only other college that may have produced as many N.B.A. titles would be the 1955 San Francisco Dons of Bill Russell and K.C. Jones. Considering Paul Westphal's success in Phoenix and Seattle, S.C. can lay claim to be the top spawning ground of coaches this side of Dean Smith.

In the 1930s, McGarvin starred along with Gail Goodrich's father at USC. The game was much different then, not the run'n'gun "showtime" spectacle that it is today.

"They had nets around the court," says former East Coast basketball writer Jerry Cowle, "and players would bounce balls off them, playing the rebound."

That is why they were known as cagers, but out West, the "modern" game was being developed. Stanford's Hank Luisetti become basketball's first superstar, where legend has it that he invented the jump shot. Stanford won the National Championship in 1942.

"Hank Luisetti, as far as I'm concerned," opines McGarvin, who played with Jackie Robinson at Pasadena's Muir High "was the best player I ever saw during those years, but saying he invented the jump shot is a misnomer. Guys' were using jump shots already. He did use one-handed shots more than anybody.

"We played at the Olympic Auditorium, the Shrine, the Pan-Pacific, anywhere we could find. I was the captain of the Trojan team that went to the Final Four and lost to Phog Allen and
Kansas by one point in Kansas City. Everybody fouled out because the refs' were Midwest homers, but we were as good as anybody."

Hamilton High's Hannum was a 6-7 enforcer who played with Sharman and Winter in 1946-47. Hannum's NBA career lasted until 1957. He went on to one of the most successful coaching careers of all time. Hannum led Wilt Chamberlain and the 1967 Philadelphia 76ers to the best record in NBA history (68-14, since broken by Sharman's '72 Lakers and the Phil Jackson/Winter Bulls of 1996). In 1969 he coached Rick Barry and the ABA's Oakland Oaks' to that league's best-ever record (60-18). He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1998.

**The Triangle Offense**

The evolution of the triangle offense has an almost Biblical quality to it. Doc Meanwell created it (in six days, resting on Sunday?). His version begat Sam Barry, who begat Winter, who begat Jackson. Many have been disciples. Winter probably has done more to refine it than any coach.

"Barry picked it up from Doc Meanwell when he was a graduate student at Wisconsin," recalls Winter, who came to S.C. from Huntington Park and Compton College, and has coached for 53 years (including all six of Michael Jordan's championship teams). "Initially it was called the 'center opposite.' It was popularized on the West Coast by Jimmy Needles, and developed further by two Loyola players, Pete Newel and Phil Woolpert.

"It's based on reverse action,' and you don't want players with great individual skills who don't utilize the team game. That's what we're trying to teach Kobe Bryant. It took Michael years to learn to play in the system. I try to teach them and let them know what's expected; ball control and player movement. Shaq O'Neal is so physically dominant that sometimes we get out of the system and just rely on him. Some better-skilled athletes are less effective in the triangle."

Winter recalls the pre-Wooden UCLA rivalry.

"They had a great player named Don Barksdale," he says. "I recognized right off that Sharman was a great player. We had the 'buddy system,' where a younger player <Sharman> would be paired with a veteran <Winter>. Hannum was a leader and an enforcer."

"I was an All-American my last two years," says Sharman, who came to USC from Porterville after a year at Narbonne. "We finished second my last three years, but beat U.C.L.A. when John Wooden was the coach. I was very impressed by Wooden immediately. He taught a fast-break style that was a big influence on my coaching career. I won four titles as a player with Boston, six as a coach, g.m. and team president in the NBA.

"Jess Hill offered me the head coaching position at SC in the 1960s," Sharman recalls, "but the lack of an on-campus arena--a place where the students can get behind you, the team can practice--that plus I had pro offers, so I turned it down."

Forrest Twogood took over, and guided the Ken Flower teams' to 21-6 and 17-5 marks in the early 1950s. The Sports Arena was built in 1959, and while it was considered a great facility at the time, Pauley overshadowed it. The program has been mired in mediocrity for years. Now, a real possibility exists in which Henry Bibby's squad can create the environment in which their on-campus arena launches an era of greatness for Trojan basketball.
It’s hard to believe that it has been 21 years, but the memory of how the AP robbed the Trojans to force a shared national title is still irksome today.

1978. Legion Field, Birmingham, Alabama. A day game in September, hot and muggy. National television. Two undefeated teams, the winner would have the inside track at finishing number one. As Marv Goux would say, “The best of the West vs. the Best of the East.”

Eight years prior, in a game that by no means had been forgotten in ‘Bama, John McKay’s Trojans waltzed into Birmingham for a night game against the Crimson Tide. Southern California was cocky, arrogant. Maybe the greatest program ever assembled over a 19-year period (1962-81). They featured a black sophomore fullback from Santa Barbara named Sam “Bam” Cunningham. Phenomenal black athletes, some from the South, had long been a staple at U.S.C. Their first All-American in 1923 had been a black man.

Coach Bear Bryant’s Alabama team was 100 percent white when U.S.C. walked into their house in 1970 and administered a whuppin’, led by Cunningham with four touchdowns.

Now, in 1978, the men of Troy were back. This time, they were led by a new coach, John Robinson, and he had a team that was possibly more talented than the best of McKay’s juggernauts. S.C. had won the National Championship in 1972. In ’74, despite a loss and a tie, spectacular comebacks against Notre Dame and Ohio State propelled them to “luck” into a share of the crown with undefeated-but-on-probation Oklahoma.

All-American tailback Charles White led USC in ’78. Anthony Munoz opened his holes. Junior quarterback Paul McDonald had as much brains and ability as Pat Haden. Cornerback Dennis Smith succeeded Dennis Thurman as the second straight All-American to come out of Santa Monica High. A young safety named Ronnie Lott was hitting people with the force of a major earthquake.

Alabama was not their father’s Tide. This time, they came to play with black athletes. Extremely talented ones. Lots of them. The era of the USC’s and Michigan State’s picking off the Bubba Smith’s of the Deep South was over. Now Alabama, Tennessee, Florida State and the others would reap the harvest sown in their backyards. For this reason, USC no longer enjoyed that quiet advantage that nobody really wanted to talk about in 1970. They would have to play it even up in the other guys’ stadium.

It was no contest. White ran for 199 yards and a couple touchdowns. The Trojans dominated from the first snap, taking the huge crowd out early, and the final score, 24-14, did not reflect Southern California’s superiority.

A few weeks later, the Trojans had a letdown. It was one of those radio-only Saturday night games against a tough Sun Devil squad, fired up to prove themselves in the new Pacific-10 Conference. In L.A., sports fans making the disco scene at the Red Onion or Flanagan’s missed Tom Kelly’s broadcast of ASU’s 20-7 upset win.

That was it, though. The rest of the conference fell like Eastern Europe under Stalin. Terry Donahue’s UCLA Bruins could play anybody else even up in 1978, but against their rivals they were boys facing men.

Then came Thanksgiving weekend.

With Alabama already having been knocked off, the game, played on an overcast day at the Coliseum, before a full house in an electric atmosphere, promised to be for the National Championship. In 1977, Joe Montana and the green-shirted Irish derailed S.C.’s winning streak
in front of a more-deranged-than-usual Notre Dame crowd. That earned them an eventual national title, but the victory was an exception during that era. In those days, USC beat Notre Dame like a redheaded stepchild.

Mays going all out. Brando emoting. Reagan communicating to the camera. Some people are naturals, and anybody lucky enough to have been at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum that day could recognize that Montana had it, too. Absolute charisma. Undeniable magic.

Still, in the beginning, USC moved Notre Dame off the line with ease, Lott was in Montana’s face, White ran crazy, and McDonald threaded passes like a southpaw surgeon. Well into the third quarter, S.C. led by three touchdowns.

Then came Joe! If you were there, you saw Montana wake up the echoes and single-handedly silence the home crowd. He was everything that he would be against Dallas, or Cincinnati, or Denver. He was the best I ever saw.

Still, those were the halcyon days of the University of Southern California. They got the ball back with about a minute on the clock, and McDonald moved them up the field. With two seconds left, Frank Jordan, a history major from Riordan High School in San Francisco, calmly broke Joe Montana’s heart with the game-winning field goal, 27-25. Montana walked off the field, a defeated warrior bathed in the kind of respect reserved only for the rarest of champions.

In an anti-climatic Rose Bowl game, Southern California toyed with an out-manned Michigan team, holding the score down like Ali letting his opponent save a little self-respect.

When the sun set in Pasadena on New Year’s Day to the chant of “We’re Number One,” it seemed a foregone conclusion that USC had indeed captured the National Championship. They were 12-1-0 in a year that saw no undefeated teams. Alabama’s one loss had come at the hands of SC.

What those “number one” chanters had not taken into consideration was the popularity of Paul “Bear” Bryant. The next day, the Associated Press (the writers) voted Alabama number one. United Press International (the coaches) voted SC number one.

Perhaps it was karma for sharing the top spot four years earlier with Oklahoma, not recognized by the coaches because of their probationary status, but it still bugs me to this day!

"HOT ROD" REMEMBERS LAKERS' FIRST YEAR

In 1960, the Democrats' nominated JFK and the Republicans' nominated Richard Nixon, both at the spanking new Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena. That was also the year the Lakers moved from Minneapolis to LA, to play at the Sports Arena. Under the ownership of Bob Short, the team had experienced 12 successful years in the Midwest, jet travel had become a common event, while the Dodgers' and Giants had recently led the way of Westward expansion. In their first year, the Lakers' featured a rookie guard from West Virginia named Jerry West, who scored 17.6 points per game. They already had an established superstar, Elgin Baylor from Seattle University. Baylor scored an all-time franchise high 34.8 points per game that year, second in the NBA. He scored 71 on November 15 vs. New York. The team was still finding themselves under coach Fred Schaus, going 36-43 for a second place finish, but they managed to advance to the Western Division finals before succumbing to a strong St. Louis team, 4-3. StreetZebra caught
up with an integral member of that team, the raucous "Hot Rod" Hundley, who recalls the old Lakers and a simpler time.

LA NOSTALGIA - THE '60s: "I hung out with Bo Belinsky and Dean Chance at Ernie's House of Surface, at the 'Four Corners Where Friends Meet,' in Baldwin Hills. We did the Sunset Strip all the time, the Whisky A-Go-Go, Gazzari's. The writers used to hang out at a restaurant on the Strip that I'd go to. I wasn't really into the bands. We also used to go to the La Marina Inn, a place at the beach in Marina del Rey. Everybody in the NBA went there, it was a good place to go in those days. I was good friends with Claude Crabbe of the Rams, and I used to go to a lot of Dodgers and Angels games. I loved being in LA, it's still my favorite city. In my heart I would love to live in LA again. It's the greatest sports city in the world to me, and there's everything to do there; the beach, Hollywood, skiing, the lifestyle is casual and the fans are great. There's so many great sports teams, plus college sports with Southern Cal and UCLA, and schools like Pepperdine and Loyola. It's overcrowded, but nowadays everyplace is."

BOB SHORT: "Bob Short was great, a fabulous owner. One year we got beat in the seventh game finals at Boston. Their pay for winning was $2,000, ours for finishing second was $1,000, which was a lot for us back then. So Short came in and said 'the toughest game is ahead of you,' meaning facing the press, then he said 'there's an extra thousand for each of you' so we'd make the same as Boston. Short did something that was like in a way not legal. We'd be down 20 at the half, he'd come into the locker room and he'd say 'here's $200' or 'here's $300,' if you win this game, or if you just played a good game. Once I left my billfold back in the hotel room, he just gave me a hundred and asked if that would be enough to get by. He'd just smile and do it in a way where I knew I wouldn't have to pay him back. He was Catholic, very straight-laced with nine kids or something, didn't drink, but he didn't condemn me for the way I lived. He was just amused by my carrying on."

JIM MURRAY: "He said West Virginia was the only state in America still on welfare."

CHICK HEARN: "He said to me once 'I hear you've been using all my lines,' and I said, 'Every one of 'em. I'd love to replace Chick when he retires."

ELGIN BAYLOR: "He was 'a ballet dancer in sneakers.' That was one of Murray's lines."

WILT CHAMBERLAIN: "He had 78 points in a game against us, but we won, and 71 another time, but we won again. When he became a great all-around center his teams won."

JERRY WEST OR OSCAR ROBERTSON?: "West was one of the five greatest players ever. The Big O would bitch at his teammates; he was so great but hard to get along with.

BILL RUSSELL: "Bill Russell was quick like a cat, very smart and surrounded by greats like Havlicek, Ramsay, Heinsohn, Cousy, K.C. and Sam Jones, but he was the key, the difference was Russell. He was better than Chamberlain.

In "Tall Tales" by Terry Pluto, Hundley was quoted saying of Bob Cousy, "He was my idol...he scored 20 points on me in the first half. George Mikan was my coach and Mikan said, 'Hundley, I told you to watch Cousy, didn't I?"

"I said 'I did and he's great, isn't he?""

THE YEAR AL AND GEORGIA STOLE CHRISTMAS

The last pro football game played in L.A.
Greater Los Angeles is the Football Capitol of the World! USC has one of the two greatest traditions in the country. Two major football powers (UCLA and SC) vie for the best high school talent in America, which is in our backyard. They play in the two most famous stadiums in the land. Some of the most mammoth crowds in the sport’s history have showed up in these venues. The Rams and Raiders are part of the hallowed lore of the pro game, and more NFL players hail from the Southland’s high schools, junior colleges and universities than any other section of the United States. So, this is the Football Capitol of the World, right?

Yeah, right!

It has all turned out be a cruel joke, and it reminds me of the Christmas Eve Crime of 1994. On Saturday, December 24, 1994, the Rams and Raiders played the last pro football games in L.A., within a few hours of each other. At Anaheim Stadium, the Rams fell to Washington, 24-21, and at the Coliseum the Raiders bowed to Kansas City, 19-9.

A miserable 25,705 knew the Rams (4-12-0) were headed to St. Louis. Georgia Frontiere had taken over as owner of the club in the 1970s when she…when her husband, Carroll Rosenbloom, died in a mysterious swimming accident. The worst owner in pro sports history, Frontiere has run football’s model organization into the ground.

Tight-lipped Al Davis had not shown his hand yet. The Raiders (9-7-0) had played an exhibition game at their old home, the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. After an erratic year, the Silver-and-Black just missed the Play-Offs. 64,130 had shown up for the Chiefs rivalry and post-season hope. On Christmas Day, Mike Downey’s column was titled, “Coliseum Becomes a Wasteland.” The reference was to the uninspired play of Art Shell’s squad, but also inferred that the team might not be there in 1995. In June, Davis announced that the franchise was returning to Oakland. Since that time, the Raiders have been an also-ran, playing before empty seats and the Bay Area’s version of gangbangers.

1994 had started with a bang, in the form of the Northridge earthquake, but ended in a whimper for both teams. 30 miles down Interstate 5, the smallest crowd ever to watch a Ram game during their wretched stay in Orange County observed a team in total disarray. Mike Reilly’s next-day analysis speculated that change would do them good. As the next four years demonstrated, until that change involves Frontiere taking her place in the Old Gold-Digging Showgirl’s With Evil Mind’s Rest Home, this franchise is doomed to repeat the past. Sort of like a “Twi-Light Zone” episode.

The chanting went like this:
Then:
“Georgia (expletive)!
Georgia (expletive)!”
Then:
(General manager) “John Shaw (expletive)!” “St. Louis (expletive)!"

19-year veteran offensive tackle Jackie Slater put some historical spin on things. “Some of the greatest football ever played was played by the men who sat here in this locker room.”

Slater certainly is one of the all-time greats, and the Rams had some fine performers in Anaheim, but the fact is that the life was sucked out of the club when they left the Coliseum. Bob Waterfield, Norm Van Brocklin, Tom Fears, Jon Arnett, Merlin Olsen, Rosey Grier, Roman Gabriel, Hacksaw Reynolds, Jack Youngblood, and Deacon Jones were among the legends. For
countless Southland kids, the memories of sitting with their dads, watching the Los Angeles Rams play on sunsplashed Sundays in the heart of this incredible city—these memories deserve not to have been discarded by Frontiere.

Boston lost the Braves. So did Milwaukee. L.A. even lost the Chargers. City hopping was not new in 1995, just as it had not been when the Rams did that but pretended not to in 1980. Having the old bimbo...oh, let's face it, she orchestrated Rosenbloom’s demise...be the one to trample on our traditions was just too distasteful to take, however. I mean, at least when Walter O’Malley left Brooklyn, the benefits of such a move for baseball was obvious.

Then there is Al Davis. Unlike Georgia, Al deserves plenty of admiration. He was the guiding force of the American Football League, and in his time his vision of aerial offenses, bump-and-run “intimidation” defense, combined with an amazing way of determining whether veteran players could still contribute, all led football people to conclude that the Man In Black was a genius. Genius is a tough word to apply to anybody, especially in sports and politics. To say that time passed Al by is too simple an explanation. He had great players in L.A.: Jim Plunkett, Marcus Allen and Howie Long formed the core of talented mid-'80s squads. By 1994 he was still just as committed, worked just as hard, and put in as much time as ever. For whatever reason, the Raiders had not fielded a truly quality team since Plunkett’s 1985 squad. Yes, they made it to the A.F.C. championship game in 1990, but they also lost at Buffalo, 50-7.

Davis’ decision six months later to move back to Oakland was based more on an intrinsic feeling that Oakland crowds would spur the players to greater achievements. What he found out is that East Bay fans are almost as front running as their west-of-the-bridge counterparts. The talent level of the Raider Girls took a nose dive, too.

Los Angelenos have yawned their way through the past four seasons. This is not Nashville or Charlotte. People here are laid back. We take a lot of heat because of our attitude. However, anybody who has ever sat in the Coliseum when 90,000 fans are really into it can tell you that the L.A. football fan may have seen it all, but we also recognize real quality. Give us a state-of-the-art stadium and occupy it with a modern, committed champion for the next millennium, and…

…hey, if they build it, we will come!

**Sidebar: A CHECKERED, YET GLORIOUS, HISTORY**

George Halas, Curly Lambeau, and Jim Thorpe got together in the showroom of a Canton car dealership and formed the N.F.L. in 1920. Los Angeles was a charter franchise in name only. They never played a home game in L.A. Ollie Matson was one of pro football’s first black stars, playing for the Los Angeles Dons. In 1946, the Los Angeles Rams started play in the All-American Football League, and the 49er rivalry was born. They merged into the N.F.L. after the 1951 season. In the 1960s and '70s The Fearsome Foursome dominated. Coach’s George Allen, Tommy Prothro and Chuck Knox, and general manager Don Klosterman molded one of the top organizations in terms of scouting, player development and marketing. The 1975 Rams (12-2-0) were probably the finest team not to reach the Super Bowl. Georgia Frontiere, the worst sports owner in history, had Carroll Rosenbloom, uh, taken care of, and that ended that tradition. Al Davis brought the Raiders to the Coliseum in 1982. In ’83 they won the Super Bowl. His outdated style and the gang element made attending a Raider game a miserable experience by 1994, though.
"THE BEST THAT I CAN BE"

Rafer Johnson beat his friend, UCLA's C.K. Yang, to set a world decathlon record in Rome.

Rafer Johnson was like a Greek god who knew first-hand, as Homer wrote, that "there is no greater glory that can befall a man than what he achieves with the speed of his feet or the strength of his hands."

Johnson, a black man and civil rights symbol, is also a heroic patriot and humble Christian.

A product of Kingsburg, California, his younger brother is Jimmy Johnson, a UCLA football star and All-Pro with the 49ers, who regarded him as is hero after Rafer saved him from drowning when they were kids.

Johnson was UCLA's student body president, competing for legendary track coach Ducky Drake, and he placed second in the 1956 Olympic decathlon at Melbourne. After his college eligibility ended, he trained alongside another Bruin decathlete, C.K. Yang of Taiwan. They were friends, pushing each other while competing in international competitions against the formidable Vasily Kuznetsov of the Soviet Union.

"C.K. taught me about the pole vault, which he set the world record in," Johnson said. "I helped him, too. He started lifting weights to gain the kind of strength I had."

Johnson was chosen to carry the U.S. flag at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

"I was called a credit to my race," he recalled in his book, "The Best That I Can Be", "when I wanted to be a credit to my entire community. I would rather strive to be the greatest Christian in the world than the greatest athlete."

Johnson, Yang and Kuznetsov had all achieved world records, with Johnson setting it last at the Olympic Trials in Eugene, Oregon.

As the result of Red China's effort to oust Taiwan, Yang competed for Formosa, the embattled island's original name.

The political and social ramifications in Rome included a Taiwanese citizen competing in the face of Chinese threats; a white man vs. a black man vs. an Oriental; a couple of friendly-yet-competitive UCLA teammates; America vs. Russia, East vs. West, and capitalism vs. Communism--all set against the televised backdrop of the Cold War, the Space Race, the Kennedy/Nixon campaign, and the civil rights struggle.

"We each wanted the other guy to do well," said Johnson, "but we wanted even more to win."

In a photo op with Kuznetsov, Johnson insisted his friend, Yang, be included, angering the Chinese and Soviets.

"In sports we do not carry on a cold war," said Kuznetsov, a remark that probably made Nikita Kruschev's veins expand four inches.

In the muggy Italian summer heat, four false starts drained Johnson in the 100 meters. His 10.9 was three-tenths of a second less than his Trials time, a 132-point scoring differential.

After a 24-foot long jump, Johnson went to lunch ahead of Kuznetsov but trailing Yang by 130 points.
Johnson put the shot 52 feet to Yang's 44 to lead by 143 as the sky grew ominously dark. After sleeping during a rain delay, he came out at night to high jump 6' 3/4"", but Yang topped it by two inches to narrow the lead to 75.

At 11 PM, running in puddles, Yang edged him in the 400 meters, 48.3 to 48.1. After a 15-hour day, they slumped to bed, Johnson ahead by a razor-thin 55 points.

Johnson slept from 1 to 6 AM.

"The pressure inside me was intense," he recalled.

The hurdles were all Yang, 14.6 to 15.3 to take the lead by 62. It was now obvious Kuznetsov could not keep pace.

"I had never felt as much pressure as I did before the discus throw," Johnson said of his "best single effort," 159' 1", to regain the lead.

Yang pole-vaulted 14' 1 1/4" to Johnson's 13.5' 1/4". Johnson by 22.

Johnson's javelin toss was six feet better than Yang, so it all came down to the 1500 meters.

Before the race, Yang and Johnson went separately to Drake, who with perfect impartiality gave both athletes the advice they needed to win.

Yang, a much better distance runner, was now favored. Under a full moon, before what was left of a big crowd on a muggy night not unlike what Johnson was used to in Central California, he reached back for that extra effort the great ones seem to find.

Johnson stuck with Yang like a shadow, despite an increased pace. He dogged him stride for stride, on his inside shoulder, a couple steps behind. On the third lap Yang tried to break Johnson's will with an all-out sprint, but Rafer, his strength almost gone, dipped "into my last dregs of energy."

Johnson finished two strides and 1.2 seconds behind his friend, who had needed to win by 10 seconds to win. Johnson going for and winning the Gold remains one of the greatest moments in Olympic history.

He went on to a fine business career, carried the torch at the 1984 LA Games, and is now an elder statesman of sports and society.

THEY WERE JUST WILD ABOUT HARRY

The legendary Cubs and White Sox announcer lives on in the hearts of baseball fans.

Harry Caray remembered it this way:

"My car stalled outside the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, where I used to spend a lot of time. I was sitting there, about four in the morning, cursing my bad luck, when these two guys came up to me. Each of them stuck a gun in my ribs. Hoo boy! Then one of them said, 'Hey, Harry. It's you, isn't it? What're you doing out this late? Are you one of us?' I'd been a broadcaster in St. Louis for 25 years, you know, so I was pretty well known there. Well, this guy put his gun away and we just stood there jawing about baseball. They forgot they were mugging me. We were all just fans. I signed a couple of autographs and they took off without taking a nickel."

Before Caray was a legend in Chicago, he was a legend in St. Louis, where he was fired as Cardinals announcer after the 1969 season. It seems that Harry fell from grace because he was
playing fast and loose with a young woman who had married into the August A. Busch clan, thereby imperiling the marriage. Harry never answered the tawdry allegations. Still others rumored (unconfirmed) that the woman was actually Busch's wife.

"I'd rather have people believing the rumor and have my middle-aged ego inflated than deny it and keep my job," was Harry's non-denial denial.

Rick Monday, who played for the Cubs, was on the Oakland A's the one year (1970) that Harry was an announcer for Charlie Finley.

"One day we were waiting in the bus outside the ballpark," Mondays recalls. "Somebody said the only one we were waiting for was Harry. One of the players got impatient and said 'Oh, Harry told me to say he's taking a cab.' So the bus takes off without him, and Harry comes out, no bus. He buried that guy on the air, just buried him. Later he tipped a skycap at the airport a hundred bucks to have the guys' bags shipped to Tokyo."

Harry could restore his affections for a player just as easily. These shifts in attitude did not always sit well with players, who prefer to think of announcers as part of a team. Harry's relations with former White Sox manager Chuck Tanner were frequently strained. Tanner disapproved of Harry's on-air jabs, and was particularly chafed at his popularity with the fans.

No Chicago summer was complete without Harry, banana daiquiri in hand, making his early-morning rounds in the drinking quarter where State and Rush Streets converge. Revelers would follow him, chanting his name. Cabdrivers would stall traffic to hail him. Barflies would call "Hey, Harry" as if he were their best friend. Harry's response was usually an engaging and familiar, "Hiya, sweetheart" for the ladies, and "Whaddaya say, pal" for the dudes. "You're the greatest." "Hey, Harry, say hello to the people of the world." It was like Norm in "Cheers", only the bar was the whole city of Chicago, north and south side. Prostitutes would stop him for autographs.

Harry would call players on the phone, leaving the message not that "Harry called," but rather he would give the name of the club owner so as to assure a return call. The biggest sin a player could commit, in Harry's eyes, was to disparage the fans. This made him popular with fans, not always with players.

Harry was married numerous times. His real wife was baseball. His tag line was "Ho-lee Cow." He sang "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" during the seventh inning stretch. He would lean out of the broadcast booth to communicate with fans. Bill Veeck, the former White Sox announcer, thought Harry fit in with his fans' raucous style (remember "Disco Demolition Night"?), and that he would not fit in with the Cubs. Of course, when Harry made the switch from Comiskey to Wrigley, he was deified by the Cubbie faithful. It seems that he was made to order for Chicago's entertaining but usually not-successful teams. Harry was, to be honest, the most unprepared announcer in the game, bungling names and facts without a care in the world.

Still, there is no doubt that Harry was responsible for raising attendance on the north and south sides, which is what really counts. On Saturdays, he did his broadcasts from among the "bleacher bums," beer in hand. Harry represented something the game no longer has. The new corporate owners would no more tolerate his antics than they would keep a low-performing stock in their portfolios.

Outside of Ernie Banks and Michael Jordan, Harry Caray will live on as one of the most popular sports figures in the city's history.
THE WONDER TEAMS

It is sometimes hard for people who live in California to imagine that at one time the Golden State was considered the Prairies, the Hinterlands, Way Out There (this was before we were Way Out There in a psychedelic sense). Prior to the advent of jet travel, California was a place of curiosity for Easterners who openly wondered how people could hope to maintain discipline and work ethic in a place where you could get a suntan in the winter.

Before California became a trendsetter in fashion and style, in the years preceding World War II, and prior to the population growth that created Presidential electoral juggernauts; even before Hollywood opened the world's eyes to what this state was all about, sports was our link to the rest of the country.

In the first half of the 1920s, the University of California at Berkeley was the home to a football dynasty that some purists say is the greatest team of all-time. They were called the Wonder Teams.

Ernest Hemingway and Gertrude Stein wrote about the Lost Generation, American ex-patriates, often physically ruined from their ordeals on the battlefields of France, whose cynical attitudes in the 1920s would be embodied also in the work of F. Scott Fitzgerald. However, for boys still at their physical peak, and too young to have been thrust into the hellfire of Belleau Wood or the Charlemagne Valley, football was still a pure and idealistic pastime. It was these fellows who would make up the Wonder Teams.

Coach Andy Smith was in his fourth year at Berkeley. Clarence M. "Nibs" Price, who would become well known as a basketball coach, had gone to Berkeley to assist Smith in 1918, and his appearance was most fortunate for the blue and gold. He had been a high school coach in San Diego, and had many contacts to exploit in Southern California. Recruiting was not the "science" that it is today, but Nibs was one of the first great "recruiting coordinators." He was responsible for bringing one of the best crop of freshmen players ever to arrive at any school. Many were from the Southland.

The best of them was Harold P. "Brick" Muller.
The 1919 Bear Cubs frosh team compiled a 10-1 record, pasting Stanford 47-0. Their one loss was by 13-12 to the University of Nevada varsity. The Wonder Team had arrived!

From 1919-20, President Woodrow Wilson suffered a stunning defeat when the U.S. Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, and his dream-child, the League of Nations, went down for the count. Towards the end of his tenure, Wilson suffered health problems, and his wife, Edith, ran the country (sound familiar?). European revenge backed Germany into a corner, from which National Socialism would eventually emerge. With the men off fighting The Kaiser, American women had forced prohibition and given themselves the right to vote (the rascals), and the Roaring '20s would describe a decade of decadence.
"Roaring" was also a good word to describe the football fortunes at California. Beginning with their 1920 schedule, the Golden Bears did not lose a football game for five full seasons. Blessed with some of the most remarkable talent ever assembled on one team, Smith molded some of the greatest squads in the history of the collegiate game. No discussion of great college football teams is complete without inclusion of the Wonder Teams.

Smith was a firebrand who almost had broken up the team before they started, however. In 1919, he practiced the freshmen with the varsity in brutal sessions, amid a torrent of verbal abuse. The freshmen, most of whom had been recruited from Southern California by Price, decided enough was enough, and decided to leave. In the summer of 1920, Smith traveled to Bakersfield with Price to meet with the leader of the revolt, Charley Erb. Erb talked Smith out of holding any more "elimination" practices, the team stayed together, and the resulting balance of political power foreshadowed the modern coach/player dilemma.

In 1920, Cal shut out the Olympic Club, 21-0, beat the Mare Island Marines, 88-0, and then massacred St. Mary's, 127-0. The rest of the schedule was 79-7 over Nevada; 63-0 over Utah; 17-7 over the Oregon Aggies; 49-0 over Washington State; 38-0 over Stanford; and 28-0 over Ohio State in the Rose Bowl.

8-0-0. 514 points for Cal against 14 for their opponents.
Only two starters graduated, and in 1921 Cal again ran the field undefeated. Muller was a First Team Walter Camp All-American, and his bust can now be found in the Hall of Fame.

The Bears dominated West Coast football until Pop Warner's Stanford team, led by Ernie Nevers and Adam Walsh, broke the string. Cal continued to have a strong program, winning the National Championship in 1937 and making three Rose Bowl appearances after the war. Smith became a legend, and when he passed away, a fly-by delivered his ashes over Memorial Stadium.

THE DODGERS LAST HURRAH

The Los Angeles Dodgers received a real shot in the arm when hard-hitting outfielder Kirk Gibson signed a free agent contract prior to the 1988 season. Gibson hit 25 homers and drove in 76 runs that summer, stats that pale in comparison to today’s sluggers, but it was Gibson’s team that went all the way. Gibson hated to lose, he played in pain, he played hard every inning of every game, and he saw to it that his teammates did, too. A look at the Dodgers’ offensive numbers begs the question, How did these guys finish in first place? The answer can be summarized in the words of the late, great Connie Mack, who once said, “pitching is 90 percent of the game.”

Dodger tradition was carried on by a corp of hard-throwing horses who gave them a lot of innings. Tim Belcher brought high heat, going 12-6 with a 2.91 e.r.a. U.C.L.A.’s Tim Leary finished 17-11, also with a 2.91 e.r.a.

With all due respect for Gibson, who won the award, the Most Valuable Player in the National League that year was pitcher Orel Hershisher. A fine pitcher over his career, explaining exactly
what got into him *that* year is surely beyond my expertise. He had one of those “mystery seasons,” like Dean Chance in 1964, or Ron Guidry in 1978; guys with solid ability who for one year are absolutely untouchable.

That was Orel. By mid-season, he was having a good year, but Cincinnati left-hander Danny Jackson was the frontrunner for the Cy Young award. Then Hershisher started throwing shutouts. A bio-mechanics expert might point to finger pressure, release point, the muscles and tendons in his right arm, but whatever it was, you cannot bottle it. The baseball’s Hershisher threw had extraordinary spin, delivered three-quarter arm, creating a terrific sinking action so that wood bats meeting one of his natural sinkers had the effect seemingly of meeting up with a shot-put. Hershisher would throw a sinker to a right-handed hitter that would break in with the same kind force as a slider from a southpaw like Carlton. The utterly unexplainable aspect of it all was that no matter how much movement the ball had, Hershisher could throw it for pinpoint corner strikes in such way as to make pitching seem the easiest activity in the world.

For the last two months of the regular season it went on like that, and when it was over, Hershisher had thrown 59 straight scoreless innings, breaking Don Drysdale’s Major League record. If anybody had any doubt that Hershisher and his club were a team of destiny, Orel’s final start at San Diego would remove all questions. He needed 10 innings for the record, so it appeared that he would have to pitch a shutout, then wait until 1989 to break the mark. Naturally, after nine innings the score was conveniently tied at 0-0, allowing Hershisher to pitch a scoreless tenth, breaking the record en route to a 23-8 record and the Cy Young award.

The 94-67 Dodgers hosted the 102-victory Mets in the Championship Series opener, and the New Yorkers were already talking about playing the vaunted Oakland A’s in the World Series. For eight innings, Hershisher’s sinker was *insane*. He could knock the eyelash off a fly at 60 feet, six inches, and led 2-0. In the ninth, New York scored three times against relievers and won it. If ever a team should have been mentally beaten, it was the Dodgers, but the Blue Crew won game two. Hershisher started the third game, left leading in the seventh, but again the bullpen blew it. In a pivotal game four, Mike Scioscia belted a two-run game-tying homer off Dwight Gooden at Shea Stadium, followed by Gibson’s twelfth inning blast to win it, 5-4. Series M.V.P. Hershisher was as good as good can be in the 6-0 game seven clincher at Dodger Stadium. Few pitchers have so dominated good hitters in such important games: Koufax vs. the Twins in ’65, Gibson striking out 17 Tigers in ’68, and now Orel Hershisher.

Despite Jose Canseco’s first inning grand slam for Oakland in World Series’ game one, L.A. did not have an ounce of quit, and trailed only 4-3 in the ninth against ace closer Dennis Eckersley. With two out and none on, Mike Davis somehow drew a walk against the control expert Eck. How Eckersley managed to throw four wide ones against the non-threat Davis remains, like much of that season, a mystery.

Gibson had a bum knee, his career was effectively already over, but he was called on to pinch-hit. Why did Lasorda not use him sooner, like when Davis was up there with two outs, and it was now-or-never? For whatever reason, and that year the reasons just added up right, Tommy waited. Eckersley dominated Gibby up to a two-strike count, his moving, blazing fastball almost
knocking the bat out of Kirk’s hands. The ball Gibson hit out of the park to win it was almost in the dirt. The same hand of destiny that controlled Hershisher’s 10-inning breaking of Drysdale’s record somehow lifted, golf swing-style, that baseball into the right field pavilion.

The rest, of course, was quite predictable at that point. On Sunday night, Hershisher threw a three-hit shutout. By this time, just getting a hit off the man almost seemed worthy of headlines the same size as, say “KENNEDY MURDER SOLVED.”

By the time Hershisher wrapped up a complete game, four-hit victory to give Los Angeles a 4-1 Series victory and earn himself the classic’s Most Valuable Player award, the Oakland fans were reduced to watching and admiring the guy, like the Japanese reaction to MacArthur.

CHANGES

Change, as they say, is good. Changed seemed to be a good thing in the winter of 1957-58 for Roy Campanella, the club’s star catcher since 1949. He had to be flexible. Campy had endured the hardships of the old Negro Leagues, then faced further, more difficult challenges following in Jackie Robinson’s footsteps.

Walter O’Malley moved the Bums from a stadium where Campanella had hit 242 home runs, but now, what was this? The Dodgers would be playing in a football stadium, the Coliseum – and word was that the left field fence was little league distance.

Campanella had learned to adapt because he had to, and after winning three National League MVP awards between 1951 and 1955, he was ready for a new challenge. The new challenge was not just about the impending move to L.A. At age 37, Campanella had become a small businessman. He had bought a liquor store in suburban New York, and on an ice-cold January night in 1958, after working the night shift, Roy got in his car for the drive home. He never made it.

His car skidded off the road, ramming into a tree, and the great athlete, a man with cat-like reflexes and the most powerful throwing arm on the senior circuit, was paralyzed.

Change can be tough to swallow. Campanella went through the grueling process of rehab, but along the way discovered something special. Some time between January 1958 and May 1959, Roy Campanella went from being a suicidal paraplegic, whose wife left him because she could not handle his depressions, to learning that it’s good to be alive. In the process, his nurse fell in love with him. They call that the Florence Nightengale effect, and in Roy’s case change again was very good. They were married shortly thereafter.

Baseball is rooted in the Eastern mythology of New York City. Cooperstown is a few hours away, and in the 1950s the Yankees, Giants and Dodgers were building their own wings at the Hall of Fame, with three marquee center fielders named Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle and Duke Snider. Los Angeles was, well... Hollywood. A nice place visit, you might even want to livethere, but not to be taken seriously, as in major League seriously.

Perhaps it was on May 7, 1959, that the world first took took Los Angeles Major League seriously. When former teammate Pee Wee Reese rolled Campy out to home plate, the lights dimmed, and 93,103 fans of the human spirit lit lighters, giving the Coliseum a Heavenly appearance, paying a very moving tribute to a man who had played his entire career 3,000 miles away.
They adopted Roy Campanella as one of their own, and they adopted a club that had finished in seventh place in 1958. The Dodgers would go on to break the 90,000 attendance mark several times during their stay in Exposition Park – the ’59 All-Star Game, and in three games vs. the “go-go” Chisox in that year’s fall Classic. Whether the players were inspired by Campy and their adopted hometown to win the World Championship is grist for speculation, and the stuff of legend.

Duke Snider speculated on what-might-have-been.
“If it hadn’t been for the accident,” Snider once said, “I think Roy would have played another year or two and then been the first black manager.”

Campanella’s life was much more than wins, losses and MVP awards. Another former Dodger, pitcher Joe Black, remembers Hall of Famer Campy this way: “To me, he was the ultimate role model.”

Roy’s life was memorialized first in his uplifting autobiography, *It’s Good To Be Alive*, and later in a television movie of the same name, starring Paul Winfield. Change also came in the form of the West Coast move, which Campy eventually made after all.

He became a fixture at Dodger Stadium, working for the club in an advisory capacity until he passed away from natural causes in 1993.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA SPORTS**

*These are mostly a culmination of my columns at the San Francisco Examiner.*

**A KING WALKS AMONGST US**

The man is an artist. The Da Vinci, Michelangelo or Frank Lloyd Wright of broadcasting.

Bill King is the long-time announcer for the Oakland A’s, and before that the voice of the Raiders, Warriors, Giants, and California Golden Bears. He has one of the most recognizable deliveries in sport. The goateed Sausalito resident is a highly recognizable Bay Area figure who has even been stopped and asked if he is the devil.

The man is a talkative angel.

“I always liked to talk,” says the Bloomington, Illinois native of how he got his start in broadcasting with the Armed Forces Radio Network, while stationed in the Marianas Islands after World War II.

“It was great duty. I guess you could say I was the `Robin Williams of Guam,’” say King, referring to Williams’ role as Adrian Cronauer in “Good Morning, Vietnam” (1987).

Like so many veterans, King migrated to California, and was the right man in the right spot when the Giants brought Major League baseball to San Francisco.

“I worked with Russ Hodges and Lon Simmons on Giants’ games on KSFO,” recalls King, as well as Cal games, then the Raiders and Golden State Warriors.

“Football by far is the hardest sport to do,” he says. “Basketball is the easiest. In baseball, you have to be careful when you open your mouth not to show how stupid you are.”
King announced California football as well as the 1960 Bears’ National Championship basketball team, coached by the legendary Pete Newell.

King achieved his most lasting fame announcing the most dramatic moments of the most exciting team in pro football history, the Al Davis Oakland Raiders of the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s. He followed the team to Los Angeles from 1982 to ’94, but left in a dispute with Davis when the team returned to Oakland in 1995.

“Davis is a fascinating man,” King says of the mysterious Raiders’ owner. “He coached and was Commissioner of the AFL.”

Was Davis the “genius” behind the wide-open passing game of the old American Football League?

“Sid Gilman was the real force of the new offensive philosophy of the AFL,” exclaims King of the former San Diego Chargers’ coach, “but Al absorbed those philosophies. Interestingly, though, nobody won with over 40 passes in those days.”

In 1970 back-up quarterback George Blanda passed and kicked the team to a series of miraculous wins, and King’s legend was made when he said “George Blanda is King of the World” after he kicked a long field goal to beat Cleveland. His “Wells to the right, Beletnikoff slot left” was a trademark, too, but two phrases define King’s football broadcasts.

One stems from the 1974 AFC Play-Off win over Miami, when he stated “Raiders: Two yards from the Promised Land” just before Clarence Davis’ touchdown grab gave them victory. The other is “Holy Toledo,” which King used mostly to described touchdowns. “It’s better than saying ‘holy sh-t,’” is King’s explanation.

“Ken Stabler was a delight,” Kings says of Snake. “He’s the only athlete I’ve ever known who had no fear of failure. He’s the converse of Dennis Eckersley, who like most athletes drove himself through fear of failure.

“The Raiders’ party scene was over-hyped, but I will say that their rowdiness at the El Rancho Tropicana in Santa Rosa lived up to the legend. John Madden was fairly true to the image of him, but he was totally absorbed in his job. Now, he truly loves what he does, because he’s glad not to have to have the tunnel vision required of a head coach.”

King is a literate man who makes references to the likes of Aristotle and Fitzgerald, among others, but he “cannot explain what comes out of my mouth.”

King has seen all the great ones.

“Rick Barry is intelligent and has a huge ego,” Kings says, “but I’m always sorry when I hear him say some of the disparaging things that get him in trouble.”

King supports Ray Guy as a Football Hall of Famer, but is not sure of Stabler’s qualifications.

One thing is for sure. King’s has Hall of Fame credentials in at least two sports.

BIG UNIT WAS BAY AREA BOY OF SUMMER

This is one of my favorite articles. I knew Randy Johnson at USC and was particularly amused by the reaction of Matt Williams and Mike Morgan when I sat in his chair. It is also worth noting that Johnson’s chair is just like the one Barry Bonds has at Pac Bell Park, but nobody ever gives the Unit a hard time about it.
PHOENIX – He is the Paul Bunyan of baseball. In the modern day version of David vs. Goliath, he is Goliath. This guy is not Everyman. He is to pitching what Rommel was to desert combat, Chuck Yeager to aviation, Einstein to quantum theory.
Randy Johnson’s natural skills make him stand out above and beyond the normal, the average, and the humdrum.
Still, this Frankenstein of baseball, this 6-10 millionaire <I>wunderkind</I> who is so different, so skilled, so gifted, is in fact very much like the rest of us.

The chair
It had been a few years since I last saw Randy Johnson, but I attended USC with him, and when I approached him in the locker room and asked if he had a few minutes, he said, “Of course I do.”

Now, Johnson has a comfortable recliner next to his locker at Bank One Ballpark in Phoenix, but he was not sitting in it.
“Do you mind if I sit here?” I inquired.
He nodded “sure,” and so I did.
Apparently, the recliner is not available to just anybody. Pitcher Mike Morgan dropped by, opened a nearby refrigerator, and offered me a beer.
“No thanks,” I said. Gee, what a nice guy.
“Can I get you a sandwich?” asks Matt Williams.
Wait a minute! I am getting goofed on by the Diamondbacks.
“I’m not supposed to be sitting in your chair, am I?” I ask the Big Unit.
He smiles.
“You know what?” he says. “Us Trojans stick together. You can sit anywhere you like.”
You gotta love the Good Ol’ Boy Network. I conduct the interview, which lasts the better part of 45 minutes, sitting in the recliner.
It eventually got so comfortable I almost told Morgan that I had reconsidered that offer of a cold brew.

The conversation centers not on Johnson’s great career statistics, or “what is it like to be Randy Johnson?”, which seems to be the semi-boring focus of 99 percent of modern-day sports interviews. At least not the Randy Johnson we see on TV. No, it is time to take a trip down Memory Lane, to The Big Unit’s roots.

Bercovich Furniture
When the punditocracy of baseball talks about a guy’s background, they often refer to the high school he played at. High school baseball is very much a rite of passage, as American as apple pie. However, it may not be the place where a baseball player best hones his budding skills. The prep season usually starts when the weather is colder, wetter. The season goes about
30 games, give or take, and outside interests like school, girls, friends, and cliques can encroach on ones’ concentration.

Summer ball is where progress is made. It can be American Legion, Connie Mack, Joe DiMaggio or Senior Babe Ruth League. Kids play more games than during the high school season. They travel, they face great competition, and the team itself often draws from a larger population base than the school, making for an “area all-star” concept.

The weather is warm. The players have fewer distractions in the summer. They are more skilled by August than they were in May.

Years ago, there was a team in Baltimore called Mama Leone’s. The sponsor was, as you can guess, an Italian restaurant. Reggie Jackson played for Leone’s. Sports Illustrated wrote an article about them. Today, if you are a top prospect in Southern California, you might travel 30 miles or so to play for Long Beach’s Connie Mack team at Blair Field, or the Orange County Dogs.

In the 1970s and ‘80s, such a team played hard, fast baseball at Laney College in Oakland, and on dusty ball fields from one end of the Bay Area to the other – and beyond.

They were called Bercovich Furniture. If that name sounds familiar, it is because Mr. Bercovich, who ran a furniture store (and maybe a few other things) was a close, personal friend of Raiders’ owner Al Davis. Whenever talk would break out about new stadium financing, or a re-shuffling of the ownership group, this guy Berkovich’s name would pop up. You never saw his picture. He was not a media dude, but he was a mover and a shaker.

Maybe he owned some land, or had some parking lots that could be converted into the Raiders new football palace. Whatever. He had money, he loved sports, and he was connected to the powers-that-be.

He also liked to see young athletes prosper.

Berkovich had the dough. Ray Luce knew the game. Luce had passion for it. Luce ran Bercovich Furniture for years. Often, they played double-headers – in different cities. Maybe an afternoon game at Laney, then a nightcap in Walnut Creek. Heck, they played triple headers. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Luce’s team might play 120 games!

Luce loved baseball and kids. He liked to be around them. The guys who played for him swear by him. One of those guys was a very tall, thin southpaw who had been born in Walnut Creek, and was pitching at Livermore High School.

“Yes, we’d play three games a day,” recalled Johnson. “We’d play in Hayward, we’d play in Oakland. We’d play wherever there was a game and a team to play against. It was a Bay Area All-Star team. Jack Del Rio played for us. Don Wakematsu, Doug Henry, Kevin Maas. We had guys from Berkeley. Guys would travel to play, or move in from outside the area.”

Wakematsu and Henry were stars at Tennyson High in Hayward who went on star at Arizona State. Henry, of course, has been a top relief pitcher for years, including productive seasons with the Giants. Del Rio starred in baseball, basketball and football at Hayward High, and led Southern Cal to the 1985 Rose Bowl victory before playing linebacker for the Minnesota Vikings.

Mass, from Oakland’s Bishop O’Dowd High School, played at the University of California and, for a couple of seasons at Yankee Stadium in the early 1990s, looked like the next Babe Ruth.

“It was the best team I’ve ever been on,” says Johnson, obviously making this reference within context. “The caliber of ball was excellent, and it was a lot of fun.”
Another Bay Area left-hander, Bill “Spaceman” Lee, once made a similar statement when he said the best team he ever saw was “either the 1968 USC Trojans, or any Taiwan little league team.” Space did concede that the 1975 Cincinnati Reds could compete in this league, as well.

Speaking of USC, that is where Mr. Johnson went next. You hear about these players who turn down millions of George Steinbrenner’s or Ted Turner’s dollars to play college ball at USC or Stanford. This must have been the case for Randy, right?

Not quite.

“Johnson was not the best pitcher on the team,” says former Berkovich teammate Bruno Caravalho, who also played with him at USC.

“Luce would have us travel all over the Bay Area,” says Johnson, “and beyond the Bay Area. We’d go to the Wine Country, the Central Valley, anywhere. My Dad would often drive me. It was a bit of a haul, but Dad would take me to the games. I really appreciate my Dad. He played mostly rec league softball, but he saw that I had potential ability.

“Luce was mostly a good organizer. He wasn’t the greatest manager I ever played for, but there’s no doubt he knew how to put a good team together.”

Livermore: Cy Young award capitol

Livermore, California is a place known mostly for its laboratory, where nuclear weapons are worked on by government scientists. Other than that, it is just down the road from Altamont, where The Rolling Stones’ held their infamous free concert in 1970, which resulted in a Hell’s Angel stabbing a fan.

Today, it has become a bedroom community, and BART makes it easier for its residents to commute to San Francisco or Oakland.

“It was a small town,” recalls Johnson. “At least, it seemed like a small town. It’s 40 or 50,000, but it’s a place where you are removed from city life. It was pretty rural.”

The Big Unit was more of a farm boy type, not a sophisticate from the San Francisco Bay Area. He reflected what Livermore was all about. Still, little old Livermore has produced more Cy Young awards than any town of comparable size in America. Sure, Johnson has three, but Mark Davis, a left-hander out of Granada High, won one in 1989 at San Diego.

“I never thought about that,” says Johnson. “I remember when Davis was at Granada, that was a few years before me, and I’d go to see him pitch.”

Johnson went 4-4 at Livermore High in 1982, but the Cowboys did not give him much support. His 1.65 ERA and 121 strikeouts in 66 1/3 innings pitched in 1982 landed him All-East Bay Athletic League and All-County honors. Atlanta (yes, Turner’s team) made him their fourth round draft choice. USC came around with a scholarship offer.

"I thought he was a little wacky."

Johnson discussed his future with his dad. They both knew that he was a work in progress, a project.

Heck, this guy was the Hoover Damn. The Tennessee Valley Authority. The Pyramids. Minor league baseball might have eaten him alive, so it was decided that the University of Southern California, a national powerhouse led by the greatest collegiate coach of all times, Raoul “Rod” Dedeaux, would be the best place for him to hone not just his diamond skills, but his life skills, too.
Dedeaux, winner of 10 National Championships, is to his sport what John Wooden is to his. This guy is a genius, right? He must be a coach who combined the discipline of Vince Lombardi, the tact of Mike Krzyzewski, and the strategic thinking of…Napoleon.

“I thought he was kind of wacky,” says Randy.

Some guys just hang on too long, and that seems to have been Rod’s case.

“He was the best baseball man I ever played for,” said Lee, who starred at USC 15 years before Johnson arrived. “He didn’t look like a ballplayer, but he had eyes in the back of his head. He knew every play that would happen before it happened. He was in the seventh inning when the game was in the third.”

“Rod never really was on hand,” says Johnson of the Dedeaux he played for. (Assistant coach) “Keith Brown ran the program. I mean, he surrounded himself with good baseball people, and he was a fun guy who I enjoyed playing for. I still run into Rod in LA and it’s always nice to see him.”

After playing a couple years of minor league ball, I was finishing up my degree at USC during this period. While Dedeaux was at the top of his game during Spaceman’s era, he was pushing retirement during the Unit’s time. Dedeaux, a millionaire trucking executive who “moonlighted” as SC’s coach for a dollar a year out of love, had never been a full-time collegiate coach. By the 1980s, I recall him showing up for games late, sometimes after attending a cocktail party.

Still, the Trojans had one of the most talented college baseball teams ever assembled. Aside from Johnson, the Trojans had a first baseman named Mark McGwire.

In the entire history of this great game, it can be argued that the most intimidating offensive player ever is McGwire, and the most intimidating pitcher is Johnson.

So, naturally, facing mere college opponents wearing uniforms that read “UCLA,” “Arizona State” and “Fresno State,” these two larger-than-life diamond gods led Troy to unheard of heights of glory!?

Actually, they lost in the NCAA Regionals – when they even made the play-offs.

“I wished I’d learned more,” Johnson says of his college career (1983-85). “I was still a project when I left.”

The project was also a lefty. A California lefty. The connotations of what this means go back a long way. Rodeo’s Lefty Gomez, aside from being a Hall of Famer with the Yankees, was known as “El Goofy”.

Spaceman was, well, Spaceman…the King of Flaky Lefties.

It is hard to pin Johnson down, but Dedeaux recalls him this way: “Randy was one of the most colorful personalities in college baseball,” says the man who, now retired, is still a familiar figure at SC and Dodger games. “But he also had the ability to go along with it. He was an excellent competitor, and had a Major League fastball. He always provided an exciting performance.”

Johnson may not have been Mark Fydrych, or even Turk Wendell, but he was a team cheerleader who attracted attention on the hill. He would talk to himself, frequently ran around the infield shouting encouragement to teammates, and congratulated himself for good pitches.
Big Mac was all he was cracked up to be, a two-time All-American, College Player of the Year in 1984, and an Olympian. It was not just Mac and the Unit, either. Del Rio was a catcher on those teams, and a good ballplayer, too. Pitcher Sid Akins was an Olympian. Brad Brink would pitch in the big leagues. Randy Robertson and Mickey Meister were talented, hard-throwing right-handers. Phil Smith and lefty Bob Gunnarsson were tough pitchers. Even the pitching coach, Bill Bordley, had pitched in the Majors and had once been considered the best college pitcher ever (today, Bordley is a Secret Service agent who was assigned the Chelsea Clinton detail at Stanford).

Aside from McGwire, SC had offense, in the form of third baseman Craig Stevenson, spray-hitting outfielder Alby Silvera, and power threats Reggie Montgomery and John Wallace.

With all this talent at his disposal, Dedeaux could not get his club into the NCAAs in 1983, and they were blown out in the Regionals the next two seasons. After going 5-0 as a freshman, Johnson was statistically mediocre in 1984 and ‘85, and this reflected his team’s enigmatic performance.

“I never gave that much thought to the fact that Mac and I were teammates,” says Johnson, “and now we’re so-called ‘dominant’ players. He’s a home run threat now, and he was then. He has size, and ability.

“The fact we didn’t get into the College World Series was disappointing. You need pitching. We had talented pitchers – Akins, Brinks, Meister, Gunnarsson – but we didn’t pitch well in the Regionals. We were not as outstanding as you have to be to win at that level. Pitching wins games. I had height and ability, but I was a long way from where I am now.”

A rapport with other power pitchers

Johnson’s professional career is well documented. He pitched for Montreal, and came into his own in Seattle. He has dominated the game in a way few pitchers ever have, and he also had a connection with power pitchers of previous eras.

“I talk to Tom Seaver when the Mets come to town,” says Johnson. Seaver starred at USC before becoming a superstar with the Mets, and now is a TV broadcaster in New York.

“I talked to Nolan Ryan a few times. I have rapport with guys like that. They have the same make-up that I do. As a pitcher, if you have the ability to talk to guys who’ve been there before you, that’s just great. I’ve seen Sandy Koufax a few times, too, and admire him because his career has some parallels to mine.”

Today, another Trojan lefty, Barry Zito, has hit the scene with the sudden impact not of the “project” Johnson, but more reminiscent of the 21-year old Vida Blue. The young pitcher who interests Johnson more, because of the parallel, is St. Louis’ hard-throwing Rick Ankiel.

“He’s proven that he’s a fine pitcher,” says Johnson, “he pitched great until the post-season. It’s nothing that can’t be worked on.”

The Cardinals must be patient with Ankiel. Not everybody was so patient with Johnson when he was pitching at Jamestown, West Palm Beach, and Jacksonville. After going 0-4 at Montreal in 1989, the Expos decided he was expendable.
If they had been more patient, like the Dodgers were with Koufax, they could have reaped the benefits of having one of the game’s greatest pitchers starring for them.

Still, hindsight is always 20/20. Johnson is in his zone now. He is happily married and raising his family in Paradise Valley, not far from the BOB. He is low-key and thoughtful.

He might even let you sit in his chair. If he does, make sure you tell his teammates that you only drink imported beer.

**EROTIC EXOTIC BALL OF RUNNING**

It was the saints vs. the sinners Sunday at Golden Gate Park. In what has come to be the Exotic Erotic Ball of running, the 90\textsuperscript{th} Annual Examiner Bay to Breakers attracted Jesus Freaks and presumed atheists to heckle them. It attracted nudists and semi-nudists, bare-asses and - eegadzook – frontal nudity!! There were costumed runners in wedding-gowns, \textit{<I>faux</I>} tuxedos, a guy walking in a cage, people with blue hair, purple hair, no hair. There were gays, straights and in-betweens. One guy claimed that the Dalai Lama owned slaves, which he announced to the runners while telling them to “be happy, I know everything.” Rock bands of varied stripe lined the boulevards.

70,000 people showed up on a foggy morning that eventually turned into a sunny day. 45,00 of them were runners. Some were would-be athletes. Others were minimally athletic. Some had no business being there, but of course they had every right to do their thing. That is the spirit of the Bay to Breakers.

The youngest participant was “Bay” Lee, the third daughter of Ernie Lee, the course director who works for Peter Nantel’s West End Management, and his wife Bernadette. She was exactly one hour and 34 minutes old when the race started. “Bay”, you see, was born outside at the park when Bernadette went into sudden labor and just, well, delivered. Examiner publisher Ted Fang joked that her name would be Bay, but this cannot be confirmed. Mother and daughter were taken to a local hospital and are said to be fine.

Other than that, there were no major medical problems amongst the runners.

There were also some first class athletes.

**Man, those Kenyans can run**

It all started in 1968 when Kipchoge Keino stunned the world by defeating Jim Ryun of the U.S. in the high-altitude mile at Mexico City. Kenyans train on a mountain called “Mt. Agony” in their homeland. Keino’s gold medal came on the heels of another great African long-distance man, Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia, who won the 1964 Tokyo Marathon (see the opening credits of “Marathon Man” for film clips of Bikila).

Keino, a coach now in Kenya, is a revered icon.

“He tells me to train hard,” said James Koskei, who won the men’s competition at 34.19 over the 7.46-mile course. The run starts at Spear and Howard on the Bay, winds through downtown, over the hill, and into Golden Gate Park. It ends at JFK Drive at the Great Highway. “Mexico City was a major event in Kenyan running history.”

Koskei is almost seven years younger than the man he beat in a neck-to-neck contest, Reuben Cheruiyot.
“Yes, I acknowledge that he is the older man,” said Koskei with a sly smile. “I wanted to set the pace. We jockied for position. Previous races I have lost, but I didn’t think he had enough to pass me. I was telling him to come run with me, for the challenge, but it was friendly. I want somebody to run with, like in practice. The <Hayes Street> Hill pushed me at the beginning, but not at the end. Yes, it was tough. I was not in the lead at the hill, and was afraid Cheruiyot would have good kick down the hill. This was different from the race last year. It was better. I’ll buy him dinner. I like the weather better than humidity, like at Crescent City <a race he ran recently in New Orleans>.”

On the women’s side, Jane Ngotho came in number one at 40.35.
“I finished sixth last year,” said Ngotho, of Nyrri, Kenya. All of the top five finishers in the men’s and women’s races were Kenyan, with the exception of Morocco’s El Arbi Khattabi, who finished third at 34.40.

“Last year I did not feel so good,” continued Ngotho. “The hill was good, I was strong.”

Ngotho, who trains in Boulder, Colorado, smiled. She has a lovely smile that unmasks her guarded personality, but on this day in San Francisco, she was feeling pretty good.

“Kip Keino is a coach in Kenya,” she continued, like the others giving credit to the running great. “However, I have my own coach, and a manager. My coach did not come <to San Francisco>, but my manager did. Keino and many of the older runners in Kenya push the younger runners. It starts in school. First, we run to school and back. I ran five kilometers to school, in the morning and the evening. Plus, we have track clubs established with good coaching. Volleyball and football <soccer> are also popular. I get on TV in my country and I am well known there.”

As for the Bay to Breakers, that started 90 years ago, and the Examiner continues to maintain its sponsorship of the event.

“The race started several years after the Great Earthquake of 1906,” said Florence Fang, Ted Fang’s mother. “It’s very important for this paper to continue the tradition, and we’re very pleased to do so.”

Ted Fang seemed extra pleased. He was able to wear three hats on Sunday. First, he presided over the successful event sponsored by his paper. Second, as a publisher he had to be happy with all those potential subscribers who showed up. Thirdly, he was able to be a journalist.

It was Fang, you see, who broke the “Baby to Bay” story with a twinkle in his eye.

Lori Stich-Zimmerman was typical of the type of person who enjoyed participating. Her husband, Paul Zimmerman, won in the Master’s Division. Stich-Zimmerman is from Michigan, but lives in Oregon now.

“I was here for a wedding in Napa,” she related. “I got home at one AM and made it here for the race. People thought I was crazy, but that’s the spirit of runners.”

Stich-Zimmerman, who ran in the 1996 San Francisco Marathon, stretching from Marin over the Golden Gate Bridge, to Chinatown, then the ocean.

“I was running on adrenaline,” she said of her Sunday run operating one five hours sleep. She was not the only one.

**WHY ARE THOSE CENTIPEDES WEARING THONG BIKINIS?**
Funny thing about some of these centipedes. For dedicated athletes, they sure do like to drink.

“We run on chili peppers, Bud, Coors, and shots of Tequila,” said Steve “The Preacher” Hall, a middle-aged member of Team Love Chevy Centipedes’ Aggies of San Diego. They had the whole south of the border flavor going on. Sombreros, the whole nine yards.

“We train at Blondie’s, Dolyeote and Gordon Biersch. That’s our ‘clubhouse.’ In San Diego, we go to The Tavern in Pacific Beach, where the babes all treat us well.”

What about running?

“We do that at Mission Beach,” said The Preacher. These guys came in second and are all in good shape, so one has to question just how alcoholic they really are. One way or another, they had a lot of fun Sunday.

The Aggies made a fine showing among this year’s male centipedes. This is a unique, highly team-oriented running competition in which you truly are only as strong as your weakest link.

“We ran our slowest guy in the middle,” said Preacher. “We came up Friday, and <Hayes Street> Hill was nuthin’. It was like going downhill. It did offer a great panorama of the crowd.” Kevin McCarey coaches the Aggies. The former Villanova runner, who says his pinnacle was running in the Olympic Trials, ran this year nude. All fun and nudity aside, he is serious about his sport.

“We train using the Leniche Turn,” he explained. “That’s a 360-degree turn named after a Cal-Davis coach named Gary Leniche.”

Sort of like farghtleugging, which has nothing to do with what happens after eating beans, and is all about a Swedish term meaning to “run the straight-aways and walk the turns.”

The Aggies of San Diego were entertaining and comported themselves just fine during their run, but the real heroes of centipede running was a local group of Master’s Over-40 Males, sponsored by Microsoft Office.

They set the world record in their age category with a time of 40.54 over the 7.46-mile course, which stretched from Howard and Spear adjacent to the Bay, to John F. Kennedy Drive and the Great Highway, where the park meets the Pacific.

“We set the world record,” was their immediate statement about finishing, so they knew all about it ahead of time.

They train with the Reebok Aggie Running Club of Northern California, and again, are only as good as their slowest runner. The centipedes are linked together by their “costume,” so nobody can go much faster or slower than anyone else.

“The last guy gets dragged pretty hard,” said their first man on the line, Terence Blynton, a cross-country champ in his own right. “We call it dragging.”

“We dare him to catch us and stay with us,” said Tim Minor, second behind Blynton. “But the best part of this is winning our bet with the <Microsoft> women’s team. If they beat us, we had to cook them dinner wearing frilly underwear. Now they have to wash our cars in thong bikinis.”

The Microsoft’s train in the Peninsula, but some of their guys run in San Luis Obispo. Their “last guy” is Carmello Rios, who held his end of the bargain nicely.

“I’m new at this,” said Rios. “I popped my cherry. I didn’t feel good the whole way, but they kept tugging and encouraging me, not letting me quit or let up.”
Rios also had an unprintable message for the women, but in fairness the man was pumped full of testosterone and cannot be fully held accountable for his statement. "They thought they would win, but we shut ‘em down," he added. “It was a great experience. I’ll be back.”

"We just told him <Rios> to go for it,” said Mando Siqueiros, who ran next to Rios. “It was that or we put a rope around him and haul him.”

The women who lost the bet were terrific sports.

“Well, we didn’t shake on it,” said Rachel Cook, who trains in Santa Cruz, regarding the bet, “but we’ll do it.”

In thong bikinis?

“Sure,” she said, smiling. One thing about female runners. They are in good enough condition to get away with being able to wear thing bikinis. Some of the women contestants who are not competitive runners wore thongs, but should not have. It was all in good fun, though.

“I’ve run in the Boston Marathon,” continued Cook. “The hill was alright. This was my first time running as a centipede. We put the slower person in the middle, it’s really different. I like the camaraderie, but I didn’t like finishing second.”

The Microsoft women came in at 47.50, behind Reebok Pete at 47.16.

“I ran the 12K Hoolihan’s,” continued Cook. “This is harder to run, even though I was three to four minutes behind what my personal best is for this course. At one point we fell behind and ripped the costume. The crowd was great.”

Dick Rouhloff was the “bouncer” for the Microsoft women.

"My wife’s the captain of the team, so I had to do it,” joked Rouhloff, “but I’m doing it for the fun of it. A lot of people are crowded there in the beginning, behind the six-minute pace guys.”

Rouhloff and the other bouncer, Kevin Searles, were charged with making sure the crowd did not block the centipede team, much like the guy who creates a hole for celebrities as they make their way through the paparazzi.

All things considered, the centipedes represented everything that the Bay to Breakers is supposed to be: Good athletes having a good time.

**HE WAS FLOWER OF SF SPORTS PAST**

Respect for ones' elders. This is an important quality to have, because those who came before us can teach us through experience and acquired knowledge. San Francisco has plenty of athletic elder statesmen, and Ken Flower is one of them. Ken has punched a lot of tickets and has plenty of stories to tell. Recently named to Lowell High School's First Annual Hall of Fame, Flower is a part of City tradition.

He was the California State (basketball) Player of the Year in 1949 and an All-American at Southern Cal. Also a Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame inductee, Flower worked in the San Francisco 49ers marketing department, and in local radio, for many years.

There is nobody of note in the NoCal he has not seen or known.

Take Hank Luisetti of Galileo, considered the greatest basketball player in the world when he was credited with "inventing" the one-hand set shot as a star at Stanford in the late 1930s.
"Jim Pollard really invented it," says Flower, "but Luisetti perfected the shot. He was a big influence on me."

His next big influence was Bennie Neff, a "father figure to me," who was Lowell's legendary basketball coach for many years before, during and after World War II.

"I grew up in the Haight-Ashbury District," recalls Flower. "I could have gone to Lowell or Poly, but Nehf recruited me in the seventh and eighth grades. He was a dynamic force in my life, and in others.

"Benny was very organized. He'd diagram plays using pennies. He also coached at St. Mary's. We'd practice in the seventh period, and at five he'd drive to Moraga for an evening practice, then we'd practice together on Saturdays. He was remarkable."

Flower thought he would go to Stanford.

"In 1949 we beat the Cal and Stanford frosh," he says. "I went to Menlo JC on my way to Stanford, but then SC started recruiting me. I planned a career in radio and figured L.A. was the place to be for that, so SC appealed to me.

"Sam Barry was the coach when I got there. He taught Tex Winter the triangle offense, and was a leading advocate in eliminating the center jump after each shot. I then played for Forest Twogood from 1951 to '53. We beat John Wooden's UCLA teams, Phog Allen's Kansas team, Hank Iba's Oklahoma A&I team, and Duke Groat's Duke squad.

"Wooden was not unbeatable. He's obviously a fine coach, and he took advantage of a very hot gym they played in, which we called the 'B.O. Barn.' Her was a constant bench jockey, but his team's were not yet dominant."

Flower also revealed a potential scandal that was averted. Gamblers approached him about throwing the UCLA game for $1500. This was around the time of the Long Island and NYU scandals back East. Flower played along, and then went to Twogood, who called in the LAPD. Eventually, the man was convicted.

"Luckily, he didn’t have Mob connections," says Flower, "but he did have a manslaughter conviction, and the guy spent a year in jail.

Flower knew Phil Woolpert and Pete Newell when they were at USF, and got to know Newell quite well.

"He had a dynamic coaching style," he says. "Newell's 1949 USF team won the NIT.

"After college I played AAU ball, and we faced the Harlem Globetrotters. After basketball I came to San Francisco and worked for CBS, then moved to New York and worked for ABC Sports and the NFL. This was during the time that Monday Night Football got started, so it was very exciting to be in that medium during this period. I knew Pete Rozelle very well. I originally hired Pete, who had gone to USF, to run the sales and marketing division.

He came back to the 49ers in 1976, working on community affairs and negotiations regarding marketing and major media placement until 1986. Flower worked closely with some of the game's all-time greats.

"Bill Walsh is just a remarkable, great coach, a dynamic leader and innovator in all aspects of the game," says Flower. "He had a real hands-on approach to his job.

"Joe Montana possessed an indescribable genius for the game, despite his physical limitations. He had a quiet way about him, displayed zero fear to his teammates, and there was nobody better."
CORRECTIONS ON "HE WAS FLOWER OF SF SPORTS PAST"

Steven Travers' Monday column contained some facts that need to be corrected. Ken Flower did not hire Pete Rozelle. Rozelle hired Flower when Flower went to work for the NFL. They first met when Rozelle was the USF sports information director. Hank Luisetti invented the one-hand set shot. Jim Pollard was the first or one of the first jump shooters. The correct spelling of Lowell's old basketball coach is Ben Neff.

CHAPTER THREE

PREP SPORTS

Most sportswriters get their start writing about high school sports. Let me tell you something, it is a great way to learn. At high school sporting events, there is no press box liaison, stat-keeper or PR guy handing out play-by-play if you miss anything. You have to keep your own stats and watch every play carefully. Furthermore, most great American athletes get their start in high school. California produces the best high school athletes and teams, and I have always loved writing about it.

A MAN OF CHARACTER, A LEADER OF YOUNG MEN, A FORCE OF NATURE

This is a story about my own father. He is one of those unsung heroes who deserves recognition.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 12, 2001--Have you ever seen the 1995 film “Mr. Holland’s Opus”? In this inspiring tale, Richard Dreyfuss plays a high school music teacher. He toils in relative obscurity for years, and as he retires he thinks perhaps his work did not have much meaning. On his last day, he is lured into the school auditorium by his wife, where all the bands and music classes he taught over some 20 years are gathered together to play for him, to honor him, and to let him emphatically know how important he has been in all their lives.

A real-life event such as this occurred in 1990. Donald Travers had coached track and cross-country at Balboa High School in San Francisco in the 1950s. Yes, he won some City championships, and yes, some of his athletes had loyally stayed in touch with him over the years. But time, memory and age had receded the impact he had on all those young men.

Don’s wife, Inge, a prominent artist, lured Don from their San Anselmo home to San Francisco one spring evening that year, saying that her paintings were being displayed at the Slavonic Hall. His son, Steve and granddaughter, Elizabeth, just “happened” to tag along. When they walked in the door, just like in “Mr. Holland’s Opus”, Don was met by the smiling faces of all the guys who ran track for him at Bal from 1954-59. It was a surprise “Night With the Coach.” Milers, sprinters, shot-putters, some of the other coaches at Bal, including longtime football coaches Bill Holland and Archie Chagonjian. Everybody was there.

Don remembered all their names with perfect recall.
“I was thrilled and excited and surprised,” says Travers. “It’s natural to remember
their names. I can name Cal’s Rose Bowl football teams end to end without knowing their
quarterback from two years ago. Remembering your youth seems to be better than the later
years.”

The event was so much fun and such a success that eight years later, in 1998 when Don
turned 80, event organizer Tom DeMerritt of Pleasant Hill did it a second time. They all showed
up again, maybe even more of them. The idea was that The Coach was getting long in the tooth
and they had better spend time with him now, or never. The fact is, however, that the man is just
as healthy and opinionated as ever, and not going anywhere, so do not be surprised if these old
Buccaneers start making this a regular habit, say every five years or so.

People look back at high school with nostalgia. Those are integral years in a person’s
development, and if they played sports, the bonding and maturation that takes place is very
important. Everybody remembers some old coach, mentor, or teacher who influenced them. Yet
somehow, Don Travers…was a force of nature.

“I don’t think there is any difference between kids then and kids now,” Travers insists, all
evidence to the contrary. “The question is about respect. It’s hard to say if kids were raised
differently in the ’50s, but no matter the era, the coach has to establish respect.”

To the kids he coached, his words were as if they came from the Burning Bush.

Travers used to drive the cross-country route in an old Frazier. One time the jalopy got
stuck on some railroad tracks, and the team had to pitch in to move it. Luckily, the train was not
coming.

Travers grew up in The City. His father, Charles S. Travers, was a legend in San
Francisco journalism circles and president of the local Press Club who started a silent film
magazine in Hollywood in the 1920s. Don attended Galileo High in the Marina with the
DiMaggio family. His older brother, Charles T. Travers, went on to become a political advisor to
such Republican stalwarts as Senators William Knowland and Richard Nixon, Governor Ronald
Reagan, and a lifelong pal of former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger.

“As far as the Depression was concerned, it didn’t affect me,” recalls Travers. “I was 11
when it hit. We had values in our family whether there was a Depression or not.”

After graduating from the University of California and serving as a Naval officer in the
South Pacific during World War II, Don got a teaching credential and entered coaching.

“We had a basketball tournament on the aircraft carrier that took us from Tokyo to Long
Beach after the war,” he says, “and I organized the communication section’s basketball team,
and we won the tournament. This got me fairly excited about coaching. I really didn’t think too
much about it until I went to Albany High School and they wanted to know if I had any sports
background.”

Prior to the Navy, Travers had played baseball, basketball and football at Cal. He became
Albany’s track coach.

“Joe Verducci was the football coach at the old Poly High, and I had been a long-term
sub there in 1947,” says Travers. “Because I had been a coach at Albany, the principal, a man
named Anderson at Poly, asked me if I’d be interested. I said yes to Poly. I started talking to all
the track kids and when Verducci found out I was a gung-ho guy, he thought I’d be taking his
football players away from him. They had spring football and he didn’t like the idea of my
getting his kids away from football. Next thing I knew, Lowell needed an assistant to Elmer
Harris, so they called and requested I be transferred to Lowell in 1948.
“Elmer was a famous coach, one of the greatest in San Francisco history. In two years, Elmer decided to take early retirement and I became head cross-country coach in 1949. Elmer was instrumental in making me the kind of coach I was. The relay team set a record that lasted 30 years. I’ll never forget it, that was a great team. Jim Plessas crossed the finish line before the second-place runner came around the turn, which is 100 yards.

“Plessas had been a sprinter, but we turned him into a quarter-miler. Ollie Matson at George Washington and Plessas were the best athletes in The City. Matson became a gold medallist, I think, in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, on the 1600-meter relay team. He was an All-American football player at USF and an all-star pro with the LA Dons. Matson won the 100, the 200 and the pole vault in the All-City Meet.

“When Lowell and Washington met, Lou Vasquez, the Washington coach, ran Ollie in the 440s. We had Plessas in the 180 low hurdles and the broad jump. Plessas won the All-City 180 and set the City record in the broad jump at 23-feet, four inches. That record stood about 20 years.

“Plessas ran for Brutus Hamilton at Cal. Hamilton was, I think, the Olympic track coach at the 1948 London Games. Anyway, one day he was practicing at Ohio State when two Olympians came in front of him just as he was going clearing a hurdle, and he injured himself and missed the ‘52 Olympics.”

Plessas, a member of the San Francisco Sports Hall of Fame, is now a successful public relations executive living in Mill Valley.

The great crooner Johnny Mathis was a great prep athlete in San Francisco in those days.

“Phil Fehlen, who went to Stanford, and Johnny Mathis of Washington tied for the high jump championship in the early 1950s,” recalls Travers. “Mathis won the title in a jump-off. The next year, Fehlen missed the ‘52 U.S. Olympic team when, for the first time ever, three jumpers cleared seven feet. Phil was fourth at 6-11 down at Stanford, where the Olympic Trials were held.

“Mathis was a high hurdler. One day he hit a hurdle and went sprawling. I picked him up and carried him to the bench on the south side of Kezar Stadium. He was one of the finest athletes in City history, also a fine basketball player.”

Barry Gilbert, the father of Andre Agassi’s tennis coach Brad Gilbert, was an athlete at Lowell. Richard Blum, Senator Dianne Feinstein’s eventual husband, was the best friend of Travers’ nephew, a Lowell discuss man named Chuck Travers. Travers also coached his other nephew, Bill Friedrichs, who went on to star as a quarter-miler at Stanford.

After winning several City track and cross-country titles, Balboa came after him in 1954. Lowell was the premiere school in The City. Balboa was on the “wrong side of the tracks.” Unlike most of the lily-white schools of that era, Bal had Mexicans and blacks. Travers knew what it was like to be a minority of sorts. He had been a WASP amongst Italian- and Irish-American classmates at Galileo, and his Depression experience had taught him that the only thing that mattered was hard work and character.

“Bennie Neff was the athletic director at Lowell,” says Travers. “For years, the Lowell track team had to go to Old Park Stadium at 36th Avenue, and we had no lockers, no facilities. I was asked by Bill Holland, who was at Bal, to come here.”

The late Holland later coached Mike Holmgren at Lincoln. After going to USC, Holmgren went on to a coaching career that included leading the 1995 Green Bay Packers to a Super Bowl.
When he got to Balboa, Travers announced that the Bucs would win the cross-country championship. He knew what good coaching could accomplish. He recalled that at Galileo, the coach would let the kids practice on their own and just show up for meets.

“I told them we’d win the cross-country title and they laughed at me,” recalls Travers. “We had seven guys finish in the first 12.”

Four five years, he ran Balboa’s track and cross-country program like it was the Olympics.

Claude Cooper ran the 180 low hurdles in 19.7 (Plessas had run 19.2). Talisuo Nikko was a great shot-putter. Every cross-country team he had won the All-City or dual meet, or both. Johnny Brazier was another fine athlete.

Dick Herreries was one of Lowell’s stars. Pete Rider was the son of the head of the psychiatric division at U.C. Medical School.

“He went to Harvard and ran the mile and the two-mile there,” says Travers, “setting freshman Ivy League records in the mid-‘50s. Ray Batz and John Cressa were two of our best athletes. Both are in Balboa’s Hall of Fame.”

Travers, like the Dreyfuss character in “Mr. Holland’s Opus”, had opportunities to take his act to a higher level—in his case, college--but commitments kept him on a smaller stage, to the gain of the kids who ran for him.

“I don’t think my relationships with the kids was any different from most coaches, but Tom DeMerrit liked to do things like that,” he says modestly of the fact he has been remembered and honored by his old teams.

His era was a golden one not only for athletes, but coaches.

“Mike Voyne and Bennie Neff were two of the greatest prep coaches in San Francisco,” he recalls. “At Bal there was Carl Mitchell and Archie Chagonjian. Also Jim Livingston had great Lowell tennis teams. He just died last year.”

Bob Troppmann, an All-City star for Benny Neff who did his practice teaching at Lowell, went on to be a legendary football coach at Redwood High in Larkspur, which produced Pete Carroll, the new coach at USC.

In 1955, Travers entered the University of San Francisco’s night law school. “I used the G.I. Bill from the Korean War <he had been activated from his Reserve unit> to go to law school four nights a week until 1959,” Travers says. “I taught social studies and PE in the mornings and coached in the afternoons.”

He retired from coaching in ‘59, although in later years (1974-76) he was the successful manager of Redwood’s Joe DiMaggio League summer baseball team, back when Redwood was the top prep program in the nation.

Don practiced law in San Francisco until 1981, moving his practice to Fairfax in 1982. He also taught at City College of San Francisco from 1962-77.

“Dutch Conlan brought me in after China Lang recommended me,” says Travers. “I saw O.J. Simpson play when I was there.”

In a city rich with prep sports tradition, Don Travers is a legend. He is a legend not just because his team’s won and he had kids who made names for themselves, but because many, many young men, most of whom are not famous, learned the value of honesty, hard work and fairness from a tireless coach a long time ago.

On April 28, Plessas and Travers will attend the Lowell High Hall of Fame dinner, run by the Lowell Sports Foundation. For more information, call Lowell at (415) 566-7900.
L.A./ORANGE COUNTY ALL-CENTURY PREP DREAM TEAMS

This might be my all-time favorite article, a true labor of love that I put together as part of the Millenium series of "all-century" teams and themes.

THE REAL GOLD RUSH

Forget movies, cars, oranges, Presidents, electoral votes and new religions. What Southern California always has, and always will be the best in producing, is athletes. As we approach the Millennium, here is the football section on the greatest local athletes of the past 100 years. Who has the edge, Los Angeles or Orange County? Hey, you decide.

(Thanks to Bill Peck of the CIF-Los Angeles City Section, and Harbor City historian Rick Obrand, for their invaluable contributions in the compilation of these lists.)

In 1849, gold was discovered in California, and by 1850 so many new settlers had arrived that statehood was bestowed upon us. By 1900, San Francisco was a thriving port colony, but Los Angeles remained a sleepy pueblo. William Mulholland and a few other slicksters decided that Los Angeles should be on the proverbial map, so they figured a way to siphon water from the Owens Valley. That water, combined with marvelous year-round weather, helped to spur the growth of acres of orange groves, but the best natural resource in the Southland was athletes. Like oranges, they seemed to grow on the trees.

Before Hollywood had developed the “art form of the Twentieth Century,” before the automobile and the post-war baby boom created suburbia, and before Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan rose to the Presidency on the strength of a powerful, trendy Sun Belt-based electorate, great football stars were splashing their way across America’s sports headlines. Athletics became our first tradition. In the years just after World War I, a myth began to circulate that there was something in the air and the water in California that was creating some kind of superhumans, all but unstoppable on the football field. Here are a few of them:

MARION MORRISON - GLENDALE
He was the prototype offensive lineman of the 1920s, just the kind of guy U.S.C. Coach Howard Jones needed to develop the nucleus of The Thundering Herd. Unfortunately, Morrison injured himself bodysurfing while trying to impress a couple chicks at Newport’s notorious Wedge. Unable to block, he lost his starting job, then his scholarship, forcing him to leave school and start an acting career at Fox, under the name John Wayne.

EMILE HARRY – FOUNTAIN VALLEY
A terrific player for S.C.’s Thundering Herd.
JEFF CRAVATH – SANTA ANA
One of the early stars from Orange County, he would go on to a star-crossed career as SC’s head coach in the ‘50s.

AARON ROSENBERG – FAIRFAX
Never heard of this All-American offensive guard at U.S.C.? Think again, about every cheesy television show you ever watched in the 1960s and ‘70s. He produced ‘em all.

GLENN DAVIS – BONITA
Teamed with Doc Blanchard to form West Point’s “Mr. Inside/Mr. Outside” Heisman Trophy combo of 1944-45. After serving as an Army officer, he was a halfback with the Rams.

JOHN FERRARO – BELL
An All-American lineman at USC in 1948, he became a powerful fixture on the L.A. City Council.

JACKIE ROBINSON – MUIR
Possibly the greatest all-around athlete in Southern California history, he put UCLA on the map in the late ‘30s with his running and receiving. Baseball was his fourth best sport after football, basketball, and track, but he did pretty well on the diamond in Brooklyn.

BOB WATERFIELD – VAN NUYS
He brought his girlfriend with him to UCLA, they were married, and he went on to a Hall of Fame career quarterbacking the Rams in the 1950s. The girl did pretty well, too, as an actress in Hollywood. A nice-looking brunette with nice, uh, …a nice-looking girl named Jane Russell.

HUGH McELHENNY – WASHINGTON
They called him “Crazy Legs”. A track star with Olympic potential, he was an All-American at the University of Washington, and a Hall of Fame NFL running back in the 1950s.

JON ARNETT – MANUAL ARTS
His All-American career at USC was overshadowed by NCAA sanctions, but in the 1955 field that included Syracuse’s Jim Brown and Notre Dame’s Paul Hornung, Arnett was considered the best of the lot. He played for the Rams (is anyone seeing this L.A./Ram connection here?), but the other guys had better careers.

JOE PERRY – L.A. JORDAN
We’ll forgive this old running back even though he went to San Francisco, starred for the Niners in the 1950s, and started a string of trendy restaurants in the Bay Area.

RONNIE KNOX – BEVERLY HILLS
Ronnie’s story is the kind that seems like it could only happen in L.A. His father was some kind of dad-from-hell who ordered all his high school coaches at Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and about three or four other places to tailor their offensive schemes to his son’s
considerable talents. As Marlon Brando probably was saying of Ronnie in his quest for “method,” he “coulda been a contender,” but ended up a boy trapped in a man’s body. Dad tried to tell Hollywood how to make Knox’s beautiful sister a movie star, but she became a drug-addled hooker instead. What a town!

(Later, Greg Goorjian at Crescenta Valley and other schools would pull a Knox, following his coach/father around, and setting in motion a disturbing transfer trend that has bedeviled L.A. prep sports ever since.)

BILL KILMER - CITRUS

Before there was “Dandy Don” Meredith, Joe Namath, Kenny Stabler, and Jim McMahon; before Semi-Tough and North Dallas 40; before Hollywood and hyperbole created the image of the hard-drinking, womanizing man’s man quarterback who got idolizing teammates to charge through brick walls, there was Kilmer. He acted like a lineman, ate nails for breakfast, and no attractive young lady was safe on the late-'50s UCLA campus with Billy around. He helped revolutionize the “shotgun offense” under Clark Shaughnessy in San Francisco, but it was a marriage made in Heaven when he hooked up with George Allen in Washington. Broken-down, incapacitated by injury and drink, he still managed to lead the Redskins to the Promised Land until Miami burst their bubble at the Coliseum in ’73.

JACK KEMP – FAIRFAX

This overachiever lit up the old American Football League with the San Diego Chargers, and quarterbacked Buffalo to the 1965 AFL title through sheer force of will. Not an intellectual, through hard work and honesty he parlayed his football success to a career in Congress, and a Quixotic run at the White House.

MIKE GARRETT – ROOSEVELT

Another overachiever, this short man was SC’s first Heisman running back. He played on two Kansas City Super Bowl teams, and gave pro baseball a brief fling. Now he is up to his elbows in alligators trying to restore U.S.C. to greatness as their athletic director.

RON MIX – HAWTHORNE

The Beach Boys are not the only good thing to come out of Hawthorne. Mix was a legendary interior lineman at SC and lived up to his potential in every way in San Diego.

BEN DAVIDSON – L.A. WILSON

At about 6-9, 300 pounds, with a handlebar moustache, he was the personification of Raider intimidation. A hard-charger on and off the field, his brief film career was highlighted by his role as the bouncer at the Sausalito club where Marilyn Chambers gets gangbanged in the porn classic Behind the Green Door.

RON YARY – BELLFLOWER

An Outland Trophy winning offensive tackle at USC, he was the first pick in the 1968 draft before embarking on a Hall of Fame pro career.

JOHN HUARTE – MATER DEI
Does anybody know how to pronounce his name? Sports professionals called him WHO-OR-TAY, as in Duarte, but others insist on HEW-URT. It really does not matter. This guy was all hype at Notre Dame, a place known for that sort of thing. They parlayed a few passes to Jack Snow into the 1964 Heisman. Huarte then produced exactly zero second half points in the Irish come-from-ahead-National-title-down-the-drainer against SC. He should have been a Clinton staffer, because he still had enough spin to steal about $400,000 from the New York Titans (later Jets), but after one minute, seven seconds of training camp the club realized the guy John beat out for the Heisman was a better quarterback. Fella named Joe Namath.

FRED DRYER – LAWNDALE
He was the smallish defensive end with California ideas who came to the New York Giants out of San Diego State, confounding Eastern writers who thought only hateful psychos could play football. In L.A., Fred was one of the Rams most popular players in the club’s ‘70s heyday, all the while spending days at the beach and nights partying with Hef at the Playboy Mansion. His t.v. show, “Hunter” was pretty damned good, too.

ISAAC CURTIS – SANTA ANA
Don’t let any of those Berkeley intellectuals talk about academics over sports. Before there was Chuck Muncie, there was wide receiver Isaac Curtis, whose early-‘70s anti-student inactivities cost the Bears a National Championship in track and would have deprived them of a Rose Bowl bid if they had not finished about nine games out contention on their own.

ANTHONY DAVIS – SAN FERNANDO
Ara Parseghian still wakes up in a cold sweat thinking about this guy, who ran for six touchdowns against Notre Dame in 1972. The Heisman votes were pretty well sent off by the first December Saturday of ’74, and Ohio State’s Archie Griffin would get the trophy. He ought to pack it in a box and send it to A.D., because no matter what he did (or did not) do in the pros, Davis may have turned in the greatest one-day performance of all time against the Irish. He scored four touchdowns (including two kickoff returns for six), igniting a 55-point earthquake in a 17-minute span that erased a 24-0 Irish lead in the most exciting sports event in L.A. history.

PAT HADEN – BISHOP AMAT
During Haden’s 1970-71 senior year, his folks moved to San Francisco to accommodate a job transfer, but Pat wanted to keep passing to favorite wide receiver J.K. McKay. McKay’s dad was a guy named John who coached at S.C., and wouldn’t you know it, he even let Haden live in his house while he set about 1,000 C.I.F. records? Recruiters from Stanford and Notre Dame had to sit in Coach McKay’s living room and pitch the merits of their schools. The scholarly q.b. went on to lead Troy to the ’74 National Championship, played for the Rams, then became a lawyer (in the same downtown firm with J.K.), a broadcaster, and despite Republican recruitment pitches, not a politician.

RICKY BELL – FREMONT
Overshadowed by other Trojan tailbacks, Bell was one of the best playing for both John McKay (1975) and John Robinson (1976), then for McKay again in Tampa Bay. Tragically, he was cut down young by a rare disease, and a t.v. movie told his story.
CHARLES WHITE – SAN FERNANDO
Almost as impressive as SC’s “Tailback U.” tradition is the plethora of darters who come from San Fernando. White ran wild in Troy’s convincing 1978 win at Alabama (despite both teams finishing with one loss, the teams had to share the National Championship). He won a Heisman in ’79 after saying he wanted two or three, captured a tainted N.F.C. rushing title with Robinson’s Rams, and spent some time in an empty lot banging a garbage can.

WARREN MOON – HAMILTON
After leading Washington to a 1978 Rose Bowl win, he went on to a career making millions as Leigh Steinberg’s phone buddy/client, all the while breaking down racial barriers as a black quarterback in Houston. Surely all those Texas oil guys were receptive as heck to the new kid. Yeah, right.

RON CUCCIA – L.A. WILSON
Who, you might ask? True L.A. fans remember the three straight years in the mid-’70s when Cuccia, playing in a sophisticated quarterback/run-oriented offense designed by his father and coach, was All-World at the prep level on teams which were undefeated city champs. Lacking a powerful arm or N.F.L. size, he went on to use his brain at Yale.

RANDY CROSS – CRESPI
This telegenic Bruin center was a mainstay of the 49er dynasty before embarking on a successful sportscasting career.

JOHN ELWAY – GRENADA HILLS
Along with Jackie Robinson, perhaps the region’s finest athlete. The star pitcher of the 1979 CIF-L.A. City Section championship game at Dodger Stadium, he starred for the Stanford baseball team before signing a six-figure bonus with George Steinbrenner’s Yankees. Elway was groomed for football by his coach/dad, though, who chose Granada for their advanced passing attack, then gave up Rose Bowl glory at ground-oriented S.C. for four years as the big fish in a small Stanford pond. Victimized by The Play in the 1982 Big Game with Cal, John made a major niche in the record books with his passing at Denver, but the Shakespearean ending of a king denied ultimate triumph was averted with the Broncos 1997-98 Super Bowl run.

KEITH VAN HORNE – FULLERTON
A Bear of a man, this Trojan All-Everything was an academic whiz and a fixture on Chicago’s offensive line, seemingly from Halas to Ditka.

TODD MARINOVICH – SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO VALLEY
His story could read like Shakespeare or Kerouac, and it is not over yet. The USCcion of a regal Trojan family, he was reared by father Marv (S.C. ’62 and an Oakland Raider in the pros) to be a quarterback from birth. The first sign that controversy would surround him came when he transferred from Mater Dei to San Juan Capistrano Valley after starting his freshman and sophomore years. At SC he clashed and flashed, left early, briefly started for the L.A. Raiders, then disappeared to travel, paint, surf and sing in a band called Scurvy. Now, Todd has disrupted
his modern version of *On the Road*, asked himself the question, “To be, or not to be,” and the answer is to be a quarterback again, in Canada. Good luck, baby.

**SIDEBAR: A TALE OF TWO QUARTERBACKS**

Consider the case of two men who played the same position, but took two distinctly different paths in life. On the right we have Jack Kemp of Fairfax High School, whose experiences growing up in a multi-racial urban city shaped his desire of political inclusion for all. Not exactly a blue chip prep, Jack did not get the scholarship offers from the big schools, so it was off to Occidental, where he was good enough to get drafted into the A.F.L. by the Los Angeles Chargers. Kemp serves in the Army Reserves, becomes the league’s first passing star under Sid Luckman in San Diego, and takes the beautiful California blonde he marries, with him when traded to Buffalo. There, all he does is win an A.F.L. title, get elected to Congress, serve for 18 years, and become a star in the Republican Party. The point man for the Reagan Revolution, he turns himself into one of the most respected authorities on the “trickle-down theory,” makes a semi-serious Presidential run, and a serious Vice-Presidential one.

On the left consider Mr. Todd Marinovich of Mater Dei, San Juan Capistrano Valley, and Balboa Island. Growing up the scion of U.S.C. royalty, he is reared from birth to quarterback the Trojans. Upon matriculation, he discovers the California Pizza and Pasta Company, where he makes up for 18 years of junk food denial by eating pizzas and drinking cokes. Flashes of brilliance merge with arrogance and stupidity on the field for the spoiled troublemaker, who has also found he likes to do drugs. No All-America honors, Heismans or degrees for Todd, who instead finds his name on police reports. Al Davis rescues him from himself, temporarily, drafting him in the first round and giving him a couple mil, but “Marijuanavich” decides he does not like to practice, take orders, or get hit by linemen. Fade from football, into a life of surfing, bumming around the world, painting, doing more drugs, and forming a band called Scurvy, which favors the heavy metal sound that, uh, well, skinheads seem inclined towards.

Now, Mr. Marinovich apparently wants to be more like somebody like Mr. Kemp, in the hopes that this “transformation” can turn him into a hot quarterback in Canada.

**THE LAND OF PLENTY**

Robert Towne’s classic “Chinatown” is based on Bill Mulholland, who around 1906 was organizing a group of Los Angeles “City Fathers” to go up to the Owens Valley, and talk those folks into letting L.A. have all the water in Pyramid Lake. At around the same time, down a road that was a long ways from becoming I-5, the son of an itinerant oil worker was mowing down country opposition for Fullerton High. Walter Johnson had arms that seemed to stretch almost to his feet. He would go on to become, arguably, the greatest pitcher in baseball history for the Washington Senators, winning 417 games with 110 shutouts, and—get this—a 2.17 E.R.A. in 21 seasons! They called him the Big Train. He was not the first kid from the L.A. Basin to make his mark in baseball. The player-manager of the 1908 World Champion Chicago Cubs (*yes, you heard that right*) was a Southern Californian named Frank Chance. They nicknamed him the Peerless Leader. When it comes to the Southland and its long connection with the Major Leagues, one is reminded of the James Earl Jones character in “Field of Dreams”, who says: “People will come, Ray.”
Well, people have come, from here, and the following are a few of the better ones:

**BOBBY DOERR** – FREMONT

28 big leaguers went to Fremont, more than any high school in the U.S. Dick Williams and Gene Mauch went there, but Doerr may be the best of the bunch. He was a star infielder, teammates with the legendary Ted Williams (a San Diego guy) and Dom Di Maggio (a San Francisco guy) in the 1940s.

**JACKIE ROBINSON** – MUIR

Yes, he was in the football section of this series. Coming out of Pasadena City College, Robinson teamed with Kenny Washington on the U.C.L.A. gridiron and in track, but was probably so worn out that he only hit .237 for the Bruin baseball team. Robinson was a winner on the field, although a closer look shows his Brooklyn stats not in the same league with Hornsby, Collins, et al. The fact is, Robinson the man was even more impressive than Robinson the ballplayer. The ordeals of his life breaking the color barrier may have cut his career by several years. His wife, Rachel, was a looker with kindness in her heart. Jackie was a World War II Army officer, and for years a staunch Connecticut Republican in the Nixon camp, who refused to let anybody, black or white, tell him who he was or where he belonged.

**RALPH KINER** – ALHAMBRA

Kiner was one of the most prolific home run sluggers of all time during his Hall of Fame career with Pittsburgh. His malapropisms as New York Met announcer are just as legendary.

**BOB LEMON** – LONG BEACH WILSON

He teamed with Bob Feller to form Cleveland’s dynamic pitching combination of the 1940s and early ‘50s. The Tribe beat the “Spawn and Sain and Pray For Rain” Braves in the ’48 Classic. Lemon, Feller, Mike Garcia and Early Wynn propelled the ’54 Indians to a 111-43 record. In 1978 he survived George Steinbrenner and the Bronx Zoo, managing the Yankees from 14 back on June 28 to a World Championship.

**DUKE SNIDER** – COMPTON

Interestingly, jaded New York sports fans have reserved their greatest idolatry predominantly for Californians—Joe Di Maggio of the Yankees, Frank Gifford of the New York (football) Giants, and Tom Seaver of the Mets come to mind. Include the Duke of Flatbush in that list. Overshadowed by Willie Mays and Mickey Mantle during the golden age of New York center fielders that was the 1950s, among the Dodgers Ebbetts’ Faithful he was number one!

**DON DRYSDALE** – VAN NUYS

At Van Nuys High School in the 1950s, there was a pretty brunette child actress named Natalie Wood, and a pretty-good left-hand-hitting outfielder named Robert “Bobby” Redford. The Big Man On Campus, however, was 6-6 power pitcher Don Drysdale, who turned down an academic ride at Stanford to pitch for Brooklyn. In L.A., Big D teamed with Sandy Koufax on two World Champs, won the 1962 Cy Young award, and in ’68 broke Johnson’s record with 58 2/3 consecutive scoreless innings. He was a popular broadcaster until his untimely 1993 passing.
BRUCE GARDNER – FAIRFAX
Sometimes tragedy in the Naked City touches sports. After a stellar prep career, the bonus money was offered, but USC coach Rod Dedeaux combined with Gardner’s Jewish mother to convince him a college education was worth more. 40 wins at Troy followed, as well as an arm injury that ended his pro career before it started. In 1974, Bruce got drunk, went to brand new Dedeaux Field, surrounded the pitcher’s mound with All-America plaques and his S.C. diploma, and blew his brains out.

ANDY MESSERSMITH - WESTERN
After pitching at Cal, he returned home to Orange County, winning 20 for the 1969 Angels, then repeated the trick for the Dodgers before going down in history with Dave McNally, as baseball’s first free agents.

ROLLIE FINGERS – UPLAND
Former A’s broadcaster Monte Moore loved the sound “Rancho Cucamonga,” and said it whenever it was “Hold ’em Rollie Fingers time” in Oakland from 1972-74. Perhaps the greatest relief pitcher ever, this Hall of Famer led Cucamonga to the 1964 American Legion National Championship. Later, teammates recalled him to be too dumb to know he was in pressure situations, which explained his razor sharp sliders nipping the black on 3-2 counts.

BERT BLYLEVEN – SANTIAGO
The Dutch-born Blyleven is as American as they come. This publication lacks the space to print every team he pitched for, but the Twins and Angels utilized his awesome curveball in a career that saw him win almost 300 games and record over 3,000 strikeouts.

ROBIN YOUNT – TAFT
Robin is like the CIA: You knew about him, but he seemingly won two MVP’s and collected 3,000 hits secretly in Milwaukee. His Hall of Fame induction comes under the Freedom of Information Act.

GEORGE BRETT – EL SEGUNDO
The opposite of Yount. George was flamboyant, partied hard and played harder. The family sports bar in the South Bay was legendary for its ribald moments, and he may have never met a “nice girl” until he met his wife, who settled the Hall of Famer down. His credentials in K.C. include 3,000 knocks and a penchant for reckless abandon that the game needs more of. It turns out El Segundo was more than just a place for Fred Sanford to go on vacation. Brett’s El Segundo Eagles were C.I.F.-Southern Section champs in the early ’70s, while Yount’s Taft ball club competed in the City Section. First, Brett was not the best hitter in his family. Older brother Kemmer was, but Boston made him pitch instead (another brilliant Red Sox front office decision). Then, he was not coach John Stevenson’s top prospect on his high school team. Southpaw Scott McGregor, later an Oriole standout, drew more attention.

GARY CARTER – SUNNY HILLS
Orange County has some tradition behind the plate—Milwaukee Braves star Del Crandall went to rival Fullerton. Carter was Rookie of the Year at Montreal in 1975, and the cornerstone of the 108-win World Champion 1986 Mets.

**EDDIE MURRAY AND OZZIE SMITH – LOCKE**

Baseball needs to attract the kind of inner city talent that Murray and Smith displayed at Locke, much like what Centennial was producing during the days of Reggie Smith, Don Wilson and Wayne Simpson.

**BILL BORDLEY – BISHOP MONTGOMERY**

For every Bruce Gardner tragedy, there is the uplifting story of a guy like Bordley. Those who saw him at Bishop Montgomery, where he was 16-1 in 1975, or at USC, where he was 14-0 as a 1977 freshman, say he was as good as anybody, pro or amateur. A torn rotator cuff incurred before current medical techniques ended his brief career with the Giants, but the southpaw from Rolling Hills just took his life in a new direction. When Chelsea Clinton walks around the Stanford campus, one of her Secret Service bodyguards is Bordley.

**TONY GWYNN – LONG BEACH POLY**

The 3,000-hit Hall of Famer might have been in the NBA if he had his druthers, and is talked about as the future hoops coach at his alma mater, San Diego State. Who could have guessed, when Gwynn played for the Long Beach Jets Joe Di Maggio League team in 1976 (a club that wore skintight above-the-knee short pants), that he would become the most scientific hitter since Williams?

**MARK McGWIRE – DAMIAN**

A pitcher in high school who became the College Player of the Year as a first baseman at SC in 1984, Big Mac comes from a family of athletes (his brother quarterbacked the Seattle Seahawks). He came into his own at Oakland after Jose Canseco was traded, and everybody knows what happened in that magical 1998 season. McGwire, 36 in October, needs to average about 50 knocks a year in order to break Hank Aaron’s career mark by age 40, but if he can avoid injuries and play into his 40s, that record could be in jeopardy, too.

**IF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WERE A COUNTRY…**

it would be be an Olympic medal power.

In the 1976 Montreal Olympics, had the University of Southern California been a country, they would have finished fourth behind the USSR, USA and East Germany in total medals won. Over the years, if the region of Southern California were a country, the propaganda value of all the gold, silver and bronze won in various Olympiads would have made the most dedicated Marxist envious.

Track and field may be the sport most dominated by Southlanders. USC has won eight national titles in football and 12 in baseball. UCLA has 11 in basketball. S.C. has won twenty-six NCAA track titles, and most of them were with local athletes.

The following is a compilation of L.A. and Orange Counties’ brightest stars from the high school fields of dreams:
CHARLIE PADDOCK – PASADENA

USC’s “fastest man alive,” he was a Gold medal-winner at the 1924 Paris Olympics.

MEL PATTON – UNIVERSITY

Another Trojan draped in Paris Gold in ’24, he died in World War II.

LOU ZAMPERINI – TORRANCE

This Man of Troy learned how to fend off challenging elbows while running the 1500 like few before or since, but the biggest challenge he ever faced was during World War II. A fighter pilot, he was shot down by a Japanese Zero and had to survive in a South Pacific jungle. All’s well that ends well, though—Lou is still around to tell war stories about track meets and combat missions.

EARL McCULLOGH – LONG BEACH POLY

He was O.J. Simpson’s Trojan teammate in football, and on the NCAA champion relay squad before embarking on a career as a receiver in Detroit.

MIKE POWELL – EDGEWOOD

This Bruin broke Bob Beamon’s seemingly unbreakable long jump record that had been set in Mexico City’s thin air.

DWIGHT STONES – GLENDALE

The 1976 Gold Medallist in the high jump.

BOB SEAGREN – POMONA

He won the Gold in the pole vault in ’68.

PARRY O’BRIEN – SANTA MONICA

This strongman was a medallist more than once.

TRACK AND FIELD DREAM TEAMS

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<td>HH</td>
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LJ  Mike Powell, Edgewood  George Brown, L.A. Jordan
HJ  Charlie Dumas, Centennial  Dwight Stones, Glendale
PV  Bob Seagren, Pomona  Guinn Smith, Glendale
SP  Parry O’Brien, Santa Monica  Dave Davis, Canoga Park
TJ  James Butts, Fremont  Herman Stokes, Roosevelt
DIS Ken Carpenter, Compton  Bob Humphreys, L.B. Jordan
JAV  Frank Covelli, Long Beach Wilson  Doug Miller, University
HAM  George Frenn, North Hollywood  Paul Herman, Reseda

ORANGE COUNTY

FIRST TEAM  SECOND TEAM

100  Isaac Curtis, Santa Ana  Fred Kuller, Santiago
200  Clancy Edwards, Santa Ana  Eddie Morris, Hunt. Beach
400  Erwin Miller, Fullerton  Brayton Nolton, Laguna
800  Brian Theriot, Newport  Jess Strutzel, Huntington Beach
1500 Mel Dahl, Santa Ana  Bruce Bes, La Habra
5000 Dale Story, Orange  Greg Whiteley, University

FIRST TEAM  SECOND TEAM

HH  Fred Kelly, Orange  Ross Nichols, Hunt. Beach
LH  Tom Beckley, Fullerton  Jim Seymour, Hunt. Beach
LJ  Norm Paul, Santa Ana  Verden Nash, Hunt. Beach
HJ  Ed Caruthers, Valley  George Horine, Valley
PV  Dan Ripley, Loara  Fred Barnes, Fullerton
SP  Terry Albritton, Newport  John Brenner, Fullerton
TJ  Ken Williams, Troy  Doug Ford, Savanna
DIS  Glenn Hartranft, Fullerton  Bill Neville, Garden Grove
HAM  Mike Morales, Garden Grove  Scott Sargeant, Los Alamitos
JAV  Jacques Nelson, Canyon  Jack Bankrude, Orange
DEC  Sheldon Blockburger, Newport  Steve Odgers, Edison

TRACK ATHLETE OF THE CENTURY: Bob Seagren, Pomona

LOCAL MOTION

In a big league town, sports fans and sportswriters alike can get spoiled watching professional athletes. This series covering L.A.’s “Dream Team” of prep talent is a reminder of just how great these people have to be to get to the top.

It starts in the youth leagues, usually around age eight. Every year there is a “weeding out” process. At age 10, some little leaguers stay in the minors, others advance to the majors.
The Pop Warner coach has to tell some kids they are too small and could get hurt. C.Y.O. hoops differentiate between the “A’ team and the “B” team.

The move to the big diamond at age 13 breaks a lot of spirits. High school is a real eye opener, because they start to cut the squads—first the freshman, then the j.v.’s, and finally the varsity or oblivion. College scholarships and pro drafts separate a lot of the “men” from the boys, but the hardier ones keep the dream alive as walk-ons, or at junior colleges, or on the try-out circuit. For those who actually sign professional contracts, they can take solace in the fact that they have hurdled one of the most insurmountable obstacles in the modern world. Still, they face a Normandy invasion-like road to get past the “bushes”—the minors in baseball, the C.B.A. or European leagues in basketball perhaps, maybe arena football or the C.F.L.

Everybody remembers at least somebody who was a superstar in little league, in high school, or in college—the kid who had recruiters and scouts at all their games, the “can’t-miss” prospect that seemed destined to be the next McGwire, Elway or Reggie Miller. This and other nation’s are littered with coach’s, salesmen, lawyers, writers, plumbers, garbage men, and has-beens of every stripe who, pick one:

a) Couldn’t hit the curve ball.
b) Wouldn’t “juice up” enough to be an N.F.L. offensive lineman.
c) Couldn’t negotiate the pick’n’roll.
d) Got hurt, got homesick, got in trouble, never got good enough.

OR,

e) Any and all of the above, plus a million other reasons why they did not have the “right stuff” to make it in their respective sport.

Basketball may be the most difficult major team sport to make it in. Baseball players look like regular people. A naturally big kid can eat, lift weights, and ingest enough steroids to look like a football player. Hoopsters, except in rare instances, are born very tall. Unlike most very tall people, they are not awkward, but rather have the coordination of a cat, the strength of a bull, the leaping ability of Superman, the soft touch of Houdini, and the toughness of a longshoreman facing his “replacement” during a dock strike.

The NBA draft only goes about 11 rounds, and only one or two of those guys will make it past training camp. There are five starting spots, seven at most in reserve, and no minor leagues. If a kid is not a first round, multi-millionaire rookie after his sophomore or junior year at a college basketball factory, the odds are overwhelmingly against him.

As of 1995, Los Angeles had produced more of these “freaks of nature” (30) than any other city (source: StreetZebra magazine). The L.A. Basin, with its great weather and open fields, naturally produces more baseball, football, tennis, tracksters, swimmers, and volleyball players than any other place, and no doubt leads in a host of other sports categories, too.

Some pretty good coaches have come out of Los Angeles, too. Three of them, Bill Sharman, Tex Winter and Alex Hannum, played at USC in the late ’40s.

Easterners like to think that the cold weather and dank arenas of Philly, Brooklyn, and D.C. produce a certain kind of superior gym rat, but in actuality, California basketball rules. UCLA’s 1964-75 run of 10 National Championships was no accident.
Places like Baltimore Dunbar and De Matha High of Hiattsville, Maryland have long lists of graduates that get basketball scholarships every year, but for years our own Verbum Dei ruled the prep roost. Now, Mater Dei of Santa Ana has assumed that mantel, and Crenshaw is always at or near the top.

Of all the kids who played basketball in the all of the gyms and playground of the Southland, the following is the cream of the crop:

**DARREL IMHOFF** – ALHAMBRA

He was big, slow and white, but by 1959 the seven-footer dominated in Final Four action against Oscar Robinson’s Cincinnati club, and an Ohio State team led by Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek. Imhoff’s California Golden Bears won that National Championship for Coach Pete Newell (who built San Francisco into a power), and he held his own in Philadelphia, too.

**GAIL GOODRICH** – L.A. Poly

His dad played at SC, but when he overheard John Wooden talk his son up during a City play-off game, Goodrich was destined to become a Bruin. The 6-1 left-hand shooting guard mastered the Wizard’s full court press and led UCLA to the 1964 and 1965 National Championships, then was an All-Star with the Lakers. He was Jerry West’s backcourt mate on the 1972 World Champs.

**CURTIS ROWE** – FREMONT

If you tire of hearing about the guys in Westwood, you best turn go turn on the t.v. or something, because in Los Angeles, BASKETBALL is spelled U-C-L-A. An All-American for the Bruins 1970 and ’71 champions, he followed that with a solid pro career.

**SIDNEY WICKS** – HAMILTON

UCLA’s 6-9 forward, he was overshadowed by Lew Alcindor before him, and Bill Walton after him, but Wicks took 7-2 Artis Gilmore of Jacksonville to school (five blocked shots) in the ’70 title game.

**RAYMOND LEWIS** – Verbum Dei

This 1970 legend from was featured in a *Sports Illustrated* piece. As good as he was in real games, he was even more legendary on L.A.’s outdoor courts. Grades and discipline did him in, and Raymond never made it much past the JuCo level.

**PAUL WESTPHAL** – AVIATION

Westphal’s Redondo Beach school was converted into a TRW facility--the one where the Falcon and the Snowman stole missile secrets for the Soviets. The place is located across the street from the Federal Building (where the CIA no doubt has a presence), but before the corner of Aviation and Marine became Spy Central, this deadeye shooter was the South Bay’s Friday night hero. At USC, he led the greatest Trojan team ever. In 1970-71, SC lost just two games, both to UCLA, and finished number two in the nation. After a stellar NBA career, Westphal had a good run as Phoenix Suns coach.
DAVID MEYERS – SONORA
Meyers led John Wooden’s last National Championship team in 1975. He starred in Milwaukee, and his sister, Ann, was a women’s star in Westwood before marrying Don Drysdale.

MARQUESS JOHNSON – CRENSHAW
He was an All-American under Gene Bartow in 1977, and an NBA All-Star.

GREG GOORJIAN – LA CRESCENTA VALLEY
In the late 1970s, Goorjian was a throwback to “Pistol Pete” Maravich: A hotshot backcourt scoring machine who played for his father. Nobody ever accused Maravich of being the ultimate team player, but he was John Stockton compared to Goorjian. Greg went to UNLV, but stifled under that legendary disciplinarian, Jerry Tarkanian. He was the Ronnie Knox of college basketball, transferring every year from this or that j.c. or small school, all of which may or may not have destroyed his NBA dreams.

HAROLD MINER – INGLEWOOD
Every once in a while, a good one gets snagged by the Trojans. The left-hand shooting All-American starred at SC during a time in which they played UCLA even up in the early ‘90s, then took his show to the Miami Heat and Cleveland Cavaliers.

BASKETBALL DREAM TEAMS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

FIRST TEAM

F  Marques Johnson, Crenshaw
F  Sidney Wicks, Hamilton
C  Billy McGill, Jefferson
G  Gail Goodrich, L.A. Poly
G  Paul Westphal, Aviation

SECOND TEAM

David Greenwood, Verbum Dei
Kiki Vandeweghe, Palisades
Darrell Imhoff, Alhambra
Dennis Johnson, Dominguez
Joe Caldwell, Fremont

THIRD TEAM

F  Willie Naulls, San Pedro
F  Curtis Rowe, Fremond
C  Sven Nater, Long Beach Wilson
G  Michael Cooper, Pasadena
G  Reggie Theus, Inglewood

FOURTH TEAM

Keith Van Horne, Diamond Bar
Keith Erickson, El Segundo
*Tracy Murray, Glendora
*Paul Pierce, Inglewood
Byron Scott, Morningside
Harold Miner, Inglewood
Raymond Lewis, Crenshaw
Greg Goorjian, La Crescenta Valley

*Out of position.
ORANGE COUNTY

FIRST TEAM

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LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY

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PLAYER OF THE CENTURY: Paul Westphal, Aviation

FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE CENTURY: John Elway, Granada Hills
BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE CENTURY: Mark McGwire, Damian
BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE CENTURY: Paul Westphal, Aviation
TRACK ATHLETE OF THE CENTURY: Bob Seagren, Pomona

LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY ATHLETE OF THE CENTURY: John Elway

In a close call that breaks down to such notables as Elway, Mark McGwire, and Jackie Robinson, the call goes out to the retired, two-time Super Bowl Champion quarterback of the Denver Broncos.

Elway was a three-sport superstar at Granada Hills. Robinson starred in four sports. Big Mac was a pretty good hitter who had not reached his stride; he did his best offensive work in American Legion play. Mark also played golf. Had he been a prep football player on a par with his younger brother, that might have swayed the vote.

McGwire was an even better college baseball player at USC than Elway was a football player at Stanford, winning The Sporting News Player of the Year award in 1984 after leading the Alaskan Summer League with a .403 batting average in 1982. John never won a Heisman. He was a good enough baseball player, however, to garner a six-figure bonus from George Steinbrenner, and to play minor league baseball in the Yankees organization. Robinson was a very good multiple-threat offensive football player at UCLA, but track may have been his best sport. World War II wiped out the 1940 and ’44 Olympics, so Jack never had a chance to shine on the world stage.

Elway’s career passing records have been matched by very few—Tarkenton, Marino—but his two World Championship rings at the end cinch the deal. McGwire played on the World Series-winning A’s, but the Series was marred by an earthquake. He also failed to propel his
team to the top in the years prior to and after that. He has never won an MVP award. His
career has not played out, however. His 70 homers in 1998 are remarkable, but Sammy Sosa still
beat him out for the league’s most coveted trophy. His team’s are not very good, and it remains
to be seen if he can assault Hank Aaron’s career mark of 755. Robinson, had he ran track in the
Olympics, not served in the Army, and played longer in the Majors, might have gone down as
the second-half-of-the-century Jim Thorpe. His brilliant, yet all-too-short life remains a star-
crossed reminder of what this country can be, and should be more of!

AN UNSUNG HERO

"Unsung." Not celebrated in song or story, not acclaimed.
Bob Troppmann may have been unsung, but Bear Bryant used to attend his football clinics to learn new techniques.
The problem with people is that they do not do what they say they are going to do. If
Troppmann, an ex-Marine with a heart of gold, told you he would do something, you could take
to the bank.
He was one of the best prep football coaches in California, building Redwood High of
Marin County into a dynasty, but he lost his beloved job over generational differences.
There is a theory that says America always wins its wars because of prep football. The
pageantry. The marching bands. The organized mayhem. Crowds, like countries, taking sides.
Tropp was the master of this structured world. In 1970, when Robin Williams was a
senior at Redwood and Vietnam was raging, a bunch of athletes got together and said they did
not have to cut their hair.
You would have thought Sacco and Vanzetti were advocating anarchy in Larkspur!
"Hair" was not just a Broadway play at the time, but a Great Divide between old and
young that cannot be comprehended by today’s generation. To make a sad story short, the
school, which still enforced a uniform dress code, won a court case that said they had the right to
ask players to cut their hair.
It was a *Pyrhnic* victory for Tropp. That means the cost of winning was greater than
winning itself. He resigned on principle.
Instead of coaching for many more years during his prime, he faded into relative
obscurity.
Today, his legacy lives on in the person of Pete Carroll. Carroll played for Troppmann at
Redwood, and was inspired by him to enter coaching. As defensive coordinator for the 49ers in
1994, he helped the Deion Sanders team win the Super Bowl. Head coaching stints with the Jets
and Patriots followed. Now, he is in charge of what Yamamoto might call the "sleeping giant,"
the USC Trojans.
"He was born to coach," says Tropp. "Everybody loved him. Now, he’s had 15 years
professional coaching experience, he’s been with Lou Holtz, and on the staff at Ohio State. He’s
just a solid individual with enthusiasm, whose mastered mostly defensive skills. He’s always had
his followers."
Tropp was asked about the Generation Gap of the 1960s and ‘70s.
“The world was changing,” he recalls. “I took on the hair issue and ultimately lost. In
retrospect, a lot of people said I was right, but at the time there was high pressure over the issue.
Marin was sports-crazy in those days. Housing was affordable and young families moved in.

On Saturday, April 28, Lowell High School honored their first Hall of Fame class. Tropp graduated from Lowell, but was not included. This seems to be the story of his life. The unsung hero. Unrecognized for the years of toil and good influence he provided young men, not just Pete Carroll, but kids, some troubled, who benefited from Tropp’s wise counsel.

Despite the Marine background and the shorthair drill instructor reputation “Coach T” was known for on the football field, he was a kindly soul in his dealings with students, many of them non-athletes, who attended his classes.

“I remember Robin Williams,” says Tropp. “He ran track. There was never a semblance of the comic we see today. I see kids 30 years later, I don’t recognize ‘em, but they all know and remember me. They’re doctors, lawyers, professionals. I see ‘em on the golf course. Kids were just great 30 years ago, but kids are the same every generation, basically.”

Tropp did coach the Redwood freshmen for a few seasons, and was head coach at College of Marin in the 1980s.

Tropp, who joined the Marines on the “day of infamy, December 7, 1941,” spent time in occupied Japan after the war, and then attended San Francisco State on the GI Bill. He recalls watching the San Francisco Clippers and the Oakland Giants of the old Pacific Coast Football League.

Guys like Bob Troppmann have a terrific influence on young lives, but they are too often unrecognized. Not on my watch they aren’t.

American Sports
'A KID WHO HAD IT ALL' IS AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY

by Steven Travers

American Reporter Correspondent

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. -- Marin County, Calif., is one of the most affluent, prosperous places in the world. Not only does it contain some of the richest zip codes and home prices, but its leafy environs symbolize Westernized Ivy League reverence for education and scholarship. Consequently, graduates of Marin's high schools regularly matriculate at the top colleges this nation has to offer, using their advantages and contacts to vault into great success in life.

Out of all the graduating seniors who made up Marin County's Class of 1979, it can be argued that the one most likely to succeed was Mickey Meister, 18 years of age, wearing the cap and gown of the county's most prestigious school of the era, Redwood High. If there is a laundry-list of traits that pass as "advantages" in the modern world, Mick had them all.
He stood six feet, five inches tall and weighed 220 pounds. Look up "handsome" in the dictionary, and a picture of Mick in 1979 appears. He had a lion's mien of brown hair and a smile that lit up a room. Girls drooled over him and guys wanted to warm themselves in his sunshine. Everybody loved him. Or envied him.

Mick either had a photographic memory or was just gifted when it came to numbers. Either way, he was a math genius who could compute figures in his mind like Dustin Hoffman in "Rainman."

Mick was an only child. He lived in a mansion in Ross, one of the most exclusive enclaves in one of the most exclusive of locations. Everything he wanted was handed to him. His daily allowance matched the meal money provided to top professional athletes.

Speaking of sports, Mick was named National High School Athlete of the Year in 1979. His competition included John Elway from Granada Hills and Jay Schroeder from Palisades. It was on the baseball field where I knew Mick, and where our friendship developed.

When I got to Redwood, I began to hear stories about Meister's legend from the Central Marin Babe Ruth League and junior high hoops. He was said to be a man among boys. I spotted Mick for the first time playing tennis on the College of Marin courts. He wore a perfectly matched white outfit, had a state-of-the art racquet, and the strokes to go with it. He also could talk "trash" with the best of them.

In those days, Redwood under taskmaster coach Al Endriss was one of the two or three top prep baseball programs in America. Endriss was nothing if not hard-nosed.
"This isn't a democracy," he told us. "It's a dictatorship."

Every once in a while a skilled sophomore would make the varsity. Mick made the "big club" as a freshman. The tradition was for "rookies" to carry equipment and handle menial tasks. Mick would have none of it. He knew he was destined to be the best pitcher Redwood ever had, and demanded the number 19 jersey that was always worn by the staff ace. Meister never paid Endriss the respect he demanded through fear and intimidation. He was kicked off the team, and his teammates voted to keep him off. Endriss knew he needed him, though, and brought him back. Mick nonchalantly sauntered back, never uttering a whiff of apology or remorse.

Mick allegedly went through Redwood's female population like Patton's Army in the Low Countries. He drank and reportedly did drugs. He seemed impervious to any ill effects. In 1977, despite the fact that our staff included four pitchers who would play professionally (five would earn athletic scholarships) Mick was the main man. The honor of starting the league opener was going to go either to Mick or myself. I learned that it was Mick when I walked in the library and Mick stood up and announced, loudly, that "Super sophomore Mickey Meister..."
will be starting for the Giants today." He was 11-1, earned all-league honors, and led us not only to a 33-4 record and the North Coast Section title, but the "mythical" National Championship of high school baseball. In his junior year, Mick was 14-0, made consensus prep All-America, and Redwood again won the NCS (finishing number two in the nation). As a senior, Mick capped the greatest pitching career in Marin history with another All-American season.

The world was at his feet. In my life I have never known a more self-confident egotist than the teenage Mick. Despite his braggadocio, Mick was impossible not to like. He had the copyright on charisma, and as Dizzy Dean once said, "If you can do it, it ain't braggin'."

The Boston Red Sox drafted him, but Mick decided to accept a full ride to the University of Southern California. I attended U.S.C., too. It was there where I cemented my friendship with him. Mick's time at this private school was worth about $70,000. It was also when the small fissures began to appear in Mick's life.

His father, Jack, had been a minor league pitcher who had built his own insurance business, but he was starting to run into financial problems. His mother, June, had been an aspiring actress who claimed to have dated Marlon
Brando before marrying Jack. When Mick pitched in high school, June would sit in her car with a bottle of booze. Her alcoholism was a known "secret." June was a talker. When you called Mick, you had to give yourself 15 minutes because she could talk your head off if she answered the phone. As soon as Mick graduated from Redwood, his folks broke up. June moved into a small apartment in Greenbrae, and Jack moved to Atlanta, where he married a black woman. She was not Tyra Banks. Mick's U.S.C. teammates called her "Aunt Jemima." For the first time in his heretofore charmed life, Mick had to hold his tongue.

Still, U.S.C. was a blast. In his sophomore year, Mick led the Trojans with a 9-3 record and was incredibly popular with all the beautiful U.S.C. coeds. But he partied too hard. He rarely attended class, unless it was something like Film Appreciation and was held at night. Mick was a film buff and an authority on all things rock 'n' roll, especially Mick Jagger and The Rolling Stones. Jagger was his not just his namesake but his role model, which explains much too much.

Mick spent hours playing video games instead of studying. He would find a smart, pretty girl and cheat off of her. He drank every night. He had no
work

ethic, and it affected his pitching. By his senior year he was out of favor
with legendary coach Rod Dedeaux. The L.A. Times, noting that four years
earlier he was considered the nation's best high school recruit, called him the

"enigma." Instead of putting his math skills to use as an aspiring
accountant or

engineer, Mick became a card shark. He outsmarted his teammates in poker games,

and on trips to Vegas allegedly learned how to count cards out of a
three-deck shoe.

Mick had chutzpah in a big way. If he did not sleep with a girl, I heard, he claimed
to sleep with them. One of his "conquests" approached Mick when he came to a
campus

restaurant with his teammates.

"Hi, I'm Leslie," she said. "I thought I should introduce myself, since
we've been sleeping with each other." It did not faze Mick in any way. The
things that would buckle a normal guy had no affect on him. He was brazen.

Mick never graduated. His standing as a prospect fell precipitously, and

Seattle drafted him in the low rounds. In the minor leagues, he drank heavily

and took advantage of the small town groupies. After two inauspicious seasons,

his once-bright baseball career was over.

Mick ended up in the South Bay Area of Northern California, living in San
Jose and eventually Fremont. He always had the touch with women. His girlfriends were always attractive. He always cheated on them. They always deserted him. He always found a replacement. Mick actually found gainful employment, counseling students at Silicon Valley College on their career prospects. It amazed me that he could hold a job like that. It seemed utterly incongruous that somebody like Mick "counseled" students. He was never in his office when you called him, bragging that he played golf and expensed everything on the company dime. He was always juggling women; the divorcee did not know about the secretary who did not know about the college chick. His friends felt sorry for the girls but kept their mouths shut, even when they would ask them, "How could he lie to me like that?"

Eventually, things started going south in the South Bay. "Mick sightings" described a haggard guy who no longer resembled the sports stud of his youth.

His mother passed away, and for all practical purposes Mick lost touch with his old man. He drank at work and was the subject of sexual harassment complaints. He was suspected of everything from absenteeism to embezzlement. Mick became addicted to gambling and owed markers to bookies all over the country. He
was fired.

Mick had friends with money. He went to all of them, but over time each of them cut him off. After being evicted, he would stay with friends, but always outstayed his welcome. A constant tobacco chewer, he would leave his dip cups around the house for the wives and kids of his friends to find, and eventually he just spat on the carpet, blaming the children. Mick's friend, Mac, was the last to help him. He tried to direct his credit card number only to motels and restaurants, but when he discovered that the money he lent Mick went to wine, not food and shelter, he had to cut him off and change his phone number.

The last we heard of Mick, he was living in a car - or worse - in Texas.

I thought about Mick on Thanksgiving. On the one hand, I know he has nobody to blame but himself, and that if I had been blessed with his gifts I would have used them to the limit. Mick never had any spiritual guidance. He laughed at the idea of religious faith, and seemed to admire people who got away with bad deeds. He loved the way O.J. Simpson had gotten away with murder, and thought Bill Clinton's ability to walk through the raindrops was a textbook for life.
On the other hand, I cannot help but feel thankful that I have what I have. My problems are minuscule compared to Mickey Meister's, and while he may not acknowledge God, I pray that he will find peace.

The last of Mick's friends to see him report that as he was being driven to the bus station, he was still bragging about his latest sexual conquest. Then he thought about his situation, and finally it seemed to hit him. Still,

the film buff in him was yearning to get out.

"I don't know how this happened to me, but this could be a movie," he said. "What would we call it? 'An American Tragedy'?"

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AMERICAN SPORTS

+ by Steven Travers

American Reporter Correspondent

San Francisco, Calif.

April 10, 2006

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SAN FRANCISCO -- Mickey Meister passed away this week. To those who knew what had become of him, this was news we expected since 2003. He was 44 years old. His life is a Shakespearean cautionary tale of wasted talent and excess. He was a man of extraordinary flaw, yet also one of great charisma. It is the fervent hope of this old friend of Mick's that somehow that charisma, combined with Mick's spiritual knowledge of death's impending harvest - and hopeful repentance - impressed God enough to grant salvation to his soul.

Where do I start? Well, for one, Mickey is the greatest high school baseball pitcher in the history of the Marin County Athletic League. He played during the MCAL's "golden age" - the 1970s. Redwood High School was the best prep program in America. Great pitchers like Gene Frey, Eddie Andersen, Jeff Lucchesi, Frank Ferroni and Jimmy Jones came out of Al Endriss' program like so much wheat gracing an Indiana cornfield. Charles Scott of Terra Linda was another superstar. But Mickey's record was unparalleled. He deserves to be in the
Marin Athletic Hall of Fame. The Marin Old-Time Athlete's meet May 1, and I for
one will lobby for Mick at that event.

He played four years of varsity ball. His sophomore year, Mickey was my
teammate, the ace of a club that not only won the NCS championship but also
was
voted "mythical" national champions of prep baseball by Collegiate Baseball
magazine and the Easton Bat Co. You can look it up. The Tamalpais Union High
School District office still displays a giant photo of that "number one team in
the nation." Mick was 11-1, first team All-MCAL. As a junior he was 14-0, a
high school All-American. Redwood won the NCS title again and finished number
two in the nation. As a senior, Mick again made All-American, was named by
Cal-Hi Sports the state's best baseball player, and another organization even went
so far as to award him the title "National Athlete of the Year."

Mick turned down the Boston Red Sox to accept a full ride to play for Rod
Dedeaux at USC. This is where he and I were again classmates. At USC, he was
the Trojans' ace, going 9-3 his sophomore year. He beat John Elway and
Stanford at Sunken Diamond, 2-1 in a classic performance. After USC, he played in the
Seattle Mariners organization.

<center><b>Most Likely To Succeed</b></center>
It can be said that the leafy, affluent suburbs of Marin County may produce the very best and brightest of America's high school students. In 1979, if one were to survey all of Marin to determine which of that year's seniors was the "most likely to succeed," the most obvious choice would have been Mickey Meister. His baseball success was only part of the story.

Mick was 6-5, 225 pounds, and if you looked up "handsome" in Webster's, his smiling face was to be found there. Girls craved his attention. Guys wanted to bathe in his sunshine.

Mick was also a mathematical genius who could rival Dustin Hoffman's Rainman when it came to adding up and computing numbers in his head. He was smart, savvy, street-smart, funny, the life of the party. Nothing got past him. He was nobody's fool. He was a movie buff whose knowledge of Hollywood rivaled Siskel and Ebert's. Similarly, he knew the history of rock music in like fashion.

Mick grew up in a mansion in Ross. His parents reportedly gave him $100 a day for "expenses."

So, after Redwood, after USC, and after the Mariners, where did it all go wrong? I was his friend, so I wanted to know that answer. Three years ago, when Mickey became homeless in Texas, I wrote an article that ran nationally.
The American Reporter, trying not just to understand his cautionary tale but maybe to help him, if I could.

The article found its way to Texas, where residents of Earl Campbell's old hometown of Tyler were trying to make sense of the strange, oddly entertaining drifter named Mickey. The article detailed Mick's success, his failures and his faults. The desired effect was that he would grasp the realities of his life, causing him to right his ship; take stock in himself; stop drinking; find peace through Christ.

I heard through friends that Mick was peeved at the article, especially since it shed light that made it harder to flimflam local Texas women. But he had a strange pride in his faults, causing him to show the article around town, cherry-picking the parts about his sports heroics and, oddly, bragging that "it's all true." Even the parts about his childhood affluence were used to create the image that a trust fund was waiting, that he just needed enough to get by, a loan, an investment in an Internet stock that was a sure thing until his ship came in.

The article hit a nerve. Numerous old Redwood and USC people came across it and contacted me with "Meister stories." Mick's circle of friends started
getting emails from Tyler, Texas. The typical query went like this: "I have a
female friend who has befriended a man named Mickey Meister. She is not very
attractive and quite flattered to receive male attention. Each day she meets
Mickey at ~TGIF Friday's, where he spends the day drinking on my friend's
tab until she arrives after work. They drink and eat, she pays the tab, and they
go. Mickey has access to her bank account, ATM and 401K. He promises he will
pay her back, as he is investing in a big deal. He claims a doctorate from USC,
to be a former big league All-Star, and other fantastic fables."
Mick's friends, myself included, tried to warn off these "lonely hearts
club women," apparently with some success, but there was always another one.
Finally, some months ago, he talked one of them into coming to California with
him. She weighed close to 300 pounds and had given Mick access to her
savings.
Looking back, Mick was coming home to die. He knew his liver could not take
the alcohol abuse he put it through. The handsome pitching ace was
unrecognizable the last few years.
But, again... why? As his friend, Alex Jacobs once said, "Mick's a
complex human being." To figure out the roots of his demise, one must look to a
youth in which his physical, mental and economic gifts were so great that he
took them for granted. To those of us who knew him, this was plainly obvious.

As an athlete, he showed up and dominated. Females? Same thing. Money? It
seemingly grew on the trees of his Ross surroundings. Academics? His
photographic memory meant he did not need to study. His parents doted on him; his
friends were more like apostles. Door after door... Welcome, Mick.

But Mick cheated on girlfriends and stole from his male friends. One good pal had a computer heisted by Mick. He was dishonest. Employment never lasted. He took money from a Marin County bank that employed him as a teller,
telling a friend who inquired how he could do such a thing, "It's really pretty easy
once you get past the morality of it."

When caught red-handed stealing, cheating and lying, he just smiled. He was proud of his ability to get away with stuff. He loved Bill Clinton because he
was a slickster who never got caught. He used his math skills to cheat at cards.

My personal, humble analysis is that he lacked spiritual guidance. As it says in the Gospel according to Matthew, "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, only to lose his soul?" It was in this verse that I found strange hope for Mick, because in the end he lost the whole world. This was why I
wrote about him in 2003, hoping he would realize this, repent and save his soul, for in God's mystery our earthly stumbles can be the pathway to Heaven. This remains my hope.

Mick's friends will gather for memories of him at Marin Joe's on April 29.

Steven Travers is the author of "Barry Bonds" Baseball's Superman" and the upcoming "The USC Trojans: College Football's All-Time Greatest Dynasty." Contact him at uscsteve1@aol.com.

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A RECORD FALLS IN SIMI VALLEY

El Segundo High School's Scott McGregor won an astounding 51 games, the all-time California career high school record, from 1969-72. To understand what a phenomenal achievement it is to have won more games than any other California prep pitcher is to stand in awe of the state's baseball history. Walter Johnson (Fullerton), Tom Seaver (Fresno), Don Drysdale (Van Nuys), Bret Saberhagen (Cleveland), Rollie Fingers (Upland), Bert Blyleven (Santiago), Bob Lemon (Long Beach Wilson), Dave Stewart (St. Elizabeth), Bill Lee (Terra Linda), Randy Johnson (Livermore), Jack McDowell (Sherman Oaks Notre Dame), Randy Jones (Brea Olinda), Jim Lonborg (Santa Maria), Mark Davis (Granada), Mike Scott (Santa Monica), and Dennis Eckersley (Irvington) are just the beginning of a list of great pitchers from the Golden State.

McGregor won more games than any of them.

On May 10, 2000, Tim Thompson, a senior right-hander at Grace Brethren High School in Simi Valley, beat archrival Faith Baptist, 10-0, upping his record to 13-2 on the year. His ERA is under 1.00 It was also his fifty-second career victory.
"It feels really good," Thompson said. He was pressed to put in some kind of historical perspective what it is like to have done what none of the aforementioned twirlers did.

"Now that I look at it," he said, "it's a real honor to have past everyone, and to break a record that a pro pitcher set."

Thompson is not a flame-thrower. He brings a fastball in the mid-80s with a good slider and excellent control. In this respect, he is very much like McGregor, who was a finesse artist.

Thompson should add several more victories to his career total while pitching in post-season play, although the national record is out of his reach. Terry Heiderscheit of Kee High School in Lansing, Iowa won his sixty-ninth game in 1978!

McGregor, now a Baltimore pastor, called him when he heard about the record.

"He called me at school," said Thompson. "I found it weird at first because they told me, 'Pastor McGregor's on the phone for you.' Then I put two and two together. He talked to me about college and professional baseball, and he seemed really gung-ho about seeing me break his record."

Thompson, 5-11, 190 pounds, has accepted a scholarship to play baseball and continue his Christian education at Cal Lutheran, and he is "pretty anxious" about his future. He probably will be a low draft choice in June, and definitely hopes to play professionally after his college career. He learned how to pitch from his father, his brother, and cousin, Brian Falkenborg, who pitched for the Orioles.

Thompson's legend began when he was in the eighth grade and he pitched a team that consists of all the guys on Grace Brethren's current squad to victory over the varsity. He won 12 games as a freshman and has been All-Southern Section every year, and Division VI Player of the Year as a junior.

"He has good control and good command of his slider," says coach Aaron Marcarelli, "and he'll throw any pitch even when he's 2-0 or 3-1 behind in the count. He has 115 strikeouts in 79 innings with 15 walks" prior to the record-breaking win.

The June issue featured Grace Brethren senior pitcher Tim Thompson as the Prep Player of the Month. The Guru trudged all the way out to Simi Valley, photo-journalist Dave Blank in tow, to cover Thompson's 10-0 shutout win over rival Faith Baptist. That was Thompson's fifty-second career victory, breaking the 28-year old state record held by El Segundo's Scott McGregor. The Guru went on and on, naming great pitchers like Tom Seaver, Walter Johnson and Bob Lemon—all California high school products who did not win 51 games. What a feat!

Not that what Thompson did was not a feat, but it turns out the record was not broken, it was only tied. By the time the season ended, Thompson had added four more wins in the CIF-Southern Section Play-Offs, ending with 56. The guys over at the CIF set out to add his name to the list of new record-holders, but in the interest of accuracy they conducted a check of Grace Brethren's records, just to be sure.

What do you know? It turns out that Thompson is credited with wins his freshman year, not the 12 the school said he had. The Southern Section also disallowed a 1998 Division VI quarterfinal win credited to Thompson. In that game, Grace Brethren lost to Pacific Christian,
but when Pacific Christian had to forfeit for using an ineligible player, the win went to Grace Brethren. There are no winning pitchers in forfeit games.

This leaves Thompson tied with McGregor, who pitched for legendary Eagles' coach John Stevenson (1969-72) on a Southern Section title team that also included third baseman George Brett. McGregor, now Baltimore pastor, had been invited to the "record-breaking" game, but did not receive word until the last minute, so he called Thompson by phone to offer his congratulations.

Grace Brethren has won three straight Southern Section championships with Thompson. Aaron Marcaerelli took over as Grace Brethren's coach in the middle of Thompson's career, so he was unaware of the victory discrepancy. When it became a story that the young man would break the mark, he just went by the records he knew of, and nobody came forward to raise the issue. Some scorebooks had been lost, so a review of local newspapers was made. Thompson's father, Jim, an assistant coach at he school, speculated to the LA Times that maybe the Southern Section just did not want the record of a former Orioles big leaguer broken by a kid at Division VI small school. The real problem is that nobody seemed to realize what was happening. Coach Marcerelli said that had he known, he would have given Thompson more starts towards the end of the season to let him go for the record, instead of resting him in preparation for the Play-Offs.

Thompson finished his senior year 17-2, and will play at Cal Lutheran next season. He pitched well in the Bernie Milligan All-Star Game, and appears to be the kind of hurler who just gets everybody out.

Like Greg Maddux. The Guru thinks that Thompson can still be happy with tying McGregor's record, at least his name will still appear in the all the books, and that this young man may be breaking other records down the road.

HE'S LIVIN' THE DREAM

Move from Bakersfield to Ventura changes Reynolds' life.

Dane Reynolds, 14 years old, is considered a surf rat. He spends as much time in the water as he can, coming out, it seems, just to eat and sleep. The kid hardly needs clothes, outside of a wet suit. The interesting thing about Dane, however, is that he did not grow up in Surf City. He is actually from Bakersfield, by way of Downey. His father, Tom, was forced to re-locate to the dusty Central California town in the early 1990s. Bakersfield is known for little more than being home to Frank Gifford and the wildcat oil industry. It is only a couple hours from the Pacific Ocean, but psychologically the place is as far removed the California beach culture as, say, Wichita.

In 1996, the Reynolds' family made the move from Bakersfield to Ventura, as in two blocks from some of the best waves on the West Coast. Dane took to the water like a fish, rising regularly at 5:15 AM to hit waves at first light.

Actually, Dane's Bakersfield years were not wasted in terms of perfecting his skills. He turned to skateboarding, a sport that requires the same kinds of skills, and he perfected moves that he now uses in the surf. At 5 feet 6 inches tall and 115 pounds, Reynolds is a good size for
his board, but he is growing--naturally. He feels too much height is not conducive for surfing, but the kid will lose this particular battle with nature.

The top 13- to 15-year old surfers will compete next weekend at Trestles in San Clemente in the National Scholastic Surfing Association national championships. The best of the best from Hawaii and Florida will be there to challenge them, and Reynolds will be there, landing "the biggest wave, the longest wave, the cleanest wave." Reynolds is unafraid of radical maneuvers and experimentation, and he rarely loses his composure. He pushes it to the edge of the envelope all the time, but out of the water he is a typical quiet, laid-back type. He saves his adrenaline rush for the water, where he will need it.

TOP GUNS

A year after I wrote this article, Chandler went in the first round of the pro draft. His coach, Russell Otis, made an appointment with me over the phone to interview Chandler, but when I showed up he stiffed me. I later found Chandler on my own. It was not hard to find the only seven-foot black kid on school grounds. Otis was arrested a couple years later for sexually molesting one of his players. Way to go there…Otis.

TYSON CHANDLER

Dominguez’ seven-footer has respect for the game,

Coach Russell Otis feels that, with all due respect for New York City, the best high school basketball players in the world come from California. A front court that includes Bill Russell (Oakland McClymonds) and Bill Walton (San Diego Helix) may just knock off that mythical New York team with Lew Alcindor and Connie Hawkins. All fantasy aside, Coach Otis sees the real thing every day, and he knows that what keeps the recruiters coming to the Golden State is not the cheese. The “real thing” is a dominant seven-foot, 223-pound package named Tyson Chandler.

Right off the top, this is a nice kid. The whole “star syndrome” that once affected high school athletics seems to be ebbing away. Good role models like Michael Jordan, Cal Ripken and Steve Young have taught a new generation of kids that nicer is better.

In speaking to players on other teams, however, the jealousy factor rears its ugly head. "He's all hype," some Artesia players said. "He's seven feet tall, he's supposed to score." This was before Dominguez waxed the Pioneers by 20 in a recent tournament.

Worse than that is the whispering campaign. Players at other schools who do not even know Tyson say, "He runs with a bad crowd…he's involved in drugs…what do you expect, he lives in a bad area<Compton>.

All of this sounds like sour grapes. First of all, Coach Otis is adamant that Tyson is not involved with a bad crowd or does stupid things, and while kids can fool you, my take is that Tyson has got it together.

Historical perspective
Another thing that strikes one about Chandler is his knowledge of basketball history. He even paraphrases Santayana.

“You can only know the future if you remember the past,” he says in reference to the sacrifices and achievements of N.B.A. greats like Oscar Robertson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Walton. He knows that great players labored for smaller amounts of money and took the game to new heights, making it possible for young men like him to have the opportunities now available to them.

Lottery pick

Chandler was the National High School Freshman of the Year two years ago. As a sophomore in 1999, he led Dominguez to the state championship, was a consensus All-American and the California Player of the Year. Now, as a junior on the Dons (14-2 at press time) he unselfishly limits himself to 17 points per game, and is considered the best schoolboy player in America. UCLA and everybody else are recruiting him, and he is rumored to be the first pick in the 2001 NBA draft.

“I like Coach Lavin,” he says of the embattled Bruin coach. Listen up, Steve, because if you get this guy he could do for you what that Lew kid from Power Memorial did for John Wooden in 1965. Maybe.

“I’m working on getting bigger in the off-season,” says Chandler, who trains under Marv Marinovich at the Oakley training center in Orange County in the summer months. “I hope to be up to about 235—not too big, but I want good strength.

“I like Kevin Garnett. He’s agile and runs the floor. Shaq <O’Neal> elevates everyone’s game by playing full-court and hustling on defense. I try to lead by example like that. I played other sports growing up, and that helped me be more agile and athletic. I feel like I need to only score as much as I need to help us win. My job is to be a court presence, play strong ‘D’ and rebound on both ends.”

Paging Nick Nolte

How about recruiting, Tyson?

“All coaches act the same way,” he says, smiling. “They’ll all do anything they can to get a player. It’s not their fault, the pressure is on them. As for my family, everybody just wants what is best for me.”

Ever see “Blue Chips”, starring Nick Nolte?

“Oh yeah,” says Chandler, and his smile says that he knows all about the sorts of shenanigans depicted in the film.

Rare insight

“The game is about desire, not money,” he continues. “Guys’ got beat up playing this sport before I came along, so I appreciate the love of the game that pushed the old-timers to make basketball what it is today.”

Rare insight for a 17-year old.

“I don’t know where I’d be without him,” admits Coach Otis. “He’s a blessing, and not just on the court, but as a person. He has compassion for people and for life. People look at his basketball ability and that’s all they see, but he had a chance to read to elementary school kids and he just jumped at the opportunity. He’s a shining star.”
Not the next Kareem

After interviewing Tyson, I saw him play against archrival Artesia in the Nike Dream Classic at Long Beach. My inexpert conclusion: He is not now nor will he be ready for the NBA by next year. He scored nine points and pulled down five boards. Artesia's zone defense contained him, and while he was willing to mix it up, he far from dominated. A good college player? Maybe, by his sophomore or junior year. Would he elevate UCLA to a National Championship? Not by himself.

ALL-TIME CALIFORNIA PREP TEAMS

MARIN COUNTY

P Bill Lee, Terra Linda
P Mickey Meister, Redwood
P Charles Scott, Terra Linda
P Eddie Andersen, Redwood
P Jim Jones, Redwood
C Chad Kreuter, Redwood
1B Brett Wallace, Justin Sienna
2B Mike Parnow, Marin Catholic
3B Greg Zunino, Redwood
SS Buddy Biancalana, Redwood
OF Dennis Keating, Marin Catholic
OF Sam Chapman, Tamalpais
OF Derek White, Terra Linda
PLAYER: Sam Chapman, Tamalpais
PITCHER: Bill Lee, Terra Linda
COACH: Al Endriss, Redwood

Honorable mention

P Frank Ferroni, Redwood
P Russ Dillon, Novato
P Tom Arrington, Redwood
P Andrew Ferrari, Redwood
P Dewey Forrey, Terra Linda
P Dan Lucia, Tamalpais
P Gene Frey, redwood
P Jeff Luchessi, Redwood
P Jesse Foppert, San Rafael
C John Boccabella, Marin Catholic
C Jerry Goff, San Rafael
1B Tony Guralas, Redwood
3B Phil Bacigalupi, Redwood
3B Gordy Hodgson, Terra Linda
SS Joe DeMaestri, Tamalpais
SS Gary La Torre, Redwood
OF Clifford Hall, Tamalpais
OF Gary Zunino, Redwood
OF Jim Connor, Redwood
COACH: Keith Fraser, Terra Linda

SPECIAL: Tyler Walker, Ross (San Francisco University)

ALL-TIME GREATEST MCAL BASEBALL TEAMS

1. 1977 Redwood
2. 2005 Justin Sienna
3. 1974 Redwood
4. 1978 Redwood
5. 1973 Redwood

ALL-TIME MCAL BASKETBALL TEAM

Walt Gillespie, Drake
Eddie Joe Chavez, Drake
Steve McGee, Redwood
Lance Phillips, Marin Catholic
Steve Kenilvort, Drake
COACH: Pete Hayward, Drake

Will Garner, Tamalpais
Byron Stewart, San Rafael
Ken Cooney, Novato
Gary Sorgen, Redwood
Dan Hunt, Drake
COACH: Dick Hart, Redwood

SPECIAL: Steve Lavin, Drake
Jim Saia, Drake
Steve Spencer, Drake

ALL-TIME MCAL BASKETBALL TEAMS

1. 1982 Drake
2. 1981 Drake
3. 2007 Branson
4. 2000 Tamalpais
5. 1973 Drake
ALL-TIME MCAL FOOTBALL TEAM

QB Mike Moroski, Novato
QB Jim Peters, Redwood
WR Stacey Bailey, Terra Linda
RB Brad Muster, San Marin
RB Greg Loberg, Terra Linda
RB Dean Lazzarini, Drake
DB Mike Connor, Redwood
L Natu Tuatagaloa, San Rafael
? Bob Beedle, Tamalpais
? Matt Hazeltine, Tamalpais
? Reg Carolan, Drake
Brett Carolan, San Marin?
COACH: Don Lucas, Terra Linda

SPECIAL: Dan Fouts, Drake freshman? (San Francisco St. Ignatius)
   Pete Carroll, Redwood

ALL-TIME MCAL FOOTBALL TEAMS
1.1980 Terra Linda
2.1952 Tamalpais
3.1965 Drake?
4.1982 San Marin

ALL-TIME MCAL ATHLETES

TRACK AND FIELD: Darrell Elder, Redwood
   Rod Berry, Redwood
SWIMMING: Rick DeMont, Terra Linda
   Bob Placak, San Rafael
GIRL’S TENNIS: Sharon Walsh, San Rafael
GIRL’S BASKETBALL: Brooke Smith, Marin Catholic
   Caren Choppelas Horstmeyer, Redwood

ALL-TIME CALIFORNIA PREP BASEBALL TEAM

P Tom Seaver, Fresno (Fresno CC)
P Walter Johnson, Fullerton
P Don Drysdale, Van Nuys
P Randy Johnson, Livermore
P Dennis Eckersley, Fremont Washington
C Gary Carter, Fullerton Sunny Hills
1B Mark McGwire, LaVerne Damien
2B Jackie Robinson, Pasadena Muir
3B George Brett, El Segundo
SS Ozzie Smith, Los Angeles Locke
OF Ted Williams, San Diego Hoover
OF Joe Dimaggio, San Francisco Galileo
OF Barry Bonds, San Mateo Serra
MGR: Sparky Anderson, Los Angeles Dorsey

Honorable Mention

P Jim Maloney, Fresno
P Dick Selma, Fresno
P Barry Zito, San Diego University
P Bret Saberhagen, Reseda Cleveland
P Mark Prior, San Diego University
P Wally Bunker, San Mateo
P Mike Norris, San Francisco Poly
P Dave Stewart, Oakland St. Elizabeth’s
P Bob Lemon, Long Beach Wilson
P Bill Lee, San Rafael Terra Linda
P Mike McCormick, Los Angeles?
P Dave Righetti, San Jose Pioneer
P Dontrelle Willis, Alameda Encinal
P Scott McGregor, El Segundo
P Bill Bordley, Torrance Bishop Montgomery
P Wayne Simpson, Compton Centennial
P Don Wilson, Compton Centennial
P Mark Langsford, Santa Clara Buchser
P Jim Lomborg, Santa Maria Righetti?
P Andy Messersmith, Anaheim Western
P Tim Leary, Santa Monica
P Larry Sherry, Los Angeles Fairfax
P Trevor Hoffman, Anaheim Savanna
P Bert Blyleven, Villa Park?
P Jack McDowell, Sherman Oaks Notre Dame
P Rollie Fingers, Upland
P Randy Jones, La Brea
Gary Nolan, Oroville
P Mike Scott?
P Jon Garland, Granada Hills Kennedy
P Dan Haren, La Puente Bishop Amat
P Mike Witt, Anaheim Servite
C Brian Downing, Anaheim Magnolia
C Del Crandall, Fullerton
C Ernie Lombardi, Sacramento?
C Bob Boone, San Diego?
C Joe Ferguson, San Jose Camden
C Earl Battey, Los Angeles?
1B Mark Grace, Tustin
1B Erik Karros, San Fernando Valley?/UCLA
1B Willie Stargell, Alameda Encinal
1B Keith Hernandez, South San Francisco El Camino
1B Frank Chance, Los Angeles?
1B Eddie Murray, Los Angeles Locke
1B Ron Fairly, Long Beach Wilson?
1B Mike Epstein, Los Angeles Fairfax
1B Chris Chambliss, Oceanside
1B Wes Parker, Pacific Palisades?
1B Shaun Green, Tustin
2B Joe Morgan, Oakland Castlemont
2B Bobby Doerr, Los Angeles Fremont
2B Jeff Kent, Huntington Beach Edison
2B Bret Boone, Villa Park?
2B Jim LeFebvre?
2B Bobby Grich, Long Beach Poly
2B Tony Lazzerri, San Francisco Mission?
2B Bobby Brown, San Francisco Lowell
2B Jerry Coleman, San Francisco Lowell
2B Billy Martin, Berkeley
2B Ken Hubbs, Colton
2B Steve Sax, Sacramento
3B Todd Zeile?
3B Morgan Ensberg, Manhattan Beach Mira Costa
3B Tim Wallach, Irvine University
3B Carney Lansford, Santa Clara Wilcox
3B Ken Reitz, Daly City?
3B Eric Chavez, San Diego Mt. Carmel
3B Alan Gallagher, San Francisco Mission
3B Doug DeCinces, San Fernando Valley?
3B Robin Ventura, Santa Maria?
3B Aaron Boone, Villa Park
3B Troy Glaus, Carlsbad
3B Craig Nettles, San Diego?
3B Jeff Cirillo, Pasadena?
SS Arky Vaughan, Fullerton
SS Jim Fregosi, San Mateo Serra
SS Bobby Rollins, Alameda Encinal
SS Rick Burleson? (Cerritos JC)
SS Gary Templeton, Los Angeles?
SS Xavier Nady?
SS Roy Smalley?
SS Alan Trammell, San Diego Kearney
SS Nomar Garciaparra, Bellflower St. John Bosco
SS Connor Jackson, Woodland Hills El Camino Real
SS Larry Bowa? (Sacramento CC)
SS Robin Yount, Woodland Hills Taft
OF Daryl Strawberry, Los Angeles Crenshaw
OF Curt Flood, Oakland Castlemont
OF Eric Davis, Los Angeles?
OF Kevin Mitchell, San Diego?
OF Joe Charboneau, Santa Clara?
OF Mark Kotsay, Santa Fe Springs
OF Jason Giambi, West Covina South Hills
OF Dusty Baker, Carmichael?
OF Willie Davis, Los Angeles?
OF Willie Crawford, Los Angeles?
OF Billy Beane, San Diego Mt. Carmel
OF Dwayne Murphy, Lancaster?
OF Joe Rudi, Modesto?
OF Pete Incaviglia, Monterey?
OF Greg Jeffries, San Mateo Serra
OF Frank Robinson, Oakland Castlemont
OF Harry Heilman, San Francisco?
OF Bobby Bonds, Riverside
OF Rickey Henderson, Oakland Tech
OF Vada Pinson, Oakland Tech
OF Len Gabrielson, Oakland Tech
OF Geoff Jenkins, Sacramento?
OF Jackie Jensen, Oakland Tech
OF Fred Lynn, Lynwood
OF George Foster, Los Angeles Leuzinger
OF Rich Dauer?
OF Steve Kemp, Arcadia
OF Jeff Burroughs, Long Beach Wilson
OF Tony Gwynn, Long Beach Poly
OF Rick Monday, Santa Monica
OF Dwight Evans, Chatsworth
OF Don Buford, Los Angeles Dorsey
OF Dom DiMaggio, San Francisco Galileo
OF Joe Cronin, San Francisco Sacred Heart
   MGR: Gene Mauch, Los Angeles Fremont
   MGR: Dick Williams, Los Angeles Fremont
   MGR: ? Hoffman, Anaheim Savanna
COACH: Rod Dedeaux, Hollywood
BEST CALIFORNIA PREP BASEBALL TRADITIONS

1. San Mateo Serra
2. Lakewood
3. Los Angeles Fremont
4. El Segundo
5. Compton Centennial
6. Larkspur Redwood
7. Fresno
8. Santa Monica
9. West Covina Edgewood
10. San Diego Rancho Bernardo
11. Woodland Hills Taft
12. Santa Ana Mater Dei
13. San Diego University
14. Compton De La Salle
15. Long Beach Poly
16. Los Angeles Venice
17. Villa Park

ALL-TIME CALIFORNIA PREP BASKETBALL TEAM

Bill Walton, La Mesa Helix
Bill Russell, Oakland McClymond
Jason Kidd, Alameda St. Joseph’s
Gail Goodrich, Los Angeles Poly
Reggie Miller, Riverside (Poly?)

Honorable Mention

K.C. Jones, San Francisco Commerce
Bill Sharman, Los Angeles Narbonne
Bill Cartwright, Elk Grove
Phil Smith? (California)
Phil Chenier? (California)
John Lambert, Berkeley
Gus Williams? (USC)
Hank Luisetti, San Francisco Galileo
Marquess Johnson, Los Angeles Crenshaw
Sidney Wicks, Los Angeles Hamilton
Curtis Rowe, Los Angeles?
Raymond Lewis, Los Angeles Verbum Dei
Paul Westphal, Redondo Beach Aviation
Dave Meyers, La Habra Sonora
Alex Hannum?
Tex Winter, Compton
Darrall Imhoff, Alhambra
Tom Tolbert, Artesia
? Barry, Concord De La Salle
Bill Laimber, Palos Verdes

Girl’s basketball

Cheryl Miller, Riverside (Poly?)
Ann Meyers, La Habra Sonora

BEST CALIFORNIA PREP BASKETBALL TRADITIONS

1. Los Angeles Verbum Dei
2. Oakland McClymond
3. Santa Ana Mater Dei
4. Los Angeles Crenshaw
5. La Mesa Helix
6. Artesia
7. San Anselmo Drake
8. Berkeley

ALL-TIME CALIFORNIA PREP FOOTBALL TEAM

RB O.J. Simpson, San Francisco Galileo
RB Marcus Allen, San Diego Lincoln
QB Tom Brady, San Mateo Serra
WR Lynn Swann, San Mateo Serra
WR Keyshawn Johnson, Los Angeles Dorsey
TE Tony Gonzalez, Huntington Beach Edison?
C Randy Cross, Encino Crespi?
L Anthony Munoz, Ontario Chaffey
L Bruce Mathews, Arcadia
L Mike McKeever, Los Angeles Mt. Carmel
L John Vella, Sherman Oaks Notre Dame
K John Lee, Norwalk?

LB Tim Rossovich, Mountain View St. Francis
LB Jack Del Rio, Hayward
LB Junior Seau, Oceanside
LB Jerry Robinson, Santa Rosa Cardinal Newman
L Ron Mix, Hawthorne
L Aaron Taylor, Concord De La Salle
L Ron Yary, Bellflower (Cerritos JC)
L Fred Dryer, Lawndale
DB Ronnie Lott, Rialto Eisenhower
DB Tim McDonald, Fresno Edison
DB Jimmie Johnson, Kingsburg

COACH: Bill Walsh, San Jose?

RB Ricky Williams, San Diego Patrick Henry
RB Jon Arnett, Los Angeles Manual Arts
RB Sam “Bam” Cunningham, Santa Barbara
RB Mike Garrett, Los Angeles Roosevelt
RB Charles White, San Fernando
RB Anthony Davis, San Fernando
RB Freeman McNeill, Baldwin Hills?
RB Ricky Bell, Los Angeles Fremont?
RB Morley Drury, Long Beach Poly
RB Napoleon Kaufman, Lompoc?
RB Cotton Warburton, San Diego
RB Rashaan Salaam, La Jolla Country Day
RB Reggie Bush, La Mesa Helix
RB Frank Gifford, Bakersfield
RB Russell White, Encino Crespi
RB Jackie Robinson, Pasadena Muir
RB Ernie Nevers, Santa Rosa?
RB Mort Kaer, Red Bluff
RB Glenn Davis, LaVerne Bonita
RB Jackie Jensen, Oakland Tech
RB Garrett Arbelbride, Huntington Park
RB Erny Pinckert, San Bernardino
RB Vic Bottari, Vallejo
RB Sam Chapman, Tamalpais
RB Paul Cleary, Santa Ana
RB Jim Sears, Inglewood
RB Clarence Davis, Los Angeles Washington
QB Craig Fertig, Huntington Park
QB Orv Mohler, Alhambra
QB Ronnie Knox, Inglewood
QB Matt Leinart, Santa Ana Mater Dei
QB John Sciarra, La Puente Bishop Amat
QB John Huarte, San Diego Mater Dei
QB Pat Haden, La Puente Bishop Amat
QB Todd Marinovich, San Juan Capistrano Valley
QB Bob Waterfield, Van Nuys
QB Jimmy Clausen, Thousand Oaks Oaks Christian
QB John Brodie?
QB Mark Sanchez, Mission Viejo
QB Gary Beban, Redwood City Sequoia
QB Dan Fouts, San Francisco St. Ignatius
QB Joe Roth? (Grossmont JC)
QB John Elway, Granada Hills
QB Jim Plunkett, San Jose James Lick
QB Gino Torretta, Pinole Valley
QB Ken Dorsey, Orinda Miramonte
QB Alex Smith, La Mesa Helix
QB Carson Palmer, Santa Margarita
QB Craig Morton, San Jose?
QB Steve Bartkowski, San Jose?
QB Joe Kapp, Salinas?
QB Paul McDonald, La Puente Bishop Amat
QB Don Williams, Santa Ana
QB Gus Shaver, Covina
QB Grenny Lansdell, Pasadena
QB Jay Schroeder, Palidades
QB Tom Ramsey, Granada Hills Kennedy
QB Vince Ferragamo, Los Angeles Banning
WR J.K. McKay, La Puente Bishop Amat
WR Sam Dickerson, Stockton Edison
WR Amani Toomer, Concord De La Salle
WR Gene Washington, Los Angeles?
WR James Lofton, Los Angeles?
WR Hal Bedsole, Reseda
WR Erik Affholter, Agoura Oak Park
WR Curtis Conway, Hawthorne
WR Johnnie Morton, Torrance
TE Charles Young, Fresno Edison
TE Tim Wrightman, San Pedro?
TE Jim Obradovich, El Segundo
E Brick Muller, San Diego?
E Francis Tappaan, Los Angeles
C Stan Williamson, Pittsburgh
L Ralph Heywood, Huntington Park
L John Ferraro, Maywood Bell
L George Achica, San Jose Andrew Hill
L Tony Slaton, Merced
L Pete Adams, San Diego University
L Booker Brown, Santa Barbara
L Damon Bame, Glendale
L Bill Fisk, San Gabriel
L Elmer Wilhoite, Winton Merced
L Charles Weaver, Richmond
L Marv Montgomery, Granada Hills
L Marlin McKeever, Los Angeles Mt. Carmel
L Harry Smith, Ontario Chaffey
L Tay Brown, Compton
L Steve Riley, Chula Vista
L Don Mosebar, Visalia Mt. Whitney
L Nate Barager, San Fernando
L Johnny Baker, Kingsburg
L Aaron Rosenberg, Los Angeles Fairfax
L Mike Patterson, Los Alamitos
L Shawn Cody, Hacienda Heights Los Altos
L Tim Ryan, San Jose Oak Grove
L Mark Tucker, Los Angeles Banning
L Willie McGinest, Long Beach Poly
L Jesse Hibbs, Glendale Lake Forest Academy
L Ernie Smith, Gardena
L Larry Stevens, Piedmont
L Jacob Rogers, Oxnard
L Keneche Udeze, Los Angeles Verbum Dei
L Jimmy Gunn, San Diego Lincoln
L Al Cowlings, San Francisco Galileo
L Sid Smith, Long Beach Wilson
L Pat Howell, Fresno
L Dave Cadigan, Newport Beach Newport Harbor
L Bill Bain, Santa Fe Springs St. Paul
L Keith Van Horne, Fullerton
L Jeff Bregel, Granada Hills Kennedy
L Sam Baker, Tustin
LB Adrian Young, La Puente Bishop Amat
LB Scott Ross, El Toro
LB Charles Phillips, Pasadena Blair
LB Duane Bickett, Glendale
LB Chris Claiborne, Riverside J.W. North
LB Matt Grootegoed, Santa Ana Mater Dei
DB Mike Battle Lawndale
DB Dennis Smith, Santa Monica
DB Dennis Thurman, Santa Monica
DB Mark Carrier, Long Beach Poly
DB Nate Shaw, San Diego Lincoln
DB Artimus Parker, Sacramento
DB Darnell Bing, Long Beach Poly
K Frank Jordan, San Francisco Riordan
P Tom Malone, Lake Elsinore Temsecal Canyon

Coaches
Joe Gibbs, Santa Fe Springs
Dick Vermeil, Calistoga
Bob Toledo, San Jose Lincoln
Pete Carroll, Larkspur Redwood
John Madden, San Mateo Serra
John Robinson, Daly City Jefferson
Paul Hackett, Orinda Miramonte
George Seifert, San Francisco Poly
Mike Holmgren, San Francisco Lincoln
Jeff Fisher, Woodland Hills Taft
Norv Turner, Crockett
Marv Goux, Santa Barbara

BEST CALIFORNIA PREP FOOTBALL TRADITIONS

1. Concord De La Salle
2. Santa Ana Mater Dei
3. Long Beach Poly
4. Bakersfield
5. San Mateo Serra
6. Fresno Clovis West
7. Mission Viejo
8. Los Alamitos
9. Santa Monica
10. Santa Margarita
11. Granada Hills
12. Huntington Beach Edison
13. Los Angeles Loyola
14. Santa Ana
15. San Diego
16. Mountain View St. Francis

CALIFORNIA OLMPIANS

Bob Mathias, Tulare
Bob Seagren?
Rafer Johnson, Kingsburg
John Naber?
Mark Spitz, Carmichael?
Dwight Stones?
Marion Jones?

CALIFORNIA TENNIS PLAYERS

Pete Sampras, Palos Verdes
Jack Kramer, Los Angeles?
Bobby Riggs, Los Angeles?
Stan Smith, Pasadena
Venus Williams, Compton?
Serena Williams, Compton?
Maureen Connelly, Berkeley
Tracey Austin, Palos Verdes
Lindsay Davenport, Palos Verdes

CALIFORNIA PREP COACHES
John Herbold, Lakewood (baseball)
Al Endriss, Larkspur Redwood (baseball)
Wally Kincaid, Cerritos JC (baseball)
Bill Workman?, Fullerton JC (football)
George Rush, City College of San Francisco (football)
Bruce Rollinson, Santa Ana Mater Dei (football)
Bill Redell, Sherman Oaks Notre Dame; Thousand Oaks Oaks Christian (football)
Willie West, Los Angeles Crenshaw (basketball)
Gary McKnight, Santa Ana mater Dei (basketball)

SPECIAL INTEREST
David Strathairn (actor, A League of Their Own, L.A. Confidential), Larkspur Redwood
(track and field)
Robin Williams (actor, Good Morning Vietnam), Larkspur Redwood (track and field)
Kevin Costner (actor, Dances With Wolves), Villa Park (baseball)
John Wayne, aka Marion Marrison (actor, True Grit), Glendale (football)
Richard Nixon (President), Whittier (football)
Huey Lewis (singer), San Rafael (baseball)

Marin Athletic Foundation Hall of Fame
2006 Inductees
Athletes Coaches
Bob Beedle, Tamalpais, 1952 Rick DeMartini, Marin Catholic
Nancy Camera-Clary, San Rafael, 1981 Tom Lyons, Redwood
Missy Donnelly, Marin Catholic, 1983
Art Foster, Tamalpais, 1963 Special Recognition
Eric Lessley, San Marin, 1976 Mike Nelson, Nicasio
Greg Loberg, Terra Linda, 1980
Jennifer Lucas, Novato, 1986
2005 Inductees
Athletes Coaches
Lori Allen Brady, Tamalpais, 1974 Mark Whitburn, San Marin
Dwight C. Ely, Tamalpais, 1949  Anne Zarraonandia, Novato/Redwood
Mary Knudsen, Marin Catholic 1983
Michael James Lamb, Tamalpais 1975  Special Recognition
AJ Ross, San Rafael 1982  Andy Frauenhofer, San Marin
Jodie Wertz, Redwood 1985
Jerry Zieff, Drake 1984
2004 Inductees
Athletes   Coaches
Todd Brockman, Redwood 1983  John Bechtold, Marin Catholic
Craig Burnett, Drake 1984  Bob Vassar, Terra Linda
Gary Dellepere, Tomales 1968
Dan Lucia, Tamalpais 1976  Special Recognition
Robyn MacSwain-Berry, Terra Linda 1982  George Lewis, Drake
Simon Scott, Tamalpais 1936
Natu Tuatagaloa, San Rafael 1984
2003 Inductees
Athletes   Coaches
Susan Burroni-Biggar, Drake 1982  Al Scott, Novato
Gene Ferrari, Marin Catholic 1952  Bill Taylor, Drake
Jerry Goff, San Rafael 1982
Steve Kenilvort, Drake 1982  Special Recognition
Brad Muster, San Marin 1983  Dr. Robert Teasdale Jr.
Sarah Sweeny, Marin Catholic 1978
Veronica Venezia-DeMartini, Terra Linda 1976
2002 Inductees
Athletes   Coaches
Buddy Biancalana, Redwood 1978  James Naugle, San Marin
Ken Cooney, Novato 1978  Marlin Olsen, Novato
Sue Corder, Novato 1981
Gigi Geoffrion, Drake 1982  Special Recognition
Lori Saia-Odisio, Drake 1978  Rich Woodall
Charles Scott, Terra Linda 1982
Jack Parsons, Tamalpais 1943
2001 Inductees
Athletes   Coaches
Lori Farber-Taylor, San Rafael 1979 Paul Ferreboeuf, San Marin
Beth Fernbacher, Redwood 1977  Bret Tovani, San Rafael
Dennis Keating, Marin Catholic 1978
Marty Larson, San Marin 1972  Special Recognition
Jim McDonald, Tamalpais 1950  Hugh Turner
Robert Washington, Tamalpais 1964
Dan Young, Redwood 1972
2000 Inductees
Athletes   Coaches
Linda Broderick-Gill, Tamalpais 1976  Stanlee Buchanan, Redwood
229
Caren Horstmeyer Choppelas, Redwood 1980  Susie Woodall, Marin Catholic
Charles "Elmer" Collett, Tamalpais 1962
John Fall, SR Military Acad. 1945  Special Recognition
Bruce Kilby, Terra Linda 1968  Carl Kotala
Maureen McGrath, San Rafael 1980
Fred Rodoni, Tomales 1965
1999 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Stacey Bailey, Terra Linda 1978  Doug Basham, Redwood
Suzanne Enos O'Meara, Drake 1976  Keith Fraser, Terra Linda
Dave George, Tamalpais 1957
Walter "Walt" Gillespie, Drake 1976  Special Recognition
Milton Mancebo, Tamalpais 1940  Marion Higgins
Lance Phillips, Marin Catholic 1977
Robert Placak, San Rafael 1977
1998 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Rod Berry, Redwood 1978  Mike Diaz, San Rafael
Michael Biber, Tamalpais 1967  Bruce Grant, Tamalpais
Jim Conner, Redwood 1977
Conrad Hoetger, Tamalpais 1961  Special Recognition
Stephen Hoog, Novato 1974  Phil Roark, Redwood
Tom Knopf, San Rafael 1965
Juile Lanzarin, Tamalpais 1976
Doug Pederson, Tamalpais 1939
1997 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
John Dohn, Terra Linda 1969  Edward Chavez, Tamalpais
Curtis Embry, Redwood 1959  Larry Gondola, Marin Catholic
Clifford Hall, Tamalpais 1972
Walter Langford, Drake 1953
Jack W. O'Connor, Tamalpais 1945
Donald C. Perry, Tamalpais 1920
Bob Schilling, San Rafael 1950
Tom Zechlin, Novato 1969
Michael Zeller, Drake 1957
1996 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Eddie Joe Chavez, Drake 1974  Beth Juri, Tamalpais
Eleanor Garatti Saville, San Rafael 1928
Bill Ingram, Drake 1966  Special Recognition
Ken Johnson, Redwood 1968  Jim Hanretty
Jack Lagomarsino, San Rafael 1936
Paul Lee, Terra Linda 1967
Donald Mackin, Tamalpais 1969
Steve McGee, Redwood 1972  
Mike Moroski, Novato 1975  
Rocky Shone, San Rafael 1966  
Ellis E. Williams, Tamalpais 1964

1995 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Leroy Barrow, Tamalpais 1968  
Johm Boro, Redwood, 1970  
Jim Castognoli, SR Military Acad. 1945  
Elton Davis, Tamalpais 1949  
Will Garner, Tamalpais 1972  
Bob Hector, Tamalpais 1960  
Larry Kerr, Terra Linda 1971  
Harvey Klyce, San Rafael 1963  
Ray Leach, Novato 1968  
Wayne Roche, San Marin 1975  
Hoza Wright, San Marin 1973  
1994 Inductees
Athletes  Coach
Rick DeMont, Terra Linda 1973  
Frederick L. Doar II, San Marin 1973  
Darrell Elder, Redwood 1974  
Honor Jackson, Tamalpais 1966  
Bill Lee, Terra Linda, 1964  
Bill Monti, San Rafael 1957  
Michael Parnow, Marin Catholic 1970  
Jerry Sprout, Drake 1967  
Dick Stone, Tamalpais 1947  
Sharon Walsh, San Rafael 1970

1993 Inductees
Athletes  Special Recognition
Richard Brear, Redwood 1961  
Mike Connor, Redwood 1973  
J. Scott Duncan, San Rafael 1972  
Michael Hoffman, Redwood 1960  
Pat Morgan, Tamalpais 1961  
Jerry Piro, Redwood 1970  
Arthur J. Quinn, Sr., Tamalpais 1920  
Arthur J. Quinn, Jr., Marin Catholic 1960  
Jay Simon, Tamalpais 1946  
Ralph Tierney, Tamalpais 1943

1992 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Tom Corder, Novato 1966  
Kenneth Donaldson, Novato 1969
Kirtis Donaldson, Novato 1969  Special Recognition
Tim Farrell, Tamalpais 1959  Dolly Nave
Nanci Kosta, Redwood 1970
Norman Kreuter, Tamalpais 1961
Alan Lee, Tamalpais 1968
Martin Moroski, Novato 1972
Randy Petrini, San Rafael 1961
Ron Petroni, Tomales, 1970
Jim Sherbert, Terra Linda, 1967

1991 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Jim Baxter, San Rafael 1948  Bob Franceschini, Drake
Joe Cardoza, San Rafael 1933  Bob Muster, San Rafael
Ottobono Dell’Era, San Rafael 1941
Russell Dillion, Novato 1969 Special Recognition
Charles Fisher, Tamalpais 1959  Angelo Columbo
Jack Flagerman, Tamalpais 1939  Mike Convis
Kent Francisco, San Rafael 1959
George Gnoss, Jr., Novato 1959
Roger Lane, San Rafael 1940
Wally Laster, Tamalpais 1942
Robert Nelson, San Rafael 1946
Harry Obitz, San Rafael 1929
Steve Woodward, Tamalpais 1964

1990 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Bill Adams, Tamalpais 1936  Ralph Cutler, Novato
Warren D. Alexander, Tamalpais, 1963  Don Lucas, Terra Linda
Don Alvarado, Drake 1968  Charles Metz, Terra Linda
Jack Barnes, San Rafael 1946
Ron Cox, Drake 1957  Special Recognition
John Dolinsek, Novato 1966  Ted Mitchell
Rayfield Edwards, Tamalpais 1963
Dewey Forry, Terra Linda 1970
Dean Lazzarini, Drake 1966
Brent Marshall, San Rafael 1959
Mat Palacio, San Rafael 1933
Jim Peters, Redwood 1969
Frank Quinn, Tamalpais, 1923
Jack Sims, SR Military Acad. 1936
Mike Watters, San Rafael 1957
1989 Inductees
Athletes  Coaches
Dick De Bisschop, Drake 1956  Dick Hart, Drake/Redwood
If anyone has the qualifications to produce a list of California's greatest high school baseball players, author Steve Travers would go to the front of the line.

Travers is the author of several books, including "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman", "The USC Trojans: College Football's All-Time Greatest Dynasty", and "One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game that Changed a Nation." Now, Travers takes a stab at anointing the all-time team consisting of individuals who played high school baseball in California.

**High School Baseball**

**June 19th, 2007**

P Tom Seaver, Fresno (Fresno CC)
P Walter Johnson, Fullerton
P Don Drysdale, Van Nuys
P Randy Johnson, Livermore
P Dennis Eckersley, Fremont Washington
C Gary Carter, Fullerton Sunny Hills
1B Mark McGwire, Pomona Damien
2B Jackie Robinson, Pasadena Muir
3B George Brett, El Segundo
SS Ozzie Smith, Los Angeles Locke
OF Ted Williams, San Diego Hoover
OF Joe Dimaggio, San Francisco Galileo
OF Barry Bonds, San Mateo Serra
MGR: Sparky Anderson, Los Angeles Dorsey

**All Time California Prep Baseball Team**

**Best California Prep Baseball Traditions**

1. San Mateo Serra
2. Lakewood
3. Los Angeles Fremont
4. El Segundo
5. Compton Centennial
6. Larkspur Redwood
7. Fresno
8. Santa Monica
9. West Covina Edgewood
10. San Diego Rancho Bernardo
11. Woodland Hills Taft
12. Santa Ana Mater Dei
13. San Diego University
14. Compton De La Salle
15. Long Beach Poly
16. Los Angeles Venice
17. Villa Park

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONS!!!!**

I include this prep report because of its mention of Katy Fick, at the time a water polo player at Newbury Park High School. When I played in the A's organization, Katy's dad was my catcher and he used to show me her baby photos.

Congratulations to coach Russell Otis and star center Tyson Chandler of Dominguez High School, the first boys basketball team in the history of California to capture the National Championship, which they did by beating Newark Memorial to win the state title, thus finishing number one in the USA TODAY poll.

The same for coach James Anderson and his star, Ebony Hoffman of undefeated Narbonne High, who beat Berkeley for the state and stayed atop USA TODAY's poll all season. The concept that California is the home of the best prep basketball in the country has always been a source of argument. These National Championships, from two teams separated by about
15 miles, whose main competition came from other California teams (Artesia, Clovis West, Mater Dei among the boys; Brea Olinda among the girls) is empirical evidence to support the "California is best" argument.

ACADEMIC ATHLETE OF THE MONTH: Katy Fick, Newbury Park girls' water polo

Chuck Fick was always a family man, and when The Guru met him during their minor league baseball days, he was filled with pride when he announced that his wife back in California had given birth to a baby girl.

Which brings The Guru to this story, a reconciliation of the passage of time, really, because that baby girl, Katy Fick, recently set the Marmonte League record with 104 goals for Newbury Park's water polo team, and has accepted a scholarship to play the sport at the University of Pacific. The Guru recently caught up with Katy, our April Player of the Month.

"My mom actually got me started in water polo," says the 5-8 Katy. "She was a competitive swimmer. My Dad's really into it, now. I swam for a long time. Water polo's great cross-training for swimmers, and I also played soccer and ran track."

Katy endured surgery recently, but UOP coach Vicki Gorman knows all about it and expects her to be at 100 percent next season. Katy does not subscribe to the theory that high school athletes overtrain. She is very competitive (how surprising).

Her team finished second in the league, and Katy broke a record set a few years ago by Jenny Durley, now at USC.

"I don't know much about Stockton," she said of her home for the next four years. "I have a relative in San Francisco, which is nearby, so I'm looking forward to that."

The Guru wonders what the UOP press material says, considering Katy feels San Francisco is "close by" and Lake Tahoe is "a 45-minute drive" from campus. The Guru played in the California League and knows those roads, and neither The City nor Tahoe are particularly close to Stockton. Oh well, back to Katy, who is not Newbury Park's valedictorian only because she had one B on her report card. She carries a sterling 4.327 GPA because of upper level courses.

"Pacific is perfect for me," she says. "They have only 4,000 students so I get all the classes I want. I definitely want to coach, unless I get ambitious, earn a Ph.D. and become a professor."

The Guru feels old.

JAMAL SAMPSON

Gary McKnight, the basketball coach at Orange County powerhouse Mater Dei, does look like Ned Beatty. The fact that he coaches a plethora of highly-recruited studs makes him the great gatekeeper of Southern California.

"Jamal's more important on defense," said Mater Dei coach Gary McKnight, who bears resemblance to the great actor Ned Beatty, of his star center, Jamal Sampson. "Team's elect not to take the basket up close."

Mater Dei won the Southern Section, but was knocked off in the state.
"No way," says McKnight of the prospect that Sampson would play at the same college as Dominguez superstar Tyson Chandler. "They won't play together. I mean, they're friends, but Jamal's looking for his own identity."

"It's a proven fact that our team concept produces players with the fundamentals to play major college basketball," says McKnight. "Lute Olson knows more about our style than anybody."

What kind of college program is Sampson attracted to?

"He wants to play man-to-man defense, start as a freshman, and get a degree," is McKnight's assessment.

Jamal is a solid 3.0 student who "plays with computers and is a sharp cookie, and he's only 16" according to McKnight. The Catholic discipline at Mater Dei has helped.

How does the coach feel about the rest of his squad?

"After we win the CIF we're happy," he says of his team's I-A title, which came March 4 after a convincing win over Simi Valley at the Pond. Does the coach run into problems with kids' who want to score more?

"The only thing I run into is playing time," says McKnight. "Winning is always exciting." Mater Dei is a national power and they are filled with underclassmen. Freshman Harrison Schaan "will be the CIF Player of the Year," he says. "He's also a genius who if he were not playing basketball would get a job with Bill Gates. He's only 14 years old."

McKnight has truly amassed a collection of amazing young athletes.

"PLAYING CATCH WITH MY DAD"

This is one of my all-time faves. I was crying after talking to this kid, minutes after clinching the City baseball championship for his team at Dodger Stadium. Read on.

The Guru has pretty much seen and done it all. He knows the agony and ecstasy of both winning and losing a CIF championship baseball game. My junior year we trailed 3-0, rallied in the last inning with two outs to tie it, only to lose, 4-3, in the bottom of the seventh.

My senior year we again trailed, by two runs with two outs and nobody on base, only to rally for the tie, force extra innings, and win. Aside from winning our section, we were rewarded by being named National Champions by Collegiate Baseball magazine.

The Guru played in college and in the minor leagues. He knows what it is like to be released by a professional team—twice. He has been to about a million games, talked to thousands of athletes, seen winning and losing locker rooms, heard the excited, sweat-streaked voices of victory and defeat.

The Guru has been to the Coliseum when USC was in their greatest days of football glory, and he has been swept up in the wave of UCLA dominating on the Pauley Pavilion floor during their championship run. He has felt the pounding adrenaline rush of a World Series championship won in front of the home folks, and he can testify from first hand experience what it is like to see an Olympic record set, Snake leading the Raiders down the field in the last two minutes, Joe Montana in his prime.

The Guru has hugged total strangers and felt the bond of brotherhood with a teammate that can only happen in sports.

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Last night at Dodger Stadium, however, The Guru was moved to tears by a 16-year old high school sophomore.

*The most exciting high school sporting event I have ever seen*

Kennedy High School of Granada Hills defeated El Camino Real High School of Woodland Hills, 4-2, to win the 2000 Los Angeles City Section baseball championship. There were 5,000 people in the stands.

It sounded like 50,000.

What moved The Guru to tears, however, was not the incredible action on the field, where baseball was played the right way by young men who have have talent, are well-coached, and were driven to win what for most of them will be the biggest game—indeed, it will remain the biggest moment—of their entire lives. The Guru is here to tell you that when the game of baseball is played in this manner, there is no other sport that is more exciting, more riveting to watch. When baseball is played the way Kennedy and El Camino Real played it at Dodger Stadium, it is a thing of beauty. Poetry. Art!

"Playing catch with my Dad"

From the stands, Adam Geery, sophomore, age 16, looked like a veteran pitcher. He is not tall, but rather a stocky kid, a right-hander with a good, moving fastball and a great slider that consistently nips on the outside corner of the plate. It would not be a great surprise if some day he pitches in the Major Leagues, but he is not what you would call a “sure thing.” He will get his shot down the road, a college scholarship, maybe he will be a high draft pick. That is all to be determined.

He pitched the game of his life, going all the way against El Camino Real, out dueling another sophomore sensation, Greg Acheatel. No doubt these two will square off many times in the future; in American Legion ball, in various prep games in the San Fernando Valley, maybe at Dodger Stadium for another City title. Who knows, maybe they will be rivals in college, perhaps even pitch against each other in The Show.

When The Guru went down to the field and caught up with Adam Geery, he was struck by how young he looks. Crew cut blonde hair, and the kind of boyish face that has not yet seen that much of life.

Except that Adam Geery has, and his answers to reporters’ questions made The Guru cry. Yes, cry.

“The last pitch, when I struck out that guy, I just went on my knee and pointed to the sky because that was for him,” he said. “I can’t even speak.” But speak he did. As eloquently as any athlete The Guru has ever heard.

This young man was referring to his father, who died 10 years ago, when he was six years old.

“What do you compare this to?” he was asked.

“I can’t compare this with anything,” he replied. Then he thought about it.

“Playing catch with my father,” was his answer.

For any American male worth his salt, if he was lucky enough to have a dad who played catch with him, this meant everything. It is why so many people cry when Kevin Costner plays catch with his dad at the end of “Field of Dreams”. There is something primal, something so real, so wonderful about this memory. It supercedes all the arguments, all the generational differences
that can be a bridge between father and son. It is something uniquely American, and when
The Guru looked in the face of this teenage manchild, he felt tears well up from deep within his
cynical being.

What this kid was talking about reminded The Guru of his own father, who spent hours
practicing baseball with him. Never, ever, not once did Donald E. Travers ever say, “I’m, too
tired,” or “I don’t have time,” or “Maybe tomorrow.” The sheer good fortune I felt at having had
my father with me, beside me, supporting me all those years, right on up to this day—I felt so
blessed, so lucky.

Adam Geery had a father. Until he was six years old. He has had to make do without one
for 10 years, and he will have to make do without his dad for the rest of his life. Somehow, he
has managed to grow up into a great, disciplined athlete, a champion. When he was surrounded
by all his adoring teammates, with 5,000 people chanting his name, reporters asking him
questions, in this, his greatest moment of glory, probably the greatest moment he will ever
experience, it was his father he thought about. It was his father he dedicated this memory to.

Fathers who are there for their kids are the Real Heroes. They do not have to make a lot
of money, be super athletes or be celebrities. Kids do not care about any of that. They just need
their love an understanding. Sometimes, kids do not show their appreciation of their fathers, but
Adam Geery showed just how much he appreciated his father. If you are blessed to have a father
still around, love him and cherish him. Adam wishes he still had one to be there during the
greatest moment of his life.

It was enough to make a grown man cry.

As for the 5,000 prep baseball fans at Dodger Stadium, they might not have been moved
to tears by Geery’s words, because they did not hear them, but few will ever forget the back-and-
forth death struggle between two Valley rivals that resulted in Kennedy’s sixth City
championship. That ties the record held by Fremont. This will go down as one of the great City
title games ever played, like the one in which Bret Saberhagen tossed a no-hitter to lead
Cleveland to victory (1982), or the time John Elway came on in relief to give Granada Hills the
championship (1979). It was the thrill of a lifetime for the kids who played in it; the people in
attendance somehow reached back and made more noise than a crowd three times its size. The
players heard the roar of a stadium that few ever hear while actually playing the game. It
happened for the baseball players from El Camino Real and Kennedy who were lucky enough to
experience it. They will never forget that sound.

There were no losers in this game. El Camino Real can hold their heads high with pride.
Every kid on the field played the game for some purpose.
For Adam Geery, it was for his father. He was not there.
But he was. Adam’s father was there, and he was smiling. In a sense, this was for all the
fathers. The Real Heroes.

It is enough to make a grown man cry.

**SHAM OR SLAM?**

A crowd of 500 fans and camera crews from *Parade* magazine, NBC and ESPN showed
up at Riverside's Poly High School on the evening of January 28, 1982 to see if Cheryl Miller
would score 100 points against Norte Vista High. Norte Vista was one of the worst high school
girls' hoop teams of all time, coming in at 0-13. They had already lost to North Riverside, 117-8. Norte Vista had lost to North Riverside, 126-11, the previous year. Miller had scored 77 in a 137-11 win over them in 1981, and they had gone through three coaches in three seasons.

Was it just coincidence that Miller and her teammates broke eight national and CIF records when the TV cameras were rolling, or was it a setup? Should Miller have played the entire game?

"I guess I picked a nice night to do something," Miller said. "I didn't set out to score 100 points."

Or did she? When it was all over, she had scored 105. Her brother, Reggie, a 6-5 junior forward on Poly's boys' team, scored 32 that night in a 74-69 overtime loss to Norte Vista.

The 137 points scored by the Millers may be a world record for a sister-brother combination.

Cheryl became the fifteenth schoolgirl to pass the 100-point mark. Linda Paige of Dobbins Tech had scored 103 the previous year, and Marion Boyd of Lonaconing Central High in Maryland had scored 156 in 1924.

She was different, however. Flashier. A new kind of female showstopper.

"I guess I have to take responsibility for it," said Poly coach Floyd Evans after the century-mark game. "We didn't pull back. But what else should I tell my kids? Should I tell them to pull up when they get a good shot?"

The fact that a 30-second clock existed eliminated Norte Vista from the option of stalling. T.J. Bienas, Norte Vista's coach, had told the team beforehand that if they failed to "show up" or fouled on purpose, they would not get a letter.

When you are 0-13, getting a letter is not such great motivation, so one has to ask themselves if the cameras and the situation all boiled to a conspiratorial head that night.

The question comes down to coach's responsibility. Do you let a player break a record while showing up another team in the process? Do you allow your team to be humiliated at the expense of somebody else's glory?

Nevertheless, the 6-3 Miller has gone down in history as one of the greatest women's basketball players ever. Her high school teams were 132-4, winning four Southern Section championships, while she garnered consensus All-American honors. At USC she led the Trojans to two National Championships, was everybody's All-American, and was the top player in the nation. In 1984 she led the United States to victory in the LA Olympic Games, and she is one of the few women who could dunk.

Miller transcended gender roles by working as a courtside reporter for TNT during NBA games, and had a stint as Troy's coach. She is now the volatile coach of the WNBA's Phoenix Mercury. Emotion is a Miller trait. Reggie played at UCLA before blossoming into a star forward with the Indiana Pacers. He is well known for his taunting and antics during Play-Off games.

Cheryl, like Reggie, is respected as a player, but is not loved by everyone. Once after Southern Cal beat Cal State Long Beach, she sat on the rim blowing kisses. Another time, after beating Tennessee, she did a cartwheel in front of the Lady Vols.' bench.

"I don't consider myself a hot dog," said Miller. "But I'm not a subtle player."

There is not enough mustard in America to cover this hot dog! She was the female version of Reggie Jackson.
"I know I wouldn't allow some of the things Cheryl does," Cal State Long Beach coach Joan Bonvicini once said.

Cheryl toned her act down considerably when the media spotlight of the 1984 Games was on her.

SC coach Chris Gobrecht thinks that the Women of Troy can return to the days of glory, having landed Harbor City Narbonne's Ebony Hoffman.

Hoffman may be a great like Miller, but she is a reserved personality who will not create the kind of controversy Cheryl did.

Cheryl's CIF record was almost broken when Lisa Leslie of Morningside High School in Inglewood scored 101 points in the first half of a 1990 game vs. South Torrance, but the South Torrance coach refused to allow the team to come out for the second half.

Love her or hate her, one thing is for sure: Cheryl Miller helped put women's basketball on the map. The WNBA and players like Leslie can thank Cheryl, one of the pioneers who created opportunities now available to women in basketball.

TEAM GOORJIAN

They were the Press and Pete Maravich of high school basketball, and if you saw it, you observed some of the most exciting play in the history of LA sports. He is a legend just as much as Raymond Lewis is one.

If you do not know the names Greg Goorjian or Ray Lewis, do not call yourself a true Southern California sports fan. As for Lewis, watch for a future issue of StreetZebra Magazine. Right now The Guru offers up History 101: The Goorjian Years.

The father, Ed Goorjian, was a gruff, excitable coach who had seen Lewis and Mark Wulfmeyer play. Those were two of the highest scorers in Southland history. Today, a player like Goorjian, Lewis or Wulfmeyer would find himself shuffled off to a basketball factory like Mater Dei, where he would stifle under the team-concept of a fellow like Gary McKnight. Back in the 1970s, basketball players still usually attended the school near where they lived. What a concept!

Goorjian would later assist George McQuarn (Lewis' high school coach) at Cal State Fullerton, and Jerry Tarkanian at UNLV, when Larry Johnson played. His son helped him make a name for himself, and put Crescenta Valley High School on the map.

"Greg played three years of varsity ball for me, from 1976 to '78," recalls Ed. "We never won the CIF, but we won the league, and played in the Play-Offs, only to lose to Verbum Dei. Those were the days when Verbum Dei was the best prep basketball power in the nation. They had guys like Mo Williams and Lionel Marchetti. David Greenwood and Roy Hamilton had come out of there, and Lewis before them. When we played them, they had seven future Division I college players. We had previously faced Lewis in 1971.

"We played in the Anaheim Convention Center, and the place was so packed nobody could get in. Greg was a drawing card, like Wulfmeyer. I mean, he had a following, like when Lewis played. Once we went to Muir High, which is predominantly a black school, but by the end of the game everybody was rooting for him. He'd be dunking, twirling, behind the back, spinning, scoring from all over the floor."
"Pete Maravich was Greg's hero. He wore floppy socks just like him, dribbled to and from school, he was a great ball handler, he'd go behind the back, spin the ball on his elbows, his fingers."

Goorjian lit it up for three years, scoring 32 a game as a junior and 43 a game as a senior. "He did it in a fast league," observes Ed. "Muir and Pasadena were powers in those days. The remarkable thing is he did what he did against really good people."

Tracy Murray of Glendora finally broke his four-year scoring record, but his senior year average was out of control.

"At the time," says Ed, "we were just trying to win games. It just so happened that if he got off his shots we'd win, but he also dished off a lot, because we wanted to keep the other guys happy. Greg was an excellent all-around player who did it all. He led the CIF in assists, and still holds the school record for assists. He scored a lot, but he had assists, that was the key.

"We'd had Brad Holland, too, and I'd asked him to get the ball to other players to keep his teammates happy. I used to be a ball control coach. To score that much you have to be in control. Holland had been a great shooter, who when we changed tempo, when we'd do that, he'd get more shots."

Goorjian seemed destined for NBA greatness, but it never worked out like that. Some critics blamed the father, an irascible sort, saying that he influenced his son to become too self-centered for a disciplined college program.

"He had a strange career," recalls Ed. "He broke the single game assist record at Arizona State as a freshman, where he played ahead of Lafayette Lever. He had some problems, transferred out, sat out a year, then played for Tark at UNLV. They had a good team, with Sidney Green and all those guys who started there, but then Tark's son came in so Greg transferred to Loyola Marymount. He played for me there, where I was now the head coach, scoring 24 points per game, making all-conference and Honorable Mention All-American.

"Everybody thought NBA for sure, but he got married out of college to a Las Vegas girl whose father works in land development in Vegas. He moved back there and ended up staying. "He was supposed to go over seas, he did try out for the Warriors, but suddenly they thought all guards were supposed to be like Magic Johnson. He played on a National Champion AAU team with Armen Gilliam, who played 10 years with Utah.

"Today at 40, Greg still dunks in pick-up games. I go to Vegas occasionally to visit him and his family."

Ed also saw Lewis playing a few years ago. "He was a classic," he says. "Over 40, still playing in the black fraternity leagues, still scoring at will. Unbelievable."

The 1970s seem to have been a time of great showmanship, like the Julius Erving Era in the pros. Players did wild things on the court, and scoring a lot of points was not looked down upon like it is today. Nobody did it better than guys like Lewis and Greg Goorjian. They remain great legends on the SoCal prep sports scene!

THAT CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

Since 1991, De La Salle High School of Concord has established the most dominant prep football dynasty in this nation’s history.
In the 1970s, Marin County was establishing an identity of its own. Whether Marin truly lived up to its swinging reputation for sex and decadence is debatable, but one thing is for sure. There was some pretty fast high school baseball played over there during the “Me Decade.”

When everybody did “their thing,” wearing long hair and colorful baseball uniforms like Charlie Finley’s A’s, Redwood baseball coach Al Endriss had different methods.

“This is not a Democracy,” was his standard speech. “It’s a dictatorship.” Endriss was the Totalitarian of Larkspur. His teams were often mistaken for the Marines. Their uniforms were traditional. They came and went as a unit. None of this “individuality crap,” as George Patton used to call it.

Redwood won the old Tournament of Champions in 1973 and 1974, but lost the 1976 National Championship by a run. Lakewood High (L.A. County) was Number One, but Endriss was National Coach of the Year.

In 1977, Redwood featured perhaps the finest high school baseball team in Bay Area history. The Giants were ranked seventh nationally in Prep Sports’ pre-season poll. They went 33-4. All four losses were by one run in extra innings. They won the CIF-North Coast Section title, and were named National Champions by Collegiate Baseball magazine and the Easton Bat Company. This was before USA TODAY began their national rankings.

Endriss recruited Jim Jones from Novato. He was a two-time prep All-American pitcher/infielder who threw five no-hitters at Redwood, and powered 23 homers at Pepperdine (where he was called “The Reverend” after the infamous Jonestown cult leader) before embarking on a long professional career. Pitcher Steve Hoffmeister, 9-1 as a junior at Piedmont of San Jose, moved into an apartment in Larkspur for his senior year. He would be all-conference at Pacific. First baseman Bill Scott, who came from Drake, was All-MCAL and played on L.A. Harbor JC’s 1978 State Championship team.

Among the home grown talent, All-American pitcher Mickey Meister, who was 37-3 in four years and named National High School Athlete of the Year, pitched at USC and with Seattle. Steve Travers earned a college scholarship, was all-conference, and played in the Cardinals and A’s organizations. Pitcher Steve Compagno would star at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and played in the Yankee organization. All-American third baseman Greg Zunino hit .510, then set almost every offensive record at California, playing on the Bears’ 1980 College World Series team. He played in the Yankee organization, managed in Italy, and is now a scout for Cincinnati. Left fielder Steve Hoffmire was All-Northern California, and would play at Cal. Center fielder Jim Connor was another prep All-American, and he would lead USC in hitting in 1979.

Shortstop Bud Biancalana was the Royals’ first pick in 1978. He signed for around six figures, and helped lead Kansas City to the 1985 World Championship. Biancalana enjoyed a year of fame, making the rounds of the talk-show circuit, including the David Letterman Show. “We received media recognition then like De La Salle does now,” recalls catcher Howard Gibian, now an East Bay salesman. “So many people over the years who watched us have approached me. They appreciated what we had. “

Towards the end of the season, the Taiwan National Team was touring the U.S. They played a series of American schools, scoring in double figures in each game while not allowing a run. Redwood was the best America had to offer against the juggernaut that had stayed together since winning the 1972 Little League World Series. A game was arranged at Redwood, and over
6,000 people lined Giantsville Stadium, outdrawing that day’s Giants game. Taiwan pulled it out with a run in the ninth, 2-1.

Redwood defeated Hayward, 12-11, in the NCS final. El Camino of South San Francisco won the Central Coast Section championship with a 28-1 record, featuring pitcher Rich Bordi. They, along with Edgewood High in West Covina, were considered the best teams in the U.S. outside of Redwood. Red tape prevented a “true National Championship game” between the teams at Candlestick Park.

For those who saw them, that championship season was special. A large team picture in the Tamalpais Union High School District office remembers them with a plaque that reads, “1977 National Champions.”

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO…SHEA COTTON?

What if?
What if Baron Davis stayed at UCLA, Jaron Rush had never been suspended, and Schea Cotton had not been denied the chance to play in Westwood? Chances are, Steve Lavin’s Bruins would be the favorites to win the National Championship.

Davis, of course, left early, and while it was probably not the right decision, it is still too soon to pass judgment. Rush has a chance to redeem himself and save his coach. Cotton, on the other hand—what is to be made of Cotton?

Schea Cotton seems to be an example of everything that is wrong with the NCAA. “We are really blessed that the kid didn't blow his brains out,” his father, James, was quoted saying in a recent Sport magazine article. Apparently, for a while there, it was really touch and go.

The Guru wrote an All-Century feature in January, in which he picked the greatest prep basketball players in the history of Los Angeles and Orange County. Cotton should, by all rights, have been on that team. In his sophomore year at Mater Dei High School, Cotton was the best player in the state on a team that won the California championship, and was featured in Sports Illustrated. He was spotlighted before that, at age 12, in the LA Times. Things started going wrong after that state championship season in 1995. Cotton had transferred from St. John Bosco in Bellflower, then went back to Bosco. The family lives in Long Beach, but they were always moving. James said it was because he was following work in the construction trade. Accusations and rumors of recruiting and pay-offs followed Schea wherever he went, and the Times wrote a scathing piece that centered most of the blame on James.

Schea decided to play at Long Beach State with his brother, but when the older bro decided to skip his senior year and go pro, Schea backed out. Still, talent seemed to have won out when Schea took a scholarship to play at UCLA after graduating from high school in 1997. He passed the SAT, but a furor ensued when it was learned that, because of a learning disability, he was allowed more time to answer the questions. The NCAA jumped in and took away his ride. Cotton was then subjected to the playground wisdom of Long Beach, and he disappeared from public view.

"He became a hermit," James told Sport.
"Why me?" was Schea's reaction. "I didn't lie, I didn't cheat. I did everything I was supposed to."
The Cotton's spent $20,000 in psychological testing to determine that Shea suffered from ADD, which would justify why he was given more time to take the SAT. Despite having basically told the Cotton's that if the kid had ADD they would allow the SAT scores, they came back with a resounding, "No."

Cotton went to Long Beach City College while the family sued the NCAA. The suit brought out a lot of people who had similar experiences with the Shawnee Mission KGB. The suit forced the NCAA to grant Cotton his eligibility, based on "additional information" which was the same information they had in the first place.

Nobody watches the NCAA. All they do is wreck people while serving a nebulous, almost-useless purpose. The whole thing cost James eighty grand. Schea signed with North Carolina State but never went there. He did end up at Alabama, where he finally had a chance to really play basketball this season.

The result: Cotton, 22 in May, scored 15.5 points a game with 4.6 rebounds, and was Second Team All-SEC. Schea signed with North Carolina but never went there. He did end up at Alabama, where he finally had a chance to really play basketball this season.

WINTER GUARD BECOMES COLOR GUARD

Why is this story in here? Because it is about my sweet daughter Elizabeth, and that is my prerogative.

The Guru enjoys watching high school baseball, basketball and football as much as anybody, but what really winds his clock is Winter Guard. What is Winter Guard? It is the same as Color Guard, the colorful flag-twirling exploits of hard-working high school students who perform at halftime of football games, on the sidelines and in the stands, and at pep rallies. Some know it simply as "flag."

Once football season ends, however, these kids do not just pack it in and hit the video arcade. They move on to Winter Guard. This includes competitions on Saturday nights at the end of fall, and in gyms throughout the winter, usually all-day affairs on Saturdays. How does The Guru know this? His lovely daughter, Elizabeth Travers, is a freshman who performs on Villa Park's well regarded Winter Guard competition team, which placed highly in the flag division at the recent event held at Dana Hills High School in Orange County.

These girls (and every once in a while a guy) are at the school before dark almost every day. They practice again one or two afternoons a week, and give up their weekends to perform. The competitions vary between flags and weapons display. The whole thing originated from color guard units in ROTC, but as girls got involved and added dance and pep routines, the whole thing evolved into a "colorful" outfit-wearing ensemble that is a cross between modern jazz and military drill. The competitions involve a large number of schools from all over the Southland, and give the kids a chance to meet all kinds of other people.

Summer time is not vacation time for Winter Guard. They have to attend a two-week band camp in preparation for football season in the fall, at which time you can call it flag or color guard again. Check it out at a school near you.
CHAPTER FOUR

OUR NATIONAL PASTIME

The best sportswriting is about baseball. It has always been that way. Baseball is far and away my favorite sport, and I have had the great good fortune to be able to cover more of Our National Pastime than any other sport.

ABBOTT REMAINS INSPIRATION TO MILLIONS

I had a good friend at USC who was supposedly "handicapped" by the use of only one arm. However, this guy was a good student, active in athletics, probably the best driver I ever saw, a guy with an uncanny knack for finding a parking space anywhere. I am talking about the Rainbow on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood on a Saturday night. If I drove I would have to park three miles away. This guy provided curb service! He loved sports, and today is involved in his son's little league activities in Connecticut. My friend recently contacted me and told me I should write a story about somebody who is an inspiration to him, former California Angeles pitcher Jim Abbott.

"He was a phenom in many respects," my friend, Bob Karl, said of him. "I think the bottom line is that being without a hand is like not being handicapped at all in that exceptional coordination compensates for it. For example, I have been playing football, baseball, billiards, tennis, table tennis, basketball among many other sports and defeat the majority of my peers. I just feel that Abbott had awesome accomplishments. He did get an opportunity to hit and came through with some big ones during the 1999 season. One other note is he was out of baseball for the entire '97 season and worked his way back from Single A ball in '98, struggling at each minor league level, and won his last five starts. Quite a comeback indeed. Might want to add that Jim Abbott, who I have met, is a class act and never snubs fans as a Pete Rose would do."

Abbott is an inspiration for millions.

He was also "handicapped" by the use of one arm, but oh what an arm it is. He was one of the greatest college baseball pitchers of all time at the University of Michigan, where he was 26-8 with a 3.03 ERA from 1986-89. After being drafted in 1985, he was an All-American for the Wolverines, won the Golden Spikes award, and came to national attention by beating the vaunted Cubans. He pitched in the '88 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. In 1989, the Angels made him their first draft pick, and without him pitching a day in the minor leagues, Abbott became an Angel starter, going an impressive 12-12 in his rookie year. He was named to the Topps All-Rookie team, and was only the fifteenth player in baseball history to go straight to the big leagues without playing in the minors. In 1991 he was 18-11 with a 2.89 ERA, striking out 158 to 73 walks in 243 innings. He finished third that season in the Cy Young voting. Abbott was never on the disabled list until 1992, and then for sprained ribs.

Abbott was a Yankee for two years, 1993-94, threw a no-hitter vs. Cleveland at Yankee Stadium, and in 1995 returned to Anaheim from Chicago. He won 11 on the year. His performance slipped considerably in 1996 when he suffered a 2-18 season with a 7.48 ERA at
Anaheim, but his support that season was horrendous. The fact is, a pitcher has to be pretty good to lose 18 games.

Abbott posted a 6.91 ERA at Milwaukee last season, and at this point his career appears to be over, but hey, he had a great run and every reason to be proud. His "handicap" ceased being a story years ago because it was not a handicap, and that was his greatest contribution. What may have been his most impressive trait was the fact that he was a flawless fielder who once handled 46 straight chances without error. He perfected the transfer of glove from under his arm to his hand, would remove the ball, lose the glove, and make the throw. He was awesome.

**A CONVERSATION WITH TOMMY LASORDA**

Lasorda kept me waiting for hours. I finally had to track him down and he expected me to do the interview while walking through the aisles at Dodger Stadium. Ever walk the aisles at Dodger Stadium with Tommy? "Hey, Tommy, how ya doin'?" "Hey, Tommy, can I get your autograph?" Really easy working conditions. I finally informed Lasorda that the rest of the interview was to be conducted in his office, which it was.

The former Dodger skipper and new Olympic coach has opinions on most everything

ST: Obviously, there are high school players who improve and become big leaguers. I can only think of two--Tom Seaver and Mike Piazza, and you have a connection to both of them--who went from completely overlooked to being all-time greats, Hall of Famers. Seaver threw a knuckleball and played JV ball as a junior at Fresno High, yet only a few years later was the Cy Young winner and best pitcher of his era. Piazza was dismissed by everybody, yet today he is the greatest offensive catcher ever, better than Johnny Bench, Ernie Lombardi, Roy Campanella, Yogi Berra, Bill Dickey, Mickey Cochrane, Gabby Hartnett, or anybody else we could name. How do you explain that?

TS: You can't, I mean how in the hell can anybody foresee that kind of thing. I never saw Piazza play in high school, but I worked him out, hell he came to Dodger Stadium to work out because I knew his dad. As a favor to Vince Piazza I had a bunch of scouts go to see him, and every one of 'em came back and said, "He ain't got nuthin'." Every one! You can't judge a guy to be a future Hall of Famer. You can just see him hit, throw, and evaluate his talent, but you can't foresee that kind of thing. About one in 10 gets it right.

ST: Of course, I mean a guy like Troy Glaus seemed to be as "can't-miss" as you can get, but I can go back and pick out a bunch of names from *Baseball America* in 1994 that rated higher. Obviously nobody can foresee a Hall of Famer, but to go from "he ain't got nuthin'" to a Hall of Famer is a phenomenon, a freak of nature. In Seaver's case, you scouted him for the Dodgers when he was at USC in 1965, drafted him, and offered him $2,000 to sign, but he turned it down. Regrets that you didn't offer more?

TS: I drafted him, he had some potential, but I didn't negotiate with him.
ST: Seaver's coach at USC, Rod Dedeaux, is a close friend of yours, who coached the 1984 U.S. Olympic team. Have you sought his advice now that you are the Olympic coach?

TS: He told me all about it. Rod's one of my best friends, he's been telling me about this for years, but you can't give advice about a player until you see him play.

ST: I heard that Orel Hershisher and "Rock" Raines are among a group of recently retired Major Leaguers who may play on the Olympic team.

TS: Hershisher might, I don't know about Raines.

ST: Do you want a veteran team?

TS: Hell, I want guys who can play. Hershisher beat Cincinnati in the home opener this year.

ST: What about local college players like Mark Prior, Alberto Concepcion, and Rik Currier of SC, and Josh Karp of UCLA? Will we see any of them?

TS: No, it'll be strictly AA and AA guys.

ST: How are they being selected?

TS: It's all being done by committee.

TS: I once coached on the staff of Cal's Bob Milano, who was the Olympic coach one year, and he did it all by tryout.

TS: Naw, now it's pro guys selected by committee.

ST: Do you especially want to beat the Cubans?

TS: (voice rising from its usual thunder level) I wanna beat 'em all.

ST: Can you foresee a day in the not too distant future when Fidel Castro is gone and Havana becomes a AAA, or even a Major League city? Can you imagine the kind of frenzy and commerce created by the South Florida Cuban community if that happened?

TS: They had a minor league club, I was there. Sure, it would be a big thing.

ST: What about this scenario: A third Major League, called the International League, is formed, which includes teams in Tokyo and Mexico City, plus the current "small market" teams, all competing for a World Series via a Play-Off system?
TS: I don't know about what you're talking about, but I've always said someday there'd be a "real" World Series between Japan and the United States. A guy named Bob Cobb used to talk about the Pacific Coast League becoming a Major league.

ST: Last thought: Candlestick Park and the San Francisco fans?

TS: There's lots of good fans up there, but a lot who ruin it for them. They'd draw 15,000 on Thursday for Atlanta, and have 40,000 on Friday for us, all there to boo me, which is fine, but you can't walk across the field, they're throwin' shit at ya. But I think with this new ballpark, you'll see a new breed of fan up there.

A LINE DRIVE HITTER

Check out what Cirillo says about former USC teammate Bret Boone, who a year after this came out became his teammate again in Seattle. As Keith Jackson might say, these two guys "don't like each other very much."

Former USC Trojan Jeff Cirillo was a hidden nugget in Milwaukee who now puts up big numbers at Coors Field.

Robin Yount played 20 years in the anonymity of Milwaukee. When fans read of his accomplishments at his 1999 Hall of Fame induction, it was like breaking open old Soviet archives: A revelation.

Yount was part of a different era, a period of in which there were a few fellows who played on the same club their entire careers.

Like Yount another L.A. product, Cirillo, was putting up great numbers year in and year out in Milwaukee, but nobody knew about him, either. He received little respect in All-Star voting, despite a .307 career average dating to 1994. The eleventh round pick from the 1991 draft hit .321 with 15 home runs, 88 RBIs and 194 hits in 1999. He is a stellar third baseman who possesses a gun for an arm. Cirillo hit .325 in 1996 and .321 in 1998.

Two off-seasons ago, Cirillo was traded to the high-profile Colorado Rockies, where he now hits in the ball-carrying high air of Coors Field. Wow, Jeff, does this excite you?

"It’s a challenge," said Cirillo, who had just moved into a new home in Redmond, Washington after a vacation trip to Sun Valley when I caught up with him. "Then I started to think about Milwaukee, and I had some regrets, but I'm old enough to understand that I have a great opportunity. I had some strong relationships there. Geoff Jenkins and I are like brothers, he was in my wedding. I hope I helped him, he has a world of talent."

Jenkins is part of the SC connection that dominated the Brewers' roster the past few seasons. The other ex-Trojan was Bobby Hughes. Cirillo played with Jenkins older brother, Brett at SC from 1988-91.

"The offensive style at Coors makes for some long games," says Cirillo. "The third base coach there before I came over once told me they don't see their family much at home, but I'm old enough to understand the positives associated with playing there."

That was the second time in a minute the 31-year old mentioned his age. Who does he think he is, Methuselah?
"I've gotten bigger with weight training over the years," he says in reference to his increased power numbers, although this guy always has been a line drive hitter. He could have actually been hurt by the move to Coors if he had fallen for the long ball syndrome, but he was also jelped hitting in the same line-up with Todd helton. Cirillo is a right-handed George Brett, a guy who pounds tweeners for doubles and hard ground balls for singles.

He does have a handle on why offense has dominated baseball in recent years. "It's because of weights," he says. "Hitters get bigger and stronger, but if pitchers lose flexibility it doesn't do them any good. I never used to work on my upper body when I was a pitcher."

Cirillo refers to his stellar college career, where he was a power pitcher who would take on the role of closer, coming in from third base while warming up in between pitches. It was actually quite a spectacle! He hit for average, not power, and provided steady leadership.

Pasadena-born Jeff prepped at tiny Providence High in Burbank, where he was drafted in the thirty-seventh round in 1987. He is also a handsome devil who is married and has children now, but there are stories of girls calling his listed number at all hours. He never lacked for dates at USC, a school known for its beautiful coeds.

"I owe Mike Gillespie a lot," says Cirillo of SC's coach. "He took a chance on me coming out of a small school with supposedly inflated stats."

The Trojan teams Cirillo played on from 1988-91 were some of the most talented in the history of collegiate baseball, and included the likes of future big leaguers Bret Boone, Damon Buford, John Cummings, and Mark Smith. Still, they never made it to the College World Series, losing to Hawaii in the '91 Regionals at home. Some have placed the blame on Gillespie, stating that he was too tight in his prosecution of game strategy, but Cirillo had a different take.

"We had guys who weren't team players," he says. "When some of those guys left we went further without them."

Jeff made a few comments "off the record," but he did say "it's no secret Bret Boone and I don't get along. He's overrated. He's just unbelievable. I don't know what it is, if he's just got that big league mentality because his dad played there."

Where Boone is cocky and probably sacrifices some batting average for the sake of home runs that are all too infrequent, Cirillo disdains "big flies" for a steady stream of team-helping base hits.

"I got the most out of my college experience," Cirillo says, paying homage to Gillespie. "I learned a lot from him. One thing about Gillespie is that he teaches the intangibles; base running, the mental game.

"The mental transformation, the steps that go from being a cusp player to being an entrenched pro, are in some ways about fear and paranoia. The fear of failure. Never being satisfied. Never really being comfortable. A lot of guys have success at the A or Double-A level, but they can't make it over the hump. Every step you ask yourself, 'Can I do it.'"

The 6-2, 195-pound Cirillo, a great all-around athlete, has always had to look at his career realistically.

"When I was drafted," he recalls, "I thought, I'll just give it a shot. So many guys were drafted ahead of me, I didn't have a lot of people in my corner, not a lot of money was invested in me, so I just had a burning desire to show people I had what it took."

Cirillo's attitude has hardened a bit over the years, probably because he has had to work his way past players rated ahead of him. Now he looks at a lot of people who he knows did not
believe in him at one point, and while he is still a gentleman, one senses a definite pro
mentality that is different from the more relaxed demeanor of his college days.

He makes a lot of money (Cirillo is represented by Dennis Gilbert's old firm, the high-
profile Beverly Hills Sports Council), and he gets more more Baseball Tonight air time now that
he bounces frozen ropes all over Coors Field.

What does Gillespie have to say about his protégé?
"He's an amazing story."

A RELIQUARY FOR REAL BASEBALL FANS

The Unabomber quote attributed to Bill Lee herein made it onto sports columns
nationwide, as well as the Dan Patrick Sow on ESPN Radio.

Lee, Postema and Moe Berg are inducted into "Shrine of the Eternals"

"Reliquary" means "casket" or "resting place." In the context of the Baseball Reliquary,
"resting place" is more appropriate. Sanctuary might be even better. Sanctuary from the too-fast,
the pedestrian, the average. It is a little known organization, but a delight for real baseball fans.
Actually, it may not be for every baseball fan. The Reliquary is for the more cerebral among us,
as it is devoted to that beautiful confluence of art and baseball. You see, baseball is the favorite
sport of intellectuals, who are able to appreciate its intricacies, both on and off the field.

The Reliquary reserves its honors for those who distinguished themselves (in one form or
another) off the field as much as on. Curt Flood and Doc Ellis were among the 1999 inductees.
Remember these guys? Ellis got in hot water by complaining about the softness of his pillow
while on Pittsburgh Pirates' road trips, implying that it was some kind of plot against black
players. The white establishment vilified him, and while he was not always on the mark, in the
long run he did expose some truths about baseball. During his day, the game was not as "color
blind" as Bowie Kuhn might have wanted fans to believe.

Flood sacrificed an All-Star career to challenge the reserve clause, and in the end opened
the gates to free agency. Of course, some might think him evil for doing that, but the old system
was about as unconstitutional as a French penal colony.

On Sunday, July 16 at the Pasadena Central Library, Reliquary President Terry Cannon
presided over the second induction of three more people into their Shrine of the Eternals.

Bill "Spaceman" Lee was a three-time 17-game winning lefty for the Boston Red Sox,
but the former USC All-American was better known for his goofy, off-the-cuff remarks.

Pam Postema is still baseball's only female umpire.

Moe Berg was a catcher for several teams. Oh, and he was a Princeton man, Columbia
Law School graduate, and fluent in 12 languages (but he could not hit in any of them). Wait,
there is more. Berg, who was Jewish, was recruited by "Wild Bill" Donavan of the OSS (pre-
cursor to the CIA) to go to Germany during World War II, posing as a Swiss physics student, and
determine if Hitler was close to exploding an atomic weapon. If so, his mission was to
assassinate the top scientist working in their "heavy water" project, then eat a cyanide capsule.
His recently de-classified file was donated by the CIA to the Reliquary, and can be viewed in the
Pasadena Library (Cannon accepted it saying, "This'll make good reading tonight").
That is the kind thing the Reliquary thrives on. Postema did not know about the organization, and looked up "reliquary" in the dictionary after receiving the letter. When it said "casket," she figured her umpiring career was dead and buried, so why not? She noted that baseball was mostly a good influence on her life, except that for 13 years the number one word in her vocabulary was "f-ck."

Unfortunately, Berg is dead so the audience could only listen with rapt attention at a recounting of his unbelievable life and contribution to the war effort. What this guy did is far too amazing for a full recounting here, but numerous articles, a book, and hopefully a movie starring George Clooney tell his story in greater detail.

Lee was the star of the day. He brought his aunt, Annabel, who signed copies of the article about her in the July issue of StreetZebra. Annabel, you see, taught Bill how to pitch. She threw the only perfect game in the old All-American Girls Baseball League. Ex-USC coach Rod Dedeaux was there, and overall the whole thing was baseball Heaven.

Lee was introduced by "baseball film" director Ron Shelton ("Bull Durham"), an ex-Baltimore Oriole farmhand himself. Shelton is too Hollywood for this down-to-Earth crowd, eschewing much conversation with fans and making a hasty exit once his obligation was complete, but Lee kept the packed room in stitches, saying things like "I never liked to strike guys out. It's fascist," and "I'm really conservative, because I eat road kill," or "Politically, you could say I stand back-to-back with Chairman Mao," and "I hang a Cuban flag on my front lawn, and under it it says, 'Long live Fulgencio Bautista.'" He also said, "My father told me, 'Question authority.' He 's regretted telling me that ever since….I hang out with George Thorogood. 'I'm bad, bad to the bone, I drink alone'…I live in Vermont, where we have one Representative, and he's a Socialist. They asked me to run for Governor, and I said I don't believe in the Executive branch of any government…My address is a rural route box, 'cause I don't want anyone to know where I live. They told me they were putting in street names, what did I want to call mine? I said 'call it the Theodore Kasczinski Memorial Highway. I'm still on the rural route. I mean, I'm not for killing anybody, that was wrong, but a lot of what Kasczinski said was right on. One of these days we're gonna wake up and be really sorry about what we've done to the world. I look at LA today, and I get depressed. There's freeways everywhere, the 605, the 210, the 10. I remember you used to take Foothill Boulevard to get to San Bernardino."

Spaceman was, well, let's just say…BITTER…when recalling his career. Postema, who had more real reason for wrath, remarked, "But we're not bitter, are we, Bill?" Overall, though, the tone was light and not meant to offend anybody. Lee showed up in the baseball uniform he wore pitching both ends of a doubleheader the day before in a Vermont semi-pro league, and was to wear the next day pitching in still another game, or a clinic or something. Presumably, he had not showered!

Like most things Spaceman says and does…hey, don't ask! More information about the Reliquary can be obtained by calling Terry Cannon at (626) 358-6255, or at their web site: www.baseballreliquary.org.

SPACEMAN REVISITED

The ex-USC and BoSox southpaw reminisces about baseball days of yesteryear
Bill "Spaceman" Lee and I have been friends for over 10 years, ever since I invited him to speak to a political organization about his 1988 Rhinoceros Party Presidential candidacy. Spaceman had a roomful of stuffed-shirt Republicans rolling in the aisles when he said, "I'm so conservative I eat road kill," and "I'm so far to the right I'm standing back-to-back with Chairman Mao."

Bill is Everyman, the kind of guy who loves to get together with the guys' and drink cold beer. When I invited him to a watering hole, my buds doubted he would show, but when he did he regaled all with his Hail-Fellow-Well-Met humor. He is just a little off-center. Spaceman stayed at my house, but at 6:30 a.m. I found him not in bed but doing morning tai-chai with my neighbor, a Chinese fellow who appeared to be about 115 years old. Later he accompanied me to work, and at a law office the secretary was ready to call 911 about a heart attack victim in the parking lot. I had to explain that it was just "Spaceman" doing his afternoon tai-chi.

The Spaceman is a sixth-generation Californian whose grandfather, Rockwell Dennis Hunt, was dean of the University of Southern California graduate school from 1900 to 1937. He grew up in the San Fernando Valley, playing little league with future Montreal Expo Tim Foli. Lee's father was a strict disciplinarian. "`Get a haircut and get a job', that's what Dad always said," says Bill. "I was more George Thorogood--`Bad to the Bone, I drink alone.'" Lee, Sr. was transferred by the phone company to Marin County just in time for Bill to enter Terra Linda High School.

"It was like Stephen King's 'The Stand',' Spaceman recalls of the SoCal/NoCal culture shock. "You know, how the biker's square off against the hippies? The older students were '50s greasers. My class was the beginning of the '60s Free Speech Movement. There was a lot of prejudice against Southern California 'cause we wore shorts."

Spaceman (who was given that moniker by a Baltimore writer in 1972) was a free spirit who starred in baseball, earning a scholarship to USC. He actually thought about going to Humboldt State to major in forestry, but being a USCian meant that his only choices were to attend SC, USC or Southern Cal!

His impression of legendary coach Rod Dedeaux was one of "amazement. He didn't look like a ballplayer, he was always making wisecracks. But he had eyes in the back of his head, and as the game progressed he knew everything about every player. He was the most astute baseball man I ever met."

Spaceman says that the greatest team he ever saw was "either the 1975 Cincinnati Reds, the 1968 USC Trojans, or any Taiwan little league team." He put to rest a rumor that he "held out" his senior year by telling Dedeaux he would not pitch conference games unless he could start at first base in non-conference contests. Once the team went to Santa Barbara, but Lee was late warming up because he had forgotten his sanitary sox. Instead of asking the equipment manager for a replacement, he sought out a sporting goods store instead. During a trip to Hawaii, he emerged from the luggage chute. On one occasion during a rain delay he took a dare and did push-ups on the field--wearing only jock strap and sox!

Lee was at SC during the golden years of Trojan sports. O.J. Simpson was his classmate, as was Tom Selleck, and his teammates included Mike Garrett and Tom Seaver. Of Selleck, Lee remembers that "he was a big frat guy. They were Greek geeks. I was a left-wing jock at conservative university."

One his grandfather helped to found, by the way.
"Selleck was making 'Myra Breckenridge'," Lee recalls. "That was his first movie. Tom Seaver was a funny, happy-go-lucky guy, not the corporate type he is now. He seemed pretty easy to hit, then he got on the weights, his legs got big, he filled out and got taller and started bringing serious heat. He's got a natural hop on his fastball that can't be taught. That's the difference between him in a limo and me in a beer truck. He's the best fastball pitcher of our time, a better pitcher than Nolan Ryan or Jim Palmer."

Spaceman felt Seaver was about equal with Bob Gibson ("a sinker/slider pitcher"). He also admires a more democratic modern day twirler, Greg Maddux, who is more in his style.

"Maddux is a finesse pitcher who paints the edges of the canvas," is Spaceman's assesment. "He's the Catfish Hunter of this generation. Seaver had control, but he was such a hard thrower he didn't have to be so fine."

So, Lee was a young, single man going to SC and living in L.A. in the '60s. Memories?

"My friend Greg Freeman owned a '63 Chevy Impala," Lee recalls. "He parked it in the neighborhood near school, and when we got back the seats were stolen. We cruised Sunset Strip that night sitting on orange crates. I went to all the bars, but Barney's Beanery was more my kind of place--like the way I pitched, it was not in the center but rather on the outskirts. <Lee's dialogue is strewn with metaphors that describe life like pitching> My brother was stabbed <but not killed> at a Doors concert. I saw Janis Joplin. My Uncle Grover made keys for movie stars. Lee Marvin used to go drinking with us. I always thought of myself as a William Holden-type of guy."

Lee has movie-star good looks, and at one-time a reputation for being a ladies' man. After college he played for the Boston Red Sox, where he and a teammate, fellow Southern Californian Bernie Carbo, were notorious bar-hoppers and skirt hounds. In his riotously funny 1984 autobiography, "The Wrong Stuff" (which came out on the heels' of Tom Wolfe's tale of astronaut bravery), Lee recalls minor league groupies who would "do the whole bullpen."

Red Sox owner Tom Yawkey was "like a grandfather to me." In "The Wrong Stuff", Lee posits the metaphysical notion that after Yawkey passed away, he returned to Fenway Park to say hello to Spaceman in the form of a pigeon.

Carl Yastrzemski "dressed like 'Columbo'. He had an old raincoat. Guys would trample it, throw it in the garbage," but Yaz would resurrect the Lazarus-like garment and wear it again and again. "He was a Long Island potato farmer," and Trojan Bill made a less-than-fond remark when reminded that Yaz was a Notre Dame guy.

"Carlton Fisk was an ornery Yankee farmer who spent his whole life pulling stumps out of granite," Spaceman said of the Cooperstown-bound former catcher. "He loved to fight. He hated <Yankee catcher Thurman> Munson. Pudge was tenacious, always getting in brawls. The only friends he had were pitchers, but he was a leader, much more than Yaz."

Fisk no doubt fueled the 1976 brawl in which the Yankees' Graig Nettles broke Lee's shoulder, changing him from "a soft thrower to a real soft thrower." That was one year after the classic 1975 World Series in which Lee left games' two and seven with leads that the Boston bull pen could not hold against Cincinnati.

"I left game two leading 2-1 with a blister on my hand," he recalled. "No way I walk Cesar Geronimo otherwise. We were underdogs, but Luis Tiant pitched great."

Lee is well remembered for giving up a gargantuan home run to Tony Perez on an oh-so-hanging curve ball in the final game, but Boston still was ahead when he departed. How good was the Big Red Machine?
"They were one run better than us," says the Spaceman. "If we turn the double play, Perez leads off the next inning and it's not a two-run homer. Same thing this year with Offerman."

Still a Red Sox fan, Lee is responsible for putting forth the "Curse of the Bambino" as being responsible for the franchise's history of near-misses. Ask him about Ted Williams.

"Most cantankerous, nastiest guy I ever saw. Kind of like the West Coast version of Fisk. He tried to hit on my wife in 1991. I can't say I blame him. That probably caused his stroke."

In 1979, Spaceman landed in hot water with Commissioner Bowie Kuhn when he told a writer he "likes to sprinkle marijuana on my pancakes" for breakfast. He thought Jim Bouton's "Ball Four" was clever, even though Mickey Mantle would not talk to Bouton for years after it came out.

"Ball players have big opinions of themselves and don't like to be criticized," he offers. Spaceman says that he faced a lot of sentiment against California athletes, perhaps not realizing he is partly the reason that southpaws from the Golden State are considered oddballs.

"I'm much more cerebral than people realize," he says. This is true. Bill is highly intelligent, very well educated, and possesses a mind that inquires of a large number of subjects ranging from politics to religion to philosophy. He graduated from S.C. and picked up a degree from Mississippi State just for kicks.

He helped found the senior league, a professional association of ex-big leaguers, but the league folded and most of the players are now "in the Betty Ford Clinic," Lee deadpans. Lee also fond of telling people that he once ventured across some border into Communist China without anybody knowing about it. The State Department would have had a nice time explaining that one. Spaceman also played a baseball exhibition in the old Soviet Union.

Lee lives in Vermont and still plays over-50 hardball, leading his team to the national championship in Arizona last October. Spaceman hangs out with George Thorogood and Woody Harrelson, who is the executive producer of a Paramount film project based on Lee's career--if they can ever get the screenplay to read like real baseball-speak. He has four children (he was divorced from his first wife years ago). Michael, 29 is a graphic designer in Washington state. Andy, 24 is a Red Sox minor leaguer. Katie, 23 is a veterinarian's technician in Mississippi. Anna is five.

Bernie Carbo today? "He's sellin' religion some place," say Spaceman.

THE STORY OF A BASEBALL VAGABOND

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. - Steven Travers was a sports agent who once represented Marin County baseball players Jalal and Jamani Leach. Now he is a writer, and he caught up with his old client, Jalal, at Scottsdale Stadium on Sunday, March 25.

Jalal Leach was born 31 years ago this month in the city by the bay, San Francisco, California. The son of a big-hearted policeman who can only be described as an unsung hero - he has brought numerous foster kids into his home over the years - Jalal grew up knowing that he could do anything he wanted in life.
Raised in the affluence of Marin County, Leach and his brother, Jamani, benefitted from good schools, top-notch kids' sports programs, and the sort of safe, suburban environment that has been the hallmark of the late Twentieth Century American Dream.

Gifted with athletic ability, brains, good looks and a friendly, charismatic personality, young Leach had the world at his feet. He could do anything, be anybody he wanted to be. He wanted to be a baseball player.

At San Marin High School, Leach starred for the Mustangs, and when he graduated in 1987, a scholarship awaited him at Pepperdine University.

Pepperdine is an exclusive, private Christian school located not far from the beautiful Pacific shores in Malibu. Four years of education there are worth over $100,000. Leach, still only a teenager, had entered that special, privileged world reserved for great athletes, and he made the most of it.

After leading the Waves to the 1988 and '89 West Coast Conference championships, he was drafted in the seventh round of the 1990 draft by none other than the lordly New York Yankees.

"There's everybody else's way," he explains, "and then there's the Yankee Way. The Yankee Way is that you have to play at every level: Rookie ball, A ball, Double-A, Triple-A. Everybody has to do it. Derek Jeter, Carl Everett. Sometimes you see guys rushed because they signed for big money. They don't come up with the smarts and the knowledge of fundamentals, like knowing when to steal. But not with the Yankees."

Thus may be the key not only to the Yankees' success, but Leach's career. If he had been drafted by Minnesota or Kansas City, perhaps he would have transitioned through the minor leagues faster and found himself in the Majors. Being a Yankee meant waiting his turn. It meant an apprenticeship.

Here was a guy who majored in education at Pepperdine. Unlike players from Latin America who have baseball and little else, Leach had the tools to succeed in any number of careers outside sports.

"My goal was to play four or five years," he says of his mind-set in 1990. "At that time, I'd never have predicted that I'd play 10 years. But they went by so fast. To this day, I love playing so much, I just don't want to quit."

Leach's younger brother, Jumaane, a pitcher at San Diego State, played a couple of years in the Padre organization but did not advance as high up the professional chain as Jalal. He retired and followed in his Dad's footsteps. Today he is a Sacramento police officer.

Jalal played five years in the Yankee chain, at Oneonta, Ft. Lauderdale, Prince William, Albany and finally at the AAA level, with the Columbus Clippers of the American Association.

He displayed good defensive skills, but not the kind of power that is to be expected of a left-handed hitting outfielder. He knocked 14 homers at Albany in 1993. He stole 33 bases in Rookie ball and 28 in the Florida State League.

Another Marin County product, Jalal's friend Derek White, was moving up the ladder at a faster pace because he demonstrated the power production that has become so important in baseball.

White, who prepped at Terra Linda and starred at Oklahoma, made it to the major Leagues by 1993, and has seen brief stints with the Mets, Expos and Tigers.

Leach, who possesses more all-around baseball skills than White, found himself knocking on the Yankees' door.
After playing Winter ball in Hawaii, White found himself playing for Montreal when the Expos drafted him in the Rule V draft in December, 1995.

At this point, he found himself facing the Great Conundrum. First, he had reached his self-imposed time limit of five years without having reached the Majors. Secondly, even though Montreal offered a less-competitive environment, Leach was no longer a "young man" in baseball parlance.

College ball is a terrific option for the 18-year old American high school graduate. It offers the chance at an education, an opportunity to hone one's skills, and some experience that can help in the real world.

It also makes you 21 years old when you start playing pro ball. The Dominicans' often sign at age 16, and the advantages of youth are on their side.

A minor leaguers in his mid- to late-20s is "old." That is reality.

Leach, who had faced the uphill odds of being a Yankee farmhand, now was no longer a "fast track" prospect.

"I play as hard as I can," he says. "I don't want to have to say to myself that I didn't give it my all."

On the day we met at Scottsdale Stadium, Leach was besieged by autograph-seekers after the game, and he is not even a recognizable star. Does the adulation and recognition of being a professional athlete drive his ego?

"Not at all," he says. "I'd rather sign autographs than sign a bill. That's part of the game. We're role models to kids. I still play the same way, for the same reasons, as I did when I was a kid.

Leach is in fantastic physical condition. His sleek, yet muscular body, is a testament to an off-season regimen of weight training.

"It's not hard to drive myself," he says. "Hard is not having food on the table. I'm getting paid. I don't have a terminal illness. I'm not unemployed. Nobody's gonna shoot me. I hust play."

What would he be doing if he was not a pro baseball player?

"I'd be teaching or coaching," he says. "Still, I want to make money at this game. I have necessities. I need to provide for my family, and eventually pay for my child's college education."

Leach has a new daughter, Jada. He married his wife, Dana, in 1999.

"I think I've learned a lot about this game," he says. "AAA life is better than low-minor league life, which is mainly bus travel. Still, sometimes we have to get up at 4:30 in the morning to make a flight, but that's what I signed up for and I'm not gonna complain. Nobody's forcing me to do this."

Jalal is looking at another year of AAA, as the Giants have "too many outfielders. The only way I get up there is because of trade or injury. Still, I do the little things right. I'm in a bit of an oh-fer slump right now, but I was recognized by Dusty <Baker> for making a good baserunning read on a triple. Playing in San Francisco, my hometown, would be a dream come true. I'm an outfielder, I play the way I play, it's too late to switch positions. I've survived this long and I'm gonna do this until they kick me out of here."

Jalal also is able to recognize that, while he is a baseball vagabond who has not attained his ultimate goals, he is as successful in his chosen profession as somebody who enters the law or medicine. The odds he overcame just to play 10 years in the professional ranks are astronomical, when you consider how many strive to reach this point.
"I faced Randy Johnson the other day," he says. "That was a battle. It doesn't get any better than that. That's like a lawyer making a case before the Supreme Court, or facing Robert Shapiro in a trial. I was psyched up and prepared for it the same way. I couldn't sleep the night before."

What will he miss when he finally retires?
"The camaraderie," he says. "Still, it's funny, I have friends but only one really close friend. That's a guy I met my first year in pro ball. We make time to call each other, see each other in the off-season. Most of the guys are associates, not friends. Guys get married, move on to other things.

"When I leave the field, I may want to scout. I think I've learned to evaluate talent."

Two other Marin products, former Terra Linda and Arizona State pitching sensation Charles Scott, and ex-Tamalpais and Cal pitcher Will ( ), are now successful scouts. Gary Hughes, an ex-Marin resident, has been a noted scout for years.

"I'll miss the interaction with other players," says Leach. "I'll miss getting my uniform dirty. It's still exciting just to put on the uniform, and it's still like when I was a kid. I want get dirty. The recognition of fans is not what drives me. I'm just a normal guy like anybody else, no better or worse. I don't judge other players if they don't sign autographs or deal with the fans. I don't think that way.

"For me, the fire is still there. I don't think about my career. Maybe when it's over I'll look back and reflect. That's for you guys <the writers>. I try to do something positive every game, every at-bat, every time I pinch-run."

Jalal is as dedicated to this game as ever. He faces the daily facts of age and competition in a Darwinian profession. Still, he brings it his all day in and day out. Nobdoy can ask more than that, whether you are a star, or a baseball vagabond.

BRING ON THE YANKEES

Enough with this sniveling National League stuff. So what if the senior circuit record for consecutive games without being shutout (181) was 106 years old - until last night. The Cincinnati Reds strode into Pacific Bell Park, undemanned (sans Ken Griffey) and facing the always difficult West Coast portion of their schedule. That did not stop the games oldest franchise from dispatching with the record in the first inning. No drama. No waitin around.

Barry Larkin opened with a double off Livan "I Don't Know Elton John" Hernandez. Michael Tucker singled to send Larkin to third, and Dmitri Young bounced an innocuous grounder to Ramon Martinez.

Werethe Giants playing the infield in? Did Martinez make a desperate pitch to throw out Larkin, thus preventing the San Franciscans from going down in infamy, right there with Al Downing and Tracy Stallard?

The fact is, the record meant little or nothing to the teams on the field. Trying to get professional athletes to tell how much events of this kind mean to them is an exercise in futility. Blassé is the name of the game at this level.

"Nah, I dont really think much about the record," said Reds Manager Bob Boone. "Everybodys talking about it, but what concerns me right now is how were swinging the bat. We needed a home run the other day <Sunday vs. the Mets> to keep the streak alive and got it."
Gotcha. So you do care about the record!
"Well, sure," concurred Boone. "they've been playing this game a long time. It's almost impossible to compile a streak like this. There's so many variables. We're struggling without Junior <that is Griffey for those of you in Rio Linda>, and we face plenty of good pitching. Hernandez tonight can dominate. We've gotta go to Colorado and face <Pedro> Astacio and <Mike> Hampton."

Boone does not agree with the assessment that pitching is weaker than it was in the days of Koufax, Seaver, Carlton.

"There's a lot of good relievers," says Boone, making a very valid point about the direction that a young pitcher might take these days. "Plus, the strike zone has been refined. It's real subtle, but the good hitters, the guys who really judge balls and strikes and are selective, are facing an adjustment period right now. It'll take awhile."

All of this makes the Reds' assault on the National League consecutive non-shutout streak quite remarkable. The 1895 Phillies held the mark.

Now the team can set their sights on the Major League mark of 308 held by the 1931-33 New York Yankees.

"It's almost impossible to break that record," says Giants broadcaster Lon Simmons. "There's so many factors involved in not being shut out."

Lon is not one of these guys who "doesn't notice" records.

"Oh, no," he says, "I always was aware of the records of the teams, the players, I read the articles, the place of teams in the standings."

Larkin, who broke the record, said he could not explain it and held the overall line of not appearing excited about it one way or another.

Right now, Cincinnati is playing .500 ball in the young season. They have been getting some pretty good pitching, and they are a team with talent. Outside of veterans like Griffey, Sean Casey and Aaron Boone, they feature a young bullpen sensation, Danny Graves, and have high hopes for Seth Etherton, a college sensation a few years ago who they recently acquired from Anaheim.

To break New York's 68-year old record, Cincinnati will have to score in each of their next 127 games. That would happen in a September 14-16 series vs. Philadelphia at home.

C'mon, this is big news."

"I agree," said Reds longtime announcer Joe Nuxhall, whose association with the club dates to 1944, when, at an age in which he should have been a high school freshman (15 years, 11 months), he became the youngest player in big league history. "No doubt about it, this is not a record to be taken lightly."

For some reason, team records are not as coveted as individual marks. Records set by individuals are sexier. Mark McGwire got more attention for his 70 home runs in 1998 than the Yankees did for their 116 wins, but team records should be cherished because they are group efforts.

SOMETIMES GREED TAKES A BACK SEAT TO HONOR
"Greed is good," said Ivan Boesky, a stock manipulator who symbolized the go-go 1980s. Gordon Gekko, played by Michael Douglas, echoed the words in Oliver Stone's entertaining 1987 film, "Wall Street."

Professional athletes are seen by fans as the most greedy people in our society. They make millions and millions of dollars. They sign guaranteed contracts. They get paid if they are injured, or play like crap. They have agents and lawyers who milk owners and fans for every cent they can pay for their clients. They blatantly demand contracts to be re-negotiated long before they run out. Players' unions have the gall to go on strike for more money and benefits.

While one can argue that pro athletes are not more over-paid than rock stars or movie stars, the fact that they play on teams and perform on an almost-daily basis for teams that communities adopt as their own makes them seem to "belong" to the fans more. Much is expected of them.

For many years, athletes were paid more in line with the rest of society. Often they had to work in the off-season to make ends meet. Free agency, which hit its stride in 1976, changed all of that. Reggie Jackson signed for millions of George Steinbrenner's dollars in 1977.

In 1978, the California Angels, owned by the "singing cowboy," Gene Autry, made their move into the era of free agency by bringing in players like Bobby Grich, Don Bailor and Lyman Bostock.

Some players understand their situation. Some have respect for the game, realize how fortunate they are to be playing it, and see themselves from the fans' viewpoint. Bostock was one of these players.

A .300 hitter in Minnesota, Bostock was a hot commodity. The Angels saw him as the catalyst of a new, aggressive, winning ball club. Free agency was a new phenomenon in 1978, and the press made a big deal of the new tycoons of sports.

All March in Palm Springs, Bostock was asked what it was like to be wealthy after growing up an inner city black kid, then playing for the penurious Twins. When the season started, expectations were very high, for Bostock and his team. The Angels were favored to win the American League West.

Bostock was carrying a heavy load, and he started in a bad slump. All through April, Bostock hit miserably. The Los Angeles media questioned the premise of paying free agent prices for talent. It was said that the players would lose all their drive once they became wealthy. Bostock had the opposite reaction. He had all the drive in the world. He had too much drive. He wanted to contribute and earn his pay in the worst way.

As his hitting slump continued, it got so bad a month into the season that Lyman actually went to Autry and offered to give his salary back for April, or to play for free, until he started to hit again.

It was a noble and heroic offer. Autry and the Angels turned it down, and eventually Bostock hit his stride and hit over .300 in 1978. Life has its share of funny ironies, however. Shortly thereafter, he was killed in Chicago by a jealous husband.

Nice.

Another example of financial nobility came in 2001 in the person of St. Louis Cardinals' slugger Mark McGwire. The former USC star, who set the home record with 70 in 1998, was approaching 600 lifetime home runs by the end of last season. Big Mac is a man of odd personality traits. He can be generous, he can be prickly. He is, however, a man of honesty and integrity in all matters.
McGwire experienced injuries that curtailed his performance last year, but he still appeared to have plenty to contribute. While his chances at breaking Hank Aaron's career record of 755 home runs looked less promising, any team still would love his bat in their line-up.

McGwire did not live up to his own high standards of performance, though. His contract was running out, but the Cardinals put an offer on the table, a multi-million dollar package that would have guaranteed McGwire the money whether he was hurt or hit.

McGwire coyly put the offer off. He said he would wait until the season was over. The Cardinals said there was no downside to signing it. The money was his, they would gladly pay him.

McGwire never signed it. He retired. Had he signed it, he could have had his agent negotiate an expensive buy-out that would have cost the Cards millions, while McGwire would have collected money for nothing, as Dire Straits calls it. Many, many athletes get money for nothing.

Big Mac simply chose to leave without taking a dime, because it was the right thing to do. He refused to dishonor himself by taking his team's dough for not working.

Nobody should confuse McGwire's actions with Mother Theresa healing sick people in Calcutta, and McGwire is a millionaire already, set for life. But in the context of the athlete's greedy little world, his actions have a Jack Armstrong quality to them. There are lessons about life, business and money that anybody can learn from McGwire and Lyman Bostock.

**HUDSON, A'S HAVING TIME OF THEIR LIVES**

I love Huddie's quote that the A's had to leave Phoenix "while we're still standing." A month after this article about how much Giambi and the mostly-bachelor A's party during Spring Training, they were 8-18 and the Mariners were off to the fastest start ever. They have gotten off to slow starts every season. Maybe they should train in Vero Beach, Florida.

**PHOENIX** - "Jason decides where we'll go," says Oakland's ace righthander Tim Hudson of the A's Phoenix night life schedule. "We just follow."

Hudson is, of course, talking about Jason Giambi, reigning American League MVP, self-described "connected" Italian-American ("My uncle lives in Las Vegas, you know), and all-around bon vivant and man about town.

Observers of the baseball scene have noted in recent years that these new young professionals like to read the Wall Street Journal and talk business on cell phones with their agents. Where is the fun of baseball? The camaraderie and friendship?

In Oakland, it is alive and well, thank you. The A's model themselves after Giambi, a guy who trains as hard as his good friend and ex-teammate, Mark McGwire. Like George Brett in a previous generation, he likes to have fun but is always ready to play when the bell rings.

So are his teammates. They are young, good-looking guys, though, and like to enjoy life. "We go to Maloney's, maybe Sanctuary," says Hudson of the hopping Phoenix/Scottsdale night life.
(I personally researched the subject, and can assure you that attractive women can be found at either of these places.)

"In Oakland," Hudson continues, "we stay more low-key. Guys usually live in the Pleasanton, San Ramon area, and we'll occasionally hang out and have a few beers at some clubs in Walnut Creek. Phoenix is a good place to spend a month, but I think it's about time to get out of here while we're still standing."

Hudson was standing on Wednesday afternoon (March 26) at Phoenix Municipal Stadium, when he reached his pitch count of 80 after four impressive innings against Milwaukee. He struck out the first two Brewers as if they did not have bats in their hands, and had four altogether. The only damage done against him came off the bat of Milwaukee's superb left-fielder, Geoff Jenkins. The former All-American from Southern Cal (who is a native of Sacramento) went deep over the right-field fence with a man on in the third.

"Jenkins got a hold of a change-up," said Hudson. "He's a terrific hitter. I've not faced him much, just in Spring Training.

"I had a good feel for all my pitches and I'm ready to start the season."

20-game winner in 2000, Hudson will be honored with the opening day start Monday at Safeco Field against Seattle.

"I don't really feel like we need to make a statement" against Oakland's top division rival of a year ago, Hudson said in response to a question. "The season's so long, we'll just be happy to hold our own, hopefully win a couple games."

Oakland had the best Spring record in the Cactus League last year, although they got off to a so-so start before pouring it on at the end to win the West by a game over the Mariners.

They break camp with the best Spring record in baseball, head to Sacramento for an exhibition against the AAA River Cats, then come home to take on McGwire's Cardinals and a two-game Bay Bridge stint vs. San Francisco at Pacific Bell Park.

"I don't think Spring ball means much," says Hudson. "We're playing good, but we don't wanna play our best ball here."

Hudson does not think pitchers are ahead of the hitters in March and April.

"Last year was great," he said of the 2000 campaign. "Everybody enjoyed it, it was something special. I don't really feel pressure. I don't even think it means that much that we play in Oakland, where there's not as much media as in New York. We're a bunch of fun-loving, outgoing guys who seem to get along with the press. In that respect, we're a New York-style team. It certainly didn't bother us in the Play-off <last year against the Yankees>. Our style is just to play and have fun. The pressure's on the Yankees to win it again."

Apparently, that pressure is piling on. With his club at the bottom of the Grapefruit league standings, Yankee owner George Steinbrenner is threatening to fire Manager Joe Torre. (April Fool's)

"The media is neither an advantage or a disadvantage," Hudson continued. "We don't shy from the attention. I think we have a lot of big-time players."

Hudson was asked about the mild year-round Bay Area weather, which former Manager Tony LaRussa used to say was an advantage.

"Yeah, it's mild," he said, "and I think if you play in Texas, it can wear you out. You definitely might not come out early for batting practice in
the hot sun, but most guys get used to it, so I don't think weather can be an excuse or a reason for your performance."

Hudson is also a baseball fan, and while he may not be a historian with the Elias Sports Bureau, he does have a sense for the A's history.

The A's staff, led by Hudson and also including left-handers Barry Zito and Mark Mulder, along with veteran Gil Heredia, is being compared to the early '70s combination that included Jim "Catfish" Hunter, Ken Holtzman, Vida Blue and John "Blue Moon" Odom.

"Obviously, I'm too young to have seen those guys," he says, "but just to be compared or talked about next to guys like that is exciting. I know they were greats with the A's."

One can make some real comparisons between the development of the A's then and the A's now. After going 82-80 in 1968, the team won 88 and 89 games, respectively, but finished second behind Minnesota in 1969 and '70. In 1971, they broke out with 101 wins, capturing the West before losing to a talented, veteran Baltimore team in 1971. Finally, in 1972, they had the requisite talent and experience to go all the way, winning the first of three straight World Series'.

The pitchers can be compared, too. Holtzman came by trade, but Hunter, Blue and Rollie Fingers were, like Hudson, Zito and Mulder, young, home-grown phenoms who skyrocketed to the big leagues. Hudson, Mulder and Zito are college boys with a little more experience than Hunter, Blue and Fingers, but their ascent to the Major Leagues has been sudden and successful, too.

As for the rest of the comparison, the A's 1999 run for a wild-card berth can be compared to their 1969 and '70 second-place finishes, and their impressive 2000 Play-Off team looked a lot like the 1971 club that was almost, but not quite good enough.

2001? As former broadcaster Monte Moore might say, It is "look-out, Yankees" time! "Experience means a lot," says Hudson. "We have that now, but it's not everything. I think chemistry is just as important, and that's what we really have. You can't find a clubhouse in baseball with guys who get along and have as fun as us."

The players are not the only ones having fun. Watching the team play this year and, hopefully, for succeeding seasons, promises to be pure enjoyment.

NOTES: Ran into Milwaukee Brewers' announcer Bob Eucker, one of my favorite all-time baseball people, which is what I told him, at Phoenix Muni on Wednesday.

"Hey, thanks buddy," was Euck's response. Because the Euckster was in between innings broadcasting the game back to Wisconsin, he did not have time to do a sit-down interview, but we did talk about Lou Brock's first year in St. Louis, when he was Eucker's teammate on the 1964 Cardinals. That season has been immortalized by David Halberstam's classic "October 1964", which uses baseball at a metaphor for American society. The Cardinals were the Democrats, the New Breed, a team that employed numerous black and Latin ball players and played aggressively. The Yanks were the old Republican Party, country club patricians who eschewed radical thinking in any form. Like The Democrats of 1964, St. Louis won it all. The Yankees had to adjust their thinking (like the GOP), and using Halbertsam's historical comparison, the Bronx Bombers eventually came back in the sports version of the Reagan
Revolution. Eucker enjoyed our short discussion of other colorful characters from his era, including Bo Belinsky, Tim McCarver and Phil Niekro.

You know how Eucker described catching Niekro's knuckle ball? "Just run to the backstop and pick it up." You gotta love this guy.

APRIL FOOLS: Apparently, the pressure is piling on in New York. With his club finishing at the bottom of the Grapefruit league standings, Yankee owner George Steinbrenner is threatening to fire Manager Joe Torre.

THE GIRLS OF SPRING BRING OUT THE NOSTALGIA

Scottsdale, Ariz. - SATURDAY: It was drizzling and a little chilly when I left Oakland, but 79 degrees at 9 PM when my buddy Mac picked me up at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix. I have been to this city several times over the years, but this is the first time I am here during Spring Training since I was a minor league pitcher in the Oakland A's organization back in the 1980s. The sweet, warm nighttime weather is just the first thing that begins a wave of nostalgia for me.

Mac, who lives in Scottsdale and is letting me stay at his condo, is an expert on the local night club scene.

Our first stop is Martini Ranch, and as soon as I walk in that nostalgia thing comes over me. The sense of synaptic pleasure is in the air, and I am 23 years old again.

You see, when I look back at my pro baseball career, particularly my Spring Training experience, my memories are as much of bars, pretty girls and a fleeting sense of god-like immortality as of running wind sprints, spitting tobacco juice on my teammates' shoes, or staring down a hitter with the bases loaded and the game on the line.

Martini Ranch is happening, man! Beautiful women are everywhere. The place is a virtual shrine to youth, beauty and hedonistic pleasure. I partake of an exotic cocktail, and the first sensory pleasure pangs begin to take over.

Then I see them. Young, handsome, muscular men. Short hair. Athletes in groups. They are - unmistakably - ballplayers.

They are me a few years ago.

Nostalgia.

I remember as if it were yesterday what it was like to be one of those golden people. Recognized as a professional athlete. Enjoying the good life as if it were my birthright, and always at the center of this world are a bevy of pretty women.

Pretty women are the same today as they were when I was a young buck. They have an...effect...on you. As the man once said, they make the rockin' world go 'round.

Anyway, to synthesize the events of Saturday night, Mac and I were in our element and we had a darn good time.

It was 4 AM by the time I got to sleep.

SUNDAY: 12 noon. I barely make it out of the sack.

Oh nooooo!!!
Now, the biggest difference between Travers then and Travers now is that Travers then could be up and at the yard by 8 AM, running wind sprints and sweating through a day-long workout.

Travers now needs his rest.

Luckily, Mac's pad is a mere two blocks from Scottsdale Stadium. After showering and getting two cups of Joe, green salad, fruit, OJ and two barbequed chickens (all fortified by a fistful of vitamins), along with a quick read of the Arizona Republic at Carl's, Jr., I am pleased to be feeling quite good. I am ready to go to work.

Scottsdale Stadium has been re-furbished since the last time I was here. Spring Training was more leisurely in those days. Now it is big business, and the place is packed for a game between the San Francisco Giants and the Chicago White Sox.

When did the White Sox move from Florida?

The old sites are a thing of the past. The White Sox were in Sarasota. The Mets were in St. Pete. Now teams train in Maryvale, Peoria, Pt. San Lucie. Places I have not been to or know how to get to.

Scottsdale, however, is familiar territory. The newer digs are nice. One other thing remains the same.

Nice-looking girls.

Sure, I seem to spend a lot of time dwelling on this subject. Maybe it is not the PC thing to do, but hey guys, you know what I am talkin' about.

It is a hot day in late March. The really warm weather is here to stay in the AZ until October, and that means halter tops, shorts, summer dresses and clear, golden brown skin outlined by black hair, blonde hair, brunette hair.

Of course, this reminds me of my days as a player, sneaking glances at all these young lovelies, convinced that they are all impressed by my 6-6, 220-pound frame.

The next emotion is one of envy. Not just envy because a lot of these 20-somethings ballplayers are multi-millionaires (watching Barry Bonds half-jog a groundout to second base does not help), but envy because all those buxome baseball beauties are no longer inspired to see me (as if they ever were), but to see these new, buffed diamond gods of the 21st Century.

Still, as David Kahane told Griffin Mill in "The Player", "I can write." The ability to convey stories somehow immortalizes these distant memories. There is an art to storytelling.

I remember watching Top Gun with my Dad, a Naval officer during World War II. The man was in tears, the film vividly having brought back to him the sense of camaraderie that he felt with men who shared the combat experience of the South Pacific Theatre.

Anyway, the game in itself is relatively uneventful. By this, the last week of Spring Training, most rosters are pretty well decided. With the current economics of baseball, managers have fewer options when it comes to cutting players and maneuvering their rosters.

Veterans are itching to "go north," as they used to say when all the teams really played in the north, and get to playing the games for real.

This is also the "dead arm" period. Do not be deceived by Spring pitching statistics. If a veteran pitcher is 5-0 with a 1.40 ERA in March, it may mean he left his best stuff in the Cactus league.

"I always wanted to have at least one bad game towards the end of Spring Training," explained Giants' broadcaster Mike Krukow.
Over at Phoenix, Barry Zito got roughed up the other day. That tells me he could break out of the gate with his good stuff when the team opens at Seattle.

Remember Bob Welch, who won the 1990 Cy Young award with the A's after posting a 27-5 record? That Spring, he was hit so hard it looked like he was washed up.

Of course, not everybody can afford the luxury of rounding into shape on their own schedule. Take my aforementioned Spring experience.

While I may have left the impression that I was more interested in partying and girls than baseball, the fact is that I was a dedicated athlete.

That winter I had been released by St. Louis. Oakland signed me, and Spring Training was a place where I had to impress my new employers.

I ran, put on 10 pounds of muscle weight lifting, and pitched in a semi-pro league in the off-season. The result was that I was in mid-season form when I got to Phoenix, and when the games started I was a world-killer. The fact that hitters are not in a groove yet at this time of year also helped. If memory serves me, I pitched 13 or 14 innings that Spring, allowing one unearned run, walking nobody, and striking out at least a batter per inning.

I was awesome.

I pitched in several big league exhibitions games. My claim to fame was when Lon Simmons broadcast my three scoreless innings against San Francisco at Phoenix Muni back to the Bay Area. I am told that he described me as a "tall, lanky non-roster pitcher," and apparently I had struck out two guys before Simmons learned my name.

Then we "broke north." At Modesto of the California League, I found myself on one of the best minor league staffs in baseball. The A's sent me to Idaho Falls, where I pitched with mixed effectiveness.

I had left my best stuff in Phoenix.

THE FORREST GUMP OF BASEBALL

I wrote this before Kreuter was the catcher in the photos of Barry Bonds' record-breaking home runs in 2001.

A journeyman is defined as "someone who works competently but not brilliantly." Such a description captures the career of new Dodger catcher Chad Kreuter, who was told by manager Davey Johnson that he would work day games after night games, but has seen seen much more action than that.

Kreuter has spent his career in places like Texas, Detroit, Kansas City, Seattle and Chicago, but he has deep ties to California. He once played for the Angels, and Chad prepped under legendary baseball coach Al Endriss at Marin County's Redwood High School, located in suburban San Francisco. In the 1970s and early '80s, Endriss fashioned a prep dynasty. The school won a National Championship and several CIF-North Section Section titles. It was not uncommon for most of the starters to go on to college or pro careers.

"The Redwood program was very disciplined," Kreuter says of his years in Larkspur, "and we were taught the value of humility. When you lose it's not fun, and at Redwood we just didn't lose. Losing is humbling, so the few times we experienced that, it made us disciplined to work harder, and this carried over to the rest of my career."
Kreuter played on the last of Endriss' NCS champions, in his junior year of 1981. He was also an all-everything quarterback on the Giants' football team, and upon graduation in 1982 faced a dilemma. The University of California wanted him to come over to Berkeley and play quarterback. Instead, he chose to play baseball only at Pepperdine. Hey, he could have been at Memorial Stadium for The Play. Regrets?

"My main thinking between football or baseball was that football meant a greater risk of injury," he says. "I was at Memorial Stadium when <former Cal quarterback> Gale Gilbert broke his leg. It occurred to me that as much as I love football, longevity belonged to baseball. It was still tough during college. I would watch USC and UCLA play, and think to myself that if I were there I'd do as good a job as their quarterbacks. Still, in hindsight after 10 years in the big leagues, I have no regrets about not playing football."

Other Redwood players like Brad Cole and Jimmy Jones had preceded him to Malibu, where Kreuter played for well-respected Waves' coach Dave Gorrie.

"SC was in a down time back then," he recalls. "UNLV had a good program. We were in the Southern California Baseball Association with Pepperdine, Loyola, UC Irvine and UC Santa Barbara. We had a good program, and that started with walking on the field, playing in a nice facility. We had good batting cages. All this contributes to getting a step up on the competition."

In the summer of 1983, Kreuter played for then College of the Canyons coach Mike Gillespie with the North Pole Nicks of the Alaskan Summer Collegiate League. He was lonely at first, trying to adjust to the strange environment. Then he met Gillespie's pretty daughter, Kelly. Kelly, an LA girl, was also adjusting to the Land of the Midnight Sun. Love flourished, and they are now married.

Father-in-law Mike became USC's head coach in 1987, and in the off-seasons Chad assisted with the program for a couple years.

"Early in Mike's career," says Chad, "he was filling in Rod Dedeaux's shoes. Even though there had not been many quality teams in the period before he got there, he felt he to win. The alumni are huge at SC, and they put pressure on him, so when he produced a National Championship, that opened the door for him to enjoy it a little more.

"I was there today, and his interaction with player's is unique. He's obviously learned to relax," he observed.

After college he climbed his way through the minor leagues, and while Kreuter is not a household name, he is, like the fictional "Forrest Gump" character, seemingly always in the middle of the action. He was behind the plate when Nolan Ryan struck out Oakland's Rickey Henderson for his five thousandth career strikeout.<p>
"That is one of the highlights of my career," he says in an understatement. "That and my first day in the big leagues, hitting a homer off Dave Stewart."

Of course, everybody in LA and Chicago knows that Chad has been suspended recently for going into the Wrigley Field stands after a drunken fan stole his hat and glove, but due to legal complications, he has been unable to speak about this event.

Chad is the kind of guy who is a leader, never complains, and demonstrates terrific work ethic. He hits the weights, so as to maintain the strength a catcher needs to handle a long season, swings from both sides of the plate, and is creditable defensively.

"Hey, this is where I should have been the past 10 years," Chad says of Dodger Stadium. After having grown up going to games there, one can see in his eyes that the Dodger mystique is still alive.
MULDER STEPS UP

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. - Mark Mulder pitched six innings in Oakland's victory over San Francisco on Tuesday (March 27) at Scottsdale Stadium, allowing four runs with four strikeouts, seven hits and three walks. He was phenomenal in the first couple innings, yakking the Giants with a big, slow curveball that had San Francisco standing in the box with the bat in their hands. His two strikeouts in the second inning consisted entirely of called third strikes.

So what did the 6-6 southpaw want to talk about after his impressive effort?

"Michigan State's real good," he said of the Spartan basketball team which will be defending their National Championship at the Final Four this weekend. "They don't have a Matean Cleaves, but they're experienced and it's great to see."

You guessed right. Mulder is a Michigan State alum.

"It's great to see," he says. "We never dominated Michigan when I was there, but now it's really looking good."

Mulder was in East Lansing in 1997 and 1998, when he was an All-American pitcher for the Spartans.

"I think the Big 10's a tougher basketball conference," he says, "but its not as good as Western and Southern leagues in baseball. It's just too cold. We didn't even get out and play games until our first trip West."

On Tuesday, Mulder felt "too strong."

"I threw extra in the bull pen because I just didn't want to ocome out throwing so hard," he explained. "When I'm throwing that hard, my pitches tend to straighten out."

Mulder does not feel that he has experienced the usual "dead arm" period of Spring Training that seems to be the latest thing "experts" talk about. Rather, he attributes his ineffectiveness of mid-March to the fact that he, like many of his teammates, had the flu.

Since recovering from the bug, the A's are looking less like a baseball team and more like Napoleon's Army during the Italian Campaign, rolling through the Cactus League in true pillage style. Tuesday's win puts them at 19-9, the best Spring record in baseball, and offensively they are at peak performance.


"Having the best record in Spring really is not an indicator," agrees Mulder. "Teams lose games when they bring in substitutions in the late innings. There's only a day left in Phoenix, and we're all just anxious for the regular games."

"I'm where I wanna be. I feel real good. I battled in the fourth inning, but it's good to make adjustments. I felt I was more rested for this start. I threw some bad curves early so I just started to throw it softer and it worked out."

"When batters are taking strikes against me, that tells me I'm hitting my spots."

It tells anybody watching that his stuff is excellent, which it is.

Mulder also got a base hit, but lost the RBI when Adam Piatt was thrown out at home by Barry Bonds.

Offensively, Jason Giambi looks to be in mid-season form. He slammed a long home run.

Newcomer Johnny Damon contributed three hits, scoring on every sequence.
The team looks absolutely fantastic, but these games, as Korach correctly points out, do not mean anything. Hopefully, Oakland will still be firing on all cylinders when they arrive at Safeco Field to begin the season against Seattle.

"Damon is such a factor for us," says Mulder of Oakland's leadoff man. "He steals more and gets to ball other guys don't get to."

Damon also allows Terrence Long a chance to bat fifth, where he is more protected and can show his considerable power.

Spring is, naturally, a time for optimism, but right now it does not appear that any optimism for Mulder or his team is false.

A-ROD PICKS FRIENDS WELL

It was just perfect. Alex Rodriguez emerging from the Texas Rangers’ clubhouse after Friday night’s 13-1 win over Oakland with Andres Galarraga. Two handsome, gifted Latino baseball players. Obviously friends.

Rodriguez, the owner of the richest contract in sports, could not possibly pick a better pal than Galarraga. Not that anybody is accusing A-Rod of getting the Big Head, but his new contract exacts certain pressures and responsibilities. He has demands on his time and a team on his back. Nothing will ever be the same for him, at least not for a long time.

So it is comforting to see him with El Gato, a man whose picture should be in Webster’s next to the word “perspective.”

First of all, Galarraga is just one of the nicest guys in sports. He makes time for people. He has an expressive smile and the attitude of a guy who is happy to be playing ball and enjoying the promise of America.

Oh, baseball. It is such a terrific game. It is all that it ever was and more. Like the country it originated in, nothing can ruin it. Not the money, not the politics of the sport, not bad uniforms, Astroturf, or old-timers’ who say players are not as good as in “my day.”

Baseball brings an Andres Galarraga to America. If it was not for baseball, Andres would still be in Caracas and we would not have the gift of his presence. Neither would Rodriguez.

Galarraga had been playing in the Majors since 1985. He had good years and not-so-good years in Montreal. In 1992 the Cardinals’ acquired him, he hit .243 and found himself demoted to Louisville. Signed as a free agent by the expansion Colorado Rockies, he lit up Coors Field at a .370 pace in 1993, and ever since has been a marquee player. After a 44-121-.305 performance in 1998, he was diagnosed to have lymphoma in the lumbar spine in February, 1999. The Big C. He missed the whole season, and instead of ripping baseballs out of the yard, underwent radiation and chemotherapy.

He returned to Atlanta in 2000, hitting an even .300 with 100 runs batted in, and signed with Texas in December.

“I relax and enjoy the game more,” he says of his attitude after battling, and defeating, cancer. “If I go 0-for-4, I don’t let it bother me like before. I work hard, but I don’t put more pressure on myself. I just keep going because I know I’ll play tomorrow.”

Told that he reminds people of Orlando Cepeda and Tony Perez, El Gato smiles one of the most beautiful smiles this side of Matt Damon.
“I’m glad people think that,” he says. “Tony Perez is a role model for me. I’m just enjoying the game more than ever. When the doctor told me I can play baseball again, I just said ‘thank God.’”

Andres is such a gentleman that hearing him talk about this can make a grown man cry. Speaking of role models, he may be the perfect example for Rodriguez. Hanging around with Galarraga helps him keep perspective.

“Pressure’s relative,” says Rodriguez of his contract. “The pressure is something people feel elsewhere. For me, I just play. The talk of the contract is over among my teammates. They’re all happy for me, and they know that my getting this kind of money increases what they’ll get.”

Coming into the Oakland series, Rodriguez was struggling at the plate, and his team was 4-6. On Friday evening, he broke out with a home run, two RBIs, two runs scored on a 1-for-2 night, and made a nice backhanded defensive play before being pulled for the great Bo Porter in the seventh. Texas won big, 13-1.

On Saturday he homered again, and his team got to the .500 mark with a 9-8 victory at The Net.

“The cold weather didn’t bother me,” he said of the Bay Area in April, “but I love the heat. I’m from Miami, so playing in Texas won’t bother me at all. My impressions of Texas are good so far. I think we have the potential to make things happen, and our pitching was good tonight” (Friday).

No doubt having an experienced pal who has faced much tougher circumstances than the high expectations of a big contract – that pal being Galarraga – is the kind of thing that will keep Rodriguez grounded in this important seventh year of his brilliant career.

THE BLEEDING HAS NOT STOPPED

For one month, the Oakland Athletics got pushed around like kids getting sand thrown in their face at the beach. They have decided to get tough. They decided to get tough now. They decided to begin their vengeful quest against the Toronto Blue Jays Tuesday night at Network Associates Coliseum.

Well, maybe Wednesday.

The As were two outs from victory. So close, and yet so far. Toronto won, 5-4 in 10 innings.

"I'd rather get hot at the end of the season than at the beginning," was Manager Art Howes assessment.

How about the middle of the season? In the As case, this is not a preference, it is virtually a requirement. Last year at this time they trailed Seattle by two games. The As have to play .600 ball and hope Seattle plays .500 ball. They need runs like their 18-4 stretch last June, and their 22-7 of the last 30 days of 2000.

The As did get some needed shots in the arm. Slugger and leader Jason Giambi? Ace righthander Tim Hudson?

Those guys will be there when it counts. Giambi already is. A baseball team sometimes is as good as its weakest link, and on Tuesday those so-called "weak links" were anything but.
Facing a hot (17-9) Toronto club that features some of the best sluggers in the American League, Corey Lidle stopped the bleeding. In his best Catfish Hunter imitation, Lidle gave up three homers - all solo shots - while striking out seven in six workmanlike innings.

Frank Menechino homered in the fourth.

Menechino is quite the story. He was drafted behind a woman once, when White Sox General Manager Ron Shueler chose his daughter, presumably as a joke, ahead of Menechino. Lidle rebounded from a terrible showing vs. Texas in his last start at Oakland, and in the fifth inning pitched his way out of a jam after Shannon Stewart had tripled with one out.

Some other good news came when Olmedo Saenz, hitting .200 coming in, doubled in the fifth.

Raul Mondesi's home run on a hanging, 0-2 curveball in the sixth cut Oakland's lead to 4-3. Giambi, who is showing signs of becoming a Gold Glove quality first baseman, speared a searing liner off the bat of Brad Fuller one hitter later. This was a crucial play in holding Toronto's rally to minimum damage.

In another encouraging sign, middle reliever Jim Mecir, who had an 0-4 record coming in, suddenly was hitting the corners with wicked fastballs and sliders a la Dennis Eckersley. He disposed of Toronto three-up, three-down in the seventh and eighth, catching Mondesi looking with heat on the outside to make it a one-inning game.

Brad Isringhausen came on in the ninth and was immediately met with negative feedback in the form of Brad Fullmer's double down the first base line. Isringhausen bore down to get Tony Bautista swinging, but Darrin Fletch's single tied it up.

Terrence Long, who started things off with a two-run double in the first, looped a single with one out in the ninth off Dan Plesac. Paul Quantrill came on to get Miguel Tejada and send the game into overtime.

Alex Gonzales homer in the tenth put Toronto up, 5-4.

Saenz single opened the Oakland tenth. Jeremy Giambi, he of the .182 batting average, sacrificed him into scoring position. Ramon Hernandez lined to center. Johnny Damon (.211) came up looking for redemption. He will have to find it another day, as he grounded weakly to second to end the game.

**PITCH THE TENTS**

Pitch the tents. Dig in the infantry. Saddle the horses, it is time to ride.

The Oakland Athletics, like Napoleon, made the long, bloody retreat on Sunday night, not from Moscow but the Big Apple. There is no Elba for the Green Team, though. There is only option: Carry on.

Yes, they can. Yes, they will.

The cold numbers are this. At 8-17 (.320), the club has the third-worst record in baseball, they trail Seattle by 12 games coming into Monday nights home stand-opener with Toronto, there are five months and 137 games left to play.

The last two figures are the ones to find encouragement from. The reason for this goes to the heart of why baseball is such a wonderful game. They play it almost every day. The law of averages has a chance to play itself out. There is usually a tomorrow.

A football team loses its first three and the season can be darn hard to salvage.
Here is why the team can still win the West. If Seattle is the club that will have the best record in their division outside of the As, Oakland needs to pick up two games a month on the Mariners in four of the five months left. In the other month they must pick up three games. For the team to win 90 games, which is a realistic minimum to win the division, they must go 82-54. Basically, this means going a little better than 16-10 every 26 games.

This is doable. The best way to arrive at and exceed this math would be a few eight-game winning streaks, a 20-5 month, and no more losing streaks.

In other words, they need to perform the way they are capable of performing.

History tells us a 12-game deficit on May 1 can be a Maginot Line. Not impregnable. In 1971, the Giants led Los Angeles by that margin at the end of May. They hit a June Swoon and barely held the division. The 1987 Brewers were 14-0 and 18-2, but finished as also-rans. The 1982 Atlanta Braves went 13-0, before relinquishing the lead. The 1981 As, 11-0 at the beginning of the year, almost blew the lead to Kansas City in a strike season.


"Yeah, I think about history," says Manager Art Howe. "My experience is that teams can go both ways. We can come back. Seattle call fall back."

Seattle is a nice team that has lost two superstar offensive threats and has great middle and late relief pitching. Kazuhiro Sasaki has been a mystery. Teams play each other within the division more this year. A non-flamethrower like Sasaki is more susceptible to being solved. The Mariners will experience a big drop-off. Mark my words.

The rest is up to the As. Their clubhouse is subdued right now. No music blares. They are having team meetings.

The key is Jason Giambi, who has continued to produce because he does not try to hit five-run homers. He carries the club, on and off the field. He is a leader and he will lead. Count on it.

Howe is patient. USA TODAY says he is in hot water with General Manager Billy Beane, but there is no truth to it.

"Right now," he says, "we just have to get to .500 before we can think about catching Seattle. We cant shoot for the moon. Yeah, two games a month is realistic. The goal is to play solid ball. We played solid ball on the road. We should have won two of three in New York. We pitched well enough. Compared to our last home stand we played outstanding. Over the course of the year, things even out. You win some youre supposed to lose, lose some youre supposed to win. Weve lost a few we should have won. We need a winning streak, and that happens when everybody gets hot."

Here is the thing. They have great talent, and almost everyone has been cold. The law of averages says this highly talented group will re-group like the Third Army after losing to Rommel at Kasserine Pass.

A TALE OF TWO PITCHERS

The story of Bill Bordley and Bruce Gardner has all the key elements of Shakespearean tragedy. Gardner became a case study in melancholia, ending in suicide. In Bordley's case, all his negative energy was turned into something positive, and today he is with the Secret Service.
Both were left-handed All-American pitchers at the University of Southern California, separated by 17 years. Both played for legendary Trojan baseball coach Rod Dedeaux on National Championship teams. Both men were considered "can't miss" professional prospects, and both had those careers destroyed almost before they started by awful arm injuries. Both men were damaged goods before their collegiate careers were over.

What they did with their lives after baseball defined the fundamental differences between the two.

Gardner was a phenomenal talent at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles. By his senior year, 1956, he was considered one of the top pitching prospects in the nation. He threw extremely hard, had great command of his stuff, and was a bulldog competitor. The pros came calling, and Gardner was all for signing. Those were the days, before the Major League draft, when teams would participate in bidding wars for top high school players. Although it does not seem like a lot of money by today's standards, players of Gardner's stature could demand and get $100,000 bonuses. That was more than big leaguers like Willie Mays or Mickey Mantle were paid in salary, because the Reserve Clause was still in force, thus depriving them of free agency.

Gardner, being an LA kid, was no less prone to the Trojan mystique than anybody else, but he faced a tug of war with his emotions, for reasons that most young athletes might not relate to. Gardner was Jewish. He had been raised by his single mother in modest surroundings. His Mom was convinced that the path to success in America was through education, and she dreamt that her son would make a good lawyer or doctor. She was not enamored with the successes of Joe Di Maggio or Ted Williams, and with very, very few exceptions, Jews were virtually nonexistent in sports. The idea that Bruce would be a successful professional athlete was not real to her; it held no promise. She knew little if anything about Bruce's athletic prowess. That her son could throw a 90-mile an hour fastball was an oblique concept. That people cheered for him and that men with stopwatches showed up to see him pitch was not something she could compare anything to. There was no value to such things. Being a doctor, now that had was something of value!

Along with the pro scouts came Dedeaux, a gregarious, wisecracking guy who bleeds Cardinal and Gold. USC was the one school that could entice a hot prospect away from bonus riches. They had won several National Championships already, and if you were a great high school baseball player who wanted a college education, you're three best choices were USC, Southern Cal, or Southern California!

Dedeaux was a master recruiter. He knew how to get into a player's mind. The best way to do that was to get into their home, and in this case he knew that Gardner was basically a mama's boy who yearned to please his mother. He knew that Gardner felt guilt about letting his mom down, and he knew how to manipulate that guilt. Dedeaux spent more time with Gardner's mother than he did with Gardner. He sold her on the value of a USC scholarship, which over four years, if one factored in tuition, books and housing, matched the six-figure enticements of Major League teams.

Bruce liked the idea of playing for Dedeaux, alright, but he had a shy side to him, and was a little self-conscious about the prospect of being Jewish at a rich, frat-society school like SC. This was still the "Gentleman's Agreement" 1950s. Mom would have not of it. Mr. Dedeaux is a nice man without an anti-Semitic bone in his body, she told him. He would watch out for him. The campus was only 15 minutes from their house, he would never have to be homesick.
He would meet a nice girl there, he would make contacts with important people who could influence his life. USC was the American Dream.

Bruce wanted to sign, but he lost. He could never win that kind of battle with his mom, he was like the Anthony Harvey character in "The Manchurian Candidate", and Dedeaux had proven to be her insurmountable ally. He entered the University in the fall of 1956. He never had a chance.

At USC, Gardner was everything he was supposed to be, a flame-throwing all-everything who garnered all the awards there were to win. He played with other stars like Ron Fairly, who would be a star with the Dodgers. He helped Troy to victory in the 1958 College World Series, and spearheaded the ’59 team which went 59-6 but was denied another national title because they were on NCAA probation. In 1960, he won his fortieth game, a record that still stands at SC, and was named College Player of the Year. He also hurt his arm.

Gardner's arm problems seemed minor at first, but the irritation caused him to lose speed on his fastball. Being a control artist with good breaking stuff, anyway, he continued to be successful. He knew how to pitch, and how to win. The scouts, however, saw something. Radar guns were not invented yet, but these guys had been watching him four or five years now. Gardner had thrown a ton of innings at Troy, and now, in his early 20s, he was not the fresh new phenom that he had been at Fairfax High. His stock, which seemed high to the average fan, went down in the eyes of the real investors, the scouts.

The Chicago White Sox signed him to a paltry bonus and stuck him in the low minors. The agonizing personal descent of Bruce Gardner had begun.

On top of everything else, the draft was still in place, so Gardner found his dreams further interrupted by a stint in the Army. One day, riding on the back of a truck with other GIs at Fort Ord, California, Gardner was thrown to the ground when the truck hit a bump. He re-injured his arm, and when he returned to baseball his already-eroded skills were so far from big league quality that all hope of a glorious career faded away. Gardner's minor league career came to an end pretty much the way it happens for 90 percent of the kids who sign contracts.

After his release, Gardner tried to focus on other things, like everybody else who must re-direct their efforts. He tried his hand at the insurance business, hoping his SC contacts and notoriety as a one-time local sports star would elevate his business, but Bruce's heart was not in it. He resented his mother and Dedeaux for talking him out of signing a big contract out of high school, convincing himself that all those pitches he threw as a Trojan amateur could have been used in the bigs.

He saw another Jewish kid from Fairfax, Larry Sherry, attain heights of glory for the Dodgers in the 1959 World Series.

Gardner, on the other hand, sold insurance.

In 1974, Gardner had a few cocktails, gathered all his trophies, plaques, awards, and memorabilia, along with his USC degree, and went to the pitcher's mound at the brand new Dedeaux Field on SC's campus in the dead of night. He produced a gun, put it to his head and blew his brains out.

The next morning, a groundskeeper at first thought the body on the mound was a drunken student sleeping one off. Then he saw the blood, then the suicide note, which was addressed to his mother and Coach Dedeaux, and said, "This is what I think of your USC education."
Needless to say, Bruce's photo is not prominently displayed at Heritage Hall, his story is not re-told in Trojan press guides. Mention of his name was taboo around Dedeaux.

Three years after Gardner's suicide, another southpaw graced the pitcher's mound at SC, and he was even better than Gardner was.

Bill Bordley was 16-1 pitching for a CIF-Southern Section championship team at Bishop Amat High School in Torrance in 1975. He was a left-hander who reminded people of Sandy Koufax. After his senior year in 1976, he was selected in the first round by Milwaukee, but turned down their offer to attend SC. As a 1977 freshman, he was 14-0, a First Team All-American, considered the best pitcher baseball...period!

"He was the best pitcher I ever saw," former Pacific-10 Conference umpire Roy Roth, who also worked in the Major Leagues, once said. "Not the best college pitcher. The best pitcher."

"My freshman year was a big step," says Bordley. "Having Dedeaux was the best influence I ever had in amateur or pro ball. I still talk to him. He's successful and a leader at everything he does. I learned even when I was not pitching, and he did it in a fun type of manner. We were never stressed during big moments, he could make you relax, and gave you the feeling that you were King Kong. He's done that his whole life, like in his trucking business, where he's a multi-millionaire. You can go to a suit and tie event, but by the end of it Dedeaux will always have a crowd around him. He used to throw parties at his place in Seal Beach after we'd beat UCLA, and I went to Japan with him, too."

Dedeaux has a "Japan Room" at his beachside home, where he displays memorabilia from his goodwill trips to the Far East, stretching back to the days not long after World War II.

In 1978, Bordley was an All-American again, and the Trojan team that season is considered by many collegiate baseball enthusiasts to be the finest ever assembled.

"The '78 team was the best ever," agrees Bordley.

Bordley defeated a powerful Arizona State team in the College World Series championship game.

"The second-best college team of all-time was probably Arizona State in '78," asserts Bordley, "yet we were vastly superior to them. I never played on a team that had that kind of talent, plus motivation. Rod never allowed diversions. We were just great, we made one error in five games at the College World Series. We played the game the right way."

Bordley recalled Dedeaux's influence.

"We had the same bus driver in Omaha for two weeks," he says. "The guy had hair down to his waist and a full beard. Rod kept working on him, and by the end of the Series he looked like a businessman."

Bordley skipped on the Alaskan Summer League, and told Dedeaux he was not returning to school. Bordley must have realized that the time to cash in on a pro bonus was sooner rather than later.

"I used to throw 95 miles an hour," he said, "but by the end of my college career I was down around 86-87. I still had enough to dominate college hitters out, but I felt pain from the wear and tear of pitching.

"The scouts were not as aware of my diminished velocity because I had not gone through a showcase junior year. We had financial hardships at the time, because my brother had been in a car accident, and my father had suffered a heart attack. I knew I'd be the number one pick in the
country. Bob Horner had just signed for $250,000, so I dropped out of school and enrolled at El Camino JC, making myself available for the January, 1979 draft.

Bordley also may have realized that the cupboard was bare at Southern Cal. '79 was the beginning of a long dry spell for Trojan baseball.

"Bowie Kuhn was the Commissioner," Bordley continues. "It was a big scandal, and I was a big fish in a little pond with all these junior college kids."

The Winter draft is almost exclusively JC players, receives little publicity, and bonus money is minimal.

"I wanted $250,000," says Bordley. "Buzzie Bavasi of the Angels said he would match that, and I said ahead of time that I would only sign with a West Coast team, so I could be near my father. Cincinnati drafted me after saying they wouldn't, so Kuhn got involved. He fined the Angels for tampering, then did the same thing they had done with Tom Seaver."

Bordley's name was put in a hat, and any West Coast team willing to put up a minimum of $150,000 entered the lottery.

"San Diego was owned by Joan Kroc and they did not agree to the minimum," says Bordley. "The Angels were barred, and Oakland had no money, so it was the Dodgers, San Francisco and Seattle."

Milwaukee, the team that had drafted him three years prior, was allowed to participate, but the Giants name came up.

"I went straight to Spring Training," recalls Bill. "They signed me to a Major League contract, which I'm grateful for because this allows me a pension, but immediately they could see that my speed from SC had dropped. I had had a swollen arm at the College World Series."

Bordley went through surgery after the 1980 season.

"It was pain and swelling," he recalls of the after-effects of the failed procedure. Doctors had attempted a "Tommy John" procedure, using muscles from his Achilles and implanting them in his elbow. He endured three surgeries.

"You know the old expression," he says. "I was throwing as hard as ever, it just wasn't getting there as fast."

Bordley did pitch briefly in the big leagues, and lived in Marin County, where he worked with weights in a program devised by a specialist named Satch Hennessy. Nobody tried harder.

"SI did articles comparing me to Koufax," he recalls. "From my junior year in high school to age 22, I was very confident, I knew that I could win. I was striking out two guys an inning, I was on top of my game. I had the God-given ability to throw a baseball. Plus, being a southpaw helped, and I had a good breaking ball."

But his arm was shot. Joe Torre invited him to Atlanta's Spring Training in 1983, but his career was over.

"Baseball was a positive influence," Bordley says without a trace of regret. "It gave me financial independence, paid for college, and I saw the world. It taught me a great work ethic. I have no problems leaving the game behind, you have to move on. I went back to SC and earned a 3.8 GPA in finance."

Bill was the pitching coach under Dedeaux in 1984 and '85, when Mark MoxGwire and Randy Johnson were there. In return for coaching, the school paid for him to complete a Master's degree.
After graduation, he worked in finance in the San Francisco Bay Area. How did he end up in the Secret Service, an elite, ultra-secret organization normally reserved for former FBI agents and military officers?

"We played the Mets at Shea Stadium in 1980," Bordley recalls. "George Bush was the Vice President, and I got to know some of the guys on his detail, I left them some tickets. I was always interested in investigative work. I thought to myself, 'Hey, I'd like to look into that.'

"It took two and a half years of tests. I work on polygraph investigations, threat cases, and deal with the CIA. If you know of a death threat, the Service administers a polygraph test to determine if the person is on the level. I've interviewed Charles Manson, who made threats from prison."

On can surmise that Bill determined that allowing Charlie out of prison would be a threat.

Things got very interesting for Bordley when he was assigned to Chelsea Clinton's detail at Stanford University. Naturally, he is unable to give specifics about the detail, or any of the things he has seen while working for the Clinton Administration.

"I was on the President's and First Lady's detail," he says. "I had to testify in the Starr Report, and I know Chelsea. She's a normal 20-year old kid. She goes to a lot of events, and we try to make her college experience as normal as possible.

"What people don't realize is all the other things we do in the Service, like counterfeiting. We're under the Treasury Department, so I travel the world--I've been to 75 countries--where our money is counterfeited."

Bordley was asked about whether he was ever required to sign a document that would not allow him to ever talk about inside Presidential stuff. If anybody has anything on Presidents, past and present, it would be the Secret Service. In recent years, some former Kennedy Secret Service agents disclosed details of White House shenanigans, but for the most part, nobody ever hears a peep out of the non-partisan Service.

"We have top secret clearances," he explains, "and it's pretty much taboo to talk about them. Before we get to the Presidential detail, there's so much screening that it's a virtual certainty that an agent will not disclose secrets. It's also a matter of courtesy. It's taken years for me to get in a position of trust with President and Mrs. Clinton, and with Chelsea. If politicians couldn't trust the Secret Service, it would be very harmful to future public figures. I look at it like a baseball clubhouse, where we went by the saying 'What you say here, what you see here, what you do here, let it stay here.'"

Bordley knew the Bruce Gardner story, but found no satisfaction in comparing himself to his predecessor.

"It's an adjustment for anybody," he says, "whether you're Steve Compagno <this writer knew Bordley in the early '80s, and Compagno is a mutual friend of ours who once played in the Yankee organization, before embarking on a successful mortgage banking career> or anybody. You learn a good work ethic and take the same positives that go into being a Cy Young award winner or a 20-game winner, which are valuable."

Bordley still follows the Trojans, and remains loyal to Rod. He lives in San Jose, and plans to retire in the Bay Area.

"I studied finance," he says, "and did well in stocks."

BIG BUCKS BRENNY SHOULD HAVE USED HIS JOHNSON
Arizona Diamondbacks’ manager Bob Brenly gets the big bucks to leave no stone unturned in thinking of everything in order to give his club a chance to win. He is inexperienced and it shows. His decision to squeeze with a left-handed batter against a southpaw who lives on off-the-corner sliders in the Championship Series was brutal, but he got away with it. He may not be lucky enough to get away with his omission in New York.

How come Brenly never used ace lefty Randy Johnson in relief at the end of either games’ four or five at Yankee Stadium? Johnson pitched a complete game shutout on Sunday in Phoenix, and at that point it was decided he would not start again until Saturday night at the BOB. He normally pitches on four days’ rest, but in this case the Big Unit has five days to sit his butt on planes, buses, autos, hotel rooms and dugout benches. He likely would do some long toss and light bullpen work on Tuesday, followed by some more bullpen work on Thursday. Or, if he normally only goes once on the side between starts, Wednesday would be that day.

Brenly and pitching coach Bob Welch should have decided on Sunday that Johnson not throw on the side on Tuesday. Instead of having him throw before the game Wednesday, he should have been sent to the bullpen to get ready late in Curt Schilling’s game. Byung-Hyun Kim is not a good bet to get six outs. Johnson should have come in for the last one or two outs on Wednesday, instead of Kim sticking around long enough to hang a rising slider to Tino Martinez and later flatten one into Derek Jeter’s zone. The relief appearance would have amounted to Johnson’s sideline work, whether he was brought in or not. If Johnson did not throw on the side before Wednesday’s game or in the late innings, he should not have thrown at all.

If he warmed up Wednesday only, or warmed up and pitched, that should have been his only between-starts work and he would not have been used Thursday. He only should have thrown Wednesday as part of late-game strategy.

On Thursday, he should have been fresh, not having thrown at all since his last start not, and again should have been ready by not throwing before the game. Brenly should have had him ready in the ninth to get the last one to two outs, no more. If Johnson is not used and does not warm up, he then could have gone to the pen with a catcher after midnight to get the 15 minutes of work that he had been held out of over the previous couple days.

Yes, the whole effort would not have been his regular routine, but he has an extra day of rest anyway and the World Series is not supposed to be routine. It is possible that Brenly and Welch went to the Unit and Randy told them he could not be ready on Saturday if my scenario were to take place. My guess is nobody thought about it. It takes a little thinking and some calculation, but it is not all that complicated. Of course, I thought of it, but I am not paid to tell Brenly what to do.

**MARTIN BIGAMY ALLEGATION IS NO SURPRISE**

In 1994, a business partner and I formed a company in the Bay Area called San Francisco Sports Management, Inc. Our one real client was Al Martin, then an outfielder for the Pittsburgh Pirates. We repped Martin's marketing opportunities. Martin was married (Cathy), they had a child, and were in the process of buying a home in Scottsdale, Arizona. My partner arranged to have Martin's mistress flown from one National League city to the next so that she could see Al on his road trips. All the records came back to us, so Al could claim deniability to his wife. We
gave him a phone card so his calls to the mistress were not traced to him or his cell. The
Pirates wives were getting suspicious that year, and were calling the various hotels asking for
phone records for "tax purposes."

I never met the woman, although I spoke to her by phone on at least one occasion. Sean
Haggerty-Martin (a different individual) is the woman Martin is accused by Scottsdale police of
punching late on the night of March 20. I am not in any way proud of being involved in these
tawdry proceedings. The baseball strike and some business problems ended the company in
1995. We never did negotiate the big contract for Martin that would have provided a "Jerry
Maguire" happy ending, and my relationship with Martin, the partner, and the sports agent
business ended at that time. I segued into a career as a screenwriter and sports columnist. <p>
As for the recent Martin story, I was not surprised by any of it. It is what it is, and he is what he
is. Apparently he took up with Sean Haggerty, and on December 11, 1998 they were married in
Las Vegas. Martin, praised as a hard-nosed player and clubhouse leader throughout his career,
claims he attended the ceremony but did not know it was a legal wedding. He never divorced his
wife, Cathy, who apparently knows about Sean Haggerty.

Traded to San Diego over the off-season, Martin is expected to be a catalyst on a team
with aspirations of overtaking Arizona in the National League West. Haggerty-Martin thought
she was legally married to Martin. That seems to have been the nexus of their argument, and it is
said not to be the first time. Haggerty-Martin has said that Martin has been known to put a gun in
her mouth, saying "I'll O.J. you." The Padres media guide lists Martin's wife as Cathy.

Martin was a nice guy when I knew him, but frankly the man had a violent undercurrent.
He was raised in a nice, comfortable suburban environment. His father was a police officer, and
he played football at Rowland High School in the Covina area, east of Los Angeles. However,
Martin had a major temper. He was capable of awful screaming.

Once we arranged for him to get use of a car from a Pittsburgh dealer, in exchange for his
appearances at little league games. One time Martin did not make the game for some reason,
maybe a late flight after a rain delay. The dealer had his home number, and called him to
question his absence. Martin flew into a rage and left a super-loud, obscenity-laced tirade on the
company voicemail. We got the affair squared away for him, but it was actually frightening.
Martin would routinely joke about how he would "kill" somebody for some indiscretion. It was
taken as a joke, but one felt the tension under the surface. On another occasion, we sent letters to
other players on the Pirates, advertising ourselves as agents, and mentioning Martin as our client.
Outfielder Andy Van Slyke got on Martin's case for going with unknown people instead of Scott
Boras or Dennis Gilbert or somebody like that. Martin took it good-naturedly--until he got to a
phone. Again, it was a tirade of swear words and threats of "killing you" if we embarrassed him
again. The incident was smoothed over and Martin was as sweet as a baby after that, but you
know what? The guy was scary.

Martin never played baseball in high school. He attended USC and played football
briefly, but his next door neighbor was Dave Hansen, the Dodger utility player. Hansen saw that
Martin had baseball skills, urged him to give the game a try, and he was signed by the Braves,
traded to Pittsburgh, and had an excellent rookie year in 1993. Martin never had us negotiate his
Pirate contracts as promised, staying instead with Joe Bick, but he eventually signed with
Steinberg and Moorad.
CITY OF ANGELS

Bill Rigney was a major part of the Bay Area baseball landscape. Growing up an A’s fan in Marin County, I knew all about Rig, and when I pitched in the Oakland organization, I had a chance to get to know him personally. A few years later, I wrote a screenplay, “Once He Was An Angel”, about former southpaw Bo Belinsky, who pitched for Rig with the Los Angeles Angels. Even though I had not been a major prospect with the A’s, Rig remembered me, and gave me valuable insight into that period. One funny anecdote involves a friend of mine, Kevin McCormick, who for years would call my house and identify himself to my Dad as some well-known Bay Area sports figure; say, Monte Moore or Reggie Jackson or Bill King. One day Rig calls me, my Dad answers and asks who is on the line, and Rig says, “Bill Rigney.” My Dad said, “Yeah, right, Mac,” before recognizing the voice as Rig’s. In writing the screenplay, I became an expert on a state of mind called Hollywood during a golden era, circa 1962. Rig, who also spent years in New York, would be the first to tell you that his LA experience was probably the most colorful of his long career.

There are some years that stand out, encapsulating a certain time. 1962 is one of those years. George Lucas' "American Graffiti" was set in '62, when an innocent country had not yet gone to Vietnam, John Glenn circled the Earth, and missiles in Cuba had schoolchildren practicing the Cold War task of ducking under desks.

It was a particularly good California sports season, too. The undefeated Trojans of Southern Cal ushered in the John McKay Era with a National Championship, and the National League pennant race was a bitter, down-to-the-play-offs death match between new West Coast rivals, the Dodgers and Giants.

1962 was not supposed to be a memorable year for the Los Angeles Angels. An expansion team in 1961, the Angels were a creditable 70-91 in their first year, playing at dilapidated Wrigley Field on Avalon Boulevard. In '62, they rented Dodger Stadium from Walter O'Malley. The Dodgers' were the toast of Hollywood. The Angels, a combination of cast-offs and kids, were tenants who played before family and friends. The first Angel to receive attention was southpaw pitcher Bo Belinsky, a career minor leaguer who held out of Spring Training for all of $1,500. When asked what he would do without baseball, he replied that he was "Playing in some big-time pool tournaments and (scoring) a lot of broads." He did not say "scoring." Writer Bud Furillo made a big deal of it, and the Angels had themselves a devil.

Belinsky was feted at a Palm Springs press conference, made the club because the Angels thought he would attract female fans (he did), and threw a no-hitter in his third start! Another rookie, Dean Chance, was an emerging star, winning 14 games. Former Giant Leon "Daddy Wags" Wagner hit 37 home runs and knocked in 107 runs.

Belinsky started the year living in Ernie's House of Surface with Laker wildman "Hot Rod" Hundley, but apparently Bo's consumption of women and alcohol was too much even for the Rodster. Belinsky then moved his act to the Hollywood Hills, where some adoring girl almost killed herself trying to climb a tree into his bedroom window. When Bo was not winning and dining Tina Louise, Mamie Van Doren and Ann-Margret, he was winning games. By August, an early-morning run-in with the LAPD and escapades with the Hollywood crowd had slowed his win total down, but the man had put the club on the map.

On July 4, Los Angeles was in first place in the American League. Manager Bill Rigney and general manager Fred Haney were shrewd baseball men. Rig had been schooled under Leo
Durocher in New York, and Haney had developed the great Milwaukee Braves' pennant winners of 1957-58. The Yankees, led by Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris, were at the height of their dynasty that year.

The Angels played them tough, finally succumbing in the dog days of late August and September. Their 86-76 record earned Rigney Manager of the Year honors, and Haney was named Executive of the Year. Chance was the best rookie pitcher in the game. Movie stars like Carey Grant and Doris Day cheered them on.

“Chance was the best pitcher I ever managed,” Rigney said of the 1964 Cy Young award winner. “He was a farmboy who started hanging out with Bo and the Hollywood crowd. Oh, what a pistol those two were!”

What about Belinsky?

“Oh my,” said Rigney, who had a shock of white hair. “He’s the reason I had white hair.” Behind his back, Belinsky called him “The White Rat”.

“He also looked like a cab driving down the street with the doors open,” recalls Bo of Rigney’s rather oversized ears.

Rigney and Belinsky feuded from 1962-64, when Bo was arrested for punching a lovesick showgirl in his “lipstick red” Cadillac, later assaulted LA Times’ sportswriter Braven Dyer, and showed up “reeking of booze and broads,” only to find the club’s Boston hotel burning down.

“See me at the ball park first thing in the morning,” was all Rigney, who had thought Bo was burning up inside, said when he observed saw him try to “blend in” with the pajama-wearing group.

“Rig was always trying to hit on Mamie when I’d bring her to team parties,” recalled Belinsky, who lives in Las Vegas now. “They all tried to get in her pants. Every time I’d get in trouble, Rig would call me on the carpet and say he was my friend, but behind my back he’d say I was bad for the game.”

Rigney certainly had no hard feelings. He said his sole motivation in helping in the research of a screenplay about Bo’s life was, “I’ll do it if it helps Bo.”

An older, mellower Belinsky had fond memories of his old manager.

“If I’d listened to him then,” he said, “I would have had a much better career.”

Belinsky was unable to control his taste for wine, women and song, and the others proved to be one-year wonders. The team moved to Anaheim, and by the time they fired Rigney in 1969, they had lost all their personality. Some say an Angels Curse has hung over them, in the form of various tragedies and quirks of fate that have befallen players wearing the Halo. The nostalgic memory of the Sunset Strip summer of ’62, however, remains perhaps the highlight of their history.

“Working for Gene Autry, managing Bo Belinsky, and dealing with Hollywood,” Rig said of the 1962 season, “made that the most interesting year of my career.”

THE BIG UNIT: MEMORIES OF A SIMPLER TIME

On June 11, I had the opportunity to speak with an old USC classmate of mine, Arizona Diamondbacks southpaw Randy Johnson, at Edison International Field of Anaheim.
The Big Unit recalled playing for an amateur summer team in the Bay Area, Bercovich Furniture, run by a crusty, old-time baseball guy named Ray Luce. A mutual bud of ours from S.C., Tony “Bruno” Caravalho, always talked about his days with that club, so I was spurred to ask Randy about it. The legendary pitcher was recruited by Rod Dedeaux after striking out 21 of 22 batters while pitching for Bercovich.

“Dedeaux was larger than life,” recalled Johnson. “He was getting on in years by the time I got to S.C., though.”

Johnson still stays in touch with Trojan teammate Mark McGwire. What does he think of the fact that the two most dominant players in baseball went to the same college?

“It’s a testament to the history of that program.” Does he still root for Troy? “Sure.”

THE MOTHER OF ALL SPORTS MEMENTOS

Todd McFarlane brought his McFarlane Collection to Dodger Stadium the weekend of June 4-6, then down to San Diego, and back to Edison International Field of Anaheim June 18-20. The collection features baseball memorabilia that blends old and new, like a mobile wing of the Hall of Fame. The crown jewel of the collection is Mark McGwire’s seventieth home run ball, hit on the last day of the 1998 season.

I have a personal connection with McFarlane, having played with him in a collegiate summer league in Canada in the 1980s. The second baseman on that team was Todd’s Eastern Washington State teammate, Al Simmons, and he is the inspiration for Todd’s comic creation, “Spawn”. Spawn became the number one comic character in the world, and the film version, starring Martin Sheen, made over $50 million. Simmons actually is Spawn. Check out Sheen’s opening movie line: “Al Simmons is the best.”

On the Friday evening photographer Dave Blank and I visited the Big A, Simmons and sports radio personality Scott Ferrall were holding court in the stadium’s…courtyard. It was an evening of laughs and a re-union for Al and myself. Al and I gave Scottie a detailed description of how every hotel in Canada, large and small, features a strip club. The man was impressed.

McFarlane paid $2.7 million at a New York auction for number 70, and $3.5 million for all the balls in total, which include several of Big Mac’s post-60 blows. He has organized a tour of the collection around the country, with profits going to A.L.S. (Lou Gehrig’s Disease). He was in L.A. on June 4, and has charged Simmons and Ferrall to host the tour. Ferrall is known for his gravelly voice and quick wit, interspersed with thrasher rock music, dark humor, and calls from his adoring Gen X fans.

“Chicks dig Ferrall,” Scottie, a much-better looking dude than his radio persona would lead one to believe, was quick to inform me. “There should be a registry of all the action I’ve gotten on this tour.” Well, that’s little more information than I need to know. Now, about that ball.

“Baseball is the only sport where you get to keep the ball as a souvenir,” said Simmons. “It’s like that commercial. Priceless.”

Simmons is a true fan. “I’ll never forget my first game, at Baltimore. Mark Belanger was at shortstop, and the grass was so green, the field was kept immaculately, unlike little league fields I was used to.”
“Vivid,” interjected Ferrall in reference to that first children’s’ reaction to a Major League stadium that is so much an American rite of passage.

Not surprisingly, Simmons admires his boss. “When Todd left Marvel Comics, it was like Randy Johnson and Mark McGwire leaving the same team at the same time.”

Still, it “took a lot of balls” as Ferrall delicately put it, for McFarlane to leave a secure place at the comic giant for entrepreneurialism. Now look at him. He has more balls than most men would know what to do with. McFarlane is not like other men, and he knew exactly what to do with the ones that make up his collection, which costs several hundred thousand dollars just to set up and move around the country, armed guard in tow.

“I honestly believe Todd’s gonna own the Phoenix Coyotes,” intoned Ferrall. What about his future in Hollywood? McFarlane owns a production company with offices in Century City and Phoenix. He has a deal with New Line Cinema, an HBO production of Spawn 2 is out, and more are on the way. What is next for him?

“He is going to move into more mainstream filmmaking,” responded Simmons. “Spawn will always be the center of Todd’s world, but he is looking at screenplays and projects that cover a wide variety of subjects.”

Ferrall is dabbling in Hollywood himself. He is involved with Columbia/TriStar and Turner Pictures with a revival of the American Gladiators that he promises to have “more violence and chaos than before, plus that ‘Zap’ chick with the enormous knockers, the one Rodman said he did—at least he told me he did.” He is also the new play-by-play announcer of the (appropriately named) Thrashers ice hockey team, a sport the Pittsburgh native loves as much as baseball. No matter what, he will always be associated with cutting edge sports talk, having carved out a niche for himself “like Stern, Likas and ‘Loveline.’”

The mile-a-minute Ferrall leaves one breathless, but Simmons calm demeanor and obvious passion for America’s National Pastime are the perfect anti-dote. Together, they are just what the doctor ordered for fans tired of multi-million dollar athletes with attitudes and minimal knowledge of events outside their sequestered lives. Ferrall and Simmons are approachable and will talk about any subject with any fan who wants to come their way.

Not surprisingly, McGwire has distanced himself from the whole tour. Ferrall and Simmons are disappointed, but they have forged the McFarlane Collection into a success based on a simple premise: Baseball is bigger than any one player!

THE MODERN GAME

Why are so many runs being scored in the Major Leagues? What about the college game, where ERA’s under 4.00 are considered excellent? Aluminum bats at the amateur level account for part of the reason. Advanced weight training techniques, better nutrition, supplements, expansion and smaller ballparks are legitimate reasons. The bottom line, however, is that pitching is not as good, or at least advances in pitching have not kept up with advances in batting.

One reason for this is that pitching is more about finesse. A pitcher cannot generally improve his performance through weight lifting as much as a hitter can. A hidden reason for sub-par pitching, in my opinion, is that too many fine young pitchers are burned out by the time they reach the Majors.
Today, amateur baseball is big, and in some instances big business. Top prep teams in the Sunbelt, where a majority of American talent is developed, begins with “fall ball” in September. That means weight training, regular practice and conditioning, and a “winter league” schedule, maybe two games a week, up to Thanksgiving and sometimes even Christmas break. Practice begins February 1, and a high school schedule for a team that goes well into the C.I.F. play-offs can run 37 to 40 games. An ace pitcher is expected to carry his team, and will pitch a complete game on Tuesdays, maybe a few relief innings on Fridays, throw on short rest during the Easter tournament, then pitch a hefty number of innings during single-elimination post-season play. The best of the best—that is, the guys most likely to play in The Show some day, might put up a gaudy 18-0 record and throw 100 innings, earning honors, scholarship offers and high draft bonuses, but their coaches are hurting their chances before they really start. My high school coach, Al Endriss, was notorious for ruining young arms. First there was Eddie Andersen, who pitched heavy duty innings four years, but after signing as a high pick with Houston had nothing left. Frank Ferroni was 17-1, but Endriss pitched him on back-to-back nights twice in the CIF play-offs. God bless him, he won those games, but he never even pitched an inning at Cal State, Fullerton. Mickey Meister was the best schoolboy pitcher in America, he won something like 40 games, but he threw harder as a high school junior than he did at U.S.C., and he only lasted a year in the Mariner organization. Al was named National Coach of the Year, we finished my senior year ranked number one in the country, and Al garnered a lot of glory, though! It was not worth it.

American Legion ball means another 60 games, maybe even more, between June and August, and the best programs take baseball very seriously. That means ace pitchers picking up a heavy load again, only this time the post-season consists of double-elimination tournaments that give pitchers even more opportunity to strain their arms. In a single calendar year, a high school kid may play 100-120 games. That is great for the hitters, but it is wearing out the pitching.

College programs consist of full weight conditioning, daily spring training-style practice sessions, and maybe a 30-game schedule of games vs. local colleges and JC’s. The NCAA cut “fall ball” off at Thanksgiving a few years ago, but the kids are out in force right after New Year’s, with a 60-game (in Arizona sometimes a 70-game) season from late January until the College World Series in June. Major programs are big business nowadays, drawing large crowds and television revenue. Winning is important, and a college horse like USC's Seth Etherton last year is supposed to carry a big load. Post-season regionals and the CWS in Omaha means a lot of innings in a few short days.

Collegiate summer leagues are next, and if a player goes to Alaska or the Cape Cod League, then the post-season tournaments, finishing at the American Baseball Congress in Wichita, he can expect to participate in a 60- or 70-game schedule. Coaches do not like to lose in these leagues, either, and they will overpitch their best guys. So, in a calendar year, a good college player goes through 150-170 games.

Then there is the minor leagues, the Arizona Fall League, plus the various Latin Winter Leagues. Latinos are very susceptible, because they are expected to give it their all during the so-called “off-season,” in the name of national patriotism. The 300 games played between the States’ and the Latin leagues wear down even position players. Orlando Cepeda almost collapsed one season before finally calling it quits in Puerto Rico.
16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21-year old pitchers have not fully developed, yet the superstars of the bunch throw too hard for their own good, and for as many innings as a veteran big leaguer, all before they are in the bigs. I am convinced that this is a major reason for ineffective pitching.

Jack McDowell comes to mind. Superstar at Sherman Oaks’ Notre Dame High School. Pitched Stanford to the National Championship in 1987. 20-game winner in Chicago. Washed up by the time he was 30.

Kerry Woods is a prime example. He threw too hard too soon, and now look at him. Don Gullett was a Kentucky schoolboy phenom, a “sure Hall of Famer” in manager Sparky Anderson’s words with the 1970s Reds, and another flameout. Remember Wayne Simpson from L.A.’s Centennial High School? 14-1 at mid-season of his rookie year with the 1970 Reds, on the d.l. the whole second half, gone a few seasons later. Dwight Gooden, another high school ace who lost his best stuff early. Todd Van Poppel? Sad case. The list is endless.

The best pitchers usually are the late developers. Tom Seaver never even made the Fresno High varsity until his senior year, but a stint in the Marines, natural growth and weight lifting helped him slowly but methodically develop, from U.S.C. to the Mets, into the best pitcher of his era. Greg Maddux never threw that hard in the first place at Las Vegas’ Valley High, but matured without pressure. John Glavine? Finesse pitcher. Nolan Ryan, you say? Okay, a freak of nature to be sure, but the scout who signed him as a Texas schoolkid told me he only threw about 85 m.p.h. back then. Sandy Koufax was raw and underdeveloped growing up in Brooklyn on his way to the University of Cincinnati on a basketball scholarship. He rode a lot of pine for the Dodgers, but had his best fastball when he needed it. His injuries were not related to early-career overwork.

A word to the wise to all you high school coaches. Do not use some flamethrower who happens to land in your lap to advance your own glory. Nurture him. Protect his arm. They will thank you for it, in the long run. Kids, forget the macho stuff about pitching in pain and on short rest. I have seen too many guys pay the price.

EVER HEARD OF STEVE DALKOWSKI?

He never pitched an inning in the Major Leagues, yet he remains a legend. His life was consumed by alcohol abuse, and he has been arrested for common drunkenness more times than anyone cares to count. He was featured in Sports Illustrated, and was at one time a skid row bum in downtown Los Angeles. He was the fastest pitcher in the world, and a day laborer in fruit and cotton fields near Bakersfield. He spent a career pitching in minor league stops that included Santa Barbara, San Jose and Stockton.

Steve Dalkowski was born in New Britain, Connecticut in 1939. He was a left-handed pitcher who was signed by the Baltimore Orioles and drifted through the minors for 10 years, ending in 1966. On the surface, he appeared completely ordinary. But he was not ordinary.

Anybody who ever saw him pitch said nobody, not Nolan Ryan, Bob Feller, Walter Johnson, Randy Johnson, or any other fireballer, ever threw the pill harder. He was 5-10 and 160 pounds, and he could throw a baseball like a speeding bullet through a brick wall. Of course, that was the trouble. His speed made it impossible for him to control his pitches, and he was unable to control himself.
Remember the scene in "Bull Durham" in which "Nuke" Lalouche, played by Tim Robbins, is so wild he hits the man in the on-deck circle? That was based on Dalkowski. Dalkowski was once clocked at 98.8 miles an hour at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. 98.6? What is so amazing about that? Tom Seaver and Sandy Koufax threw that hard.

"But the amazing thing about it was that he had to throw the ball in a certain spot and it took him all of 80 pitches before he could get the electrical timing device to register that figure," said the late Cal Ripken., Sr., who was there. What Ripken failed to mention is that he had pitched the day before, so here you have a guy pitching without rest, throwing 80 pitches with his all his might, getting clocked at 98.6. How hard could he throw? Maybe 105-110 miles an hour.

Ripken once saw Dalkowski throw a ball through the backstop in 1958. "So help me, the ball tore through the screen and shot down the runway," Ripken said. Ripken said he saw that hole still there almost 20 years later!

Dalkowski once hit an umpire in the face mask, breaking it all to pieces. The ump spent three days in the hospital.

"Dalkowski could do some drinking," said Ripken. "He liked to stay out, drink and have a good time."

It did not help that he played with Bo Belinsky--both on and off the field. Dalkowski once got in trouble for drilling holes in Belinsky's hotel room so he could peep at a girl next door who just happened to be the reigning Miss Universe of 1959.

Dalkowski is really more of a legend than if he had pitched in the big leagues, but stories about him are embellished and turned into mythology, as if the guy was a phantom, a figment of one's imagination, a name to be spoken in awe.

Dalkowski drifted, like Tom Joad in "The Grapes of Wrath", back to California, where he had played some minor league ball, and worked as a day laborer in the San Joaquin Valley. He did landscape work. He drove a forklift. It was better than the fields. He knew the fields well, roaming the valley for several years after leaving baseball. He picked fruit, chopped cotton--oranges, apricots, lemons--for $7 a day. Mexican families would stand under his tree and steal his fruit. He would work 10-hour days in 117-degree heat chopping cotton in rattlesnake country.

Dalkowski had started drinking at age 16, but got hooked when he played in Stockton, when he started drinking wine. Ray Youngdahl, a former Oriole teammate who worked for the California probation department, tried to help him out. Chuck Stevens, who for years headed the Association of Professional Ball Players of America, an organization that helps indigent and sick ex-players, got involved. Dalkowski had a 14-foot long medical sheet and 35 common drunk arrests. For a while, Stevens had Dalkowski living like a productive citizen, but the cure did not take. Eventually, the APBPA gave up on him, because he just would not help himself.

"We knocked ourselves out but he wouldn't accept help," recalled Stevens. "We did everything humanly possible. There is not anything more that can be done."

Dalkowski lived the days of wine and roses. Where is he today? Who knows, but he lives on as a legend.

JOHNNY GRANT PLAYED FOR THE ANGELS

http://www.american-reporter.com/3,336/1.html
Ralph Houk also dealt with a unique challenge in 1961. With expansion to Los Angeles, the team faced 7,700-mile road trips. Prior to an 11-day, 12-game swing to the West Coast, Houk advised his charges prior to the first stop, in Minnesota, not to turn their watches back.

"East and sleep like you do in New York," he told them.

The team maintained "Eastern time" in Minnesota and won three straight, then made their way to Wrigley Field in Los Angeles. It was a bandbox of a park and the big Yankee sluggers figured to feast on the Angels' expansion-quality pitching and short porches. But the club ran into something else in Los Angeles, and it would continue to hold them back in successive years in L.A. They were "Johnny Grant parties."

Johnny Grant was the "unofficial Mayor of Hollywood," a local celebrity who presided over ribbon-cutting ceremonies, the hand-printing on cement of movie heroes, and the famed naming of stars on Hollywood Boulevard. He also threw wild shindigs at his plush home in the Hollywood Hills.

The New York Yankees were as big as they come, in the sports world or any other world. The arrival of Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, Whitey Ford and company was tantamount to the arrival of Presidents, astronauts, religious leaders, or any other kind of superstar. They were especially big deals in those early days. The Yankees had been to Los Angeles on numerous occasions during Spring Training, when they would play exhibitions against PCL clubs or coach Rod Dedeaux's USC Trojans. But in 1961 they came out to play for real.

Grant invited the entire team to his place, promising to have his swimming pool stocked with bathing beauties and starlets. Mantle, who loved to party and had a real eye for the chicks, took to Johnny Grant parties with great fervor. Of course, where Mickey went, so too did his teammates. As a result, the Yankees were hungover whenever they played the Angels; much to Houk's consternation. In 1961, most of the Angels' pitching staff could not contain them, drowning in alcohol or not. But in 1962, the Angels would move to Dodger Stadium and feature a rookie sensation named Dean Chance. The Dodger Stadium location made the young Angels more prominent and therefore helped make the Johnny Grant parties even more special. Chance's offerings would be especially hard to deal with the day after those parties.

Houk had a temper. His face would puff up and get red, his cheeks - already bulging from an incessant tobacco plug - bulging. He got like that when his authority was challenged, especially by young players or upstarts accusing the Yankees of treating them unfairly, but he especially blew up when arguing with umpires. As a player, he was always bandaged up from some fight. He and teammate Hank Bauer - a gruff ex-Marine - were cut out of the same cloth. Houk's wife, Betty extracted a promise to pay her the same amount as the fines he received for being thrown out of games.

Houk, after regaining his composure, would come back to their Saddle River, New Jersey home with his tail between his legs. Gone was the huge tobacco plug. He was suddenly a house-broken husband. Betty always knew when he had been fined. When the club paid Ralph's fines, he still had to pay Betty.
On May 4, 1962, the Sunset Strip of Los Angeles was hopping with Mexican festivities for Cinco de Mayo. Bo Belinsky, a rookie left-handed pitcher for the second-year Angels, was scheduled to pitch the next night. Never one to favor rest and preparation when he could make the scene, Bo ventured to the strip where he met a lovely brunette. They spent the evening at her pad. Bo departed with dawn’s early light, but this encounter inspired him. He asked for her phone number and meant it.

"I’ll see you again," she assured him. Bo told her he was leaving tickets for that night’s game against Baltimore and insisted she make it, because "You’re my lucky charm."

"I never saw her again," Bo told writer Pat Jordan in 1972. "It was like she was my lucky charm and once she was gone that was the end of that."

Eventually, maybe, but first Bo Belinsky was about to skyrocket to the heights of Hollywood fame and glory. That evening he threw a no-hit, no-run game against his old team, the Baltimore Orioles.

1962 was not supposed to be a memorable year for the Los Angeles Angels. An expansion team in 1961, the Angels were a creditable 70-91 in their first year, playing at dilapidated Wrigley Field in south-central L.A., at the corner of 42nd Place and Avalon Boulevard. In ’62, they rented Dodger Stadium from Walter O’Malley, who "nickel and dimed" them with surcharges on just about everything, as well as relegating their ticket booth next to a storage shed in a remote part of the stadium. The Dodgers were the toasts of Hollywood. The Angels, a combination of cast-offs and kids, were tenants who played before family and friends. The first Angel to receive attention was Belinsky. The Angels thought he would attract female fans (he did). Another rookie, Dean Chance, was an emerging star, winning 14 games. Former Giant Leon "Daddy Wags" Wagner hit 37 home runs and knocked in 107 runs.

Belinsky started the year living in Ernie's House of Surface with Laker wildman "Hot Rod" Hundley, but apparently Bo's consumption of women and alcohol was too much even for the Rodster. Belinsky then moved his act to the Hollywood Hills, where some adoring girl almost killed herself trying to climb a tree into his bedroom window. When Bo was not wining and dining Tina Louise and Ann-Margret, he was winning games. By August, an early-morning run-in with the L.A.P.D. and escapades with the Hollywood crowd had slowed his win total down, but the man had put the club on the map.

On July 4, Los Angeles was in first place in the American League. Bill Rigney and Fred Haney were shrewd baseball men. Rig had been schooled under Leo Durocher in New York. Haney had developed the great Milwaukee Braves' pennant winners of 1957-58. The Angels played them tough, finally succumbing in the dog days of late August and September. Their 86-76 record earned Rigney Manager of the Year honors. Haney was named Executive of the Year. Chance was the best rookie pitcher in the game. Movie stars like Carey Grant and Doris Day cheered them on.

"Chance was the best pitcher I ever managed," Rigney said. "He was a farmboy who started hanging out with Bo and the Hollywood crowd. Oh, what a pistol those two were! But he was the best chucker from the right I ever saw," which was an amazing statement.

What about Belinsky?

"Oh my," said Rigney, who had a shock of white hair. "He’s the reason I had white hair." Behind his back, Belinsky called him "the White Rat."
"He also looked like a cab driving down the street with the doors open," recalled Bo of Rigney’s rather oversized ears.

"Working for Gene Autry, managing Bo Belinsky, and dealing with Hollywood," Rig said of the 1962 season, "made that the most interesting year of my career."

The story of Bo and the Angels in their early years in Los Angeles is so interesting because the team’s character was utterly different from what modern fans came to know about the team in Anaheim. It was night and day. In 1962 they were owned by "the Singing Cowboy," Gene Autry, who was old Hollywood all the way. Belinsky had garnered his "15 minutes of fame" holding out for the enormous sum of $6,500. Writer Bud Furillo captured some of Bo’s choice comments about women, sex and hustling pool on a slow news day.

Fred Haney tired of negotiating with Bo over the phone. He sensed that if he were brought out to Palm Springs, it would create needed publicity in the shadow of the mighty Dodgers. He was right.

"He was the greatest thing to ever happen to us," said publicity director Irv Kaze. Kaze showed up at the airport and, without having to ask, immediately recognized Belinsky, oozing charisma in an open-collared shirt, sportscoat, long, slick hair, and "the biggest pair of sunglasses you’ve ever seen."

"Damn," said Bo when Kaze introduced himself, "I expected Autry."

Bo was immediately driven to the Palm Springs Desert Inn, where Kaze arranged for a poolside press conference complete with a full bar and strategically placed bikini-clad girls lounging about. For a couple of hours Bo regaled them with stories of his pool-hustling exploits, which he made out to sound like "Minnesota Fats."

His sexual descriptions were explicit. Nobody had ever heard anything like this guy, and in reality nobody has ever heard anything like it since. As a "kiss and tell" artist Belinsky put Jose Canseco, Derek Jeter, even Joe Namath to shame. The bizarre poolside scene; part carnival act, part "true confessions," part striptease show, was "the greatest thing I’d ever seen," recalled Kaze. All of this was over between 1,000 and 1,500 1962 dollars for an unproven career minor leaguer who said he would not sign "unless Autry begged me personally."

For three days Belinsky never suited up or came close to "training" for baseball, preferring instead to seek out those bikini-clad "chickies" by day and night. Finally Haney called him and said, "this is enough." A gentlemen’s agreement to re-negotiate if he made the club and proved himself was hammered out.

"Don Hoak when he was managing in the Winter Leagues down in Latin America once held up his finger and thumb just this far apart," Bo said years later. " ‘Boys,’ he said. ‘There’s only this much difference separating you from ‘big league p---y!’ "

Thus did Bo have his motivation. Out of shape, and continually distracted by the Palm Springs "scenery," Bo inspired nobody on the mound, however. Rigney wanted to ship him out. Haney tried to trade him back to the Baltimore organization, where he had been before getting plucked in the expansion draft. They had seen all of Bo’s act they could handle.

While in the Oriole chain he had to be snuck out of one town when an underage girl whose mother was, uh, "seeing" the chief of detectives, threatened rape if he not marry her.

Earl Weaver watched in despair when Bo and Joe Pepitone would somehow find hot nightspots in Aberdeen. In Miami Bo hooked up with a married woman. Later he found himself drinking with her husband, an Army general, and in a moment of supreme honesty owned up to being the guy she had left with, offering a toast with the statement, "we sure had a helluva time
with your money." He had gone AWOL in Mexico. Oriole pitchers Steve Dalkowski, Steve Barber and Bo were fined by Baltimore manager Paul Richards for drilling holes in Belinsky’s hotel room to sneak a peak at the reigning Miss Universe, staying next door.

Like Rod Steiger rejecting Sidney Poitier’s offer of "pity" in The Heat of the Night, the Orioles said, "No, thank you," to Haney’s offer to take back Bo.

Autry stepped in and, in a rare act of ownership control, informed his employees that Bo was to make the squad, at least for the first few weeks of the regular season. His hope was that the Spring Training publicity might sell a few tickets. Rig was none too pleased but carried out the orders. Then injuries depleted his rotation. On April 16 Bo was given an emergency start against Kansas City at Dodger Stadium.

Given the news of his start the next day, Bo went out to the Sunset Strip, made "friends," and finally fell asleep at four or five. "Sex always relaxed me, nobody ever died from it," Bo told sportswriter Maury Allen in 1972.

In the locker room Rigney handed him the game ball and said simply, "Win or be gone." Bo won 3-2. It earned him a second start, which turned out to be a brilliant 3-0 shutout against Washington. When he won in his next start, the publicity was enormous, and of a national character. Furillo’s original story had made the wire services. His Palm Springs quotes received major attention. Suddenly Bo was the subject of every media report. He was invited to major Hollywood parties. Actresses and starlets were calling him.

One of Bo’s favorite Sunset Strip haunts was the famed Whisky-a-Go-Go, which gave rise to such 1960s L.A. acts as The Doors, The Byrds, Jan and Dean, and Jefferson Starship, among many others. Belinsky once played pool with Jim Morrison of The Doors and rubbed elbows with numerous superstars, usually before they were famous.

When Bo threw his no-hit game on May 5, immediate rewards were proffered. His contract was increased to the promised $8,500, along with a "lipstick red" Cadillac, a gift from the club. Bud Furillo assumed the role of Bo’s "social director," introducing him to Beverly Hills attorney Paul Caruso, who in turn introduced him to the controversial gossip columnist and movie voice, Walter Winchell.

Winchell was the staccato voiceover of the TV show The Untouchables, starring Robert Stack as Elliot Ness. Winchell used his New York column to rail against Communist infiltration during the McCarthy era. McCarthy’s demise put Winchell on the outs in New York. The scathing film The Sweet Smell of Success portrayed him through a fictional character played by Burt Lancaster as an incestuous brother who uses his column to destroy people through Communist aspersions.

Winchell had moved to Hollywood, hoping to start over. When Furillo introduced Belinsky to the show biz crowd, the Bo-Winchell relationship became a marriage made in . . . Hollywood.

"I know every broad who matters," Winchell told Bo. Winchell arranged through his publicity contacts for every aspiring model and actress in L.A. to date Bo Belinsky, alerting the press to each liaison so that it could all be dutifully recorded in the trades.

Gilligan’s Island beauty Tina Louise; actress Connie Stevens (and her younger, blonder sister); Dinah Shore; Queen Soraya, the divorced ex-wife of the Shah of Iran; a DuPont heiress; Carnal Knowledge star Ann-Margret; Bo squired all of them and many more to every haunt on the Sunset Strip: Peppermint West, Barney’s Beanery, Dino’s, Chasen’s, LaScala, the Rainbow, Gazarri’s, the Whisky.
He found himself invited to party with the Beautiful People: Jane Wyman, Merle Oberon, Maureen O’Hara, Frank Sinatra, Lionel Hampton. In New York he was feted by Toots Shor, given tables reserved for celebrities and Mobsters at the Copa, the Forum of the Twelve Caesars, and 21.

In Washington, Bo and Dean Chance were told that FBI director J. Edgar Hoover wanted to meet them.

"Jesus Christ, they’re turning it into a Federal case," exclaimed Chance, who thought Hoover’s invite was an inquest into some kind of illegal inter-state activity. Hoover just wanted to meet them.

"J. Edgar?" Bo later told Pat Jordan. "Man, he’s a swinger. He let Dean and I shoot Tommy guns at FBI headquarters."

As the season played out, Bo continued to "pitch and woo." His record went to 6-1, but then he began to lose. Off the field, he was as wild as ever. Naturally, Rigney and Haney questioned whether he could effectively pitch on little or no rest. The papers and trades were filled with near-daily Belinsky items, mostly fed by Winchell. Madonna at her hottest never got so much attention. Belinsky courted it. He never hid from the publicity. He ate it up with a fork and spoon.

The team would arrive at L.A. International Airport in the wee hours of the morning, hoping only to get home and sleep. Bo would be met not by one but two delicious girls. He would depart into the L.A. night, leaving his bags to the equipment manager while his teammates watched in awe and wonder, exploding into an ovation.

He moved into a Hollywood Hills pad that had once been occupied by the abstract Spanish artist Pablo Picasso, who had painted a mural on the wall of what was now Bo’s living room.

The club tolerated it because the publicity was good for business, the team was winning, Bo was still effective, and Autry admired his employee’s style. But a five A.M. incident on Wilshire Boulevard brought everything to a boil. Bo and Dean went out for a night on the town, picking up on two girls. Bo’s was some kind of "showgirl," or so she said. The four of them piled into Bo’s "lipstick red" Caddy.

"Now we are tooling down Wilshire Boulevard and everything is fine," Bo recalled. "Well, one thing led to another, and this girl starts mouthing off about she loves me and will stay with me and wants to cook breakfast and all that bull. I’m really in no mood for that, so I tell her to keep her big mouth shut or I’ll throw her out."

According to Bo, the girl kept yakking, so he pulled the car over to a side street, demanding she get out. She resisted. Bo tried to force her out. In the process she smashed her head against a window, cutting herself, and causing her to start screaming bloody murder.

Just then, an L.A.P.D. squad car pulled up. Chance, who had a pregnant wife back in Ohio, made a run for it but was caught. Arrests were made and it all hit the papers, to the great consternation of Haney and Rigney.

The girl decided not to press charges on the condition that Bo stay with her for a week, but later she found an attorney and sued Bo, forcing him to pay her off.

"You just can’t trust broads," was Bo’s assessment.

While all of this was happening, Bo discovered to his chagrin that the "lipstick red" Caddy, a "gift" from the club, was late in payments. He assumed that it was paid for in full.
Instead, he had to "assume" the monthly installments plus insurance payments. He was trying to live the life of Frank Sinatra on $8,500.

The Angels, in first place on July 4, pushed the Yankees into August before tailing off towards the end, but the season was a spectacular success for a second-year team. Their veterans had played well, and youth was served. The future looked bright.

Bo finished 10-11, a disappointment after starting 5-0 with a no-hitter, but a solid year nevertheless. The team’s brass held its breath, hoping that perhaps he would mature, calm down, and make use of his natural talents in a way that would allow him to enjoy a good career for the Angels.

Chance was 14-10 with a 2.96 earned run average. One of the greatest schoolboy athletes in American history, he had been a high school basketball rival of future Indiana coach Bobby Knight in Ohio. Chance became Bo's "wingman" in swingin' Hollywood, never lacking confidence on the field or in the bar. A combination of his wicked slider, blazing fastballs and the after-effects of "Johnny Grant parties" made him virtually unhittable in head-to-head match-ups with New York. Mickey Mantle was virtually helpless against him and once said, "Every time I see his name in the line-up card I feel like throwing up." It was a half-reference to alcohol consumption as well as Chance's pitching skill.

"All we gotta do is beat Roger Mustard and Mickey Mayonnaise and we can win this pennant," said Chance. "The only difference between them and me is they get paid more."

Bo was always playing practical jokes on the farmboy Chance, who could be taken in and was still a gullible youth. On one occasion, Bo had one of his girlfriends call Dean in his hotel room from the lobby. She identified herself as "Jane, Jane from Sacramento," and told the pitcher that she was pregnant, he was the dad, and "what are you gonna do about it?"

Dean hung up and rushed down to the lobby, where he saw Bo. "Bo, Bo," he exclaimed. "I gotta talk to you."

"What's the matter, Dean?" asked a calm Bo. "You look like an expectant father."

Dean blanched, realizing he had been had.

Then there was center fielder Albie Pearson. He was 5-5 1/2 and weighed 141 pounds. A local kid from the L.A. suburbs, Pearson was the opposite of Bo and Dean; a devout Christian and happily-married family man. His way of life was always coming into conflict with Bo.

During Spring Training, Bo set up one of his writer friends with a blind date. When Albie showed up in the hotel lobby and said hi to Bo, she thought he was her guy. "Albie's real cute and adorable and this broad wants to mother him," recalled Bo. "'I love you, I love you,' she kept saying to Albie. 'Let me take you home and take care of you.'"

Albie broke away and drove from Palm Springs to Riverside to be with his wife. He called every hour on the hour to make sure she was gone before he returned. Albie's only vice was a "lipstick red" Caddy, just like the one Bo drove. One night one of Bo's minor league flames, an Oriental honey named Zenida, showed up in L.A. Bo told her to meet him in the player's parking lot, where he parked his Caddy. She found the "lipstick red" Caddy, all right, except it was Pearson's.

"So Albie comes out of the clubhouse and he's with his wife," recalled Bo. "Zenida sees this guy with a broad on his arm and figures it's gotta be me, so she starts waving at him; her legs twitching out of this tight Suzie Wong dress. Albie's wife sees this Chinese chick sitting on her husband's car and she's just pissed."
THESE RECORDS WERE NOT MADE TO BE BROKEN

Seattle’s Ichiro Suzuki is not yet halfway to Joe DiMaggio’s record 56-game hitting streak. The Yankee Clipper’s streak is insane, but it can be broken. Ted Williams will not be the last .400 hitter forever. Somebody will top Mark McGwire’s 70 home runs of 1998 (can you say “Barry Bonds?”). Henry Aaron’s 755 big flies is not impossibility. If Cal Ripken could break Lou Gehrig’s consecutive-game record, some iron man can break Ripken’s mark.

The records that will not be broken are the ones set in the early part of this century, when the game was completely different.

At the top of this list is Denton True Young, nicknamed Cy because his fastball splintered a backstop as if a cyclone hit it. Cy Young won 511 career games.

Perhaps second on the list should be Young’s 316 career losses. A guy would have to be a pretty good pitcher with the bad luck of playing 20 years on lousy teams to accomplish this impossible task.

How about Washington pitcher Walter Johnson (who went to high school in Fullerton, California, by the way)? The Big Train threw 110 career shutouts. Tom Seaver, among pitchers since 1970, is closest with 61. Randy Johnson, Roger Clemens and Greg Maddux, aces in the age of closers, just do not get complete game shutouts consistently. Johnson’s record is untouchable.

What about team records? The 1906 Chicago Cubs were 116-36. The Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance Cubs still lost the World Series in six to the cross-town rival “Hitless Wonder” White Sox, led by “Big Ed” Walsh. The 1998 Yankees made a run on the Cubs wins record, but that was in a 162-game season. For some reason teams that dominate in the regular season have their troubles in the big Dance. Cases in point aside from the Cubs: 1954 Indians (111 wins), swept in four by the Giants, and the 1969 Orioles (109 wins), taken by the Amazins in five.

Speaking of Walsh, a great spitball pitcher, he won 40 games in 1908. That is one shy of the record held by Jack Chesbro of the 1904 New York Highlanders (nee Yankees). This seems a virtually impossible mark to top. The only far-out way it could be challenged would be if a rubber-armed middle reliever on a hammer hitting, early-scoring club was constantly put into games with his team ahead, before the starter completed five innings, held the lead a few frames and the pen kept it safe. 41 times in a year? The closest thing to precedence is a college pitcher, Kendall Carter of Arizona State, who won 19 games partly that way in 1981, when the Sun Devils won the National Championship (55-13).

Pete Rose beat Ty Cobb’s lifetime hit record, finishing with 4256. This seems pretty tough to beat, but is doable. What will not be broken is Cobb’s .367 lifetime batting average. Not to mention Rogers Hornsby (.358) and “Shoeless Joe” Jackson (.356). George Sisler, Tip O’Neill (not the former Speaker of the House), Lou Gehrig, all at .340, look like the closest marks that could realistically be reached by a modern hitter.

Hornsby and Hugh Duffy are the leading single-season batting leaders, and neither mark seems reachable. Boston’s Duffy hit .438 in 1894. Cardinal Hall of Famer Hornsby, known as The Rajah, knocked the modern record .424 in 1924, and hit .397 (1921), .401 (1922), slumped to .384 (1923), but recovered to hit .424, and then .403 in 1925.

The best way a hitter can get to .400 (and maybe, just maybe, Hornsby’s .424) is this way: He hits .400-plus in his first 502 plate appearances of the season (the minimum required for the title). Theoretically, a guy could do this by August 1, get trader to the other league, and hold
the title by running out the clock. Or, he could go out for the season with an injury with the record broken.

One phenomenal record that is not completely impossible to break, but is for all practical purposes, is Christy Mathewson’s three shutouts in a single World Series (1905 vs. the A’s).

Football and basketball records from the 1920s do not have relevance. Old track and swimming marks are obviously viewed in light of training methods and conditions. Baseball, however, to paraphrase James Earl Jones in “Field of Dreams”, is the one constant in a changing world, and somehow its records, breakable or unbreakable, have magic resonance.

THE EMERGENCE OF AN ALL-STAR

All great teams have em, and in the last 20 years they have emerged as the great stars of baseball. It used to be that the likes of Davey Concepcion and Luis Aparico were the proto-type shortstops. Good field, not-necessarily-no-hit, but often little guys from south of the border without a lot of pop.

Not anymore.

The New Breed of shortstop is a five-point player who hits, hits for power, fields, throws and runs. He is likely to be well over six feet tall and buffed from hitting the weights. Trammell, Ripken and Yount gave way to A-Rod and Nomar.

Now, a new god of the middle infield is emerging in San Francisco.

"Yeah, I think hes the next All-Star," says Manager Dusty Baker of 6-1 shortstop Rich Aurilia.

Aurilia is exactly what his team needs right now. At 17-15 they are struggling with a .254 team average, but in a division waiting for a breakout team. Barry Bonds has been trying to hit five-run homers. 2000 MVP Jeff Kent has not hit his stride. Leadoff man Marvin Benard has yet to make a convincing case that the Giants should not have picked up Rickey Henderson when he was available - for cheap - a couple weeks ago.

Aurilia, 29, ranks himself at seven on a scale of one-to-10, with 10 being his prime. He leads the club at .369. Hitting second in the order behind Benard, he has not had a lot of RBI chances, but he does have pop, as evidenced by his seven doubles, three triples and five big flies. He made a key play, belly flopping to stop a hard grounder and flip to second to help beat Montreal on Monday night.

"I'm always learning," said Aurilia prior to Wednesdays game against the Expos. "I've done a lot of apprenticeship. The problem is, I did a lot of that sitting on the bench in the big leagues, instead of playing in the minors." There are pros and cons to that. The pro is that he was in the Majors, making big league money. The con is that he did not play every day, and after a while he said to himself, "Hey, I can play at this level." He had to wait out three others to get his chance.

Because of expansion and inter-league play, teams face each other less. Free agency means batters face particular pitchers less than in the past.

"That's right," says Aurilia. "However, we prepare more than in past years. Now, we have video tapes and DVD, and we take the time to learn about our opponents."

In addition to studying tape, players spend more time in the weight room.
"It's not a six-month job," says Aurilia. "I go home and rest my body for six weeks, then I'm working out again. I started out at 170 pounds. Now I'm 197 and feel great."

Aurilia hails from New York, like Oakland second baseman Frank Menechino.

"I knew Frank in high school," says Aurilia. "He's made the most of his chance. I see a lot of New Yorkers in Spring Training, and on the Coast. It's nice to run into people you know."

"He's come a long way in a short period," assesses Baker.

That is like saying an actor who has anonymously plied his trade for years, then gets an Oscar nomination, is "an overnight success." Aurilia, All-Big East at St. Johns, was making his way painstakingly through Texas farm system when the Giants picked him up in 1994. His challenge was to fill in behind several others, dividing time between the bench, the minors, and the line-up, from 1995-97. He played in 122 games with a .266 average in 1998. In 1999 he hit 22 home runs, and followed that up with a 20-.79-.279 performance last year.

On Wednesday, he singled in his first trip, then worked Javier Vazquez for a hard-earned walk in the third after barely fouling off an inside heater with a check swing to protect himself. Aurilia added a single in the eighth inning of his team's loss to Montreal.

Now, with his team relying on him more and more, Aurilia is set to break into the kind of rarefied air that could land him at the All-Star Game in Seattle.

FLYING HIGH IN APRIL, SHOT DOWN IN MAY

The Oakland As are looking like a guy swimming through shark-infested waters with a nosebleed. They are doing just a tad better than Redford and Newman in the last scene of "Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid". They would be better off if they, too, were not aware that the Bolivian Army was pointing rifles at 'em from the rooftops.

The As, however, know all about the Bolivian Army. In fact, it is worse than that. Who are those guys? "Those guys" are the New York Yankees, and it was the usual rock concert atmosphere Tuesday when Derek Jeter and his mates showed up.

You like to meet the Yanks on your best terms. You do not want to be the young scientist who forgot his notes before the big meeting with Fermi, or the guy who had a sore throat on the night he crooned with Francis Albert.

Oakland met the Yanks without any time to heal from the wounds of their mentally debilitating weekend series at Fenway Park. Waiting for them was "Rocket Roger" Clemens. The games with Boston were a microcosm of their season.

Friday nights "Merkle Boner" win allowed hope to spring eternal in the Oakland breast, but to blow a 4-1 eighth inning Sunday lead; to have Johnny Damon go down on the most feeble of swings with the bases loaded; then to lose when still another Bosox homer sent Oakland walking off the field; that was almost too much to bear.

"That's just part of the game," assessed Jason Giambi.

"Like fighter pilots, we have to keep an even keel," says Giambi. "We just got on that plane <Sunday>, came home and did what we had to do. We're humans and have emotions, but veterans always told me coming up it's not a sprint, it's a marathon."

Of course, Seattle keeps winning, and you heard it here first: Ichiro for MVP!

"To be honest with you," says Giambi, "Seattle's just playing so good, we'd be right in it if they were like the rest of the league."
The As had to fly cross-country, make nice with the wives and girlfriends, pay some bills, and prepare for the Bombers while maintaining that even keel, which is easier said than done. Was that the Jim Jones cool-aid clubhouse manager Steve Vucinich was preparing before the Yankee opener?

"Flying high in April, shot down in May," as Sinatra said. The high times of Scottsdale are now memories as distant as that babe in the mini-skirt at Sanctuary. Worst of all, they do not have until October 1. They have until August 1. Unless they are back in the race by then, say within six or seven games with a little of what George the Elder once called The Big Mo, Billy Beane may be forced to trade off Giambi and Johnny Damon to appease the gods of free agency. Even keel or no even keel.

"Yeah, we know the trade is a factor," says pitcher Barry Zito, who takes the hill this evening, "but you can't live in any moment other than the present. There can't be any external stuff."

The A's being a youth project begs the question, Is adversary easier to handle when you are young or a veteran club?

"We were 22-7 last September as a young team," said Giambi, "so I wouldn't say veterans are better in this situation."

"Youth is not an excuse," says Zito, "although in a way it can be helpful, like we don't know the odds facing us. Last year we didn't seem to realize how hard it was to come back the last month, so maybe it's better to be a young team."

Sort of like Butch and Sundance not knowing the Bolivian Army is waiting for them outside.

"Sort of," says Zito.

Veteran Yankee slugger David Justice was asked about the As.

"I ain't thought nuthin' about the As," was his eloquent response. Justice was then asked about his years with a young Atlanta club.

"In Atlanta we were just young and we played," he said. "The bottom line is you gotta have good players. You can have a veteran team, but they aint nuthin' without good players."

Picture the wise man on the mountaintop: "Uuuuummm."
ADD TO AAA MINOR LEAGUES

The International League must change its name. Call it the World League. First, it is time to open up Cuba, and the best way to get that country into the fold is to award Havana a AAA franchise, made up mostly (but not exclusively) of Cubans. Over time, non-Cubans will filter more and more onto the roster, as the city and country get more acclimated to the New World. Cubans will freely sign with other clubs, including big league teams. Montreal and Minnesota lose their Major League status, but they still have franchises in the World League. Pittsburgh and Houston lose franchises to other cities (New Orleans and Washington, D.C., respectively), but are replaced by World League teams. Award franchises to Rome, Italy; Amsterdam, Holland; Taipei, Taiwan; Sydney, Australia and other international cities that have demonstrated that they support baseball and produce good players. The Winter Leagues in Latin America can continue as they are.

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

This is not your Dad's International (minor) League. This is a new International Major League. The league consists of eight current big league franchises, most of which would be considered small-market clubs. The Pittsburgh Pirates move to New Orleans, a big league city with a relatively big league facility (the Superdome). I have always felt New Orleans should be in the Majors. The Houston Astros, who have never really been taken to by the local citizenry playing in the 'Dome, move to our nation's capital, which simply should have a franchise, in this case plying their trade internationally (just like most of the rest of D.C.'s denizens). Tokyo and Mexico City help form the league, bringing these important markets into the fold. These two teams will play long, extended home stands and road trips to accommodate travel. The league shall be divided into East and West Divisions of five clubs each, playing a total of 154 games (18 against each club, equally divided between division and non-division rivals). While the American and National Leagues are still finishing their regular seasons, this newer, perhaps less prestigious league, will have the spotlight planted firmly on their own best-of-seven League Series.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

What worked before will work again, with a few variations. Now, the league will consist of 10 teams, comprising two five-team divisions. The West Division loses some small market clubs, and gains an old friend (the Chicago White Sox), along with Arizona (switching leagues with Detroit) and Cleveland. The East looks the same as it does today. Inter-league play continues with the National League, but because both leagues have only 10 teams, clubs play each other more often and travel a little less. This is a common complaint of the modern ball player. The schedule is still 162 games.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

The West looks about the same, except the Cardinals now reside there. The East adds the Detroit Tigers (and their new stadium), that franchise having switched leagues with Arizona to
allow more western cities in the A.L. West. The Cubs return to their old stomping grounds (where they wanted to stay in the first place).

PLAY-OFFS

While the N.L. and A.L. battle it out for Play-Off spots, the newly formed International League, which at first may be considered the "third league," will have all eyes on them as their two champs play a four-of-seven game series. The winner advances into the Divisional Play-Offs (second round).

Merit plays a role, too, as the club with the Best Record in the Major Leagues is given a bye this round while the others fight it out. Each year, the format will change depending on how a system is devised, based on who has the Best Record each year, and a rotation of which teams from which leagues are scheduled against each other. In my hypothetical (see above), the A's defeat Cincinnati in the International League Series, then advance to the Divisional Play-Offs, consisting of A.L. West champ Anaheim, A.L. East champ New York Yankees, A.L. Wild-Card Boston; and in the N.L. the East champs (Atlanta) and Wild-Card (San Francisco). The Dodgers put up the Best Record, and therefore avoid this three-of-five round.

The format changes each year, so the International champ opens with a different champ from one of the four A.L./N.L. divisions. In my scenario, the A's beat the Angels, the Yankees beat Boston, San Francisco bests Atlanta, and in the League Championship Series', Oakland takes the Yankees, while the rested Dodgers defeat the Giants. In a replay of the '88 Fall Classic, L.A. takes Oakland, 4-1.

CONCLUSION

Obviously, several things in my scenario are a leap of faith. First of all, getting Montreal and Minnesota to move into the minor leagues will take some doing, and the owners of the Pirates and 'stros may take umbrage with my dictate that they move to other cities (chosen by me). Awarding AAA franchises to Sydney, Taipei and those places is definitely not in the immediate plans, and the State Department might have something to say about this Havana situation. None of that changes the fact that this is logical and in the best interests of baseball, especially from the standpoint of competing with other sports (like basketball) for the global marketplace. Travel to Tokyo and Mexico City poses problems, not to mention getting everything in place to put Major League franchises there, and the Reds, Phils, A's, et al may have something to say about being "relegated" to what is, at least in the beginning, a less-prestigious league. On the other hand, winning the I.L. with a smaller payroll might be more attractive than being an also-ran in the A.L.

Nevertheless, change can be good, and more important, it is necessary. I refer you to the merging of the A.F.L. with the N.F.L. in 1970, and further make reference to the fact that statistics and records from the A.F.L. inter-mingled quite easily with the older league. Ken Griffey's records in the I.L. will combine with his records in the A.L. It is all the M.L. One
thing that may be a problem is the proposed 154-game I.L. schedule, which puts a player in that league at a disadvantage when chasing records such as Mark McGwire's 70 home runs.

Under this new plan, the World Series will truly be a World Series, and as the twenty-first century takes shape, some of those AAA towns like Rome and Sydney may make it even more so.

If you think of a better system, I am all ears.

ADD TO AAA MINOR LEAGUES (WORLD LEAGUE)

Havana, Cuba; Rome, Italy; Amsterdam, Holland, Taipei, Taiwan; Sydney, Australia.

Montreal and Minnesota lose Major League franchises, join World League.
Pittsburgh and Houston franchises move to other cities, new franchises awarded to join World League.

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE WEST (5)
Tokyo, Japan
Milwaukee Brewers
Oakland A's
Seattle Mariners
Kansas City Royals

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE EAST (5)
Mexico City, Mexico
New Orleans (formerly Pittsburgh Pirates)
Washington, D.C. (formerly Houston Astros)
Cincinnati Reds
Philadelphia Phillies

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE WEST plays inter-divisional games with INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE EAST only. League plays 154 games (each team plays each other 18 times)

Tokyo and Mexico City play long home stands and long road trips.

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE SERIES (held last week of AMERICAN and NATIONAL LEAGUE regular seasons).
A.L. WEST (5)
Arizona Diamondbacks (switch leagues with Detroit Tigers)
Texas Rangers
Anaheim Angels
Chicago White Sox
Cleveland Indians

A.L. EAST (5)
New York Yankees
Boston Red Sox
Toronto Blue Jays
Baltimore Orioles
Tampa Bay Devil Rays

N L. WEST. (5)
St. Louis Cardinals
San Francisco Giants
Los Angeles Dodgers
Colorado Rockies
San Diego Padres

N.L. EAST (5)
Detroit Tigers (switch leagues with Arizona Diamondbacks)
Chicago Cubs
Atlanta Braves
New York Mets
Florida Marlins

AMERICAN LEAGUE plays inter-league games with NATIONAL LEAGUE only. Leagues play 162 games.

PLAY-OFFS:
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE WEST champion plays INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE EAST champion (four out of seven), prior to end of AMERICAN and NATIONAL LEAGUE regular seasons.

Team with BEST RECORD IN AMERICAN and NATIONAL LEAGUES does not play in first round of Play-Offs. Each year Play-Off format rotates.

HYPOTHETICAL REGULAR SEASON CHAMPIONS/WILD-CARDS:

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE WEST: Oakland A’s
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE EAST: Cincinnati Reds.
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE PLAY-OFF (first round, four out of seven): Oakland defeats Cincinnati, 4 games to 1.

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST: Anaheim Angels.
AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST: New York Yankees.
AMERICAN LEAGUE WILD-CARD: Boston Red Sox.

NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST: Los Angeles Dodgers
NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST: Atlanta Braves.
NATIONAL LEAGUE WILD-CARD: San Francisco Giants.

BEST RECORD IN BASEBALL: Los Angeles Dodgers (skip Division Play-Offs, second round).

DIVISIONAL PLAY-OFFS (second round, three out of five): Oakland, Anaheim, New York Yankees, Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco.

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPION (Oakland) vs. AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST CHAMPION (Anaheim): Oakland defeats Anaheim, 3 games to 1.

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST CHAMPION (New York Yankees) vs. AMERICAN LEAGUE WILD-CARD (Boston): New York Yankees defeat Boston, three games to 0.
NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST CHAMPION (Atlanta) vs. NATIONAL LEAGUE WILD-CARD (San Francisco): San Francisco defeats Atlanta, three games to two.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (third round, four out of seven): Oakland, New York Yankees, San Francisco, Los Angeles

AMERICAN LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: Oakland defeats New York Yankees, four games to three.

NATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: Los Angeles defeats San Francisco, four games to two.

WORLD SERIES: Los Angeles defeats Oakland, four games to three.

NEVIN OVERCOMES DEMONS

Some great baseball players came out of El Dorado High School in Placentia in the late 1980s. First, Bret Boone, who was an All-American at USC before embarking on a successful Major League career. Matt Luke was a star at California before playing for the Yankees and Dodgers. Next came Phil Nevin, a two-sport stud who kicked for the Cal State Fullerton baseball team while leading the baseball team to the 1992 College World Series. On the surface, Nevin's career seems to be one success after another, smooth sailing on calm seas, but the man has had a few problems to overcome.

"I hate to even admit this," he was quoted recently as saying in the Los Angeles Times, "but for a long time my priorities were baseball, having fun, wondering what bar I'd hit when the game was over, and only then my family."

Nevin, you see, almost lost his family. He met his wife, Kristin, in college. They were married in 1994 and separated for a year and a half because his temper and temptation distracted Nevin. The first player chosen in the 1992 draft, after he was the College Player of the Year during a season in which the Titans' lost to Pepperdine in the National Championship game, Nevin went from "can't-miss" to bust, shuffling between the big leagues and the minors while being traded from Houston to Detroit to the Angels, then to San Diego. He went from playing third base to the outfield and then catching.

Last summer, Padre manager Bruce Bochy talked to Nevin like a Dutch uncle, and it seemed to take. Nevin talked Bochy into letting him go back to playing third base, and Nevin responded by hitting .288 with 12 homers and 47 RBIs in the last 59 games of the season. In 2000, Nevin is cleaning up again (.314-14-43), was recently the National League Player of the Week, and is among the senior circuits' leaders in several offensive categories. He has a new contract, a new home in Scripps Ranch, a new lease on life. He has reconciled with Kristin, and they have a three-year old son, Tyler, while he also spends time with his 10-year old daughter, Korel, from a college relationship.
It has been a maturation process in every way, and while nobody would say that Nevin has had it tough--great athlete, looks, stardom, money--he has overcome personal problems to perform in an extremely difficult profession.

The thing people do not understand about sports at this elite level is the kind of concentration required to stay on top. Nevin was distracted before. He is focused now. The results are obvious.

One thing Nevin realized was that the aluminum bat hits he got in college were popups in the pros. He had been selected ahead of Derek Jeter, Jason Kendall and Charles Johnson, starting out at Triple-A, but hit only .118 in his 1995 big league debut. Terry Collins, Houston's manager, demoted him, and instead of growing from the experience, Nevin blew up.

Over time, Nevin learned from players he played alongside, veterans like Jeff Bagwell and Craig Biggio in Houston, Alan Trammell, Lou Whitaker, Kirk Gibson, and manager Sparky Anderson in Detroit.

Now, he looks at playing in the Major Leagues as a privilege, instead of his right. It has been an up and down career for Nevin, but at this point he seems to be headed in the right direction. It has been a long way from El Dorado High, but he could be headed a lot higher!

GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Major League pitchers are supposed to be monsters. Six-feet, six inches tall, 220 pounds of twisted steel and sex appeal. A three-day growth outlining a goatee worthy of any Hells Angel. Wrestlers legs and a big butt.

Tim Hudson has the goatee. Kind of.

Other than that, the similarity of Hudson and the proto-typical big league stud ends there. Two of his pitching mates on the Oakland As, southpaws Barry Zito and Mark Mulder, have their pictures in Webster’s next to the word "Typical big league hurler."

On the A’s, however, it is Hudson who is the ace. When opponents line up their rotations before facing Oakland, it is with Hudson in mind. Guys are asked to play hurt when Hudson is scheduled, because they will need everything they have. Managers will bunt in the first inning, play little ball.

"I mean, I can handle it," acknowledges Hudson. "I don’t back down from the challenge, I love it. It’s what makes you what you are."

Case study number one was on Tuesday night, when the New York Yankees came to town. They had Roger Clemens ready for Hudson.

In a game that reminded long-time A’s aficionados of classic 1970s duels between Catfish Hunter and Jim Palmer, neither figured in the decision, an extra-inning 3-2 Oakland win.

"Facing Clemens was definitely exciting," said Hudson. "Going up against Pedro Martinez, Randy Johnson - with the stadium packed. It’s just fun to be on the same field with future Hall of Famers. From the short time I’ve been here, a year and a half, I think I’ve earned respect"

Hudson drifts ever so slightly, and you can see him mentally pinch himself. At 5-10, 160 pounds, he has overcome the "size factor."
"I was 5-10, 145 in high school," he says. "That’s one reason I got overlooked. My high school coach, Russ Martin, helped me, as did my summer coach, a guy named Flint Sharpe, who coached a team called the Dixie Boys."

As you might guess, Hudson is from the South. As in Alabama.

"I didn’t pitch until my junior year in high school," he says. "Sharpe taught me the breaker. I just got better and established myself in JC." Hudson then transferred to Auburn.

"That was a great opportunity," he says, "Top to bottom, the Southeastern Conference is the best baseball league in the nation. Every once in a while I’ll get in a discussion with Zito about the merits of the SEC vs. the Pac-10 [Zito is a former USC Trojan]. We faced Stanford and lost in the 1997 College World Series.

"I played for Al Baird, who was the pitching coach and head coach, and Steve Renfro, who took over as the head coach. Auburn was my first taste of first class baseball, a terrific program with great facilities like in the big leagues. Coach Renfro and Coach Baird gave me a chance, and I’m still close with them."

He also has learned from the great sociological experiment that is professional ball.

"Coming from Alabama," he remarks, "I’d not met many Latinos, but in the minors half the team was speaking Spanish. Luis Vizcaino spoke no English, but like my buddy Chad Harville and I would talk and it was like, ‘Luis is a cool guy. I sure wish I could talk to him. Sometimes I’d have a catcher who couldn’t speak English, so we’d communicate through signs."

Hudson is the leader of a young staff.

"I don’t know all there is about pitching, but I think I can help, and we tend to look at each other pitch and give advice," he says. "Zito’s good taking advice."

Hudson, the country boy from Alabama, cannot help ribbing SoCal lefty Zito.

"I know how to get into Zito’s head faster than anybody," he says. "He worries about how others perceive him. I like Barry a lot. He never tries to be something he’s not. But when he had that blue hair, I mean, I had to get in some ribbing."

Hudson is not the first short-statured pitcher to come from south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Remember "Louisiana Lightning", Ron Guidry?

"Sure," says Hudson. "You can’t measure what’s in a guys’ heart, what his desire is, does he know how to pitch.

HISTORY AT PAC BELL TONIGHT

The game of baseball is a game of records. Records, as they say, are made to be broken. Baseball has a few of those. Ruth’s 60 beget Maris’ 61 which beget McGwire’s 70. Some records are not records, like Ted Williams’ .406 average, which is better remembered than Rogers’ Hornsby’s .424.

Some say Joe DiMaggio’s 56-game hitting streak will not be broken, but it will. How about Jack Chesbro of the New York Highlanders (nee Yankees), who won 41 games when TR was the prez?

Well, if broken records are your thing (and nobody is advocating a replay of Bill Veeck’s Disco Demolition Night), get your butts out to Pacific Bell Park tonight and see an attempt to break a 106-year old National League record by the Cincinnati Reds. They are tied with the current mark of 181 consecutive games without being shut out.
The American League, of course, is the home of the Yankees. Take a wild guess who holds the junior circuit (and Major League) mark of 308.

Yes, of course. The Bombers, 1931-33 edition. They had some guys named Ruth and Gehrig. The NL mark was set by Philadelphia in 1893-95. This was one year before The Babe was born. Connie Mack was a player. Philly really might still have been the City of Brotherly Love in those days. Ed Delahanty, who would fall from Niagara Falls in a drunken stupor a couple years later, hit .404 for the 78-53 Phillies, who finished fourth for Manager Arthur Irwin.

A 106-year old record is nothing to sneeze at. Some pretty fair country ball clubs have not knocked it off the shelves. Not the ’75 Big Red Machine, the Lumber Company in Steeltown, or anybody else in the league.

Livan Hernandez, who would deny being the inspiration for an Elton John ballad if asked, will be charged with the task of keeping those crooked lines from appearing on the visitor’s side of the scoreboard. These types of records are always fun to watch.

Remember Dick Dietz getting hit by Don Drysdale, forcing in a run to end Big D’s scoreless streak in 1968? Harry Wendelstedt called him back, saying the Giants’ catcher made no effort to avoid the spheroid, and Drysdale eventually broke Walter Johnson’s record of 56 straight shutout innings. 20 years later, the only way Orel Hershiser breaks that record is by throwing a 10-inning shutout in the final regular season game. Of course, San Diego had to pitch a shutout against the Dogs. They did, Bulldog did, and the record was his.

Pitching records are the best kind. They are about tension and build-up. Cincinnati barely kept the record alive Sunday at home when Ruben Rivera’s seventh inning home run was their only score in a 5-1 loss to New York. The Reds are struggling at 9-9.

Hernandez is the kind of dominant pitcher who could shut them down, and Dusty Baker’s staff is coming off an off day. He will use his middle relievers to set up Rob Nen not just to win but also to break the streak if he has a chance. This could be very enjoyable. Inning after inning, watching Hernandez work the Reds lineup. Pressure? This guy worked for Castro. What’s a century-old baseball record?

The Reds are the perfect team to set an ancient mark. They are the Missing Link of baseball. This team has almost as much history as the Louvre. They were the first mercenaries, going 76-0 in 1869, which was before the Indian Wars.

They won the only “fixed” World Series over the Black Sox in 1919. In the 1950s, during the height of the McCarthy Scare, somebody got the bright idea that calling them Reds might equate Frank Robinson and Ted Kluszewski with Joe Stalin and Chairman Mao, so they became the Red legs. After the world discovered McCarthy was a drunk they went back to calling them Reds, which did not stop Warren Beatty from making his paean to John Reed despite any confusion.

So there you have it. This is baseball season, a chance to soak in all the best nuances of the game, to see some history and accomplishment by a struggling team vs. a worthy opponent. This is what the diamond game is all about.

**IT'S THEIR CALL**
Duane Kuiper has managed to build a reputation as a baseball play-by-play announcer. Covering his old team, the Giants, Kipe does home run calls with relish. "He hits it high," says Kuiper of a Barry Bonds or Jeff Kent big fly. "He hits it deep. He hits it ... outta here." His inflection on "outta here" is so definitive.

Last week, Jon Miller and Kipe were discussing the intricacies of home run calls. The subject of a distinctive description with a Spanish twist came up.

It turns out that a few years ago, one of the Spanish stations that covers Major League baseball did a poll of its listeners, asking what would be their favorite home run call.

The result was, "Adios, madre."

Through translation, that has changed to "Adios, mother," and it is starting to make the rounds.

Some of baseball’s best voices, however, disdain the whole “home run hype.”

"The crowd makes the best announcer in a situation like that," says Dodger legend Vin Scully, who is in town for the first series of the year between the California rivals.

Scully looks down at guys who give it the big hullabaloo. On October 3, 1951, he sat on the Dodger side of the announcer’s booth at the Polo Grounds in New York. Red Barber was doing the play-by-play when Bobby Thompson hit his “shot heard ‘round the world.”


Nobody has ever heard that call, because games were not taped in those days.

Ernie Harwell called it for television, but nobody remembers how he described it.

“TV didn’t tape in those day” either, says Harwell, who went on to a great broadcasting career in Detroit.

Over on the Giants’ side, however, Russ Hodges was going hysterical. He was a maniac. A crazy man. Insane.

Just for the record, Hodges did it like this:

“One-and-one to Bobby Thompson. They’ll be running like the wind if Thompson hits one. Branca with the pitch...it’s a long rive...I do believe...the Giants win the pennant...”

Just for good measure, Hodges repeated this last phrase about 25 times, which makes Scully frown.

A listener in New Jersey was taping it. She sent him a copy, he kept it, and it has been preserved for posterity as the most famous call of the most famous moment in baseball history.

Over in Oakland, another legend has been making home run and touchdown calls for a long time. Bill King’s trademark “Holy Toledo” has nothing to do with the rather unholy state of Toledo, Ohio’s corrupt political history.

“I never thought about what it means or why I say it,” says the mustachioed one.

“Frankly, it’s just better than saying ’Holy s—t’ or something like that.”

Monte Moore of the A’s called ‘em “taters.”

Among the pantheon of home run calls, Hodges “bye, bye baby” became a real classic. Eventually, it became a song called “When the Giants Come to Town, It’s Bye, Bye Baby.”

His partner for many years, Lon Simmons, went with “You can tell it goodbye.”

Hank Greenwald had, simply, "Gone."

Harry Caray’s home run calls sounded like this: "Long drive...way back...could be...IT IS!"

Waite Hoyt did it in past tense, maybe thinking big Ted Kluszewski was Babe Ruth.
"Kluszewski hit it toward left center . . . ,” Hoyt would say, “and that went over the wall into Burgerville.” Burger was a beer in Cincinnati.

Mel Allen was the Yankee announcer the year Roger Maris cracked 61, but the famous call comes from his sidekick, Phil Rizzuto.

It is impossible to describe Rizzuto’s voice. Imagine a guy in the Witness Protection Program speaking through a voicebox after he just had his family jewels removed.

“Holy cow,” Rizzuto said, which is what he always said. “Maris did it.”

Pittsburgh’s eccentric voice for many years, Bob Prince, used to tell listeners to “beware of the Green Weenie,” whatever that meant, after home runs during the 1960 pennant chase. Before that, he flatly said after Ralph Kiner’s first homer of one season that “it’s the first of 61.” It wasn’t, but you cannot blame a guy for trying.

The home run call, like most things in baseball, just lends itself to more discussion and fun than things in other sports, and like catchphrases and urban legends is subject to changes and interpretations to new generations of fans.

**LI’L PROFESSOR IS THE REAL PRIDE OF SAN FRANCISCO**

There was a time when the City of San Francisco was the Crown Jewel of the baseball world. New York may have had three teams, and Southern California has become a gold mine of talent, as has the Sunbelt South. However, in the first half of the 20th Century, The City and the Bay Area was Baseball Mecca.

San Francisco was also home to a large Italian-American population, and at a time when Italians were unfortunately associated with Organized Crime and Fascist dictators, “Joltin’ Joe” DiMaggio arrived in New York just in time to carry on the Yankee tradition after the retirement of Babe Ruth, and to raise the image of people whose names ended with vowels.

Joe D. was a first ballot, no-brainer Hall of Famer. A couple of days ago, the Veterans Committee added Bill Mazeroski and Hilton Smith to the Halls of Cooperstown, but Dominick DiMaggio was left in the cold.

Dominick is used to being an after thought. He was Joe’s “little brother.” He was also a great ballplayer. Known as the “Li’l Professor” because he wore wire-rimmed glasses, Dom came out of Galileo High School in North Beach and, after starring like Joe with the Seals, became a fixture in center field at Fenway Park for the Boston Red Sox. He played alongside his brother’s great rival, Ted Williams.

The relationship between Dom and Joe can only be described as Biblical. Ever heard of Cain and Abel?

There were nine children born to Guiseppe and Rosalie DiMaggio. Dom was the youngest, and the third Major Leaguer among them. The family lived on Taylor Street and lived off the hard work of their fisherman father.

Donald Travers, who would become a legendary track coach at Lowell and Balboa in the 1950s, was a year behind Dom at Galileo. “Dario Lodigiani, Dom and I would stand in front of the school and talk sports,” recalls Travers. “Dom was a nice guy, but he didn’t talk about Joe. I think they won the City championship in 1933 and ’34. Dom and Dario were close friends. Neither one of them was very big. They played at Funston Playground in the Marina. Some other schools played at Big Rec.”
In an age when ethnic cliques defined who people on the East Coast, Travers recalls a different mindset in California.

“I had no feeling of ethnic rivalry,” says Travers, whose Balboa track teams would break racial barriers 20 years later.

Dominic hit .307 for the 1937 Seals, and in 1940 hit .400 as a rookie with Boston. In 11 years he patrolled Fenway and became a fan favorite among Beantowners, who created a song to rival the popular “Joltin’ Joe DiMaggio, we’re so glad you’re on our side.” In Boston they sang, “Dominick DiMaggio, he’s better than his brother Joe.”

Dom hit .316 in 1946, the year Boston won 41 of their first 50 games en route to the American League title. They lost in seven games to St. Louis in the World Series when the Cardinals’ Enos Slaughter scored from first base on a single because Bosox shortstop Johnny Pesky hesitated before firing home with the relay.

Dom hit 14 homers in 1942, but his greatest contribution in 11 big league seasons was on defense, where he had to make up for the defensive deficiencies of left fielder Williams.

In 1949, Boston was heavily favored to win it all. Joe was sidelined with a bone spur in his heel, but returned for a four-game June series at Fenway. Barely able to walk, Joe D. put on one of the most legendary performances in baseball history, going four-for-four in one game, winning another with a homer, flagging down Williams’ drives in the deep part of center field where the right field seats jut into the alleys, and personally forging the underdog Yankees’ sweep of the powerful Red Sox that propelled New York to the World Championship.

Joe played his best ball against Boston. The Red Sox fans gave him a standing ovation during that June series. He was determined to better Williams, but his desire to beat Dom played just as big a role.

In 1948, the Yankees, eliminated from the pennant race, had a chance to knock out Boston.

“`We’ll get back at you tomorrow,’” Joe told Dom, as related by Dom to David Halberstam in “Summer of ‘49”. “`I’ll take care of it personally.’”

“I may have something to with that…I’ll be there, too,” was Dom’s sheepish response.

Who can say what drove the complicated Joe? He never wanted anybody else but himself to make money, to gain recognition, to take the spotlight from him. Despite his own heroic image, he resented Dom. Over the years, the resentment became downright hostility and decades of silence.

When Joe was honored at Yankee Stadium before his death a few years ago, Dom was there, but he offered to stay far enough away from Joe to not take the spotlight from him. It was always that way between the brothers. Joe was one of the most selfish human beings in the world.

When Joe passed away, Dominick was kept away. There never was true reconciliation. There was hostility between Dom and Joe’s “lawyer,” the greedy Morris Engelberg. Dom called Engelberg on his vulture-like association with his brother, and there were lawsuits.

Joe’s life is now viewed for its tragic elements: The death of Marilyn Monroe, his lonely vigil as an unheroic hero. Dom continues to be man who possesses all the class his famous brother never actually had, and while he may not be Cooperstown material, he is the DiMaggio that San Francisco can truly be proud of.
OUR NATIONAL PASTIME

Baseball is, at best, America's third favorite sport. Maybe lower. Just listen to the pundits. They have been writing the Grand Ol' Game's obituary for years.

Don't buy it!

In many ways, baseball is bigger than it ever was. That definitely does not mean baseball, like all professional sports, does not suffer some major problems, and it also does not mean that these problems are easily solved. The game has changed, in many ways for the worse.

In many ways, too, for the better.

Let us start with baseball's current drawbacks. Ray Charles can see the problem. There is way too much money, not nearly enough loyalty, the average fan cannot afford to take his family to the ball park, and nobody knows from season to season--after August 1 it gets worse--who plays for whom.

Wait. Let us go back for a second. There is way too much money? Now, that is interesting. There is something oddly socialistic about that statement. UnAmerican, even. Anti-capitalistic. In what other industry do we attribute problems to the fact that there is too damn much money?

The problem with the computer chip industry is that everybody is making such tremendous profits! Yeah, right.

Hollywood is experiencing severe doldrums, especially after Titanic's big payday. Huh?

Bad news on Wall Street. The bear market is holding steady.

Yet, somehow, baseball is supposed to shun the profit motive that made this country great. Please, give me a break. It is precisely because baseball is so popular that there is so much money around to ruin the sport. That is a strange Catch-22, perhaps, but it is reality in the '90s.

The game really is not making money, you say. These huge salaries are being paid by multi-conglomerate ownership, out of the profits from their other business, but causing baseball operations to run in the red. Why? Out of an altruistic desire to provide the "communities" they "serve" with winners?

If you believe that, you are deluded. The corporate owners of Major League Baseball are in it to make money, just like every other business venture they involve themselves in. These hard-driving Type A fellows are not in this thing just for the "thrill" of hangin' around the clubhouse, sniffing around uppity millionaire man-children day and night.

Baseball pays. Big time. The reason it pays is because it is very popular.

The thought-meisters say that the quality of the game has gone down. Pitching is weak. Expansion and other sports have diluted the talent base. Kids don't care for the game anymore.

Let me tell you something, and this comes from a guy who ate, slept and drank baseball, beginning when I was eight years old. Baseball gave me a chance to experience a high school national championship. It paid for my college education. I was employed as a professional player, coached at the Division I level, and even managed a team in Europe.

Since 1967, I have been a bona fide baseball expert, and I do not subscribe to every old timers crotchety theory that the game was better in "my day." The players are better now than they were in my day. The talent base has gotten substantially larger, not smaller. First of all, the population of the United States has grown. The population of the world has grown, too. More players to choose from. Opportunities for minorities are greater today than ever. As blacks and Latinos become more and more mainstream, they can worry less about basic survival, and more about improving as players. Asians are becoming a more common sight in sports today. Third
world countries are producing a plethora of players. The Dominican Republic is a gold mine of talent. Cuba is slowly but surely heading towards being the same kind of gold mine. It will happen, it is inevitable.

Canadians have improved. Larry Walker, the 1997 National League MVP, is Canadian. Australia and Taiwan are stepping up Travers to plate. Europe produces big leaguers (Holland, for instance). More people live in warm climates. That means more time to play baseball.

Soccer? Soccer hits football harder than it hits baseball. Basketball? The combination of size and skill necessary to make it in the NBA creates such a specialized group of players that it is not likely that their talent pool is the same as baseball's talent pool. Tennis and golf? Yes, they are growing in popularity, but these sports still remain the activities of country club types and childhood prodigies, forced into a robotic system of hard-driving coaches and cut-throat competition that separates the wheat from the chaff by the time girls turn 13, boys maybe 16.

Baseball still remains accessible to everybody. The pace of the player's development is leisurely, unhurried, like the game itself. Little league, Babe Ruth League, high school (maybe the JV's), the varsity, college, the pros. Even graduation from high school does not entirely weed out the truly determined, who often ignore the handwriting on the wall by continuing to play in junior college. Plenty of these "scrubs" blossom, sometimes not until they are in their 20s. The Major Leagues have always had their share of guys (like Brett Butler) who walked on at some N.A.I.A. school, got drafted in the 187th round, worked their way through seven years in the minors, then made it to The Show at age 30.

This does not happen in the N.F.L. or the N.B.A.

Baseball is the most democratic of sports. It is also very hard to master, which is why scouts do not force a kid to live up to his potential right away. It takes longer to get to the Majors because baseball is one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult sport in the world to play. Baseball is a game of failure. Maybe that is why we love it so much.

Let us take a look at Major League Baseball, 1998. The players are better. The game is played better now than it was 20 years ago. I agree there is some merit regarding the question of fundamentals and team play. Perhaps these areas of the game have suffered in the shadow of a more "in your face" style that baseball has picked up on, mainly from basketball. This does not change the fundamental fact, however, that the average rookie has played more games, practiced more often, had better coaching, played on better fields using more sophisticated equipment, ingested a far healthier diet, and supplemented his development with better off-field conditioning than his predecessors.

Weight lifting is the biggest difference between today's players and those of yesteryear. Now, weight lifting was around in my day. I lifted weights religiously, which I had to do since I was tall, thin and did not possess a great fastball. From age 15 to 23 I was a fanatic about strength training. I did put on size, gain strength, and improve my fastball. Enough to get to the big leagues? No. Two points. One, I trained hard, not smart. Two, I was pitcher.

Addressing the first point, what I mean is that I never had a real strength coach. I was pretty much on my own. I put in many hours, but looking back I could have achieved greater results putting in half the time. I overtrained, I did not adequately isol ate my muscle groups, and I had no concept of how my diet affected my training, much less used strength supplements. Today's players benefit from the science and nutrition phenomenon that has helped lift body building from a circus stunt to a popular worldwide sport.
Point two: Pitchers do not benefit from strength training as much as hitters. This is the basic truth behind the game's greatest and most drastic changes. The muscles, the sinewy tissues, the bone structure that make up a pitcher's body and determine how hard he throws are very complex. Too complex for me to figure out, and most coaches are not any smarter about it than I am. If strength alone made pitchers throw harder, then scouts would be signing up Flex Wheeler and Dorian Yates by the steroid box full.

Strength improves pitching performance. How much? Sometimes quite a bit. Just as often, not at all. Strength almost always improves batting prowess. Swinging the bat, while still a wonderfully scientific activity (just ask Ted Williams) still is about hitting the sucker hard. The bigger the batter's forearms, shoulders, forearms, biceps, quads, lats, traps, hammies, abs and calves (pretty much in that order), the harder and farther he will the freaking baseball.

That does not mean overswinging. It comes down to bat speed.

Now, strength can improve a pitcher's arm speed, but for some reason that alone an effective pitcher does not make. Nolan Ryan has thin arms. Ron Guidry was a shrimp. Greg Maddux is built like a librarian. Roger Clemens is built like a bull, but his best years (until last season) were before he put on his current body armor.

Tom Seaver had big legs, a great asset to a pitcher. The size of a pitcher's legs, combined with his ability to take stress off the arm by utilizing leg strength in pitching motion, can increase pitch speed, but as much as anything it prevents arm injury.

Release point. Natural wrist strength. The size of a pitcher's hands and fingers (check out old pictures of Sandy Koufax). Bone structure. Finesse. These are the factors that constitute whether a pitched ball has "bite" to it. Bite means movement, usually of the sinking variety, but very often it means that a pitcher's pitches have a natural tendency to sail (preferably up and in to a righthanded batter). These are abilities than cannot be taught. It is the difference between great pitchers and also-rans, and it is the reason pitching today is still about the same as it was 20 years ago, while hitting has improved—which is, therefore and as a consequence thereof, the reason batters hit more home runs, for a higher average, more runs are scored, e.r.a.'s soar, and starting pitchers rarely throw complete games.

It has nothing to do with the player's not being as good. They are better. Example: The college game. College baseball has never really caught on like football or basketball, but I have always followed it closely ever since I was a college player. I can tell you flat out that the game's are better played, in every way--pitching, defense, offense, coaching--than in the 1970s. If the talent pool these colleges have to choose from was so poor, this would not happen. Furthermore, college teams are still dominated by white American kids, so the argument that says the best players all come from Latin America, or that black athletes "dominate" does not hold true in college baseball. Check out a game between number one ranked Stanford, and the number two ranked University of Southern California, then tell me I am wrong.

Now, let's look at the business of baseball. The crux of baseball's financial life is still attendance. When I was growing up in the 1970s, the Oakland A's dynasty produced three consecutive World Championships. During those three years (1972-74), the A's drew one million fans once (then just barely). From 1988-90, the A's, playing in the same stadium, went to three straight Series'. This time around, even though they only won one of the three Fall Classics, they consistently drew close to three million people per season. Today, A's attendance is down, as the team is in the skids. Still, the A's of 1972-74 would have loved to draw what the current A's are drawing, which is somewhere in the low to middle
million range. Obviously, larger population explains some of this, but not all of it.

Dodger Stadium has never seen a drop in attendance, but crowds in L.A. no longer are the envy of baseball. If somebody told me once that some Major League stadiums would be filled to capacity every single night, I would have said they were crazy, but that is essentially what is going on in Denver, Baltimore, and Cleveland. It was like that for a while in Toronto. Cities with new stadiums draw enormously--Atlanta and Arlington, for example. It will be interesting to see what happens in Anaheim with their newly re-furbished yard, not to mention the expansion cities of Tampa Bay and Phoenix.

Next, television. Again, using my childhood as an example (the stone age, my daughter calls it), I lived in a two-team market. I was offered about 25 selected road games from each club on local t.v. On Saturdays, N.B.C. broadcast the "Game of the Week." Then came Monday Night baseball.

Compare that to today, when cable allows virtually a game (and usually more than one) per day. On any given day in Southern California, the baseball fan can choose from, as an example, a Dodger game on channel five, an Angel game on Fox Sports West, a Braves game on W.T.B.S., another game (or two) on E.S.P.N., not to mention satellite dishes, sports bars, W.G.N. (Cubs), in some cases Mets games, plus ESPN's "Baseball Tonight" evening wrap-up of scores and highlights. There is more coverage of baseball in newspapers, magazines and books than ever, not to mention the craze surrounding baseball cards and memorabilia. This is not all happening because the corporate muckety-mucks love baseball. It is driven by advertising dollars, and nobody needs to graduate from the Wharton School of Business to know that high ad rates are driven by a large audience share of people watching baseball, baseball and more baseball!

The 1994 players strike put a damper on everything, and much of the doom and gloom surrounding the game emanated from that, but the facts are the game has bounced back nicely, financially. Emotionally, there is still a schism between players, teams and fans. This is undeniable, and to attempt to put a happy face on the fact that not even a die-hard fan like me knows who Joe Carter plays for from one year to the next is not good for the game.

Bucks, for all my capitalist rhetoric, should not be what drives the baseball engine entirely. The game is still spiritual. I cannot explain it. Anybody who has ever experienced it knows what I am talking about. For those of you who do not know this feeling, too bad, you missed out big time. The big question still revolves around kids, the heart and soul of this little boys game.

Are today's fans all corporate suits filling up luxury boxes, there to be seen and to entertain more than to see and be entertained? I still think a lot of those seats are occupied by actual fans. Maybe I am naive, but if 44,000 people fill up Coors Field 81 times a season, can it really be that there are that many business tycoons in Denver? Sure, it is more difficult than it used to be for Joe Six-Pack to bring his three kids to the yard, but compare that still with ticket prices at the Forum, or in the NFL. Are swimming pools beyond the outfield fences, exploding scoreboards (which is not a new idea), exotic food courts and radar gun pitching cages really what drive consumers to pay for gas, parking, tickets and all the above, or is it The Game?

Fans at Wrigley Field and Fenway Park still come for The Game. Maybe baseball is smart in changing with changing times, and maybe turning modern ball parks into video arcades is the way to keep the people coming through the turnstiles. It's funny, though. These modern parks are all built to look older and older. That tells me something, and that is that Our National Pastime truly
stands the test of time. The Game, in and of itself, is still the single greatest source of joy I know outside the love of family (which has often been held together in one way or another by The Game). I know a lot of folks hear what I am saying and respond with, "right on!", because in baseball, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

NO HUMILITY HERE

I admit it. I am no Willie Mays fan. Never was. After interviewing his arrogant ass my reasons were confirmed.

No apologies. No humble pie. No humility.

That was the atmosphere at Pacific Bell Park on the night Barry Bonds hit his five hundredth career home run.

Hey, we all know Bonds can be difficult, and he knows how good he is.

That may be true, but on this night the braggadocio was coming from the old-timers, not Bonds.

Old-timers as in Willie Mays and Willie McCovey. These two guys are legends, stalwarts of the San Francisco scene. Somehow one recalls that they held it in a little during their playing days. "Stretch" McCovey was always a beloved gentleman, and Mays the "Say Hey Kid" who said to Leo Durocher, "Mista Leo, I just can't hit up here" until he cranked one off Warren Spahn, no less.

Nowadays they sound more like old fishermen who insist they caught the "big one."

Take Mac, for instance. In 1969 he won the National League Most Valuable Player award. He had a great year, with 45 home runs, 126 RBIs and a .320 batting average. The Giants finished second in the West. New York pitcher Tom Seaver was 25-7 with a 2.21 ERA, including 10 wins down the stretch to lead the Miracle Mets to a 41-9 finish and the most incredible upset in baseball history. Seaver finished second to McCovey in the MVP voting, but several writers left him completely off their ballots. Had he just received a few fifth or sixth place votes, he would have beaten out McCovey.

"Seaver shouldn't have finished as high as he did," said McCovey unapologetically. "I should have won it the year before when they gave it to <Bob> Gibson. Pitchers have the Cy Young award, they shouldn't get the MVP, too."
Of course, in 1968, Gibson threw 48 straight scoreless innings, 13 shutouts and posted an unreal 1.12 ERA to personally elevate a light-hitting Cardinal club to the pennant.

"I agree with McCovey," says Giants announcer Mike Krukow, himself a pitcher. "Pitchers have the Cy Young. Sometimes a pitcher will win the MVP and not know how to react, like they know it should go to a position player."

This scribe disagrees and thinks Seaver ('69), Ron Guidry (1978) and Orel Hershiser (1988) are pitchers who were denied their rightful MVPs, but that is a different subject today. The issue is humility. McCovey seems to have used up all of his during his playing days, probably because he could not hit Sandy Koufax with a paddle.

Willie Mays was asked about the Bonds comparison. You know, how Willie was not accepted by San Franciscans despite being deified in the Big Apple. How the ghost of Joe DiMaggio hovered over him, how Orlando Cepeda and even Mr. McCovey were more popular players for a few seasons.

"You can't even compare Joe with me," says Mays.

Oh really? How many World Championships did you lead the Giants to, Willie?

(Answer: One, 1954). You hit around .200 when your team fell one game shy in the 1962 Fall Classic, and that was you who let that grounder under your legs in the 1973 Series.

Joe DiMaggio was an arrogant, selfish, greedy narcissist. He always personally forged, cajoled, pushed and insisted on the Yankees winning 11 World Series from 1936-51.

But you cannot compare him to Willie?

No humility here.

"Joe was my idol," Mays explained, "but people in San Francisco learned to accept me in the long run."

Baseball is a game of inches. In game seven of the 1962 Series at Candlestick Park, Mays doubled in the ninth off Ralph Terry. Matty Alou probably could have scored from first, but chose to stay at third base instead of testing Tom Tresh's arm. Willie Macs line drive was snagged by Yankees second baseman Bobby Richardson to end the Series.

Folklore has it that Richardson lunged and barely got the "screaming meemie," but in reality he was frozen in in place as the ball landed right in his glove.
If Alou scores and San Francisco wins, perhaps Mays can more easily dismiss the DiMaggio comparison. Barry Bonds needs to win at least one ring in order to enter the pantheon of true immortality.

One thing is interesting, though. Young Barry looks like Mr. Humility compared to his Godfather and the man they named the cove after.

**BILL KING HAS JUST BEEN ELECTED KING OF THE OTHERWORLDLY BROADCASTER'S WING**

Bill King is as much a part of my life as my friends and family. I grew up with him. Memories of his words describing utterly, absolutely fantastic sporting events of the most dramatic nature imaginable are seared into my memory and will remain forever. I can recall like yesterday sitting in the garage listening to him proclaim that "George Blanda has just been elected King of the World" after his field goal to beat Cleveland in 1970.

New York sports fans of the 1950s think they enjoyed a "Golden Age." They are not even close to California sports fans of the 1960s to early 1980s, whether it be the Bay Area or L.A.: Raiders, A's, Warriors, Rams, Lakers, USC, UCLA, Dodgers.

King was SO MUCH A PART OF THAT!!! Half of Kenny Stabler's legend is because of Bill King. His accomplishments would have been diminished had anybody else described them. Rick Barry and the Warriors? Words cannot describe the poetry of King's motor words, the DETAIL of posting, switching, putting the "bigger man on him," looking for a man who he always described by name. COME ONNN!!!

Better than Chick Hearn. Johnny Most? Forget even THINKING about that!

The Raiders' home games were not on TV even if sold out. King was better than TV. If they were on the tube, the sound was down and the radio on. He was the single greatest basketball and football announcer in the history of Mankind, and a baseball announcer on par with anybody. I can only think of two people in the sports media I immediately say had his talent and charisma: Vin Scully and Jim Murray.

I also compare Lon Simmons to him, as much because both men had class, intellect and outgoing friendship above and beyond the call of duty.

My brief professional baseball career was highlighted by one glorious, three-inning, scoreless appearance with the A's in a 1982 big league exhibition game against the Giants at Phoenix Muni on a Saturday. What made it so great was that I later heard from friends who heard my three innings of "glory" on both the A's and Giants broadcasts, described by KING AND SIMMONS!!!!!!

HOLY TOLEDO!!!!!!
I was a complete unknown and I seriously doubt the media people had much info on me other than my name, physical dimensions, number and position, yet somehow I'm told King was informing the audience that I had pitched at Redwood High. How did he know that?

When I was with the San Francisco Examiner, one of my first choices was a column about King. I sought him out at the Coliseum and he gave me time as if I was Red Smth. Total class, total help, totally beautiful human being. Absolute intellegence. What a treat to sit in the A's dugout chatting with BILL KING!!

I told him we were neighbors in Marin, and King was asking about me. When I told him I played at Redwood he expressed good knowledge of Redwood sports over the years (Chad Kreuter, BuddyBiancalana) and MCAL teams in general.

When the column was published I left a copy in the A's booth and Ken Korach was very grateful that somebody had given King his kudos, as he felt King was not getting his just due. One could see in Korach devotion, love and admiration that cannot be described. So many felt that way.

I was in the Bay Area media for one sporadic year. I forget names minutes later. King would recognize me by name and inquire as if my opinion meant something. Apparently it did to him. Everybody's did. Class, man. Pure, unadulterated class!!!!!!

In all the years the Raiders played in L.A., I lived there. What a treat to be driving the streets and highways of the Southland accompanied by the soothing, friendly voice of my childhood and adolescense. They were never on TV at home so it was King, and I knew Los Angelenos who had never, ever heard him before who fell in love with him. It was like taking somebody to a great restaurant for the first time and watching them fall in love with it as you had for years prior.

If for no other reason God grants Heaven to a human being who brought enormous pleasure to millions of fellow humans, and who treated people as he would have them treat him, who as best I could tell lived by the Golden Rule, well, then, God has just elected Bill King King to the Otherworldly Broadcaster's Wing of Heaven.

May God bless and keep Bill King.

NOTHING "BUSH LEAGUE" WAY OUT IN RANCHO CUCAMONGA

It's not your dad's minor league stadium.

I have a confession to make. I am having an affair.

My mistress is Baseball, and I have been in love with her since I first fell for her charms--hook, line and sinker--at the age of eight.
I have a special place in my heart for minor league ball. Family vacations to Lake Tahoe were never complete without making the 45-minute drive to a Reno Silver Sox game. When I played in the St. Louis Cardinals' and Oakland A's organizations, I had to pinch myself. I was living a dream!

I recently found myself looking at the 20-somethings who play for Rancho Cucamonga with a combination of jealousy and nostalgia. On the one hand, I was green with envy seeing these kids pursuing big league glory. On the other hand, as James Earl Jones said in "Field of Dreams", the memories were so thick it was like "dipping (my) hands in magic waters." Baseball truly has stood the test of time, it is something good and innocent in America. It was all I could do not to hum "Auld Lang Syne".

The Epicenter ("A 9.0 on the Richter scale of Fun!") leads Class A ball in attendance, averaging 4,373 in 2000. 7,087 showed up for a patriotic Independence Day fireworks show that may be the most American experience there is. Frenchman Jacques Barzun once said that in order to know America, one had better learn baseball.

A Jack Benny statue meets fans. His act referred to "way out in Rancho Cucamonga." Local product Rollie Fingers threw out the first pitch on opening day.

The place is immaculately clean. Cafes offering good barbecue and patio-style seating are half way down both lines.

The press box is top drawer, and the luxury suites (named after Hall of Famers) are big league. Televisions showing the Quakes' and Major League games are displayed, and the team store offers great souvenirs.

The San Bernardino Mountains (Mountain Hi ski resort is only a half-hour away) provides a spectacular backdrop.

The best testimony, however, comes from the players, who like soldiers tend to complain about everything. Not so in the R.C.

"This is the best stadium in the California League," says pitcher Steve Watkins, a third year pro out of Texas Tech Tech. "It's a fair park <330 down the lines, 375 to the alleys, 400 straightaway>. The wind's not a factor, the field is smooth, and the mound's in great shape. Plus, there's a wrinkle, the fence juts out behind first base, so sometimes errant pickoffs bounce back to the first baseman, who'll throw out a runner at second by 10 feet."

Outfielder Al Benjamin, a fourth-year pro from Houston, says, "I think our yard is better than any I've played in. We get great fan support, and I've made friends with families who sit out near left field. The wind's geared for lefties a bit. The heat's not bad, like it is in Bakersfield."
Both players also emphasized that Cucamonga is a great place--near LA, the beach, San Diego, the mountains, and even Las Vegas. They get three to four off-days a month. Their top priorities--nightlife and "local talent" (girls)--are apparently well above average.

The ball park experience is enhanced by the helpfulness of the staff. Media relations manager Davidia Benavidez was full of sunshine, and announcer/statistician/PR director/web site coordinator/salesman Rob Buskin, the hardest-working man in the minors, was full of facts and figures. He is a good broadcaster with a future. This is the kind of place where the concessionaires call you "hun."

On this night, *Baseball America* rated lefties Mike Bynum (from the University of North Carolina) vs. Joe Horgan of the Giants as the best pitching match-up in minor league ball. The Quakes won, 7-5.

*RANCHO CUCAMONGA QUAKES (909-481-5000, www.rcquakes.com)*

Stadium: The Epicenter.
Affiliate: San Diego Padres.
Capacity: 6,615.
Ticket Range: $5 - $8.
Year Built: 1993.
Famous Alumni: Padre pitcher Matt Clement, Marlin outfielder Derek Lee.
Bizarre Promotions: $1 million dice toss; "pack your bags and win a trip to Vegas"; "hit a homer in the tire and win a car."
Mascot: Tremor
Food Specialties: Super Dogs, funnel cakes, big beers, barbecued chicken (very good), and Kettle Corn ("to die for").
Directions From Los Angeles: 10 east to 15 north, exit left on Foothill, left on Rochester, Epicenter is on right.

**ORTIZ LOOKS LIKE ALL-STAR**

Every year at the All-Star Game, some "new guy" has a coming out party that makes fans sit up and take notice. Giants starter Russ Ortiz, whose slider seemed honed in on the outside corner like a heat-seeking missile, looks like one of those guys as he upped his record to 6-1 Saturday, defeating the Mets, 10-3.

"Its a little too early to talk about the All-Star Game," said Manager Dusty Baker, "but hes been our main guy."

Ortiz pitched out of a jam in the sixth, when he displayed some control trouble, by striking out Alex Escobar swinging on a high, hard one to strand two. He was lifted for a pinch-hitter with the bases juiced in the bottom of that frame, having struck out seven, lowering his ERA to 2.77.
"Bobby <Estalella's> been doing a great job," said Ortiz of his catcher, who bailed him out in the first inning when Ortiz struck out Mike Piazza swinging, and Desi Relaford was thrown out stealing on the play. "That was big. For whatever reason, I've pitched well <against the Mets>. I'm mature enough now to not think what might happen, but rather to make each pitch on its own. My sliders been working really well, and I have a lot of confidence."

Ortiz thinks the "new high strike zone" helps him.

"It helps everybody," he explained, "but my best pitches are still down in the zone anyway."

The two teams might have been groggy after playing extra-innings Friday night, but on an afternoon in which the weather displayed dual personalities, San Francisco swung more lumber than Paul Bunyan.

Mets starter Dickey Gonzalez pitched around Barry Bonds in the first inning, and right into Jeff Kents wheelhouse. Kents searing line drive almost put a hole in the left-field fence, igniting a three-run inning.

Eric Davis, who holds his bat just like Bobby Bonds used to, was the pinch-hitter for Ortiz in the sixth. He struck out. What followed were two ground balls with eyes. Marvin Benard squibbed one foul, but groundskeeper Scott MacVicar was earning his pay this day, because the ball hit the lip of the chalk line and angled back into play. Aurilia's grounder barely escaped Robin Ventura's glove, and that sealed it. By the time San Francisco was finished with an assortment of safeties ranging from impressive to questionable, the score was 9-1.

Also bidding to come out at the All-Star Game, shortstop Rich Aurilia tagged a homer in the fifth to up San Franciscos lead to 5-1.

This was the first chance for Pac Bell fans to see the latest Japanese import, Mets outfielder Tsuyoshi Shinjo, swing the bat. Shinjo, a defensive replacement Friday night, subbed for Benny Agbayani in the third when Agbayani strained a lower abdominal muscle. Shinjo, whose bat held-high stance reminds one of Reggie Smith when he came up with the Red Sox, shot a line-drive down the left-field line that could have hung laundry, scoring Mike Piazza with a run in the fourth.

New York falls to 14-21, with first-place Philadelphia playing at Arizona on Saturday night. The Giants improved to 19-16, and entered the clubhouse hoping that Los Angeles, with Kevin Brown pitching, would lose to Atlanta later at Dodger Stadium. The sell-out crowd of 41,059 brings the season total to 852,409.

**PAGING RICKEY HENDERSON**

Rickey Henderson is the greatest leadoff hitter ever, and the San Francisco Giants need his services yesterday.
Dusty Baker has a leadoff hitter already. His name is Marvin Benard. Get over it.

San Francisco is 12-11 in a so-far mediocre division. It is not likely to stay mediocre. Los Angeles and Arizona are capable of breakouts, and Colorado is a contender with improved pitching. San Francisco will need offense to win at Coors Field.

The 31-year old Benard made his mark in a big way when injuries gave him a chance to start in center field vs. Philadelphia in 1998. After going four-for-four, Benard finished at .324 in 1998, and a solid .290 in 1999.

Baker likes him, and why not? He works hard. He was part of the team’s success in past seasons. He plays smart, a trademark of the Baker Way.

He is also prone to slumps. He slumped the first half of 2000 and it looked like he might not make it out of the doldrums, but rebounded to hit .263. The problem with Benard is that he is not a great center fielder, he struck out 97 times last year, drew only 63 walks, and stole just 22 bases. He fails to start rallies or keep them alive too often for a guy without big power (12 home runs, 55 RBIs last year).

Benard is hitting just .135 with a .197 on-base average, no power numbers, no run production, no speed, nothing. He is not making anything happen. He has only one error but he is no Gold Glover out in center, either.

"Marvins our leadoff man," says Baker. "You don’t just give up on a guy because he’s slumping. We have nothing else to replace him."

Henderson was placed on special waivers by San Diego. There is some controversy involving the Padres and the Commissioner’s office regarding their handling of Henderson’s waiver. He played for San Diego on Saturday night, but getting him is doable.

The Giants must fish or cut bait.

"Brian Sabean just shook his head when he heard Rickey was on waivers," said Giants PR man Bob Rose, espousing the company line. "Even if he is available, where are you going to play him? Are you going to ask a Hall of Fame left fielder to play center field? Is Barry Bonds just gonna say, `Yeah, Rickey can play left. We won 97 games last year.’"

Bold strokes are sometimes needed. George Patton splitting forces to meet the Wermacht at Bastogne, MacArthur taking advantage of the high tide at Inchon. So, Brian Sabean, how about it?

Henderson is a malcontent, but it has been said that Stalin would have had a job in baseball if he could bring some high heat. This might be a 140-game shot in the arm to the club, and God knows Henderson is motivated. He just broke Babe Ruth’s career walks record. He needs to score
65 runs to catch Ty Cobb in that category, and he could get to 3,000 hits this year if he gets at-bats.

"Where would Rickey play?" asked Baker. Did the Giants rehearse this line before the game Sunday? "Hes not gonna play in left and remove Barry. Were not going to move Armando Rios to center. At Rickeys age hes not gonna become a center fielder. Were going on the road, so maybe Marvin can relax and not hear the negative comments and hostility thats been directed at him."

Here is the bottom line: The team needs offense more than defense. Henderson, who has played center field before, comes cheap. He provides less defense in center field than Benard, but the offensive spark he is capable of makes up for it.

"Thats my job as a leadoff hitter," he said. "Get on base, create stuff and score runs. Thats the name of the game, scoring runs and winning ballgames."

Henderson might have one last champions push left. A look around baseball indicates that leadoff hitters in their prime are not doing much. Arizonas Steve Finley is hitting .181. Tom Goodwin is at .186 in L.A. Oaklands heralded Johnny Damon checks in at .221.

Bring Henderson home to break Cobbs record, garner his three thousandth hit, and maybe bring San Francisco what they yearn for.

**HARM TO THE GAME: BONDS OR ROSE?**

Barry Bonds cheated. Pete Rose did not cheat. However, baseball has rewarded its cheaters for a century. Spitball pitchers, sign stealers, groundskeepers slowing the basepaths (as the Giants did with Maury Wills); these things have always been winked at, considered part of the game, something to be admired in the code of baseball ethics.

Gambling has been the Cardinal Sin of the game since 1919. Gamblers controlled baseball before the Black Sox scandal, which brought worldwide disrepute upon baseball. Its stain was erased by Babe Ruth and Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis.

Every baseball clubhouse has a sign warning against gambling. There is no sign warning against steroids. Medicine may someday be able to make steroids that are undetectable and not harmful. What then? This genie may be out of the bottle. Gambling will always harm the game’s integrity. A former pro football player (who is an inveterate gambler who battled drugs himself) once told me that “half of NFL games” were affected by gambling in the 1970s. Maybe big money has changed that. I hope so.

When I wrote "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" in 2002, I suspected Bonds did juice but had no proof. BALCO and the fallout of 2003-04 that created a whole new knowledge base about Bonds and steroids in all sports. I know Mark Fainaru-Wada. He did a great job. I should have
dug deeper in 2001-02, but he was able to cover the BALCO case unfolding for the San Francisco Chronicle. I did not have the advantage of these events playing out in public when I wrote my book.

I posited a list of goals that if Barry could accomplish he would be considered the best player ever. He accomplished or is about to accomplish most of them, and all else being equal I would otherwise call him the best ever. However, in light of Bonds' steroid use, I must rescind my analysis.

Bonds, McGwire and the other “juice brothers” helped popularize the game after the 1994 strike, but in the end harmed their reputations and their records. However, this gives us new respect for Ruth, Willie Mays, Ted Williams, Hank Aaron…even Frank Thomas. I would like to see the game return to the pitching rich days of Sandy Koufax, Bob Gibson and Tom Seaver. I also admire pitchers who succeeded in the steroid era.

Gambling has the potential of leading to thrown games, although Rose did not do that. Big contracts should eliminate the need for players to take gambling money anyway. I would tilt the “harm” edge to Rose, but mitigate that sentence because he did not throw games. He paid his price and should go into the Hall. As for Bonds, he is getting his just desserts and should go in to the Hall, too, but not on the first ballot.

**BASEBALL AND POLITICS ARE INTER-MARRIED**

William Howard Taft started the tradition of throwing out the first ball at the “Presidential Opener” in 1908. The Washington Senators were said to be “first in war, first in peace, and last in the American League.” Babe Ruth addressed “Silent Cal” Coolidge on a blistering D.C. day with “Hot as hell, ain’t it, Prez?” A few years later Ruth justified his making more money than the Depression-addled Herbert Hoover with, “I had a better year than he did.”

Dwight Eisenhower played ball at West Point. The day Ike had his first heart attack, Vice President Richard Nixon was studying the Sunday Major League statistics when told he had to stop trying to figure out who was better, Mantle, Mays or Snider. Deciphering who was on top of that year’s Kremlin power struggle was slightly more important.

Ronald Reagan did Cubs games. George H.W. Bush was Yale’s first baseman when they lost to Cal (1947) and USC (1948) in the championship games of the College World Series. JFK used to say he wanted to own the Red Sox, and George Bush did own the Rangers.

The Presidency requires an economist, a psychologist, a prognosticator, and a leader. These are the same qualities looked for in baseball general managers. The question is, who would make the better GM, a Republican or a Democrat?

The Republican would be less likely to spend big bucks on the kind of guy who could win a pennant. He would be fiscally austere and efficient, but he might be less inclined to put up with
the morally ambiguous shenanigans of some modern players. Can’t say what Tom Hicks’ politics are, but we know that George Steinbrenner was convicted of illegal campaign contributions to Nixon. However, Steinbrenner is nobody’s idea of a President. Steinbrenner in the White House? Now that is a scary thought.

The Democrat might spend a lot of Other People’s Money, but he would be more inclined to spread it around so that none of it went to much good use. He would figure all these guys partying, carrying on and having five or six babies out of wedlock is just a product of a disadvantaged social upbringing.

Let us take a look at some real-life Chief Execs. The only OPM John Kennedy would have been spending would have been his father Joe’s. The problem he would have had is he would have been sleeping with all his players’ wives. Eventually, Carl Yastrzemski or Carlton Fisk would have taken a swipe at him, the Secret Service would have had to shoot ‘em, and neither would have made the Hall of Fame. Under Kennedy’s endorsement, however, Bill “Spaceman” Lee might just have won on the Rhinoceros Party ticket. JFK would have made bold moves, though, especially dealing with Scott Boras.

“They were eyeball to eyeball,” is what Peter Gammons would have written about their high-powered contract negotiations, “and Boras blinked.”

Nixon might have been the guy to break the color barrier. He would have established his credentials through a Southern Strategy aimed at convincing Dixie types that he was one of them, putting minor league franchises on the lower side of the Mason Dixon Line and giving them sweet financial deals. They would have accepted him as the only guy who could bring a black player into the game, the baseball equivalent of going to China. Later, he would have been thrown out of baseball for a few years for breaking rules set forth by the Commissioner. He would have worked his back into the game’s good graces, but some old tapes would pop up with Nixon saying disparaging things about blacks and Jews. People would say he was complex.

Ike would have played golf with his players, and given the go-ahead to play in poor weather, taking responsibility if one of his guys got hurt.

Harry Truman would not duck reporters blaming him for his team’s dismal performance, saying that the buck stops in the GMs office.

Jimmie Carter would have tried to micro-manage his team. He would have been constantly telling the manager who to play and when to make substitutions. He would have gotten involved in the team’s marketing, the minor league operations, and so many little things that he would have been floundering in last place despite his never-ending efforts.

In the mean time, Carter would have been constantly frustrated when he called Ronald Reagan, the GM of another team who was either taking a nap or not in the office outside the hours of nine-to-five, Monday to Friday. In the mean time, Reagan’s assistant GM would make brilliant
moves, and the press would say that Ronnie had the golden touch and was the “Teflon GM” who could charm the pants off all detractors with his communications skills.

All to the fuming disbelief of the workaholic Carter.

Bill Clinton would have won a couple World Series’ but he would have been fired for diddling the staff, and George W. Bush would have taken over and immediately announced that he was going to “clean house.”

When it is all said and done, the best kind of GM would be an Independent who had his own dough to spend.

“Larry, we’re gonna open up the hood, look underneath, and figure out what’s wrong,” said new General Manager Ross Perot during the announcement on Larry King Live that he was taking over the club.

**RIVALRY IS FOR FANS**

The Mets and the Giants are rivals. Darn it. They are because they are.

Just read the works of great baseball writer Roger Angell, who penned terrific prose for *The New Yorker* (compiled into several books). Angell described the symbiotic relationship of the players and fans of the Mets, Giants and Dodgers in the 1960s. In those days, many of the Giants had played in New York, and there was a sense of rivalry, or continuity, or something.

The fact that the Giants and Mets are "coast" teams makes the rivalry different than it is for teams in "fly-over" country. The problem is that players switch teams so much that they no longer play for the rivalry like in the past.

"I dont feel a special rivalry with the Dodgers," said Barry Bonds, when asked if hitting his five hundredth homer against them made it special. "I've got a lot of friends over there." Lord Almighty, what in the name of Don Drysdale is goin' on here?

Bonds is available to the press only through his "personal representative," Steve Hoskins. One can only conjecture whether he feels any extra angst over his Play-Off woes against New York last year.

In 2000, the Giants were riding high. There was talk of a Bay Area World Series. All of that went down the drain, courtesy of not one but two New York teams. The Yankees broke Oakland's heart in five games. The Mets stuck the bats up the Giants butts.

Is there collective community outrage that such a thing could happen? Apparently not with the players.
"It's more for the fans," says Giants pitcher Kirk Rueter. "Theres no rivalry for us. Guys know they could be playing for that team next season."

Now thems is fightin words.

These Gen-Xers need a tradition injection. Could you imagine Terry Bradshaw telling a writer that the Raiders were no big deal, because he might be playing in Oakland next season? Luckily, there are still a few veterans of many a sage season who can appreciate that rivalries are not just for the fans, but rather they are the engine that drives sports at all levels.

"I played six years in San Diego," says catcher Benito Santiago, "and the rivalry with L.A. was intense. This is my first year here, but the Mets are a rival just because they're the team to beat. I've seen a lot of good rivalries: St. Louis-Chicago, L.A. and the Giants, Philly and New York."

One of the best guys to talk to about rivalries is Mets reliever John Franco. Recently according captains status on the Mets, he is a keeper of the flame, so to speak.

"Certain teams do have feelings for each other," says Franco. "St. Louis and the Mets, the Braves and the Mets, us vs. the Giants."

Thank God somebody who wears a uniform acknowledges there is something special when two teams wearing "SF" and "NY" on their caps get together.

"Everybody wants a piece of us," says Franco. "Were on top of the game and teams are hungry. The Giants lost to us last year, so naturally they feel this a little more."

One would think so.

Franco, 40, grew up in Brooklyn with an appreciation for the game, courtesy of his father.

"Growing up in New York, it was more a Met-Yankee thing," reminisces Franco. "They were Wall Street. In Brooklyn, the Dodgers were all they had, and when they left they took a little piece of Brooklyn with 'em."

Not to mention the greatest rivalry in sports, the Dodgers and New York Giants. When the Mets came into existence, they inherited a lot of the Brooklyn fan base.

"My Dad was a big fan," says Franco. "Because of the weather, we couldn't play year-round in New York, so when we did play we gained respect for playing the game hard and clean, and to appreciate it maybe just a little more."
Doth vengeance steel the Giants against their post-season tormentors? On Friday, San Francisco won an extra-inning thriller, 3-2. On Saturday afternoon, with the sun pushing through the clouds like a starving actor who refuses to fade out, Jeff Kents screaming first inning liner ignited a three-run inning that propelled the home team to the 10-3 victory. This one was a big move in the Hunt For A Winning October.

THE PRICE OF RESPECT

October 1974: so, here are the Oakland A’s. They have won two consecutive World Series, defeating the formidable Big Red Machine and the invincible Tom Seaver. They have beaten Earl Weaver’s Orioles of Palmer, Cuellar and McNally. They have two players (Jackson and Hunter) who are very close to Hall of Fame status already, and a third (Fingers) who has all the earmarks of Cooperstown himself. It would seem that, like other great juggernauts of American sports – the recent repeat national champion football teams at USC, the old Celtics, the Yankees – this would engender for them mythical status, media mega-attention, and respect bordering on outright fear from all opponents.

All, apparently, except the Los Angeles Dodgers. In 1972, Sparky Anderson’s Reds were amused by Oakland’s uniforms and so worn out by Pittsburgh that they took a lax attitude into the Series; but they respected Oakland. The Dodgers were one arrogant group, like they were baseball; their Taj Mahal stadium, their hallowed traditions, their adoring fans pouring in by the millions, their venerable Vin Scully like a historian describing Caesar’s triumphs in real time.

The Dodgers had broken Jackie Robinson into the big leagues, putting themselves squarely on the right side of history. They had been a great team, just shy of dynasty status, in the 1950s. Then they moved to L.A. Owner Walter O’Malley pulled the wool over Giants’ owner Horace Stoneham’s eyes. O’Malley got the warm lands of the SoCal, a population population with room to grow. Stoneham got the fog and bays, topping growth at the water’s edge. O’Malley played at the L.A. Coliseum, a football stadium holding 90,000 paying customers instead of the minor league version of Wrigley Field, holding 22,000. Stoneham got Seals Stadium and their 22,000 seats. Then O’Malley built baseball’s greatest gem, Dodger Stadium, on a hilltop overlooking downtown L.A. Stoneham went to Candlestick Point at 10 in the morning, proclaiming the place suitable because there was room for a parking lot. By 3 P.M. he was cocktailing while the point was under seige from a windstorm that would hem in the First Infantry Division.

The Giants were good. The Dodgers were always better. When the Giants played bridesmaid, the Koufax-Drysdale Dodgers were newlyweds in Hollywood, sweeping the New York Yankees, going to three World Series in four years. They were legends of the green plains of Dodger Stadium, a baseball version of Notre Dame in the West, as popular as Trojan football in L.A.

They had a few down years, but in 1974 Los Angeles knocked the Big Red Machine out of first place in the manner of Wellington over Napoleon. With great pitching, power, speed, and attitude, Los Angeles dominated the league, playing unbeatable ball in April and May then surviving a few rough patches. When Cincinnati came to reclaim the prize they found Dodger Stadium to be their Waterloo. 102 wins. Andy Messersmith, Don Sutton and a kinesiology
professor out of the bullpen, Mike Marshall. Marshall was as elitist as the British royal family, claiming to have mastered the physical art of pitching but in a way no ordinary Joe could understand.

The Infield (the caps are there for a reason): Steve Garvey, Davey Lopes, Ron Cey, and Bill Russell. Jimmie Wynn’s last hurrah: 32 home runs and 108 RBIs in center, with Bill Buckner, a guy who could wake up at New Year’s Eve and hit a line drive (.314) in left. Oakland? They coasted in at 90-72 in a division nobody else could win. Manager Alvin Dark’s devout Christianity was not seen as a strength with the worldly A’s, and the Hollywood Dodgers definitely were not impressed. Oakland beat Baltimore again, but it was nothing compared with the way Los Angeles schooled Pittsburgh.

The two-time repeat champs all seemingly had off years. Blue won 17 but lost 15. Holtzman was a game shy of 20 wins but only two games better than .500. Jackson started like a house afire but slumped to 29-93-.289. Guys like Joe Rudi just did not have the swagger that impressed those Dodger boys. It was the infantry against the aviators, The Naked and the Dead vs. Top Gun.

Lost in the shuffle was Tenace with his 26 homers, Campy at .290, North and his base stealing, the unknown Dick Green making the right side of th infield an impenetrabl fortress. Bando was supposedly on the way down, except that when nobody was looking he drove in 100 runs, 97 of them key late-inning blows. Rollie Fingers was untouchable.

Then there was Catfish, the Cy Young winner with 25 wins and a 2.49 earned run average. The Dodgers scoffed. They had Messersmith with his high cheese and Sutton with an “Uncle Charley” that started at the mezzanines and finished in those Chavez Ravine dugout seats. Dodger manager Walter Alston, a class act in the mold of a John Wooden, tried to keep his charges on the straight and narrow, but their soul had been lost to third base coach Tommy Lasorda, who managed most of them at Ogden and Spokane. Tommy was a braggart who within a minute of meeting you told you he had Frank Sinatra’s home phone number and a waiting table at some Hollywood eatery with food inedible by Original Joe’s standards. In the manner of his constant “it’s all about me” style, Tommy allowed himself to be hooked up to a microphone when the Series moved to Oakland. He babbled endlessly with third base umpire Ron Luciano, attempting to explain why the “Dodger way” and National League baseball were superior products. Meanwhile, the A’s pounded his boys into submission, therefore proving his thesis wrong just as he was making it.

After splitting two in Tinseltown, the teams came to Oakland. Hollywood’s box office superstars were put off by this location shoot, losing three straight to a superior champion for the ages. Two playes exemplified their hubris. The first was Marshall, the second Buckner.

Marshall had a doctorate from Michigan State University. He was one of those liberal professors that conservatives always complain about. He was once robbed by some black criminals but refused to tell the police the assailants’ skin color, as if an accurate physical description was immaterial to Politically Correct police work. He claimed that his studies of kinesiology had taught him that pitchers did not to need rest; rather, they needed to keep pitching. Whether Marshall’s theses were valid or not, baseball people have not picked up on it in the years since, but in his prime Marshall was highly effective being used in this manner. However, his career was not particularly long, perhaps taking something away from his theory.

In 1974, however, he was outstanding. Alston used him in 106 games, pitching him not just to close games, but in mop-up and middle relief, too. He was 15-12, striking out 143 in 208 innings
(a number most regular starters do not achieve) with a 2.42 ERA with 21 saves, earning him the Cy Young award.
In game two, Marshall picked the A’s Herb Washington off first base, an embarrassment for Finley (who hired the non-baseball-playing-sprinter strictly as a pinch-runner). It saved the 3-2 victory, L.A.’s last hurrah. The Series shifted to the Bay Area. In recent years, Dodger superiority over the Giants was made painfully obvious. Perhaps this regional snobbery made the Dodgers feel they would conquer Oakland as they had their cross-bay National League rivals. Fat chance.
The A’s won games three and four. Oakland was trying to close it out in the fifth game. With the score tied, 2-2, the Oakland fans got rowdy, directing much of their enthusiasm at Dodger left fielder Bill Buckner. A time out was called to let the grounds crew pick up toilet paper and other unpleasantness. The Dodgers observed this in silent contemplation of the fact their upscale fans did not engage in such tomfoolery.
Marshall was in, relieving the great Don Sutton. He stood off to the side, hands on his hips. As if to announce, “I’m so good I don’t need a warm-up,” he eschewed any tosses, choosing to square off with the clutch Joe Rudi. Rudi observed Marshall, concluded that without any warm-ups the first pitch was a fast ball, and guessing just right met it squarely for a solo home run.
Tarling by a run, Buckner led off the eighth with a single. Billy North led the ball, which went under his glove. Buckner, still an athlete (not the hobble-kneed defensive liability of his 1986 Red Sox Series fiasco) went not just or second but tried to stretch it to third, breaking the ancient maxim, “Never make the first or third out at third base.” Jackson backed up North, fired to Green, who tagged out Buckner. It was the end for Los Angeles, and a sad footnote to Buck’s career. A Vallejo native, he retired just shy of 3,000 hits and was one of the game’s very best hitters, but history shades him in Series failure.
Oakland became the only non-Yankee team in history to win three straight World Series.

HE’LL BE JACKIE ROBINSON OF GAY COMMUNITY

Alexander the Great was said to be gay. The homosexual lobby recruited Michelangelo as one of their own, but his posthumous outing is debatable. Bill Clinton wanted them in the military, he just did not want anybody to know who they were.

The man who “comes out” in a major American professional sport will be to the gay community what Jackie Robinson is to the black community.

Gays in sports are in the news. The editor of Out magazine is said to date an unnamed Major League baseball player, and he is pissed because the player will not do his so-called duty for the gay community and announce his sexuality. The Giants’ Eric Davis says he would want to know who a gay teammate is, so he could steer clear of him. Former Giant Julian Tavarez criticized booing Pac Bell fans for being a bunch of queers.

1993 American League Cy Young award winner Jack. McDowell reflects some typical views from the players’ standpoint. “I wouldn’t have a problem with it, not even taking a shower with a gay teammate,” McDowell, a Stanford man, said on Jim Rome’s “Last Word” television show.
“The problem would be the distraction in the clubhouse. That’s all the media would ask about, and it would be all his teammates would deal with.”

Former football star Billy Ray Smith seems to think that players today are more accepting than in the past, but Rome did not buy that.

“There’s no way a gay player would be accepted,” said Rome. “At least not right away.”

I say live and let live. I also say that in this great, free country of ours, everybody has the right to privacy. Nobody is obligated to come out and be a crusader like Robinson, which is what it would entail. The only obligation anybody really has is to not hurt others.

The gay player who courageously overcomes all the prejudice, and changes the culture of the game, will be an important person in our social history. That person must be allowed to make this kind of decision of his own free will. It is not right to force this kind of pressure on anybody, and it is selfish of Davis or the player’s lover to ask to him do this, disparate motives aside. It is also not realistic to expect players to have reached the point of maturity in life to overcome the inherent homophobia of pro sports.

In my pro baseball career, I have seen outlandish sexual behavior. The first point here is that straight athletes perform depraved sex acts. The idea of some of these guys doing the things they do, and then rendering judgment on another person would be laughable if it was not such a serious social issue. The second point is that if gay teammates engaged in the kind of orgiastic sex that the straights get into, revolution would ensue. It is a double standard that no player should be asked to overcome by himself.

Glenn Burke of the A’s lived in terrible fear of his sexuality being found out before dying of AIDS. AIDS is an issue that has been politicized, but it is not really an issue regarding the question of out-in-the-open gay big leaguers. Some teammates might call it a health risk, but education and knowledge over recent years discredits this concept. AIDS is a human issue, not just a gay one, as the African epidemic so tragically demonstrates.

The “10 percent theory,” meaning every A.L. team with a DH has one gay starter because they make up roughly one in 10 people, probably does not apply, because gays are less likely to be drawn to the macho world of team sports. Out of 25 roster spots, though, each team has a gay player every once in a while. To ask that lonely man to come out is not fair. Robinson is revered because he was willing to do something that was not fair to ask of him. If a gay player has the courage to do it with class and dignity, applaud him. Few people are Jackie Robinsons, however.

To paraphrase Branch Rickey, it will require “the right kind” of gay, and that person must assume the responsibility of his own free will, not because “Out” magazine tells him to.

STARGELL WAS MAN OF RUTHIAN APPETITE FOR LIFE
The man was larger than life, a Ruthian figure with an enormous appetite for life, love and baseball. His name was Wilver Dornel Stargell. When he was still in his 20s his teammates started to call him “Pops”. Long before Mark McGwire, he was considered the most likely candidate to break Roger Maris’ home run record. He was all that was good about our National Pastime.

“He changed the tone of baseball,” said long-time New York Post sportswriter Maury Allen. “Baseball clubhouses are always a little edgy. There’s usually some racial overtones. Stargell loved everybody. He was as comfortable with white players as he was with black players, which is rare.”

Stargell passed away on Monday of a kidney ailment, complicated by diabetes. He was only 61. He had been invited to Pittsburgh, where a new stadium is being opened this year, for the unveiling of statues honoring Pirate greats Honus Wagner, Roberto Clemente and himself, but poor health prevented him from attending.

Stargell broke into the Major Leagues in 1962, and his career blossomed in Pittsburgh during a time in which civil rights became an explosive, important issue.

“In the early part of his career,” recalls Allen, “Clemente took him under his wing. Clemente was the leader of the club, but because he spoke mostly Spanish, the public face of the team became Stargell. They respected each other, there was never a rivalry. With the death of Clemente in 1973, Stargell became the leader of that team. In all the years I’ve covered baseball, I’ve never seen a more joyous group than the 1979 ‘we are family’ Pirates. Willie was as good on bad days as good days. He always had a smile on his face. He had a classically poor, minority background, but he was just such an open guy.”

The 6-3, 225-pound Stargell’s family made the California migration during World War II, when jobs in the shipyards of Sausalito, San Francisco and the East Bay increased the black population of the Bay Area. He attended Encinal High School in Alameda when the East Bay was, quite possibly, the greatest gold mine of sports talent in America.

In the 1950s, Bill Russell played basketball at McClymond. Baseball stars Frank Robinson, Joe Morgan and Vada Pinson were just a few of the young pheenoms who patrolled the playing fields of Oakland, Berkeley and environs.

Stargell platooned in Pittsburgh for a number of years, hitting only against right-handed pitchers. Huge Forbes Field, with its 490-foot center field fence, and a right-center alley of 440, posed a challenge for the left-hand swinging slugger.

In 1970, the Pirates moved to cozier Three Rivers Stadium, on the banks of the Monongahela River, and in ’71 he broke through with 48 home runs. His early-season pace put him on the “Maris watch,” and while he never felled that record, he did hit 475 in a career that lasted until 1982.
“He had a tremendous physical presence,” says Allen, “but his personality was just as big, an overwhelming character. He hit the ball harder than anybody in my time. The sound of the balls he hit was dramatic. His personality in the clubhouse was just as dramatic. He was a motivating character.

“He would squeeze guys, pick people up. He was an overt, physical person. It seemed he rarely just hit a line drive. He had an uppercut to his swing that produced either enormous home runs, or very high fly ball outs. He was not a straight pull hitter, like Maris.”

Stargell was, quite simply, Ruthian in his manner on and off the field.

In 1971, the Pirates upset Baltimore for the World Championship, but Willie hit only .208 in a Series that everybody remembers for Clemente’s amazing all-around play. Throughout the 1970s, he was a major National League power threat. His monumental battles against the Mets’ Tom Seaver, the Cardinals’ Bob Gibson, and other hardballers of that era are etched in the mind as mythical struggles. He powered 44 home runs in 1973, and the Bucs captured the East Division six times in the “Me Decade.”

It was 1979, however, when his mark was made. His numbers were good, but not spectacular -.282 average with 32 homers and 82 RBIs. The Pirates wore those funky uniforms with the weird, old-fashioned style caps that season, but their offensive production was nothing to make fun of. They were known as the Lumber Company.

After beating Tom Seaver and Cincinnati in the Championship Series, Pittsburgh did a replay of 1971, squaring off against Baltimore, falling behind three games to one, then coming from behind to win it. They were led by Pops, who slammed three homers.

The sportswriters, a fickle bunch who reward or penalize some players for their personality traits (example: Barry Bonds in 2000), rewarded Stargell with a share of that year’s MVP award, which he shared with Keith Hernandez, even though the Cardinal first baseman had more impressive numbers. The scribes, as Allen indicates, simply liked Pops, and the trophy was his reward.

Stargell is remembered in Los Angeles as the only man to hit a home run into the third deck at Dodger Stadium, and in 1988 he was named to the Hall of Fame.

In the pantheon of Bay Area-bred sports heroes, the man ranks alongside Hall of Famers like Joe DiMaggio and Dan Fouts, the best of the best from an area that has always produced its share of superstars.

THE KID

Ted Williams was everything John Wayne pretended to be.
The recent deaths of Joe DiMaggio and Wilt Chamberlain are sad reminders that our
greatest sports heroes are mortal. This spurred me to try and interview the great Ted Williams.
My attempts, via the Boston Red Sox and the Ted Williams Museum in Florida, were fruitless.
That is typical. I am a member of the press, and Teddy Ballgame always felt nothing but
contempt for the root weevils that had the temerity to judge him. The fact that my admiration for
the man is boundless makes no neverminds to the Greatest Hitter Who Ever Lived!

Williams came out of the sunny playing fields of San Diego. He was filled with the
Qedipal complexities of a guy whose father was an alcoholic, and whose mother loved the
Salvation Army more than him. He was also pretty damn sure by the time he was 18 that he
would be the greatest batsman baseball would ever see. "The Kid", as his San Diego Padre minor
league teammates nicknamed him, became the Splendid Splinter in Boston.

Di Mag garnered all the good press, but Williams was braver, more handsome, and a
more rugged individualist than any athlete who ever performed. He was intensely controversial.
His conservative Republican politics were anathema to the Kennedyites in the Boston press, and
they ate him alive. He never, <I>ever</I> let 'em see it bother him on the field. In the clubhouse,
it was a different story.

Williams was once asked, "Did you realize that you were the guy John Wayne was really
playing in all those old movies?" "Yeah, sure, I guess you're right," was his typical answer.
It is typical because he acknowledges his greatness, but does not shout it from the rooftops.
Williams' Wayne-type exploits are what separate him from the rabble of sports. He lost seven
years of his playing career flying for the Marines. His service time was combat time, unlike Di
Maggio, who passed the war years playing ball in Hawaii. Had Williams played all those
seasons, he would have broken Babe Ruth's lifetime homer record (not to mention maybe hitting
60 in one of those prime years), gathered 3,000 lifetime hits, and held the all-time r.b.i. mark.<p>
Aside from being the greatest hitter and fisherman anybody ever saw, Williams was enough of
an ace jet pilot during the Korean War that John Glenn was <i>his</i> wingman. He was shot down
while battling Soviet-made Migs, and was never the same after he returned. He was so
debilitated that he hit .388 at the age of 39, and homered in his final at-bat!

Williams never tipped his cap after his rookie year, never forgetting a few unfair boos he
heard while in a rare slump. Anything not up to par was "Chinese" in his terminology, and he
never wilted from giving scientific hitting advice to modern superstars. He <I>is</I> a more
larger-than-life personality than anybody who has ever graced the sporting scene, in my
estimation.

If ever there was an athlete who should have a movie made about his life, it is Theodore
Samuel Williams.

**URBAN LEGEND GROWS IN OAKLAND**

"Yo, Frankie."

"Yer looking good, Frankie."

"Hey, Frankie, yer lookin pretty today."
One of the conundrums of the California baseball scene is the presence of transplanted New Yorkers who populate our stadiums and root for the Mets and Yankees.

Now, some of these East Coast fans are rooting for As second baseman Frank Menechino.

Menechino is a short, strong guy, and during batting practice on Friday night, he was hitting an assortment of seat-crashing bombs and line drives you could hang your clothes on. His public was out early to cheer him on. One BP pitch got away and was headed towards Menechinos dome. He did not duck.

He caught the sphere with his bare hand and rolled it back to the mound as if nothing happened.

Menechino, who has a five oclock shadow worthy of Richard Nixon, has been the savior of the franchise the first month of 2001. On Thursday against Toronto, his teammates seemed determined not to win a game that had "desperation" written all over it.

This club, favored to win, stocked with great, young athletes, is at the point where every contest is a death struggle. There is very little margin for error, not with Seattle winning every night, and the As trailing by 12.

Against Toronto, his teammates swung at bad pitches in crucial situations until Menechinos single in the fifteenth inning delivered them a win that, in October, pundits might call The Turning Point.

Menechino is hitting .274 with six homers and 16 RBIs. He plays good defense. Okay, the guy is not Rogers Hornsby, but on a team that is 11-19, desperately looking for good news, he is a thin rope that so far has kept he club from falling into the proverbial abyss. He is starting to get recognition for his play.

"I hear from the fans," says Menechino of his popularity. "I'll hear, 'hey, Staten Island. I like Pete Rose. I model myself on guys like that. The fans like players who hustle and play hard. I liked Lenny Dykstra growing up, and Chuck Knoblauch. Anybody who was my size.

"I'm kind of strong. Thats just genetics, although I lift a lot. My Dads strong. I used to work construction in the off-season when I was in the minors. Everybody hits the weights on this club, every day or every other day."

"I changed from the Hriniak method," says Menechino, referring to the hitting style taught on his old team, the White Sox. "Von Joshua taught me the Ted Williams style, which is to use my dominant upper hand. I was losing power. Now, I have more whip and feel the head of the bat meet the ball with greater power. I try to keep my weight back and throw my hands at the last second."
"We were confident coming in that Frankie could do the job," says announcer Ray Fosse. "Right now hes carrying the ball club. Maybe hes getting better pitches, although Im not that much a believer in that. Plus, hes done it defensively."

Menechino does not swing the bat any differently just because his more-heralded teammates are struggling, and does not plan to change when the As bats get hot again.

"I just play my game," he says. "I have nothing to adjust."

"Frankies taken advantage of the chance hes gotten," says Manager Art Howe. "The fans have gotten involved with him. Hes become a threat thats forced pitchers to pitch around him, thus giving people like Jason Giambi a chance to get pitches to hit."

Menechino gave Oakland a win on Thursday that Howe thinks was a key victory.

"Yeah, that was a `turning point type game," said Howe, agreeing that the lessons learned were easier to absorb with a W. "Frankie plays the game - can I say this? - `balls out."

Yes, Art, you can say it. Menechino does not know any other way to go about his business.

In Friday nights 7-3 win over Boston, Menechino went two-for-five with a double to lift his average to .274, and Saturdays loss to the Red Sox was not his fault. Menechino will never be a great star, but he is the kind of everyday player that championship clubs need to have.

"WHAT IN WIDE, WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS IS GOIN' ON HERE?"

That is what Slim Pickens' character in "Blazing Saddles" would say about the 2001 Oakland A's. These guys look like they have been reading all their press clippings. They went through the Cactus League like Patton moving through the Low Countries, but now that we are playing for real they more resemble the Federals at Manassas I.

Conversely, the Yankees were miserable in the Grapefruit League, but through the first 10 games of the regular season they are playing like the Bronx Bombers that they are. Oakland pitcher Tim Hudson said the A's had to "leave Phoenix while we're still standing," but right now an Arizona road trip that includes a night at Sanctuary and Maloney's might be what they need to loosen things up.

The A's are so tight right now you could not pull a pin out of their rears with a tractor. What in the wide, wide world of sports is goin' on here?

Well, for one, Manager Art Howe is just so darn…nice. Oh man, is he friendly! This fellow has one of the most expressive, cheerful faces in the world. He oozes comfort and friendship. He proved to be one of the greatest managers of young players the game has seen in years when he built the club from scratch. Now they are supposed to be World Beaters. U.S. Steel. The FBI. In other words, they are favored to win.

In 1971, Dick Williams instilled fear in his men like Stalin during a drunken all-nighter. He told the Reggie Jackson-Catfish Hunter-Vida Blue A's that their 2-4 start was unacceptable
and that if it continued like that they would be subject to his tender mercies. They won 101 games that year and the Series' the next two.

Okay, the game has changed. Players are different. Howe is the Modern Manager. Last year, after starting 4-8 and struggling through May and June, Art maintained that the season was long and there was time to get it together, which is precisely what did happen.

With higher expectations in 2001, the pressure is more intense. General Manager Billy Beane has a win-every-day football mentality. Multi-million dollar contracts have created this kind of atmosphere. Beane and Howe have different philosophies, and losses make their differences a potential conflict.

The checks and balances of the Howe-/Beane partnership are more a good thing than a bad thing, but even Art looks troubled this weekend while his team gets pounded by Texas. His "it's a long season" theory has changed to "last year Detroit got off to a bad start, and even though they played well the second half of the year, they never did get back in it."

It is not the Germans' 1870 encirclement of Paris - yet - but after getting creamed 13-1 on Friday night, and losing an absolute heartbreaker, 9-8, on Saturday, the Green Team (2-8) needs the kind of buttkicking that Williams used to deliver.

Cory Lidle opened things up Friday by allowing home runs to Rusty Greer and Randy Velarde (whose presence is now missed in the A's clubhouse). John McGraw or Billy Martin would have known what to do with the next hitter, Alex Rodriguez, who is not contemplating a hostile takeover of Microsoft. To quote Al Davis, at this point Rodriguez "must go down and he must go down hard."

Instead of chin music, A-Rod got four wide ones from Lidle, whose mind must have been racing a mile-a-minute, since he had to know this was an "opportunity" game for him. Andres Galarraga got hit in the third, but Howe insisted that it was unintentional.

"He crowds the plate and always gets hit by pitches," he said. "It's not my philosophy to go after guys with inside pitches. We got our butts kicked. Some managers don't take kindly to getting their butts kicked, but if we're getting hit it's our fault."

Howe, who has a "live and let live" attitude, said "Moses could've parted the waters for us and we'd still have been in trouble." Biblical references aside, on Friday night Texas was so relaxed at the plate that they went deep four times. "An eye for an eye" might have been more in order. On Saturday, they knew Barry Zito was not going to back them off the plate. The result is that the Rangers were swinging so hard they were leaving trenches in the batter's box after taking Tiger Woods-style cuts at all those fat strikes.

It is time to get back to basics and pitch inside.

WILLIAMS WOULD BE IN HALL IF HE'D BEEN IN NEW YORK

It was April, 1971. The Oakland A's, favored to win the American League West under new Manager Dick Williams, were off to a bad start. Vida Blue was rocked by Washington, 8-0, in the Presidential Opener, and on a raw, cold day at the Oakland Coliseum, the A's were swept in a double-header by Chicago. The team hit the road again, and continued to flounder. After losing, 10-5, to Kansas City on a Sunday, the club found itself bouncing through a thunder-and-lightning filled sky on the way to Milwaukee.
Williams fortified himself throughout the trip with scotch, in reaction to his team’s 2-4 record as much as the bumpy flight. By the time the plane touched down at Billy Mitchell Field, he was in a nasty mood. The players, relieved to be on "terra firma," were in jovial spirits as they boarded the bus for the Pfister Hotel. As the bus rolled through the streets, traveling secretary Tom Corwin whispered to Williams that somebody had pilfered a battery-powered bullhorn, part of the plane’s emergency equipment.

Williams stood up, walked about a quarter of the way to the back of the bus, and faced the players.

“Gentlemen,” he began, “some of you think you can be pricks. But I’ve got news for you; I can be the biggest prick of all. I’ve been mild up to now.”

Williams then told his new team that there would be no more drinking on flights, and that if they knew what was good for them, everybody would stay in their rooms the entire trip, except to come to the ballpark.

Rollie Fingers threw a four-hit shutout the next afternoon (yes, Rollie Fingers), hitting three Brewers in the process. Blue tossed a two-hitter the next day, and Oakland went on to win 101 games and the division crown.

There are many different schools of thought. Some managers talk tough, but cannot or will not back it up. Dick Williams was the old school. He talked tough, and he backed it up.

Yesterday, the Veterans Committee of the Baseball Hall of Fame announced that ex-Pirate infielder Bill Mazeroski and old-time Negro Leaguer Hilton Smith will be inducted into Cooperstown, but Williams did not make the grade.

Williams had been asked his opinion on the subject last week. Most guys reach into the Universal Cliché Handbook when confronted by such questions.

“If that’s God’s plan, then so be it.”

“I don’t worry about things beyond my control.”

“I absolutely deserve to be in there,” was Williams’ answer.

Williams Hall credentials are debatable, but the fact is that he was a first-class baseball man. He came out of Fremont High School in Los Angeles, a place that has produced more Major Leaguers than any high school in the country. Something that produces tough-as-nails managers must have been running through the water fountains at Fremont, because Gene Mauch came out of there, too.
Williams was not a great ballplayer, but like some other feisty Californians who would manage—Mauch and Billy Martin come to mind—he was a natural.

In 1966 he managed Boston’s AAA club to a championship, and the next year found himself in charge of a Red Sox team described as a “country club.” The team’s star, Carl Yastrzemski, was an overpaid, under performing outfielder. Williams lit a fire under Yaz, who won the Triple Crown and led Boston to within one game of the World Championship.

Williams could not get along with owner Tom Yawkey, one of the nicest guys in sports, and was fired a couple years later. In 1971 he was hired by The Anti-Nice. His name was Charles O. Finley.

Amazingly, these two fireballs were right for each other, for a while. Finley would call Williams at all hours of the day and night, at the hotel, at the park, at his home while barbequing on an off-day, to order line-up changes, roster maneuvers, different strategy.

Finley knew baseball and had a knack for scouting talent. The A’s were loaded, and in 1972 and ’73, the club won World Championships. At that point, Williams announced that he could no longer stand Finley, so he left to go to work for the loveable George Steinbrenner, who was in his post-illegal-contributions-to-Richard-Nixon period. Williams never actually did manage under George, who established a pattern of firing managers that lasted until the Joe Torre era.

Williams did return to lead San Diego to the Series in 1984, and had a 1571-1451 career record. One might speculate that had Williams been more personable with members of the press, like Sparky Anderson, he might be in the Hall. He and Bill McKechnie are the only managers to take three teams to the Fall Classic.

With all due respect to the loveable Bill Rigney, the Apostle Alvin Dark, the genius Tony LaRussa and the exalted Dusty Baker, Williams may just be the best manager in Bay Area history. Hall of Fame? If he had done what he did in New York, he would have been in there a long time ago.

**HEY, WE ALL KNOW ABOUT JASON GIAMBI**

_South Hills High's 43rd round pick is newest superstar._

Oh, scouting. It is not an exact science. Ask the guys who passed up on Mike Piazza when the kid was lifting weights to develop a chiseled body and demonstrating the kind of work ethic that legends are made of, while attending high school in Pennsylvania. Looking back, it would seem obvious that, while Mike may not have been first round material, this guy deserved a shot.

It was only because he is Tommy Lasorda's Godson that the Dodgers did his father, Vince, a favor by selecting him in the sixty-second round out of Miami Dade JC.
Remember Wes Parker? Slick-fielding All-Star first sacker, a Dodger favorite in the '60s? If you were checking this glovemeister out when he was growing up in Brentwood, you would surely figure he would help any Major League club. Not so.

Parker was a rich kid who begged his next-door neighbor, a Kansas City A's scout, to draft him. The scout told him to go to college, he could afford tuition at USC or the Ivy League, but Parker insisted, so the scout signed him as a free agent. The A's unloaded him shortly thereafter, and the Dodgers somehow landed him. The next thing they knew, Wes was winning Gold Gloves and helping the team to the 1965 World Championship.

Then, of course, you have your Todd Van Poppel's and David Clyde's. The list of great preps that never panned out after signing for the big dough is just too long and depressing to get into here. Besides, the point is made. Scouting is not an exact science!

Which brings us to Jason Giambi. Big guy, impressive, a great swing, natural athlete. Somehow 42 rounds went by before the Milwaukee Brewers saw fit to select Jason after his senior year at South Hills High School in baseball-crazy West Covina. You look at this guy mash nowadays and it seems hard to believe nobody saw the potential.

Giambi spurned the low Brewer offer and instead lit it up for coach Dave Snow at powerhouse Cal State Long Beach. Take that, he seemed to be saying of his draft snub. He was a freshman All-American and 1992 Olympian. So Snow saw what others missed, right?

Wrong.

The 49ers' coach, considered one of the best baseball men in the country, tried to turn Giambi into a full-time pitcher, but the kid talked his way into playing full-time. That is another aspect of his makeup that somehow has been overlooked, his personality. His will to win, to succeed, to show how good he is. This guy is a competitor.

With all due respect to the baseball intelligentsia who did not see greatness in the high school versions of Jose Canseco, Mark McGwire, Giambi, and others like them, one must take into account what weight training and, uh, supplements have done to make some players stronger and better.

Giambi is a hard-charger. He likes to party, the chicks dig him, and the dude is livin' large in Oakland and on the road. However, he works hard, too. He puts in the time, and it has paid off. Giambi was the starting first baseman for the American League All-Star team last year before winning the MVP award., hitting .334 with 78 RBIs, a .624 slugging percentage, a .474 on-base percentage, and 78 walks. He is the biggest reason Oakland won their division, and at this point he is as good a choice as anybody for league MVP, an award his good friend (former teammate and fellow East San Gabriel Valley product) McGwire has never garnered.

Furthermore, the 6-3, 235-pound Giambi is playing alongside his talented brother, Jeremy, a Cal State Fullerton product, who in a few years could be matching numbers with his Jason. For now,
however, Jason is The Man in Oakland, where he shared an East Bay apartment with his bro before getting hitched. The two live in—oh, this is rich—Las Vegas in the off-season. SoCal Giambi has the casual, inside-knowledge insouciance of a New Yorker, and has been known to intimate that some members of his Italian clan are, well, connected. Whether they are or not, no one is saying, but Jason just loves that kind of thing. He is flashy, drives a Lamborghini, and after 2001 could be one of the highest-paid athletes in the world. Still, he is not money-hungry, as evidenced by the fact that signed for less than market value ($10 million for three years) to stay with the potential-dynasty A's after the 1998 season.

Giambi actually follows in the tradition of another former Oakland Athletic, Canseco, in that he commands a lot of attention, not always for his on-field activities, but he seems to be handling everything pretty well. Party on, man.

**BARRY ZITO IS KEY TO OAKLAND'S RE-EMERGENCE**

Barry Zito reminds people of Bill Bordley. Who, you might ask? Well, for those of us who saw him, Bordley was the best college pitcher ever. Some people thought he was as good as Sandy Koufax. There are scouts and Pacific 10 umpires who say he was the best pitcher in the world, not just in college, back when he was leading USC to the 1978 National Championship.

Zito has the size, the big kick, the hesitation at the top of his motion, and the classic Koufax-style overhand delivery. He brings it well over 90 miles per hour, with hop and movement. His curveball crackles.

"He's the real deal," says USC coach Mike Gillespie, who coached Zito when the tall lefty was the top pitcher in the nation in 1999. Barry became a rich young man when the Oakland A's made him their first pick in the draft. It has all happened pretty fast.

Zito grew up in the San Diego area, rooting for the Padres. At University High School, he had a "decent" senior year, threw a fastball that topped out around 83 miles an hour, and was drafted in the fifty-ninth round in 1996. He was helped on his mechanics by a coach named Craig Weisman, and six months after graduation was throwing 10 miles an hour harder.

Barry took his 3.1 grade point average to UC-Santa Barbara and coach Bob Bronsema, which seemed like a pretty good choice at the time. Cal State, Northridge and Wake Forest liked him, too, but the SC's, Fullerton's and Miami's of the world had bigger fish to fry.

"SC seemed out of my reach," recalls Barry. "I got full financial aid to Santa Barbara, plus some scholarship help."

It happens to some kids. Tom Seaver went into the Marines and came out a ball of muscle. How can you explain it? Yes, Barry lifted weights and worked hard, but his "late" development can only be attributed to God, who seems to have a plan for armies, countries, kings and ball
players--sometimes. At Santa Barbara he was a freshman All-American, striking out 125 in 85 innings. He was up to 6-3, 195 pounds, and the scouts took note of his improved mechanics.

He started working with a San Fernando Valley trainer, Alan Jagger, and figured that he had entered a window of opportunity in which he would be eligible for some big bonus money.

"Santa Barbara just wasn't a high-profile program," he says.

For this reason, he transferred to LA Pierce College, although he says his departure from Santa Barbara was ugly. Zito showcased his wares for the 1998 draft, and was 9-2 with a 2.60 ERA and 135 strikeouts in 103 innings.

"The competition just wasn't that good in JC," says Barry.

After losing to Harbor in the state play-offs, Zito found himself drafted in the third round by Texas. He was intent on signing, but he is a savvy guy who knew his market value. The Rangers came in at $350,000, but Barry held out for more, finally took off for the Cape Cod League, and left his Dad in charge of the negotiations. The old man has a hard-nosed reputation, no doubt based on his money demands. Zito made the Cape All-Star team, but decided not to sign.

The result was a windfall for Mike Gillespie, who needed a new infusion of talent to replace all the studs who won him the '98 National Championship. Zito picked SC over Clemson, but he had to go to Grossmont College to get an A.A. degree first. He enrolled at Southern Cal in January, 1999, and immediately assumed the role of ace.

Gillespie loved him, and he loved Gillespie.

"I also experienced Rod Dedeaux," Zito says, recalling getting the chance to meet the legendary former coach. He was a consensus All-American in 1999, pitching the Trojans past Pepperdine in the West Regional before the team lost a heartbreaking 1-0 decision to Stanford's Jason Young, when a fly ball was lost in the dusk at Sunken Diamond, with the College World Series on the line. For fans that were unaware of Barry's rocky but flashy road, he seemed to be a surprise. Scouts, coaches, Gillespie; they got what they expected.

"The USC-Stanford rivalry is always a battle," Zito says of what is probably the best confrontation in the nation. "They'd come here, win two of three. We'd go there, take two of three."

The disappointment of not pitching Troy to a repeat national title quickly wore off when Billy Beane, the A's boy genius GM and architect of baseball's best story the last few years, made Barry their number one pick. $1.6 million later, Zito was lighting up the California League, where he was 3-0 with a 2.45 ERA with 62 strikeouts in 40 innings of work at Visalia. In mid-August he found himself in Midland (AA Texas League), and while he did not schmooze with George W, he did pitch four impressive games.
"It's a tiny town," Zito says of the place where the President grew up. "High school football is huge there."

He is a strikeout pitcher all the way, who has learned to trust his bullpen--or so he says--but after usually facing 130-pitch limits, when he broke into professional ball he found himself limited to 100 pitches by the protective A's. Zito's work ethic is legendary.

"I work hard because I figure the quicker I get there," he says when discussing the subject of getting ready for Spring Training, "the less I will have to catch up to people. I don't worry about the other guys, I can't get caught up in it. I don't lose sight of what I want and I know what I need to do to work hard, and have everything fall in place."

He works with a nutritionist and a personal trainer every day is the off-season. The result is that he has gained weight but lost body fat since turning pro, while putting speed on his heater. At the recent SC Alumni game, pitchers from both sides were getting tagged in a slugfest. Then Zito came in, and in one very impressive inning he mowed down the assorted pros that make up the alumni as if they had forgotten to bring their bats.

This is a kid who makes you sit up and take notice. You would mortgage the stadium to sign this guy after watching him throw 20 pitches! That is the thinking of every general manager in baseball, too. Beane probably had to hire extra secretaries to handle all the calls he got from other teams willing to take Zito off his hands. One possible trade almost went down, a blockbuster with the Angels involving Jim Edmonds. Although the details were not revealed, one can surmise that Zito was what the Angels wanted, and what the A's would not give up, even for a player like Edmonds.

Beane held on to Zito. Edmonds ended up leading St. Louis to the 2000 Central Division championship. The A's brought Zito along slowly last year. He pitched for the Sacramento Riverdogs, and finally made the jump to Oakland late in the year. Just in time.

Zito may have been just the spark the club needed to overtake Seattle by one game to capture the West Division title. In the Play-Offs, Zito’s inspired performance beating the vaunted Yankees in New York was one of the great coming out parties in a long time.

"I always knew the A's didn't want to lose me," says Zito. The prospect of Oakland developing a staff around Tim Hudson, Mark Mulder and Zito has long-time Bay Area fans waxing nostalgic for the days of Catfish Hunter, Ken Holtzman and Vida Blue.

"The A's had the best all-around minor league system in baseball my first year in the organization," says Barry. Two years later, many experts predict this will be the Team of the Decade in the first 10 years of the new century.

"We have great coaching," say Zito of his minor development. "Ron Romanek, formerly with Seattle, helped me a lot. So did the roving coaches, Curt Young, Glenn Abbott and Pete Richert."
Barry is a very nice, polite young man with Hollywood good looks. He is managed by Paul Cohen of TWC Management, and trains at Health South in the San Fernano Valley. He has a chance, if he can avoid injury unlike the great Bordley, to enjoy a great career. Watching this guy is already fun!

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICS AND HISTORY

Be forewarned. My politics are conservative and based upon a Christian worldview. I am a Reagan Republican. Deal with it or skip this chapter.

EXCERPT FROM GOD’S COUNTRY

The United States of America at the beginning of the 21st Century is the greatest, most powerful nation and empire in the history of Mankind! This fact has been reinforced by the events that followed September 11, 2001. The U.S. has achieved effective victory in the War on Terrorism, rendering Osama bin Laden and Al Quada impotent; total victory over Saddam Hussein; and laid the groundwork for American hegemony in the Middle East. Powerful U.S. Democratic, military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural influence spans every corner of the globe, in a way that no colonizing empire has ever known.

Steven Travers is America’s poet-warrior and Renaissance Man – an athlete, soldier, writer, political philosophizer, historian and patriot. He has taken on the task of outlining how America’s extraordinary place in the world came to be, and details the no-holds-barred, unflinching strategy for the future of America and the world.

“America’s Manifest Destiny” takes on this daunting task in three phases. First, it is a comprehensive history book, covering Mankind’s triumphs and failures, including the rise of Christianity and a study of all the world’s great religions; the philosophies of the most influential thinkers of all time (giving equal weight to good and evil); the wars, politics, territorial disputes, cultural influences and dramas that shaped the world and led to the rise and fall of great empires in Rome, China, England, and France; and the minds of those who are most responsible for great movements, ranging from Athenian Democracy, the anarchism of Rousseau, Thoreau and Emma Goldman, Marxism-Leninism, and finally the ultimate triumph of Jeffersonian Democracy.

The second phase is the history of America, from the Revolution to Iraq. Travers, an unapologetic conservative, boldly offers that America is the greatest country ever conceived by man, and theorizes that the young nation has not achieved this by accident. First, he offers “evidence” that America, from the Founding Fathers to the present day, is a country Divinely Inspired and protected by God, a notion that no doubt drives the liberals crazy! Rather than paper over or justify America’s controversies – the U.S.-Mexico War, Manifest Destiny, slavery, Vietnam – Travers explains each of these events with unflinching honesty, rebuffing the lies of detractors without excusing the human failings that demonstrate that this great country is neither infallible, nor impervious to future threats. The author is able to show the huge advantage that
the United States has. The country was founded by idealistic, intelligent, Christian Europeans who were brave and moral, thus inculcating a unique ideal. Geography and natural resources have proven to be of enormous benefit. But most important, by outlining the patterns of history, he demonstrates that the wise men who have built America had centuries of lessons to learn from and avoid the many mistakes of history in making the Great Experiment such a resounding success.

Finally, Travers writes that the U.S has “saved” the world and must accept its role as the greatest superpower of all time. He details the wisest plan to make use of this status in a way that will best benefit his country and the world as we enter the new Millenium. “America’s Manifest Destiny” is written from the perspective of his Christian worldview, and an interesting backstory permeates this view. That is the concept that good and evil constantly battle each other, and the author outlines his fascinating theories of how the devil has strategized and schemed to gain advantage through a never-ending series of lies, bluffs, false alliances and rear guard actions involving governments, despots, religious, political and military leaders.

“America’s Manifest Destiny” is not your average “history book,” the dry ruminations of a Ph.D. thesis. Rather, it informs the reader with stories, drama and modern cultural humor, providing a scathing review of unpatriotic Hollywood, the falsehoods of the Blacklist, liberals who find themselves on the wrong side of history, media bias, and how new communications are feeding a public thirsting for the Truth. God bless America.

**APOCALYPSE NOW: DRAWING U.S. INTO WORLD CONFLAGRATION MAY BE TERRORIST'S GOAL**

This was written just days after 9/11. Note that I place no credence on how difficult it would be for our military to fight in Afghanistan, just because the Russians and the British folded there. I knew we would kick ass, and we did. Russians and British? Are you kidding. We're America!

The goal of the World Trade Center terrorists may not be political, but it could be religious. The great conflagration religion has warned us about since pre-Christian times may be their goal. That goal could be a world Apocalypse of death, destruction and anarchy that spares no one, whether they are Christian, Jew or Muslim.

We do not know for sure that Osama bin Laden is behind this latest tragedy, but he probably is. We assume that the terrorists are Muslim extremists from the Middle East, either bin Laden’s confederates or cell splinter groups acting on his general orders. Now we must try to get into their warped minds.

Since “terrorism” is not a nation with an army, a government, a population, territory, and an economy, their end game is different from the goals of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, or even Afghanistan. Bin Laden may be evil, but he is not stupid. He therefore knows that the world, namely the United States, shall never permit Israel to be destroyed and the region completely destabilized. He knows that if pushed hard enough, we will attack. If this occurs, we have the power to virtually wipe out entire civilizations through conventional, nuclear and biological
destruction. Should we choose, we could virtually eliminate rogue states, and with them the terrorists sheltered within their borders.

This may be just what he wants.

Since Zionism will not be destroyed, just as secularism shall not be eliminated, and Iraq will not be allowed to dominate the region, bin Laden may have as his goal a worldwide *jihad*, or holy war. He has supporters, they are fundamentalist extremists, but their numbers are still relatively few. He may believe that the only way to generate enough hate and passion to create the real *jihad* that is a worldwide nightmare scenario would be to draw a huge U.S. military response. He may be willing to sacrifice millions of Muslim lives in the process.

Bin Laden may want a post-nuclear world of anarchy, a world without borders or governments, a world of chemical weapons and horror. The United States must caution against setting this kind of world in motion.

The Axis Powers wanted territory and natural resources. We knew how to stop them from getting it. Communism could be contained. Saddam Hussein was, and still is, a politician with political and economic goals. Since bin Laden believes he is doing God’s work, and has nothing to lose, this makes him a most dangerous enemy.

There also may be no good “fate” for him. If he is killed, he could be a martyr. If he is imprisoned, it could be worse. He could be used as a tool for further acts of terrorism, mostly of the hostage variety.

Now, the United States must turn this crisis into a window of opportunity. For the first time since Pearl Harbor, we have evoked some sympathy from most of the world. This means we may be able to build a real coalition.

Many have discredited the idea of getting a United Nations consensus, but this is our best chance to build a coalition. Even extremists in Damascus and Baghdad are human beings with feelings, and the concept of 20,000 or 30,000 dead innocent civilians surely must evoke at least a little sorrow.

However, a greater instinct than sympathy is self-preservation. The rogue states must have seen what happened and possibly realized, as Yamamoto did after Pearl, that a sleeping giant had been awakened. The last thing countries with much to lose want is to have the United States, armed with the will to do so, invade their countries in wholesale pursuit of the destruction of terrorists and terrorism.

If the terrorists persist, if they up the scale of destruction by using chemical and biological weapons, they will force us to strike back in ways that Middle East countries may not survive.
President George Bush can go to these states and tell them that either they are with us or they are against us. If terrorists harbored within their borders continue to hurt innocents, Bush will, to paraphrase “The Godfather”, “blame some people…”

Iran and like nations do not need to make a big show of their cooperation. They can play their games for show, demonstrating their hate for America, but they are still nations which much to lose if bin Laden, who does not, sees his jihad to fruition.

The best way to root out these terrorists is not by full-scale military action. Rather, it would be through internal intelligence, aided by Muslims with love in their hearts eradicating hate in everybody’s best interest. Furthermore, there must be bin Laden lieutenants who were sickened by the latest terrorism. Not everybody has the stomach for that kind of killing. Some of these people will turn.

This could even include some members of the Taliban in Afghanistan. It looks now like we will go to war with the Kabul regime in order to get bin Laden. This impoverished nation of despair and poverty may not have much to lose. On the other hand, do they really want to place themselves in the way of American force? We are not a starving Soviet Army representing a dying empire. We can occupy their nation and roll over resistance in ways the Russians never could. The big question in all this may be whether the Taliban wants to commit suicide.

Surely, too, some people in that country still have enough human instinct to realize that being on the side of the killers of 30,000 civilians is to be on the wrong side of the moral equation.

If we kill lots of Afghans, we quickly lose any moral edge we may, for a short time, possess in the Middle East. For these reasons, Bush should attempt a real coalition and resist the immediate and popular call for cowboy revenge. What is happening now is the logical conclusion of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. We have been studying terrorism and predicting for some time that it is the greatest threat of this new century.

Nations like China and Russia have a role to play, as well. China may feel safe from terrorism for now, but they could be a target when they host the 2008 Olympics. For this reason, they have a vested interest in joining with us.

A top Kennedy advisor once said that America is “the least exclusive club in the world with the highest dues.” Freedom is not free, and now is the opportunity for a new generation to accept this challenge. God bless this beautiful nation.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HEALTH CARE

Health care is the great pet issue of Democrats; of liberals and the Left; and of non-Americans (Canada, Cuba, et al). It is an emotional issue and easy to exploit. After all, everybody can use health care. Getting sick is something that happens to all people, so health care affects us all, right?
That is the point, and therefore the point of this essay. In assessing the issue, we must use history as a template. Let us consider that there are many bad things that existed throughout Mankind's existence, until America came into being. The existence of America was not compatible with the existence of these bad things. America was stronger than the bad things, and therefore quelled it from existence. First and foremost, consider slavery, a thriving international institution that propelled trade between legitimate nations going as far back as history can recall. Along came America. Four score and seven years later, America was too strong for slavery to continue to exist as a legitimate enterprise. America is where slavery came to die.

Now, let us apply this method of causation to health care. Depending on whether you believe the Darwinians or the Creationists, man has existed on this planet for millions of years or 13,000 years. Either way, for all the time that man lived on the planet, our relationship with God or with mortality or whatever you wish to call it has been the same: we are born, we live a few years, we get sick, and we die. Some people died from other causes, but by and large, for thousands and thousands of years, life expectancy was roughly 20 or 30 years.

By 1787, the year the U.S. Constitution was written, the average lifespan was probably a little bit better, about 50-60 years. Anesthetics did not exist. "Surgery" was little more than butchery. It was not until the Civil War that doctors discovered that using dirty scalpels caused infections. Doctors were still "bleeding" patients. Leeches were still used. Strange home brews and elixirs of little value were all that could be offered.

If a person came down with cancer, it was a virtual death sentence. Heart attacks were fatal most of the time, as there was little to combat them beyond rest and bad care. Little was known about nutrition, exercise and other elements of good health.

Over the next 200 years, America happened. Everything that we associate with America occurred: freedom, Democracy, capitalism, entreprenurialism, investment. Many of these concepts are viewed as evil by the Left, but the co-existence of these concepts with human progress is impossible to discount. To conceive that all the progress since 1787 has happened despite America, despite these concepts, is to make observation of that with which is obviously placed before thine eyes and to state the lie that it is not there.

There are a number of reasons why medical progress has made progress by leaps and bounds beyond all conception since 1787. Christianity certainly plays a role, since missionary zeal and charity have propelled much of this progress. However, Christianity had been around a long time prior to America, and during much of this time doctors were little more than barbers.

Obviously, the Age of Enlightenment, the Age of Reason, the Great Awakening; whatever we want to call scientific discovery occurred mostly in Europe prior to America, although it should be noted that great discoveries and invention occurred in Asia Minor while Europeans were still cave-dwellers. Then came Islam, and since then little progress in these areas happened in that part of the world. What does this mean? No commentary is offered. Arrive at your own conclusions.
While we marvel at the work of Galileo, Da Vinci and Copernicus, the pace of advancement in their day was a snail's pace compared with the pace of advancement once America arrived on the scene in all its glory. Why has America accomplished things that the rest of the world did not even dare to imagine; in all areas of discovery? Why, in little over 200 years, has a single nation, starting out as a few agrarian colonies separated by oceans from the salons of commerce, politics and culture, eclipsed previous empires and powers? Frankly, the answer to that question is quite obvious, but it is best to discover it on your own, not at my prompting.

As America grew, medical breakthroughs took place at breakneck (pardon the pun) pace. Polio, vaccines, childhood diseases, dietary discoveries, cancer, heart disease, lately AIDS research; through these advancements, mostly in, inspired by or privately funded by America, life improved. Life span and quality of life got better and better and better. People now live until they are 90, even 100 years old. 40, as they say, is the new 30. 50 is the new 40. 60 will soon be the new 50 . . . and on and on and on. Seniors no longer retire. They are active, healthy, vibrant, and enjoy themselves in all ways. A 72-year John McCain is running for President and does not seem to be the worse for wear.

Why has health care improved so much in America? Is it because the government mandated that it be so?

No!

The reason, boiled down to its barest essential, is because smart people who could be anything choose to enter medicine. Why? If you think that it is all about benevolence, you are wrong. They do it because they can make a great living from it. This is the reason most people choose any career.

Why, once these smart people get through medical school, survive the boards and rigorous internships, do they discover great things? Why do they produce great new pharmaceutical drugs? Why do they invent new products and services that help people live better and longer?

Is it because the government funds them, prompts them, and inspires them? Okay, the government sometimes gets involved in research and development, but to fool ones' self into believing this is the driving force behind medical advancements is tomfoolery. Liberals will argue against this. Liberals - and this is just the latest in the longest list known to man - would be wrong!

Health care improves mostly because of the profit motive. The profit motive drives individuals and corporations. The profit motive is most effective in the United States of America. Now, this is established. Next, we get to the result of all these health care improvements. Things that were unheard of 20 years ago are now available. Miracle drugs, stents, new technology, brain function, knowledge; it goes on and on.
How does this affect people? Well, ailments that 20, 30 years ago either killed them or left them in comas, bedridden, paralyzed, or in a state of recluse, can now be cured. Children can run free. Women can live without pain. Elders can hit the golf course. All is well.

But wait. There is a catch.

Let us get back to those smart people who, 20 or 30 years ago, decided to enter medical school, and who later on work in R&D, in cutting-edge hospitals, corporations and pharmaceutical companies.

Well, how did they accomplish all these wonderful things? First, they had to pay their way through medical school. Maybe they were on scholarship, financial aid, or whatever, but those professors' salaries, the books, the classrooms, the labs, and all the daily accoutrements of existence had to be paid for by somebody.

Then, when they became doctors and researchers, somebody had to pay their salaries. Somebody had to pay for their staffs, their equipment, their offices; somebody needed to pay for the time it took to accomplish excellence! Did this money come from the government? 90 percent always has and always will come from private industry by virtue of the profit motive.

The Apostle Paul in the New Testament states that greed and money is the root of all evil, and this may be so, but God does work in mysterious ways. There is a difference between greed and making an honest living in an honorable profession. Being a doctor is an honorable profession. Are there evil, greedy doctors? Yes? But lumping them all together because they mostly make a good living providing valuable services is not effective public policy. Yet nationalized health care is to do just that.

Let us get back to the incredible pace of medical advancements over the past 20 to 50 years and how that affects the average person. In 1970 a woman brings her child to a doctor with a severe malady. The doctor diagnoses it and says that, sorry, there is little that can be done. The child dies, or lives a shortened life, or a life of severe pain and reduced quality.

38 years pass, and some $1 billion has been spent on this particular affliction, with the result being that the malady which sidelined a child in 1970 can now be cured. That $1 billion has been spent on the educations of thousands of doctors, plus all the ancillary costs associated with arriving at the cure in question.

Let us, for a minute, remove this question from the medical arena and make it something else. Let us call it an automobile. In 1970, the 18-year old kid would like a hot rod car worthy of Le Mans. This car, however, is not available to the public. It is a specialty car available only to race car drivers. He is not a race car driver, cannot afford it and therefore does not own it. In 2008 the 18-year old kid still wants that car. Now, it is a luxury car that only the richest of the rich can afford. The auto industry has figured out a way to streamline this car so that people other than race car drivers can have it, but the 18-year still cannot afford it and still does not own it. Is it society's responsibility that he have it? Of course not.
Apply this logic to anything: real estate, boats, high-tech equipment. By and large, people buy what they can afford and it is to the benefit of the economy that the government not interfere. This is the basic concept of supply and demand that drives the marketplace, and to paraphrase Winston Churchill, it might be the worst form of economic policy known to man, with the exception of all other forms of economic policy known to man.

So, to break it down, diseases that for thousands of years killed or sickened people can now be cured, only it costs a lot of money to accomplish this task. People, however, want to be cured. If they are sick and know that a cure is available, they want it . . . at all costs, especially if those costs are absorbed by somebody else. If the cost is $1 million, just to use a round number, obviously this is unaffordable to all but maybe five percent of the populace . . . but they want it anyway. In the old days, they were told they would not survive the malady. They accepted this prognosis because it was just the way it was. Now it is different. Why? Because, mostly in America, the prognosis has changed. They know that a cure is available.

Ah, therein lies the Shakespearean rub. In America. These medical breakthroughs take place mostly in America. Sure, there are good doctors and some fine research that takes place in England, France and maybe a small handful of other nations, but let's face it: 90 percent of this kind of advancement is, like 90 percent of everything good that has happened for 200 years, something that happens, as they say, only in America.

Well, it takes little in the way of logic to see where this is going. If it can be found only in America, they all will come to America. Thus we see that America's great health care helps to drive illegal immigration, among other things. We see that Englishmen leave England and Canadians leave Canada to seek medical care in America that is available . . . only in America.

Leftists will state that Cuba's socialized medical care, for instance, is the best in the world. This is not true, but they say it anyway. There is a world in Webster's dictionary that defines such a thing.

Okay, so we have established that the best health care is in America; that the profit motive is the driving force behind it; and that because it costs a lot of money to achieve the advancements, it therefore stands to reason that it costs a lot of money to purchase it.

Okay, we now arrive at the moral equation. You thought I would never get there, right? As a free marketeer, an unreconstructed conservative, even though my logic was unflawed it was, like the works of Ayn Rand, purely objectivist and therefore lacking in sympathy. Not so fast. Conservatism is the most compassionate of all forms of ideology. However, the pure logic - as opposed to emotional hand-wringing of the Left - that drives it makes it too often appear to be unfeeling.

Health care is not the same as buying an auto, or a luxury boat, or a hot new stereo system. To be healthy is much more important to the five-year old, the 18-year old, the 50-year old and the 85-year old, than a mansion or sports car.
So, how do we make it available and affordable? Well, according to Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, we make it a government program. Since the founding of America, successful government programs are few and far between. What is the government good at? Well, a few things. Keeping Communists from invading our shores. Defeating Hitler. Building highways and bridges. There is zero evidence that government ever has been or ever will be good at providing health care, which as I have so expertly demonstrated in the preceding paragraphs is successful when the private sector engages in it for profit.

Okay, fine. But we still get back to the moral equation. Do we stand around and watch the poor black kid, the illegal Mexican, or the average white blue collar guy, get sick and die because the treatment he/she needs costs too much?

Well, the world is not fair. Advancement and technology outpaces need. People live and die. This is our relationship with God. It cannot be prevented. Democrats want you to believe that but-for greedy health care providers you too will never die, The serpent said something similar to Eve in the Garden, too. All people cannot be treated and made whole all the time, especially when so many are poor and from other countries only because the health care they seek is only found here. This is a basic fact of life . . . and death.

What about volunteerism? A fine concept, well embraced by Biblical principles. Take Doctors Without Borders, for example. It is a noble ideal, to give of one’s time in order to help the needy. Nobody should dissuade against the notion. But consider also the cause-and-effect of preventive medicine, or preventive technology. Consider on the one hand one doctor treating one patient at a time in, say, Guatemala or Ethiopia. Consider also a large corporation that creates, via technology, some device that feeds thousands, or prevents thousands from getting sick in the first place. Both concepts have their place. The volunteer will always be necessary. The corporation that prevents disease or starvation will invariably succeed because . . . the profit motive. There is an ideology - liberalism - embraced by a political party - the Democrats - that will have you believe the myth that the profit-driven corporation is evil. They know it is not true. They say it anyway.

Finally, let us re-visit the cost of health care. Sure, it is expensive because the training, research and development is costly, but it is mostly expensive . . . because of trial lawyers.

Its is mostly expensive because of trial lawyers like John Edwards. This man represents the essence of what is wrong with the tort system in America. He took corporations to trial, played to the fears of mis-led juries, and got super-wealthy extracting enormous sums from the very corporations that discover and produce the very treatments they need to get healthy. One has to admit, however, the man has chutzpah. Despite his complicity in making the system what it is, he with a straight face will stare into the camera and state the lie that only the government can reduce the health care costs he is responsible for making so expensive.

Of course, since medical advancements are so far ahead of the economic curve, the high costs of cutting edge treatment cannot entirely be avoided, but how many billions of dollars have the trial
lawyers cost the medical industry? Doctors, hospitals, pharmaceuticals; they all factor these costs into their products, their services and the insurance policies that must absorb the brunt of the John Edwards's of the world.

This is the truth about health care.

**OBAMA CANDIDACY COULD BE REFERENDUM ON BLACK AMERICA**

By STEVEN TRAVERS

If Barack Obama is the Democrat nominee for President, it could have the potential of becoming a referendum on black America. I say this not because I want it to happen. Frankly, I hope I am wrong, but as a historian and political analyst it is increasingly becoming something Ray Charles could have seen from a mile away.

If this happens, it will be divisive. It will not be good for America, and most important, it will not be good for black America (in the short run; in the long term it may be). In researching my book *One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation*, I spoke to some 40 participants in a 1970 football game seen as the seminal moment in the Civil Rights Movement. I discovered some profound truths. One was that descriptions of the same thing seen by human eyes is very different depending on whether the words, and perspective, come from a black or a white; a Southerner or a Northerner (or Westerner).

So, there is no question that the "black experience" exists and, as a white male, I cannot truly know it. That does not prevent me, as an educated, moral (albeit flawed, sinful) Christian with an inquiring mind, a voracious appetite for books and reading, a desire to improve my country, to help my fellow man, and a quest for knowledge; from understanding it pretty darn well. In researching and writing a book about it I certainly have taken to this subject beyond a merely passing interest.

There is undoubtedly no question that there have been major gains in black rights in this country and the entire world since the 1950s and 1960s. Has Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "dream" been realized? Maybe it has, yet if Dr. King were alive today he would be troubled by the following question.

Who has a better future in America: the 12-year old black kid growing up in segregated Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, or the 12-year old black kid growing up in a crack-house-and-gang neighborhood in Compton, California in 2008?

The answer to this question is complicated. I am not saying that I have the answer. The subject alone is fraught with explosive, Politically Incorrect peril. Just bringing it up is controversial, but anybody willing to analyze it with an open mind (as I believe Dr. King would), in my view, consider it a legitimate issue. Certainly, answering the question "Well, obviously the 12-year old black kid growing up in a crack-house-and-gang neighborhood in Compton in 2008 is better off
than the same kid growing up in segregated Birmingham in 1963" would not be taken seriously. Maybe the kid in 2008 is better off, but if he is, one does not arrive at this conclusion easily and it is not "obvious."

The black kid in 1963 Birmingham is more likely to have a father at home; go to church on Sundays; avoid drugs and violence. He (or she) faced legitimate prejudice and was not immune to violence, as the little black girls killed in a KKK bombing that year in "Bombingham" were not immune to it. But out of this environment, the American Dream could still be realized. At least two high-profile Americans, Condoleezza Rice and Clarence Thomas, did just that.

What are the chances that a Secretary of State Rice or a Justice Thomas emerges from the mean streets of modern-day Compton, Watts, East Oakland, Harlem, Gary, Indiana?

The Obama candidacy has been viewed as unifying, his speeches as inspirational. It looked for a while that he would be the Democrat nominee. That inevitability is no longer inevitable. The media and the country are now investigating his life, and do not discount the ruthlessness of Hillary Clinton, who will do anything she can to get elected. Considering the infamous "Clinton body count" of dead rivals, snitches and enemies that litter the Clinton past, one fears for Obama's life, but to eliminate him with "extreme prejudice" is no longer an option for the Clintons. That would be too obvious. Still, if Obama were to get the nomination, this threat will be discussed within his circles, and will be a factor in the decision not to make Senator Clinton his Vice Presidential running mate. Obama will deny it, but that will not change the fact that it will be a factor.

If Obama somehow overcomes the Clinton's strongarming of superdelegates, disenfranchisement of black rights, manipulation of returns, and outright changing of rules after the fact in allowing votes from Michigan and Florida to be counted for her; if after all that he is still standing, then America will focus like a laser beam on who he truly is.

So far, he is a mystery man. His life is a hodgepodge of places, ethnicities and religions. He did not grow up in a "black environment," which goes back to the "1963 Birmingham vs. 2008 Compton" argument and inevitably leads to the question: could Obama have achieved the success he has attained if he attended Compton High School instead of the prestigious private Punahou High School in Hawaii that is his alma mater? The answer to that question: it is possible, but so far from possible that it is, for all practical purposes, that with which is impossible. He became well educated at a time when Affirmative Action favored blacks. Whether he owes his Ivy League pedigree to this policy is not known, but it will be. He became a "community organizer" in Chicago, whatever that means (?). That sounds like Ray Liotta in Goodfellas. When he takes a date to the Copa and is given star treatment, he is asked what he does for a living.

"I'm a union delegate," he replies. Oh.

In mob-controlled, ultra-corrupt Chicago, being a "community organizer" or a "union delegate" does not come with positive connotations. Eventually, Obama was elected to the Illinois state
senate. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004 when his Republican opponent, discovered to frequent swing clubs, was kicked out by his party (the Democrats would have hailed him a Barney Frank-style hero). The election result was not as one-sided as Saddam Hussein's electoral victories prior to America putting an end to them, but it was close to it.

He was immediately elevated to the role of "Presidential contender," given the keynote address at the 2004 national convention before taking his seat. He has campaigned for the White House almost non-stop ever since, and has virtually zero record to examine in the Senate (having missed most of the votes). There is no long career in Washington; no governorship; no substantial record in business, academia or literary circles; no heading of a prestigious foundation or authorship of major legal precedents; certainly no ambassadorial postings, cabinet positions, or formulations of important policy at any level.

There is only Barack Obama's life.

Now, Barack Obama is not a "black man." He is a bi-racial man, the son of a black father who skipped out and a white mother who broke the conventions of her youth. He lived in Hawaii and Indonesia. He was exposed to the Muslim faith at a young age. He was raised a Christian and eventually found his way to Harvard and then Chicago.

Obama probably did not want to be the "black candidate," but he can thank Hillary Clinton, the Democrat Party, and the black voting blocs within that party, for painting him as being just that. At this point, like it or not, there is no turning back. He is the black candidate.

Senator John McCain is the ultimate fair political campaigner. He will not pick Obama's life apart, but the media will. Without a public record, they will have only his personal life, his family, his associations and his actions to judge him by.

What we know of Barack Obama so far, in my view, is only the tip of the iceberg. Conservative "opposition research" groups are holding back what they have until he gets the nomination, and will not make use of it until late September and October, when it will have maximum effect. We only know now what the mainstream media and the Clinton's have been willing to leak out. They have had to walk a tightrope since they must woo the same constituency: liberal Democrats who believe minorities can do no wrong.

So, if Senator Obama gets the nod, his life will be picked apart come late summer and fall, and race will be the overriding theme. As I say, I do not welcome this or think it will be immediately helpful to America. As a political thinker I predict it will get ugly.

First, there are Obama's associations. His wife has already stated, despite her own great successes and opportunities, she has never really been proud of America. She has written that, despite being welcomed into the highest level of Ivory Tower academia, she never felt welcome. Like her husband, her academic career came during a period of Affirmative Action favoritism towards people like herself. Whether she benefited from it or not is not known. Like her husband, it will be known.
Obama's pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, has been quoted on tape saying things so abominable as to be beyond the ken. The unfortunate result of Wright's incendiary comments are that many Americans, upon analyzing what he says, will conclude that:

- Many blacks feel that way.
- Many Democrats feel that way.

This will not benefit blacks or Democrats. Obama has desperately tried to distance himself from him. He will not be able to accomplish this task in effective manner.

So, this leaves us with the dynamic of the 2008 Presidential election between the moderately conservative Senator John Sidney McCain III (R.-Arizona) vs. the liberal Senator Barack Hussein Obama (D.-Illinois). The more Obama tries to make people forget his middle name is Hussein, the more he will remind them of it. His middle name will hurt him. The Republicans will not need to exploit this fact. The facts will simply be an open sore.

Senator McCain will stick to the issues and offer only praise for Senator Obama. As hard as he tries, and as hard as Obama tries, the election will steer towards a referendum on black America.

This issue has been the elephant in the room since the 1960s, when it was front and center. For decades, white people have avoided the subject. As a general rule, whites have acknowledged that blacks were treated brutally in America; that this has been the reason for their many woes; and that to dispute this notion is racist in nature.

Conservatives have veered from this concept to varying degrees, but their racial arguments have not been made front and center issues in a national campaign. They have succeeded in numerous tries for the White House on the strength of personal responsibility, low taxes, anti-Communism, anti-terrorism, family values, and patriotism, but never overt racial opinions. They have tried to woo the black vote but failed. They simply have not needed it. Beginning in 1968, they husbanded the South back into the political mainstream appealing to white voters using Orange County, California-style moderation.

The racial dynamic will change in 2008. The Republicans will use history as their ally. First, they will paint themselves as the party of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator. They will point out that the Democrats were the party of the Confederacy, of Jim Crow, and that it was their party that sponsored the Dixiecrats of 1948; their party that blocked President Dwight Eisenhower's civil rights legislation of the 1950s; and it was the Republicans who crossed partisan lines to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1965. Furthermore, they will demonstrate that when conservatism excised its extremist elements, conservatism morphed with Christianity and became the winning ideology of 2,000 years of history. It was this concept that transformed the South into the mainstream and, as Jim Murray of the Los Angeles Times wrote the day after the 1970 USC-Alabama game, "ratified the Constitution."
Faced with the stark contrast of a liberal "black" Democrat and a moderately conservative, elderly white Republican, voters will for the first time honestly address race for what it is. This will be the first time they have done that since the 1960s, when they favored Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan's law 'n' order stance against campus protest and Black Panther militancy. The eventual results: landslides in 1972, 1980 and 1984.

Many whites, and many minorities, will ask questions of the black race they have heretofore avoided. Many theories, speculations and scenarios will be posited. For instance, the question of black suffrage and its effect on the modern black community will be asked. The longheld notion that blacks lag behind in academics, economics and cultural success because of slavery will be dispelled by a thoughtful analysis of, for starters, two groups: Jews and Vietnamese.

If one were to use *ipso facto* logic to create a causal explanation of black failure, thus stating that discrimination is the answer, then the Jewish question will be brought forth. If discrimination and historical hatred equaled generational failure, Jews would be the most unsuccessful race of people on the face of the Earth. No race has ever suffered greater hatred than Jews during the German Holocaust and the Soviet gulags of the 20th Century. In a few scant decades Jews, finding America to be the new Promised Land, elevated themselves to the most successful group by percentage of population in the world.

Next, take the Vietnamese. After the Vietnam War ended in 1975, millions of "boat people" came to America. Nobody has ever had less. They looked different, did not speak the language or worship Christ, and were often scapegoated for our failures in that war. They had no power, no lobby, no help. Into the inner cities they suddenly descended. They could be found in the worst neighborhoods, where blacks peddled drugs, prostituted their women on street corners, and languished homeless in urine-soaked corners. The Vietnamese slowly built small businesses. A typical progression of experience for patrons of these stores was an introduction to the "mom 'n' pop" owners; a few years later expansion and improvement of the operation; followed by word that their son or daughter was entering Cal or UCLA; and later graduating with honors, courtesy of the American Dream. In the mean time, the patron continued to sidestep the black peddlers of flesh and drugs outside the door.

The American voter will be given an opportunity to judge the Great Society, President Lyndon Johnson's social programs of the mid-1960s. At the heart of the program, which prompted LBJ to tell aide Bill Moyers that they were "handing the country to the Republicans for the next 50 years," are voting rights. Yet, Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton will still have you believe that in 2000 and 2004, *eeeevil* Republicans "disenfranchised" black voters by "creating" long lines at polling places, thus ensuring President George Bush's elections. The American voter will give pause to this notion, then suddenly it will occur to them that avoiding "disenfranchisement" can be accomplished by picking up a registration form at the post office down the street; filling it out; putting a stamp on it and mailing it back in with a request for an absentee ballot; filling that out; affixing a stamp and mailing it back in. This entire subversive act can be accomplished for 82 cents, the cost of two stamps. The pen used to fill the thing out can be borrowed. For that matter, so can the stamps.
The American voter will consider Affirmative Action and ask: does it really work? Seriously, does it really work? The cases of Senator and Mrs. Obama will be studied. If indeed it turns out they did get into Ivy League colleges based on this government program, then many will argue that this demonstrates the viability of the program. But black conservative talk show host Larry Elder offers a different perspective. Elder entered Brown University Law School through Affirmative Action, but says that had he not benefited from this program, failure was not his only option.

Had the hallowed halls of Brown not been opened for him, Elder says he most likely would have taken his education at Cal State Northridge and Southwestern Law School in his hometown of Los Angeles. He would have worked hard, studied, made good grades, graduated, passed the bar and entered practice. Using the same diligent methods, he would have forged a successful career on his own.

The "war on drugs" will become an issue worth studying. The government's failure to win this battle is so obvious that I need not detail it herein. The worst victims of this failure? Black America (which leads blacks to call it a racist conspiracy). Prior to the "war on drugs," black drug addiction was relatively low. Occasionally a black singer like Billy Holliday would overdose, but for the most part blacks kids grew up clean and sober in functional households. Today, drug dealing is viewed as upward mobility in the inner city. Black preachers like Jeremiah Wright may address personal responsibility, but he also invents bogus claims that the CIA infiltrated the 'hood with drugs, and infests the colored population with the AIDS virus, in order to keep the black man down. The American voter in the past has disregarded these outlandish statements, apologizing for black plight by stating that whether these theories are stupid or not is immaterial and understandable since blacks have the right to complain louder and longer. However, if a black man is running for President, the issue of black accountability, honesty and truthful soul-searching will be highlighted. Whites will consider the fact that they have been soul-searching for decades and perhaps it is the time for blacks to do the same.

What about the "war on crime?" Perhaps it is not fair to assess this much cause-and-effect to the event, but the very year that LBJ initiated his programs, the "war on crime" being part and parcel of the Great Society, the black Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts broke out in flames. I cannot offer a plausible reason for this, but I do know that in the late 1960s, the more liberal policies were enacted, thus bringing more "freedom" to black people, the more riots broke out in Newark, Chicago, Detroit, and seemingly every other big city north, south, east and west. The American voter will be forced to stare at the "war on crime" and its attendant social policies, all based on "helping" black Americans, and conclude that prescriptions offered by Democrats have resulted in an expansion of black-on-black crime so horrifying as to be beyond belief. If one were to add up the body count over the decades and attribute it to white genocide, it would approach the casualties brought on by Genghis Khan or the Roman Empire at its most terrifying. Because it is black brothers and sisters killing each other, we shut our eyes to it, ignore it, and pretend it will go away. If it becomes part of a national referendum on the progress of American blacks, American blacks will not benefit from the conclusions reached about them.
Then there is the "war on poverty." Daniel Patrick Moynihan was once considered a liberal Democrat. In 1965 he suggested to LBJ that in order to stop the decline of the black family, the Democrats stop "helping" them and, instead institute a policy of "benign neglect." If he were to utter such a thing today at the Democrat National Convention he would be booed off stage. More of a moderate Republican by today's standards, Moynihan's expertise was put to use by Richard Nixon, but by then LBJ's programs were institutionalized. To disband them was by then to gore far too many sacred oxes than can be allowed in Washington.

Have blacks improved economically since 1965? Absolutely, but not because of any government program. They have benefited from the success of America, in which a rising tide lifts all boats. While it is true that government intervention and court decisions have outlawed discriminatory practices, those practices have only been "barred" through a change in hearts and minds; a new society in which prejudice is the ultimate sin, its practitioners disgraced with the least forgiveness or attempt at understanding by a Politically Correct world of "mind police." They have succeeded because more and more of them grow up in predominantly-white neighborhoods and are admitted to predominantly-white colleges. There are exceptions; traditional black colleges produce successful graduates, and neighborhoods like the Baldwin Hills in Los Angeles are home to black professionals, but the fact that these are exceptions makes the point.

It is now 2008 and it is time to address history, past and present. It is time to ask, How long is too long? When is enough enough?

This is a basic concept. Is black oppression still a reasonable explanation for current black failure, or has enough time passed to say that it no longer is? Consider that Barack Obama is an example of a prevalent racial dynamic, that of the bi-racial, multi-cultural man. We are now seeing more and more multi-racial people; combinations of black, white, Latino, and Asian ethnicities. This is the "rainbow" that Jesse Jackson has long spoken of, yet can this dynamic exist side-by-side with the concept of direct hostility towards African-Americans?

Former Democrat Vice Presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro said that Obama would not be in the position he is in if he were not black, just as she said she would not have been Walter Mondale's 1984 running mate had she not been a woman. Whether Ferraro meant this or not, her words derive from a reality that cannot be ignored anymore, which is that blacks are now a favored class in America.

Whites who espouse even controversial opinions about blacks (like this essay, probably) are excoriated with false claims of racism instead of their opinions given thoughtful validity. A public figure can get away with a long laundry list of sins, but the mere sniff of racism is inexcusable. The least wayward comment or action is immediately picked apart in an act of ultra-sensitivity.

There are millions of Americans who have been observing this for a long time and are sick and tired of it. They have said nothing, at least publicly, but they are observing the Obama candidacy, the Jeremiah Wright controversy, and a host of other factors - black comics, black pundits, black commentators, black actions - and are now ready to say, "Enough is enough." Some are even
willing to quote Peter Finch in *Network*: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not gonna take it anymore." Some call is "white backlash" or "angry white males." I call it a truth offensive.

Blacks are the new scared cows of modern America. Every effort is made to include them. Every group, every organization, is not considered complete without at least one black face, regardless of ultimate qualifications. Asians are particularly dissatisfied with blacks, since they are exceptionally bright scholars yet consider themselves shortchanged by efforts to favor African-Americans.

In conservative political circles, being black is an enormous advantage. In liberal political circles blackness, at least up to the Clinton-Obama death struggle, is almost a bullet-proof shield against criticism. If Clinton prevails, the required reprimands to be paid to blacks for "stealing" Obama's "rightful" Presidency will be enormous.

Blacks are great sports heroes in America because they are obviously the best athletes in the world. Campuses from one end of America to another are filled with young black men and women getting free educations from elite institutions despite the fact that their grades in high school fall far short of the average student at those schools.

Black professional sports superstars are multi-millionaires in a high-performance society in which they would be hard-pressed to find gainful employment otherwise. Recently, HBO ran a documentary about the black boxing legend Joe Louis. The premise of the program was that America "betrayed" Louis. This is ridiculous. Louis made $400,000 in 1938, a figure of unimaginable wealth while the Great Depression still raged. Baseball great Joe DiMaggio made less than $20,000 that year and never made more than $100,000. Louis never worked a real job in his life; he came to boxing in his early teens. Apparently he did not hire an accountant to pay his taxes and was taken by shady promoters. Was this America's fault? Was paying his taxes simply not part of his responsibilities? Later he was hounded for failing to pay taxes, but in the country that "betrayed" him, Louis made and lost millions without ever working nine-to-five. Avoiding an IRS audit was an available, rather easy task that he never bothered with. He enjoyed a free lunch from one end of the country to the other until the day he died.

*Nobody* provides more opportunities, or is fairer to African-Americans, than sports coaches; football, basketball, to a lesser extent baseball. Alabama's Paul "Bear" Bryant and USC's John McKay were pathfinders in this area. I *guarantee* from personal experience that 60 percent of these coaches are Republicans.

The military offers a wonderful chance at upward mobility for those blacks who are not division I scholarship athletes, and I *guarantee* 60 percent (or more) of the officers and enlisted personnel are Republicans. Wherever impressive people are found, so are found Republicans. Wherever the unimpressives are found . . . well, commentary is not necessary.

Blacks struggled against many obstacles. My book, *One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation*, details their fight to play football in the Southeastern Conference. The point is that while they did have to fight, they also did eventually get to play. It
was bad, but it was not so bad that it could not be overcome. Whites of good conscience joined their struggle by the millions.

Compare that with, for instance, "Jews who overcame Nazi Germany," or "Political prisoners who beat the Soviet Gulag system," or "Chinese dissidents who successfully spoke against against the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s." These narratives do not exist because the chance for such people to "rise above" their oppressors was zero, as opposed to America where the chances, while not great, were still good enough to eventually become reality.

The fact is that blacks use slavery as a bludgeon against this country; an excuse for any behavior or wild statement they want to make. They have been getting away with it for years, but enough is enough. When blacks study history, they are too often obsessed with slavery and "black history," instead of a study of all history. America's achievements, inventions, economy; its destruction of Nazi Germany, winning of the Cold War; its bringing freedom to billions; its opportunities and blessings which are beyond the ability to conceive; are many times within black circles forgotten or made fun of, overshadowed by slavery.

I recall sitting behind a black woman during 1998's Saving Private Ryan. When the George Marshall character quoted a letter extolling America's efforts to bring the "blessings of freedom" to a world threatened by Adolph Hitler, she scoffed, as if defeating Hitler was a business decision taken in order to upgrade a white corporation's profit margin, not a necessary sacrifice made by (mostly white) America in order that the entire world might benefit.

Blacks often fail to even understand the slavery issue in its entirety. Consider that prior to the birth of America, slavery was a thriving industry that existed as legitimate trade between nations and empires for thousands of years. It was brought to America by the English, the Spanish, the Dutch, the Portuguese and others. It was "inherited" by America.

Blacks are correct in assessing that the Founding Fathers should have abolished it when the nation was founded. They are apparently unaware of the plan the Founders put into place, which was to allow it to continue until 1808, at such time the importation of slaves was to end (which it did). The idea was that when those slaves alive in 1808 eventually passed away, so to would slavery. Blacks often cite the way slavery broke up families, which it did, but it was the very fact that families were generally not broken up which allowed slavery to continue. Instead of dying off, slaves married, re-generated, and their children became slaves until 1863.

Four score and seven years after the birth of America, it was no longer a legitimate enterprise. It was ended on American soil by Americans who used laws written in America to end it. No nation conquered us and forced us to do it at the barrel of a gun (unless you count Lincoln's Union as a nation). When it ended here, this "thing" that had stained the world for centuries was gone for good. America is where slavery came to die.

Blacks often demand reparations for slavery, but the fact is that an American black in 2008 is better off for being here now than he would be had his ancestors never been brought here hundreds of years ago. Had slavery not occurred, they would probably not exist as their ancestors
would likely have died of war, starvation or varied and sundry horrors in Africa, long before now.

A black person in modern America is so much better off than the average black person in any African country as to beyond description. There is not a successful black-run country. Former white colonies now run by blacks (South Africa, Zimbabwe, others) are now hell holes. Apartheid was terrible; "necklacing," the common South African black-on-black practice of placing a person's body into a tire, dousing him with gas and lighting him on fire, is far worse!

What we are left with is history, and to understand history one must address certain realities, much of it psychological in nature. History, it has often been said, is written by the winners. One can argue this point, but it is quite difficult to argue that those winners have been, for the most, white European Christians. It is Western Civilization that has shaped 2,000 years of history, for better or worse.

Getting more specific, at least for the near future, the ultimate winner of this history is the United States of America, and in assessing this reality one must say, admit or come to realize that the sub-set of winners within America is the combined ideology of conservatism with Christianity. In no place have these two concepts thrived hand-in-hand with each other more successfully than the open plains of America: Manifest Destiny, the Promised Land; call it what you will. For the better part of a century after the Reconstruction, blacks identified to one extent or another with these concepts, but the Great Society (on top of the New Deal) was a paradigm shift that swung African-Americans away from entrepreneurial capitalism towards liberation theology, to their utter detriment.

In understanding the psychology of it, this gets us back to the concept that "winners write history," and in so doing we must agree and understand that it was the mindset of white triumphalism behind our repeated narratives of victory over the British Empire, the Confederacy, the Indians, Nationalism, Naziism, Communism, and a host of isms, problems, obstacles and road blocks eliminated by the US of A. Cowboy movies, war heroism, inventions, Horatio Alger struggles; we have infused our view of ourselves with a sense of fantasy and mythology.

That said, our history holds up pretty well. In the modern age, liberalism in academia, journalism, Hollywood and the public schools has tried to dent our long-held images, but in the end the essential stories of our past continue to hold up under scrutiny. They are, for the most part, still true.

Truth is a very difficult, sometimes ephemeral concept. It benefits some, but is of little value to others. Psychologically, expecting people to admit that the truth reveals their faults, often their evil ways, is not a likely human expectation. Take the Arab world, for instance. The Old Testament tells the story of God identifying a small group of people - the Jews - and favoring them over a larger group of people - the eventual Arabs - who He simply calls evil.
Now, the Arabs can go one of two ways with this. They can "become Jews," that is ask God for forgiveness, following His ways, and eventually accept the Messiah (Jesus Christ) on a path of righteousness. Millions of them did just that. A billion did not.

The Arabs were the leading world civilization, creators of pyramids, architectural works, mathematics, tinctures, medical advancements. Christ walked amongst them, revealing His truth to their eyes. They saw, but rejected what was placed before them. They became Muslims. Since then, what great accomplishments have come from the Muslim world? Don't spend too much time thinking about the answer, which is: very little. History has not favored the Arabs. The 20th and 21st Centuries were going to be their chance at revenge. The Ottomans sided with Kaiser's Germany. The Saudis sided with Hitler. They kept losing, so they tried terror. Now the Americans are putting a clamp on that much the way they seal up oil spouting up in their deserts. The Arabs, a proud (and not stupid) people, have little to be proud of. Determined to be proud anyway, they rely on lies to tell their story, their narrative, their ageless strife against the Jews. Anybody who walks about in Arab culture knows that truth is not an inherent part of it. Bargaining in Arab bazaars is just one example. There is what the Arabs say, and then there is trying to decipher the real meaning of the words.

Up until the Civil Rights Movement, American blacks sided with truth. It was the story of their struggle and it was real. Their narrative was spiritualized by worship of Jesus Christ, the single unifying factor of all world humanity. But the Civil Rights Movement gave way to the Great Society, and then came militancy. Liberal white guilt opened doors for blacks in a determined, well-meaning effort at eliminating the age-old obstacles placed before them. One by one, the old, legitimate reasons for failure were wiped away, but this meant that continuing failure would have to be explained with excuses. In studying "white history," blacks increasingly saw that they were not the great winners of this mythic struggle for greatness. Again, psychology entered into play, and like the Arabs, African-Americans have had to invent mythologies of their own. For instance, they are determined to believe that all great knowledge springs from a 'black run' place called Luxor University, supposedly an African college existing years before the Romans or Cambridge or Harvard. They have changed the story of Original Sin from Adam and Eve, insisting that Satan came alive in the world exclusively through "white devils."

Since these stories are invented, unfortunately they are often not true, but as they are told over and over, like urban legends, they become accepted as true. Today, many blacks can be confronted with their inaccuracies, told straight truth, and they will often reject it or call it something else. Whites have accepted this reality under the proviso that blacks were treated so badly that they should be allowed to do this, but the Obama candidacy, the Wright pulpit speeches, and a million other things building up over decades, are increasingly emboldening many whites (and blacks) to confront these lies.

It is time for the truth to set us free. Unfortunately, there will be more division before there is healing, and in this regard it is sad that Obama, at first a unifier, may in the end be viewed as a divider and possibly the harbinger of doom for his party.
The "black narrative," in which truth is whatever they want to call it, has been a festering sore on the body politic for years. Perhaps it reared its ugly head in its most divisive manner during and after the infamous O.J. Simpson trial, in which the black football star was viewed as obviously guilty by everybody, except blacks. What galled so many was not that blacks really seemed to believe O.J. was innocent, but that they said he was anyway. It was a question of stupidity vs. honesty, and whites were not racist enough to blame blanket black stupidity on the O.J. reaction. Rather, the black narrative was that they had been treated so badly for so long that the usual rules of good conduct were not expected to apply to them. Whites, who have been giving tacit, liberal credence to this notion for decades, began to reject it.

It is time for blacks to be held to the same standards of right and wrong as everybody else. It is time for them to take responsibility for this amongst themselves. The fact that innocent blacks were lynched in the South in the 1930s is simply no longer a valid reason for them not to ask for the same standards of their leaders. It is time to stop assuming every black criminal in every prison is unjustly convicted. It is 2008, and enough time is passed so that by now we must address these issues rationally and with maturity.

If we get into this subject as a nation - and the Obama candidacy guarantees we will - it will ask for sincere black self-analysis. They can no longer play the blame game. It may divide us at first, but ultimately it will be good for America, for only then can true equality be earned and achieved.

As long as blacks avoid this self-analysis, however, they and the party that patronizes them - the Democrats - will suffer. Just as Western Civilization; America; and ultimately a cross-current of conservative Christianity is the winner of history, liberalism, the Left, and in America the Democrat Party, are the ultimate losers. This is sad because traditional liberal precepts drove Western Civilization. It was only when these precepts were used to temper conservatism’s extremist edges that the Right emerged victorious (symbolized by Ronald Reagan).

But modern liberalism has suffered over the past 60 years because the truth is no longer its ally. This goes back to the Whittaker Chambers-Alger Hiss stand-off. The Left invested all they had in Hiss - emotionally, financially, legally - only to have his guilt as a Soviet spy confirmed. The Venona Project, revealed after Soviet archives were opened when we won the Cold War, showed that most of the "McCarthyism" tactics of the Right were legitimate defense of national security. The "Hiss defense" has repeated itself. The Democrats’ all-out protection of Bill Clinton in the face of his Impeachment and lies further revealed their template. The Left is frustrated beyond belief; they have the mainstream media, they have Hollywood, they have the schools, the colleges, the youth. . . and they continue to lose because ultimately they do not have the Truth!

Just as the ancient Arabs could choose a true path - Christianity - in order to walk in righteousness, the modern Democrats who chose truth became Reagan Republicans, and eventually conservatives. It is most unfortunate that American blacks who seek this way are called "Uncle Toms."
It is also instructive to understand the role of Communism's defeat in this psychological
dynamic. Communism was the ultimate panacea of the oppressed, the losers, the undeserved, the
unimpressive. Its natural target of hatred was America, where success, winning and patriotic
uprightness were proudly upheld as great virtues. When Communism was swept, as Reagan
called it, into the "ash heap of history," it left a world full of dispossessed losers with nothing
solid to hold onto, but America still to hate.

A disparate group of unimpressives, ranging from gays to child molesters; from the ACLU to the
criminals; from the atheists and the ugly of soul; no longer found a single umbrella of
Communism with which to band together, but defeat did not turn them into conservatives. Being
losers in the first place, conservatism would not be their natural state anyway. What we have
seen, especially since 9/11, has been a revitalization of Communist rhetoric without the hammer
and sickle.

Hatred, jealousy, and worst of all, lies are their tools. The lies work in part because to dispute
lies, one must possess knowledge, and in order to possess knowledge, one must work at it. What
Reverend Jeremiah Wright has been preaching is a form of "black liberation theology." This
traces much of its roots to the Catholic Church's role in the post-Fidel Castro era Communist
revolutions of Latin America from the 1960s to the 1980s. The so-called Catholic priests who
worked on behalf of the Sandinista's plainly stated that God was not Jesus Christ, but the guns
held by the soldiers; the sense of purpose they had in achieving Socialist goals; and an
egalitarianism that they insisted was denied them by a host of "others": whites, America,
corporations , , , these were their "gods."

To say that all African-Americans adhere to "black liberation theology" would be a gross lie, but
America must wake up to the fact that many of them do. When Wright opens his mouth and
pours forth his vile, foul, hateful spewing of lies and untruths, the black audience, dressed in
suits and ties in heartland Chicago, the town we call the "city of big shoulders," what Frank
Sinatra called "my kind of town"; well, they do not boo. They cheer. They applaud raucously.
What is perhaps most distressing are that within the inner city, these raucous cheerers are the
best they have! The criminals and the miscreants are not in church, dressed in their Sunday best
at 10 in the morning.

Jeremiah Wright is not saying anything new. The lies he espouses have been infecting the black
community for years. The Internet has spread them into Democrat chat rooms. There are some
Revelationists who insist that Jesus Christ is returning in 2011; that the "end of the Church Age"
ocurred in 1988; and that Satan now controls the churches. What Reverend Wright sounds like -
oh, just say it - is Satanic. How else would the devil make his move? He would get supposed
"men of God" to do his bidding. I cannot say what is in Reverend Wright's heart, but I can
comment on what comes out of his mouth.

Jesus Christ, he says, was a poor black man killed by rich whites. 9/11 was a George Bush plot.
AIDs was spread by the Central Intelligence Agency in order to commit genocide against
minorities (this lie was originally started by black Watts Congresswoman Maxine Waters, D.-
California, in 1992 in order to discredit the Presidential re-election of former CIA Director
George H.W. Bush). Israel and America are to blame for Islamic terror, not the Wahabbi sect that took root some 200 years ago. America bombed Nagasaki and Hiroshima not to save the lives of 1 million Japanese and Americans who would have died in a subsequent invasion, but because they desired to kill people with yellow skin.

(The only thing Wright might have been "right" about was his statement that America knew about Pearl Harbor before the Japanese attacked; President Franklin Roosevelt "allowed" the attack in order to draw us into World War II. However, Roosevelt did not know that Pearl was the precise target; he thought the Philippines would be the staging grounds.)

Approximately 40,000 people have died in Iraq since the 2003 U.S. invasion. Crazies of the Left lie that the figure is half a million, and that they were killed by America, when in fact 90 percent of the casualties are innocent Muslims (many women and children) killed by fellow Muslims. The Left says the Muslim world hates America because of this, not realizing that terrorists are helping do our work for us. Each time they kill their Muslim "brothers and sisters," they engender hatred and leave the Arabs with the realization that while America ain't perfect, it is the best of all alternatives. Plus, we are the winners, which counts for a lot.

Waterboarding is not torture, but the Left lies and says it is, investing all their emotional (and legal) energies into sympathy for the most vile, ungodly criminals whose lives are devoted to kill brave Americans (plus cowardly ones like themselves).

Millions of blacks believe these lies. We have turned our heads to this enemy within for years now, refusing to believe it, dismissing it asrambling, not thinking that it has a real effect on the body politic. But the public schools have not only failed to dispute these untruths, they have often taught them! We now have a generation of ignorant blacks who listen to the Jeremiah Wright's of this world and actually think what he says is true. It has been drummed into their heads and they actually think a white man like me, who informs them that these notions are wrong, is merely making a racist attempt to dissuade them from some sort of "truth."

It is not just blacks. La Raza ("the Race") teaches that they have a legal right to re-claim the Southwest. Many white kids get a dose of this stuff and dumbly sympathize with liberation theology. The Democrats have recognized these unimpressives and dispossessed as their natural constituency. Their bloggers spew it endlessly. They like what Jeremiah Wright says. They cheer it. Many Democrats know it is all untrue but say it anyway. What does this say about the modern Democrat Party?

It says that the truth is not on their side, so they go in a different direction. In the mean time, these churches like the one Reverend Wright "preaches" from exist all over America, like madrassas in the Middle East. The Democrats adopt them, accept them, and pander to them. They cannot seem to help themselves.

Many white Southerners still believe blacks were treated better under Jim Crow than in modern Northern cities. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. took his case to the streets of Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma in the 1960s, many Southern whites wanted to know why he was
spotlighting them while Los Angeles, California, supposedly the home of racial enlightenemnt where the citizenry had gotten it right, exploded in flames during the Watts riots. Long after the battleground shifted away from the South, "liberal" Boston, which Celtics star Bill Russell called the "most racist city in America," was exploding in riots over the bussing issue. When Jeff Prugh of the Los Angeles Times interviewed former Alabama Governor George Wallace in the mid-1970s, Wallace told him he needed to clean his own house before trying to clean his. White Southerners may not be correct in saying that blacks were better off then than they are now, but the kind of "reality" that many of them are taught is not helping them today. The reality of actual racism in the 1950s gave them a more firm handle on how to approach life's difficulties than a modern message that says the odds are stacked against them and they have no hope because of whites, because of American immorality.

While Reverend Wright is not a public official, if Senator Obama were to say the same things he said, he would be committing treason under Amendment XIV, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution, ratified July 9, 1868, which says "No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military . . . who shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof . . ."

Is there any way to read, hear or contemplate Jeremiah Wright's words and not call it "aid and comfort" to terrorists, jihadists, Al Qaeda, neo-Communists . . . any and all "enemies" of this beautiful country?

We approach the 2008 Presidential election behind the banner of John McCain. President George W. Bush is unpopular. The Iraq War, despite the fact that victory is quickly going from a contemplated possibility to an accomplished past act, remains unpopular. It has cost us dearly. It is not a Republican year; the GOP has turned away from traditional conservative economic policies. There is much to find fault with the Republicans.

Despite this, however, two facts are emerging. First, the Democrats are again proving to be the GOP's biggest allies through their foul rhetoric (substitute Jeremiah Wright and Harry Reid for Michael Moore and John Kerry's "Winter Soldier" speech), which they continue to espouse because they lack a handle on the real America. They simply cannot help themselves. Second, and do not look now conservatives, but Senator McCain will prove to be the savior of the Republican Party.

The Democrats cannot absolve themselves of their past; Senator Harry Reid (D.-Nevada) stated that the Iraq War was lost just before America won it. MoveOn.org says that General David Petraues, perhaps our greatest military hero since Dwight Eisenhower, has "betrayed us." Whether the Right agrees with John McCain's border policy or not, the reality for now is that Latinos, who find much to fault with Obama and are by no means loyal to the Clintons, will give more of their vote to the Arizona Senator than has ever gone to a GOP candidate.

America observes Latinos and cannot help but compare them to blacks. Latinos work hard and take jobs blacks will not. No matter how hard-line the Right is about illegal aliens crossing our
borders in invasion style, they must admire their work ethic and family loyalties. They are a bigger voting bloc than blacks and much more receptive to the Republican message on abortion, family values, anti-Communism and tax cuts.

It is an unfortunate statement to make, but it remains true, that whites observe successful blacks like Maryland and Pennsylvania gubernatorial candidates like Michael Steele and Lynn Swann, respectively, and consider them to be exceptions to the rule rather than examples of their race. Nobody looks at any individual, successful Jew or Asian, and maybe not even any winning Latinos, and thinks of them as an "exception to the rule." Until successful blacks can make their presence known without whites noting that they are "unusual," blacks will continue to be a troubled class in America.

We have reached the point where only blacks can truly make this happen and help themselves. Until this happens, black Democrats will not be successful on a national level. The first black President will not come from the Left. He (or she) will come from the Right.

Obama has infused his speeches with "black cadence," but this will be a reminder to white voters of Jeremiah Wright, and will not be of value to Obama. When Obama speaks, it has often appeared that some 70 percent of the people sitting behind him are black. Right or wrong, from a strictly analytical point of view, this will not be a successful campaign image.

If Obama gets the nomination, continues his current campaign practices, and does not address the Wright controversy properly, 2008 promises to be a year in which America holds a referendum on black America. America will, in my view, reach the conclusion that it is 2008, and that we have arrived at that tipping point in our history in which black failings and attitudes can no longer be attributed to past injustices. It will be a "tough love" message, and it will not reflect well on black America. However, in the long run it might be what they need to move past the rut they are stuck in.

If Barack Hussein Obama truly wants to heal the racial divide, he needs to speak honestly to black America and tell them they must pursue reality, not the fantasy of victimhood any more. He must tell them that while their ancestors were treated brutally, social reparations have made blacks the protected class of the 21st Century. They need to take advantage of that, like a football team that recovers a fumble on their opponent's 20-yard line and has a chance to score a go-ahead touchdown. He needs to tell them that public schools and churches must start telling the truth about American greatness; that victories over evil have been accomplished by this nation; that intolerance, hatred and prejudice have not survived American ideals; and that the USA is the new Promised Land.

He needs to tell his brethren to reject the lies and false works of Satan, because the Truth will set them free!

**AMERICAN CENTURIES: THE 20TH AND 21ST**

*Who we are.*
How we got here.
What history teaches us.
Why America is special.

The United States of America is the greatest country in the history of Mankind, but why? To merely boast such a statement is empty unless it is backed by a solid premise, and this is the basis of my proposed historical analysis of my nation and how we came to become the greatest, most dominant Empire in world history.

First, I do not believe that the U.S. did not achieve its status by pure chance. My worldview is based on a Christian perspective, but rather than centering on the concept of the United States as a "Christian nation," I prefer to look at our advancement as the result of a "guiding hand" that defies denomination. Perhaps it is not meant for us to understand why we are the "chosen nation," but rather to focus on the evidence that we are without probing into a spirituality that is beyond our ken.

The first evidence of divine guidance comes during the Revolutionary War, a time in which men with much to lose chose, for reasons more often than not against their personal interests, to put themselves on the line against King George's England. This war could have been lost during many periods, yet somehow fate drove us to victory. To consider the intelligence of the resulting Constitution and its lasting importance without believing that it was a Godly document is, to my mind, impossible.

The lack of self-preservation that lies at the heart of our Founding Fathers lies at the heart of America's history, and herein we discern the difference between us and all other countries. While certain diplomats such as Henry Kissinger practiced a European kind of realpolitik, our ultimate purpose has always been one of benevolence. How else to explain that we have achieved unprecedented power so benignly? The U.S. possesses the ability to dominate all others, to turn the globe into a Pax Americana, to enslave and conquer beyond the realm of all previous conquerors. Can one envision the Romans, the Chinese Dynasties, the Soviet Bloc, Imperial Japan, Nazi Germany, even the British Empire, possessing our weapons and also our restraint? What about modern countries like Iraq, Iran, and China? The question is impertinent in the face of what we know.

So how did we get that way? Where the hand of God cannot be discounted, one must consider that timing and the quest for human knowledge has been the weaponry of our good fortune. By that I mean that we had the wonderful hindsight of world history to study and determine what mistakes had been made, and how to improve on the performance of our predecessors.

Using as a model the study of politics endeavored by Dennis Dalton, PhD. from Barnard College and Columbia University, we start by examining the Hindu vision of life. At the heart of Hinduism is a four-part "life education" centered on the value of property (capitalism), sensual pleasure, religious duty, and spiritual enlightenment. The study of Hinduism, embodied in the 20th Century by Mohandas Gandhi, contrasts with the study of the Muslim religion in such a way that is impossible not to note in light of current affairs.
Next, we analyze the cradle of Democracy, Greece after the Peloponnesian War. War is said by the Greeks to be a "violent teacher," and it is a peculiar fact of mankind that to learn from our worst mistakes has allowed us to gain our greatest knowledge. Socrates proposed ideas that were so radical he was given the hemlock, and his students, Plato and Aristotle, expound upon the lessons of the losing battle with Sparta and the Hindu vision of life. The result, in short, is a view of politics that conservatives can relate to in the modern era.

First, the Greek philosophers disagreed with the Hindu "fourth step," which was to find personal enlightenment. The Greeks felt that personal enlightenment, while admirable, should be used for the purpose of political contribution. This can be found in the concept of noblesse oblige that is at the heart of the greatest political family in existence today, the Bush's, and can be contrasted with the Machiavellian concept of power that was Joseph Kennedy's vision of his Massachusetts dynasty.

Plato argues that politics should be a science that, like Hippocratic medicine, trained professionals to eschew personal ambition and, like doctors, desire to do only good. He felt that Greek Democracy was too widespread, fomenting the mob mentality that Americans, by forming representative government, sought to avoid.

His study of war teaches us that the liberal creativity at the heart of the Athenian military was not a match for the strict discipline of the Spartans, a lesson worth remembering when we contemplate our military as a social experiment instead of a bulwark against our enemies.

The study of Machiavelli is important in trying to understand those who have opposed us over the years. Like the Greek thinkers, Machiavelli arrived at his conclusions in light of military disaster. Italy was in the throes of despair in the years after their Empire had been broken up, and it was the lessons of the Fall that Machiavelli applies to his view of political power. We find Machiavelli's ghost whispering in the ears of Hitler, Stalin, Mao and the Clintons - both Bill and especially Hillary. The Republicans have not been immune to the Machiavellian creed. McCarthyism and Richard Nixon's paranoid "enemies list" carry the Machiavellian touch, and from these periods we find cautionary tales that we must heed or face disaster.

Contrasting the Greeks with Machiavelli allows us to get to the heart of unique American designs, which are to do good. To do good, often at great sacrifice, is a concept perhaps still too novel for those not fully understanding of American values to grasp. In that regard we can offer only patience and continuing example.

Next, I address the politics that co-existed with the United States. This includes the French Revolution and how it was inspired by the American Revolution, but veered so far from that concept. Next, the English transformation from royal to parliamentarian, embodied by their Jewish Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli. The U.S. influence, embodied by Theodore Roosevelt, is studied as it applies to the eventual break-up of the British Empire and its resulting racial implications.
No study of America is complete without an unflinching look at slavery, and it is here that I propose a revolutionary, bold model that I call "America: Where Slavery Came to Die." Plato determined that slavery was a natural result of the human condition, and the British colonial view did not veer far from this concept. These values were thrust upon America. Yet somehow, in four score and seven years, the U.S. managed to address a thriving institution that had existed for thousands of years and, effectively, end it. This was accomplished on our shores, using our laws. No foreign power came here, defeated us and told us what to do. Considering slaveries economic benefits in the South, and the cost of Civil War, the ending of the "peculiar institution" might be the most compelling example of how we changed the politics of self-interest into the politics of better interests. This is a premise meant to cause some controversy and plenty of discussion, always a healthy result of philosophies and critiques.

How did Communism rise and why was it opposed in America? What did we learn from Gandhi? What lessons did we apply in the post-World War II years? Throughout history, conquering nations had enslaved and colonized. We left Europe and Japan with a legacy of goodwill never seen in the annals of Mankind. Contrast Doug Macarthur with Napoleon, just to start the discussion.

What were the results of McCarthyism? I argue that here we see the true roots of liberal bias. It was a backlash against McCarthy that lies at the heart of a left wing dominant media culture, embodied by millionaire actors racked with guilt over their good fortune, and a "gotcha" journalistic ethos spawned by Watergate. But why should the Left be the sole disseminators of correct political thought? Where were Ben Bradlee, Katherine Graham and the Washington Post in 1960 when the greatest political crime in American history was being perpetuated? Orchestrated by Joseph Kennedy, the Democrats stole the election from Nixon by creating Texas' "tombstone" vote and rampant corruption in Mayor Daley's Chicago that rivals... New York's Democrat Tammany Hall. To study liberal bias carries with it a study of how talk radio and cable television has finally brought about a sea change in how Americans receive their information, and because of it the world will never look back. I argue that the current Democrat Party's days are numbered, in my lifetime.

We will look at the role of the Democrats in the Jim Crow South and how it was the Republican Party that husbanded the South from its racist past into its current thriving, functioning role in our society.

The Cold War is examined herein, and at the heart of my argument is the Reagan Theory, which is based first on an observation of World War II. In that war, 50 million people perished from the Earth. Some 358,000 Americans died. Yet the country and the world agree that the cost was worth it, to purge society of Hitler and the Japanese war lords. The theory then delves into a scenario worthy of a Tom Clancy novel. The U.S. and the Soviets enter into World War III in 1983. The war lasts until 1989. 50 million people die. 360,000 of them are Americans. Better technology and Divine Intervention bring victory to the U.S. The political result of WW III is exactly the same thing that actually did happen! The Berlin Wall falls. The U.S.S.R. is broken up. The Eastern Bloc crumbles. Communism is relegated to the dustbin of history, leaving rogue regimes in North Korea and Cuba to live out their miserable, meaningless existences until old
age takes its inevitable toll. The Reagan Theory asks the question, Would such a result be worth the lives of 360,000 Americans? and posits the notion that a post-World War III world would, like its World War II predecessors, agree that it was.

Except that Reagan and the conservatives who believed, endorsed and fought for him achieved this without the loss of life. Is anything more telling? Still, this notion has never been put forth, so herein I propose a book that, at its heart, offers a revolutionary new model for looking at history.

Finally, we must ask ourselves who we are today, and what the post-9/11 challenges are. We see history repeating itself. It is America that stands, seemingly alone, ready and willing to do the heavy lifting necessary to rid the world of Terror, while Europe, long the benefactor of our protection, reverts to its old notions of self-interest. As Santa Anna once said, “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it.” I might add that America is willing not only to remember the past, but in so doing, we willingly take on the task of shaping a hopeful future.

ARABS AND DISTORTIONS OF HISTORY

Americans love to congratulate ourselves on how great we are. On Independence Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and on most any day, we enjoy re-telling how we saved the world from itself on more than one occasion. We took the Greek concept of Democracy, improved on the British version, and after winning a Revolution wrote a Constitution that has remained unequaled in the 200-plus years since.

We addressed our own faults and after another war, used that Constitution to end slavery, at least in the form it had been for thousands of years. We helped “make the world safe for Democracy” in World War I, then really made our mark in World War II, when we took on Hitler and defeated Nazism.

We finally ended the “second civil war” by living up to our creed in the 1960s and ‘70s, again ending the modern form of “slavery,” and again doing it on our own because we saw that it was the right thing to do, not because some foreign power came in and made us do it.

We took on Stalin and Communism and defeated that, too. One by one, we saw evil, injustice and wrong, took on the challenge of ending it, and time after time did just that.

We have every right to congratulate ourselves on our greatness.

Now, a new challenge faces us. This challenge is double-barreled. First, we must reduce terrorism, or the worst threats posed by terrorism, to its bare margins. We have the manpower, the technology, the intelligence and the will to do it, so I imagine this will be accomplished in relatively short order.
The second part of the equation is the tough part. That is the called “winning the hearts and minds” of our enemies. We have had more success through “failure” doing that in Vietnam than we did when we were over there, but this time we face 50 or 100 years – several generations, a century of conflict for our children and their children – unless we accomplish this task sooner rather than later.

This brings us to the great problem of addressing why so many Arabs hate us. We find this an absurd premise, given the wonderful deeds we have performed on behalf of Mankind through our history.

Let us examine Western influence in the Middle East. The Khyber Pass through Afghanistan has long been a passageway of trade, and as the natural resources of the region became apparent and coveted, white soldiers were sent in to subjugate the region. Russians under Peter the Great tried, and failed. The British Raj tried in the nineteenth century to take Kabul, and in what Rudyard Kipling called the “Great Game,” they were slaughtered.

By the time World War I came around, there was no particular reason for Arabs and Muslims to fear or respect the West. The Ottoman Empire controlled much Western territory, and exerted political, social, military and religious influence over an enormous swath of geography.

During World War I, things changed with mixed results due to the work of T.S. Lawrence, a young English officer who formed disparate Arab tribes into a singular fighting force that helped defeat the Turks.

In retrospect, many Arabs look back at Lawrence with disdain, feeling that he used them as a sacrifice on the altar of English hegemony. More to the point, he used Muslims to defeat Muslims, which eventually led to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in 1923. The English carved up the region, creating Iraq, taking over Palestine, and re-making the Middle East in their image, more or less.

For Muslims, Christians, Arabs and Middle Eastern people of all stripes, World War I concluded with mixed results. The Armenians were freed from Ottoman rule after millions had died in genocide. The Faisal Family in Saudi Arabia found wealth catering to the oil demands of the West. Other regions, countries and governments did not prosper.

Then came World War II, the great, shining moment of American history. Surely, everybody must love us for what we did in Europe and in the South Pacific. Think again.

First of all, with the exception of a relatively small group of Arabs who avail themselves of an education in America and really choose to immerse themselves in our glorious history; plus whatever Arabs somehow find a place in the Middle East to learn true U.S. history (such places are very rare), the average Arab and Muslim knows little or nothing of our history, and what they are taught are usually distortions and lies.
This is because they were mainly by-standers during World War II. Moroccons may have understood that they had something to gain by a U.S. victory over Germany on Vichy-French held territory, but for most of the Nomadic tribesmen and simple dwellers of the nation’s where Rommel, Patton and Montgomery fought in North Africa, it was just a bunch of white men trying to blow each other up.

Arabs do not have a D-Day in which Americans liberated them from the Germans. They do not have a history of fighting by the side of their American “brothers” in a just cause, like the Philippinos do. The war in their neck of the woods was about property, strategy and oil.

Surely, had Germany won the war and controlled the Middle East, Hitler would eventually have come up with an Arab Solution in which these natives of the conquered lands, considered subhuman with their dark complexions and “dirty” religion by the Aryan supermen, would have been rounded up and killed in concentration camps.

The Arabs do not seem to know this, and therefore do not understand that they, too, were saved by us.

In fact, many Arabs think the Nazis were the good guys. After all, the Nazis were doing “great work” killing millions of their sworn enemies, the hated Jews. Millions of Muslims, if they even know about the Holocaust, think it was a swell idea. All for it. Too bad it had to end.

Why should they love America for beating Hitler when Hitler was killing their enemies? According to this logic, we are of course the enemy because we stopped Germany from completing what many Muslims consider to be sacred work. If it was not for us, there would not be any damn Jews around, much less a whole country full of them right in their backyards.

The Arabs have made bad political choices for years. Whose side were they on during the Cold War? Not the Americans. The Soviets, second only to Nazi Germany when it comes to killing Jews, swooped in and worked hand in hand with them for years. They played on the fears and prejudice against Jews, antagonizing them by playing the Israel card for all it was worth. They did it because the Arabs let them do it.

These are the people whose “hearts and minds” we are trying to capture. We must consider whether we can ever get them to change. The only chance is not just through acts of kindness like a New Marshall Plan of food and humanitarian relief, but a campaign of Truth. Arab Muslim children must be taught real world history, not propaganda. Nobody has to go in and paint us as perfect, but the distortions and lies that have festered like cancer amongst these people must be replaced with real facts.

It will take years. The current generation is lost in a cloud of hate, but the West must tell the real story in a way that allows these people to make their own decisions on an informed basis. We must not be occupiers, but we also must insist that the lies be put to rest.
WHY IS THIS STILL NEWS?

Today’s paper said George Bush won the Florida electoral college in 2000. This was the sixth time I have seen this headline in the last year. The Miami Herald, the New York Times, the New York Post, for all I know the National Enquirer all re-counted and determined that Bush won. This is about as newsworthy as picking up tomorrow’s sports page and reading, “Shaq, Kobe leads Lakers to World Title.”

CLINTONIAN MACHIAVELLIANISM

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 26, 2001 - I think the point a lot of us have been trying to make for a long time has been missed. I am sure Gerald Ford cut a deal with Richard Nixon when he pardoned him. Yes, George H.W. Bush served his interests when he pardoned Caspar Weinberger. However, both of these acts were political judgments, and a fair segment of the populace believed they served the country by sparing the nation trials. In Weinberger’s case, particularly, he was an honorable public servant who was involved in a political operation. In Nixon’s situation, Ford judged that the man had suffered enough via public humiliation. Nancy Reagan was lambasted by the press for “borrowing” dresses. The house bought for Ronald Reagan was rented by the Reagan’s for $15,000 a month until they bought it, and it had been a gift from old friends who knew them since Hollywood days. The point is this.

Politics is a sticky business, and anybody in the public eye, particularly occupying the Oval Office, is in an almost impossible situation when it comes to scrutiny. By saying that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, does a disservice to Reagan, Ford, and even Democrat Presidents like John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. It does a disservice to the American political system and to the White House, by lumping the Clintons in with everybody else. It becomes the “power card,” like when Johnnie Cochran goes to the “race card” or implies that because there are a few corrupt cops, all cops are corrupt.

The press disrespected the Clintons because they were constantly involved in shady, corrupt situations ranging from Whitewater, Travelgate, Monica Lewinsky, the pardons, and so much more.

The press never went after the Clintons like the Washington Post went after Nixon. The right wing press did, and found a lot of stuff. None of it was proven in a court of law. This breaks down to the core of conservative antipathy toward the Clintons, which is that the right still thinks they were guilty of a lot of crimes that they got away with because the evidence was not enough to convict, indict, or prosecute. The right never proved that the Clintons ran drugs in Mena, Arkansas; had kids killed on train tracks near Mena; profited illegally from Whitewater and insider trading; were involved in Vince Foster’s killing; took bribes for pardons; and many other things.

In America, we say you are innocent until proven guilty. We disapprove of “whispering campaigns” and “McCarthyism,” and we are right to disapprove of these things. Still, this does
not change the feeling in the guts of a helluva lot of American citizens that the Clintons are guilty of some of these crimes, but just got away with them.

Furthermore, and yes, call it a “whispering campaign” if you must, but what a lot of us think is that even if they did not commit some of these crimes, IT IS SOMETHING THEY WOULD DO.

This may not be fair, but a lot of us have hunches, gut instincts, a sixth sense. What these unproven, yet very strong feelings, tell us is that behind Bill Clinton’s s—t-eating grin is a guy thinking to himself, “I’ve got you all fooled. You fools.”

People are shaped by the times and circumstances of their lives. The Clintons are both American-born, and therefore their personalities overtly reflect, to an extent, the laws, the fairness, the inherent values of the American Way. However, people have at their core inherent traits that transcend their times. What if they lived in a different time and place?

For instance, if they had lived during the Roman Empire, one can imagine that they would have done well for themselves. Hillary, in particular, seems to be the kind of person who, allowed by custom and power, would have ordered that a political opponent, or a servant who displeased her, be boiled in oil or thrown to the lions. It is not hard for me to imagine that, had she be born in Germany in 1900, she would have thrived politically under National Socialism. One may not know enough about what is in her heart to say that she is a reincarnation of the Bitch of Buchenwald, but after eight years we have gathered enough knowledge of her to have some strong opinions. It is probably unfair to cast these kinds of aspersions upon the Clintons, but the impressions described herein are held by a large number of people. Other members of her party, even such long-despised bogeymen as Ted Kennedy, do not elicit such feelings. Why?

You know what? Their relatives are just as corrupt, just not as powerful.

The suspicion of millions of honest Americans should not be dismissed as politics, which really besmirches the good name of politics, and the many fine public servants on both sides of the aisle. Yes, they are just suspicions, but there are so many of them. So very, very many of them!

Republicans have a problem with Democrats, no doubt, but to say that the GOP would or did react the same way to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Bill Bradley, Dianne Feinstein, Bob Kerry and Joe Liebermann is plain wrong. The Clintons are a special case, and using the “everybody does it” defense is bad for this country. Everybody does not do it. Absolute power does not corrupt absolutely. That is a phrase used by people who want to cover up corruption, not expose it.

If the Clintons were my people, I would not be out to expose them. I would be running from them like most of their “supporters” are doing. Who is supposed to go after them? The New York Times, the Washington Post or Time magazine? Yes, they should, but they back off. They just do.
Will Janet Reno head up a blue ribbon panel to investigate them? We know the answer to that question. The Republicans will go after them because they are the ones who have to do it, just like the Democrats went after Watergate.

Bribery in politics is different from the kind of puffery that Nancy Reagan’s gowns were all about. The Clintons’ took bribes. They are liars, corrupt to the bone. They trade money for favors. They work illegal deals, but are careful in the way they go about them.

How have they gotten away with it all so far? Machiavellian intelligence and planning. They orchestrate each corrupt act ahead of time, knowing what the laws are, what they have to do achieve their schemes without leaving a paper trail. It is what Lt. Col. Oliver North called “plausible deniability.” They do not care if they raise suspicions, because they gain power every time an investigation into them falls just shy of nailing them. This way, they can say that their enemies will stop at nothing to destroy them, but they are clean.

Mentioning Bill Clinton in the same breath with Ronald Reagan is an abomination. As for Whitewater, it stretches the imagination that they were not involved in illegalities. They just covered it up ahead of time. Susan McDougall and her husband were guilty as sin. Comparing any of the Clinton pardons to the Weinberger pardon is wrong.

Iran-Contra was a fine idea. It breaks down to a simple set of factors. The Cold War raged and a battle for supremacy existed between Communism and freedom. The Republicans opposed Central American Communism, a noble ideal. The Democrats did not. The Republicans figured out a way to fight Communism despite the Democrats. Lumping this in with the kind of tawdry corruption that Bill and Hillary Clinton engage in is an easy way out, and courageous practitioners of the political arts should know better than to engage in such “comparisons.”

LETTER TO GEORGE W. BUSH

Note the date on this letter to then-Governor Bush. I was on board with the future President when John McCain was a strong GOP contender, before the 2000 Primaries and the amazing general election vs. Al Gore.

June 30, 1999

Governor George W. Bush
504 Lavaca, Ste. 1010
Austin, TX 78701

Re.: 2000 Presidential campaign

Dear Governor Bush:
I am very disturbed. I am disturbed as an American, and particularly as a Republican. I am disturbed also because I feel this letter will not be read seriously, because I wrote this to Bob Dole in 1996, and to the R.N.C. before the 1998 Congressional elections, and I either got a form letter back or nothing at all.

I am disturbed, Governor, because I believe if the G.O.P. would have followed my simple advice, we would have a Republican in the White House, a solid majority in Congress and in the states’, and we would not be desperately trying to curry public favor in this horrendous “stained dress” scandal.

I will make this as short and sweet as I can. What it comes down is this: Win on the issues. Stay above-board. We do not need negative politics. Stay above the fray.

President Bill Clinton is riding high. Why? Because of the strong economy. Well, if and when you campaign in 2000, this is what you need to say:

> The economy is strong because of the Republican Congress that was elected in 1994. Clinton wanted to push a massive tax hike (he did in ’93) and a boondoggle health care revolution, but it was the Republicans who stopped him. The strong economy is more the result of the Republican Contract with America than Clinton’s policies.

Next, emphasize this:

> The strong economy is not just the result of Republican policies that emanate from the Contract. We are seeing something that may only be recognized by future historians, but we have the vision to interpret the fact that what we are actually reaping the peace dividends from our Cold War triumph! The press talked about this in 1990-91, but it was unrealistic to expect to see these kinds tectonic of changes so soon. Now that the Cold War is won, money earmarked towards defense is now spent in other places—or saved. Smart people displaced by the shrinking military industrial complex have landed on their feet in an entrepreneurial, information-driven society.

Next, stay with that point and point out that:

> The Cold War was won by many dedicated Americans. Harry Truman deserves some credit. So does George Kennan, John Kennedy, even Lyndon Johnson. But it was Republican hard-line refusal to back down against the Communists, during a time when liberals in the U.S. and Great Britain advocated just such a dovish policy, that eventually won the Cold War. Richard Nixon outlined this policy, Henry Kissinger implemented his plan, Ronald Reagan had the vision to boldly carry it further, and George Bush closed the deal!. He, along with Reagan and a great American named Caspar Weinberger, are as responsible as anybody for a victory that is the reason we enjoy peace and prosperity in 1999.

I am not finished:
Republicans have won the domestic war, too! Victory is ours. That sounds crazy at first, but here is what it is. The old-time liberal is no more. The McGovernites, those who advocated the Great Society, that mode of political thinking is as outdated as prohibition. However, point out that so far we have won a Pyrrhic victory. We won, but at what cost? Bill Clinton is successful only because he was smart enough to steal our ideas and cloak himself in moderately conservative clothing. The public likes conservative policies, so why not elect conservatives? This is the cornerstone of your campaign, not just for yourself as a Presidential candidate, but as the leader of a party reviving a movement—the most powerful and effective movement in the post-World War II era: The Reagan revolution. Furthermore, does anybody truly believe that, left to their own devices, the Democrats would continue these conservative policies? They act like moderate conservatives only because they are disciplined by a G.O.P. Congress. If Republicans do not maintain a solid majority, if Democrats get the Congress back along with the White House, they will revert to their old ways, because it is in their nature. You cannot change the stripes of the liberal tiger. Throughout all the changes, Republican philosophies remain rock solid. It is the Democrats who shift with the wind. The public, as it stands, like this “checks and balances” form of government. Our campaign must emphasize that what they like is when Democrats stop acting like Democrats. Therefore, it is logical that rather than electing Democrats who do not act like Democrats (but in their hearts are yearning to do so), we should elect a party that will implement proven, successful policies with enough teeth in them to stand the test of time!

I believe you need to drive these points home over and over and over. Make everybody understand this simple message: Take credit, take credit and take more credit. Declare victory, and educate the press and the public on why it is that we have won. Facts, and history, are firmly on our side. Republicans are the real thing. We won’t change.

As for abortion and the like, these need not be major campaign issues. We must gain power, then we can implement all the changes we want. First gain power. The way to do it is to drumbeat this powerful, simple message in a moderate, non-threatening manner. The beautiful part of it is that it is simple, direct, honest, informative and positive! What could be better than that?

Do not let the Democrats capture the right side of history. Republicans own the patent, but we must renew that patent in every election. We saw the future when nobody else did, and despite many detractors, we harvested unprecedented peace and prosperity!! I know you are your own man, but you have a unique opportunity, because of your name, to maximize this link to historical greatness.

I know you have a lot of fancy policy wonks feeding you advice, but I think what I have to say can be very helpful to you, our party and this country. Just stay the course.

Briefly, I have worked in Republican politics, and I met your brother, Neil, at the 1988 California Republican Convention. I stumped for Reagan and your father, and I managed the
Congressional campaign of Republican Bill Boerum, who garnered more votes in a liberal San Francisco district against Congresswoman Barbara Boxer than any opponent in her House career.

Very truly yours,

STEVEN R. TRAVERS

AIDS AND THE DEVIL

The African AIDS crisis leads me to believe that the battle between Good and Evil is being won by Evil. In the 20th Century, Evil tried a direct approach, in the face of NAZism and Communism. Major wars were fought, and the forces of Good defeated the forces of Evil. Evil then decided to make a comeback, only this time Evil is more pernicious, less obvious on the face and in its approach. It stays small, killing one-by-one by microbe instead of en mase by artillery or the dropping of cyanide into a shower stall ventilator. The forces of Good, i.e., the U.S. and the West, must confront Evil again with a new version of the Marshall Plan. As for Bill Clinton leading the charge in this effort, as Chris Matthews of MSNBC suggests, my observation is that Clinton has the intellectual tools to do it. However, he ultimately would not see it through because Clinton is in everything for himself. His goal would be to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Saving African lives might be a worthy goal that he aspires to, but it would only be a by-product of his work, not the reason for it. The same principles apply to Hillary Clinton, who should acknowledge that her "it takes a village" philosophy, based on the theory that native African culture is superior to Western family values, is a Sub-Saharan disaster. In Africa, families and villages shun children and spouses when they acquire AIDS in some kind of horrid "see no evil" immorality play. It literally "takes a village" in Africa to make AIDS such a taboo subject that millions die of it without knowing what killed them.

CRUZ BUSTAMANTE AND THE DOUBLE STANDARD

Cruz Bustamante made an accidental slip of the tongue when he used the "n-word" speaking to black audience. He has been forgiven, for good reason, because it was just a human mistake. a white Republican, or any Republican for that matter, had done the same thing, he would have received a royal pounding from the press and the liberal victim class. This is the double standard that exists. I am not complaining about it, but I do have knowledge of it, as does most everyone who now recognizes it when it happens, and thus rejects it.

MEDIA BIAS

One has to break the media down to understand that it is a larger entity I call the "Dominant Media Culture," which consists of networks, cable, newspapers, magazines, radio, Hollywood, books, the East and West Coast opinion elite, and other outlets. Overall, there is simply not a
question that the media is liberal and biased. That is not a complaint, it is a statement of fact as much as to say that "California is a state in the Union," or "It gets cold in Nebraska in the winter." To deny this obvious fact is to effectively eliminate one's self from the ranks of the credible. However, there are pockets of fairness and conservatism within the media. Talk radio is mainly conservative. Cable news has always been professional, in my view, albeit left-leaning. I personally know an on-air CNN reporter, who shall remain unnamed, who covered the Presidential campaign, and who describes a prevailing atmosphere of anti-Republicanism in Atlanta that uncovers any veil of impartiality CNN may have left. A second example comes from another CNN reporter who called conservative talk host Larry Elder at KABC in LA on election night at 6:00 PM PST. He told Larry that he was in the Atlanta studios, and that CNN had evidence that Florida not only had not been won by Al Gore, but that it was leaning to Bush. CNN announced Florida had been won by Gore anyway, and this reporter told Elder he could not imagine any reason for CNN to do this other than to influence the election in Gore's favor, and to discourage Republicans in the West from voting for Bush or Republican candidates for lower offices. George W. Bush, interviewed a few minutes later, must have had access to the same information this reporter said CNN had because he said he had reports they were winning and would not concede the state. This same CNN reporter then called Elder again a few hours later, when Florida swung back to Bush, and told Elder: "CNN staffers here in Atlanta are crying en masse, and yelling obscenities at the TV screen showing Bush winning. They are saying things like, 'You f----g gun-toting rednecks' in reference to Floridians." It would be hard to digest this information and not deduce that CNN is a liberal organization. Fox News is a fair and balanced news organization in which their major "stars" are conservative, which is the result of the marketplace. More conservatives take the time to watch news stations and listen to talk radio. Liberals are more likely to choose sitcoms or FM music. This is just reality. To argue against it is to fly in the face of known demographics. Conservatives have been listening to bias for so long that Fox's fair approach, which is so new and different, just sounds conservative.

WHERE SLAVERY CAME TO DIE

Kudos to Michele Malkin for shedding the anti-septic light of truth on the new black Muslims who spew forth anti-American hatred, calling our Founding Fathers "snakes," while living under this nation's blanket of freedom ("The enemy within", San Francisco Chronicle, November 3). These black Muslims say America is evil and point to slavery on our shores as proof. Fair enough. Civil and criminal law use the element of "proximate causation," or the "but for" theory, to arrive at conclusions, so let us apply that logic to the slavery issue. Slavery existed for thousands of years. Then America came into existence. 87 years later slavery ended. Slavery, for all practical purposes, ended in America. Slavery ended in America because Americans ended it. Slavery ended in America using laws written in America by Americans. "But-for" America coming into existence, slavery would not have ended when it did. Slavery did not end because some other country came to our shores, defeated us in battle and ordered us to end slavery. It ended because Americans decided to end it, and put themselves through a wrenching Civil War in the process. America is where slavery came to die!
Furthermore, most of these black Muslims who hate America very likely would not be alive if it were not for America. Had their ancestors not been brought here and become American citizens, they most likely would have died of disease in an African country that did not have modern medicine, or in a war perpetrated by Africans against Africans. Instead, in America, their ancestors benefited from medicine, hospitals, clothing, roads, phones, television, plumbing, education, voting rights, civil liberties, sports, entertainment, computers, communications, laws, police, fire departments, the military, and countless other advantages resulting from the Manifest Destiny of civilized expansion.

AMERICA: WHERE SLAVERY CAME TO DIE

In a recent episode of "The West Wing", a black civil rights expert made a reasoned case for why African-Americans are conservatively owed $1.7 trillion as reparations for slavery. I felt sympathy for his cause, and like the great majority of white Americans, who are moral and not racists, this is an issue of some conflict for me. I love my country, and I am proud to be an American for all the usual reasons: Kicking Hitler's ass, sending Communism into the dustbin of history, the rugged individualism of the cowboys and farmboys who have embodied the American Spirit.

Still, how could I be truly proud of a nation in which slavery existed? Germans face a similar question regarding the issue of the Holocaust. I agree that the miseries of slavery are comparable to the miseries of the Holocaust, yet the Common Sense Test told me that America is a country that has always stood on higher moral principles than Germany. So what gives?

I decided to tackle this dilemma like a lawyer, which means using the theory of "proximate cause," or the "but for" principle, applied to the course of events in arriving at a reasoned, logical answer. This would help me solve the questions I have, as a thinking man, about the country I call home.

I actually first started thinking about this when I saw the 1997 Steven Speilberg film, "Amistad". At the core of that film's premise is the notion that African slaves could find justice by using the U.S. legal system, embodied by the United State Constitution, as a remedy for their plight. However, I knew I needed to go further than just the story of a small group of slaves in a single American court case that took place in 1839.

Man has existed for millions of years. Probably not long after Man began to occupy Earth, some Men discovered that they could gain by enslaving other Men to work for them for free. For thousands of years, some Men have enslaved other Men, and this relationship had nothing to do with the fact that some Men were White, and some men were Black.

Religion eventually played a part in slavery. The Egyptians enslaved the Jews in part because of religious persecution. The Romans enslaved Peoples of many and varied races and religions, simply for purposes of economic and political gain.
So slavery existed for thousands of years, until about 600 years ago, when English Men came to a land now known as America, and brought with them slavery. At this point, the fact that some Men were Black and lived in Africa became the basis these English Men and other Men from European countries used to enslave Black Men. For about 320 years, English and European Men allowed slavery to thrive in the land now known as America. At the time, it was the English Colonies.

Eventually, Men who lived in Colonial America began to think of themselves not as Englishmen, but as Americans. Whether this was because the original settlers had yearned for freedoms not found in England, or because the actual physical dimensions of the Colonial lands were so free and different from Europe, or for whatever reason, in the 1770s and 1780s these Americans began to Think Different.

Why did they Think Different? Who knows? I am reminded of those ads for Apple Computers, urging us to "think different." I personally believe they were inspired by God to Think Different. I could be right, I could be wrong. I believe I am right.

So these Americans fought a war with these English, which they won. They wrote a Constitution, which said that it is Man's inalienable right to be free. This document would insure that. Furthermore, as Americans living in what was now the United States would contemplate certain issues, the Constitution could be viewed as a "fungible" or living document. This would allow flexibility in future Americans' ability to Think Different.

The Constitution was ratified in 1787. The Emancipation Proclamation was ratified in 1863, based upon the Constitution. While the Proclamation only freed slaves in areas under Union control, it is the symbolic moment of freedom for slaves, in terms of a legal remedy for their plight. Actual freedom came when the Union prevailed in the Civil War over the Confederacy in 1865. However, since the war was originally not fought for slavery, the Proclamation made freedom from slavery as much an issue as states' rights.

So let me break this down. Man came to exist. Slavery existed for thousands of years. The English brought slavery to America. For about 320 years slavery existed in English-controlled America. The United States then was formed (1776), and the Constitution ratified (1787). 78 years later slavery ended in America (1865).

It should be noted further that when slavery ended in America, first via the Emancipation Proclamation and later when Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomatox Courthouse, it ended in the entire world. Americans, using laws written and inspired by Americans, ended slavery.

It was not ended by English who won a war against Americans and forced Americans, in the aftermath, to see the "better angels of their nature." Neither Germans, Dutch, French, Canadians, Zulu's, Mexicans, Belgians, Spanish or any other Men from any other Country came to America, defeated Americans and, through the barrel of a gun, made Americans end slavery.
Americans ended slavery on their own, using concepts that were divinely inspired by Americans who Thought Different. Americans ended slavery because it was the right thing to do. When Americans ended slavery, slavery did not return. End of slavery.

For thousands of years, slavery thrived.

A place and an idea came to be called America.

Slavery challenged America.

Slavery lost, and has never returned.

America is where slavery came to die.

WHY THE RIGHT GOES AFTER CLINTON

Confessions from the Republican point of view.

I know this is what you want to hear, so I will just go ahead and say it, right off the top: The Monica Lewinsky lying-about-sex scandal is not an impeachable offense.

Down deep, every Republican probably believes this, at some level or another, maybe with the exception of a few True Believers like Ken Starr, the Captain Ahab of the Right.

I am no wishy-washy G.O.P. moderate. I was baptized by the Reagan Revolution, and worked for the party in official and unofficial capacities during the golden years of Reagan and Bush. I was the campaign manager for the Congressional candidate who opposed one of the Republican Party’s archest of arch-enemies, Bill Clinton’s in-law Barbara Boxer of California. Don’t get me wrong: I think “Slick Willie” is every bit as bad as anybody in my party says he is.

I just do not think this latest scandal is worthy of impeachment. So why are we going after him? Let me tell you why.

There are a handful of national Democrats who are particularly despised by the Republicans, and would receive the same treatment. Ted Kennedy, of course. Ron “Red” Dellums, maybe. Boxer—probably not.

Al Gore would never be treated like Clinton. U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D.-Calif.) is genuinely respected by the Republicans. There is no love lost for Congressman Richard Gephardt (D.-MO.), but there would be no stomach to go after him this hard.

No, Clinton gets it because as far as we are concerned, he is guilty as sin of any number of crimes, misdemeanors and scandalous acts, all far worse than this blow job matter.

First, there is his personal, pre-Presidential history. He smoked pot like everybody else in the ‘60s, sure, but that is still breaking the law, and he lied about it. Strike one, outside corner. He evaded the draft in a legalistic manner, that may not have broken the law, but probably did. Strike two, called. Then there is Whitewater. Small change, yes. Not a big deal? Maybe not. Only, there is something there. It’s one of those things we can feel in our bones. The McDougal’s did prison time. Jim Guy Tucker went down. Does it pass the b.s. test to believe Bill and Hillary were completely innocent of any illegal activity? The thing of it is is this: The
man weaseled his way out of that situation. “Der Slickmeister” somehow evaded a conviction, at the expense of some lesser lights, and you know something, we know he got away with it. Strike three, swinging!

Now, the campaign. He lied about Jennifer Flowers. Hey, so would you or me. Wouldn’t we? Is there a pattern developing? Strike one. He lied about raising taxes. Strike two. He got elected “illegitimately,” as far as we were concerned, via Ross Perot and inflated economic statistics that, God help us, the Bush people failed to explain. It was not until about three and a half minutes after Bill was elected that the real facts about how the recession had already started to turn around under Bush were made public--too late of course--and boy were we pissed! Strike three!

Now, all of this is irritating, and we had to endure it, but frankly it all falls into the pantheon of politics. All is fair in this game, remember. Of course, these events from the gubernatorial career and Presidential campaign of Mr. Clinton, combined with the 1994 Republican victories and Bill’s “I am still relevant” quote, well this all lent further grist to that nagging concept that we hung onto--that the man was still illegitimate.

Travelgate was clumsy, but no more so than the Clinton’s poor handling of the Secret Service, gays in the military or the overhaul of healthcare in their early, stumbling days. Rookie mistakes.

But then came Vince Foster, Filegate, Mena, Arkansas and the Chinese money-for-influence deal.

You know, I have no evidence that Clinton ordered Foster to be shot, or that even if he did not do that, he covered it up in some way. Maybe somebody else does, but it is not divulged. Who knows? It’s just that, I’m sorry, that situation stinks. It does not make common sense that Foster would commit suicide. It does not pass the old b.s. test. Something is fishy. Republicans are very, very disturbed by the fact that we could not pin this thing on Bill and/or Hillary. We think there is more to it than came out, or at least that some of the “outlandish” accusations are not really so outlandish. In other words, we think Clinton slicked his way out of it, and it pisses us off no end.

As for Filegate, if that is not obstruction of justice, what is? I mean, Chuck Colson went to prison for having one lousy F.B.I. file in his possession, and here Clinton had, what, 150 or whatever, and he just…slicks out of it! Are we getting frustrated? You bet we are.

How about Mena, Arkansas, that landing strip that just may have been the southwestern capital of the U.S. drug smuggling trade. Okay, I admit, this one is on the far-fetched side, maybe falls into that “vast right-wing conspiracy” that Hillary has made up out of whole cloth. Except we the general kept-in-the-dark public were told that Mena was a joint Bush/Clinton black operation. Okay, granted, but if the “vast right-wing conspiracy” does not investigate these kinds of goings-on, who will? Reno? I read about kids who died on railroad tracks down there because they were witnesses, sordid things like that. Made up? Maybe, but my gut reaction is that this is not all just a vast right wing conspiracy. What about Ron Brown’s death? Another conservative fantasy? Probably, except…

Yes, I know, they call this a “whisper campaign,” but again, would any of this fly if we were talking about Gore, Gephardt, Feinstein, even Boxer? The thing is, these are things we do not know Clinton did, but based on what we do know about his character, they are things he could do, or would do, if he had to.
Now, let me talk for a second about Chinese money. On the one hand, you have John Huang and illegal Federal campaign contributions. In this case, Gore is into it up to his neck. Yet, unbelievably, a strange Catch-22 has occurred, in which Clinton basically weaseled out of this scandal because attention was being paid to his other scandals, which were harder to on him than the illegal contributions. It is like the guy driving drunk with a drunk girl he met at a bar, and he will not let her out of the car even though she is begging him to. So the cops pull him over for d.u.i., the girl runs out yelling “kidnapper,” so now the cops take the guy in for that, forgetting to test him for alcohol. In the meantime, the girl is unreliable and will not stand up in the kidnapping case, time passes and the guy is no longer intoxicated and nothing is proven. He walks.

That is Bill Clinton’s political career. He walks, and we, the conservative “prosecutors,” just fume about it.

However, it is not just contributions. We have a full-fledged infiltration, by a Communist government that believes that we will “sell them the rope we use to hang them,” and these people now own the Long Beach Naval Station. It is called COSCOM—Chinese Ocean Shipping Company. That is absolutely appalling, it happened on Clinton’s watch, and we who helped Reagan win the Cold War are furious.

Last thing, let me just get away from these scandals for a second and say that the G.O.P. has failed miserably by not touting the fact that most of Clinton’s accomplishments—and there are accomplishments—are the RESULT OF REPUBLICAN POLICIES!

After 1994, we forced Clinton to become a moderate Republican when it came to taxes, welfare, and balancing the budget, which if the Republicans had not taken over never would have happened. A Hillary-inspired health care system that makes the Marshall Plan look like small government is what would be inflating our budget now. Clinton’s great economy is in no way inspired by Clinton. It is inspired by the aforementioned Republican discipline, but most of what we are now seeing is—remember this phrase?—the “peace dividend” from the end of the Cold War, the crown jewel of the Reagan/Bush administrations.

We are happy to credit Truman and J.F.K. for the domino theory and the Cuban Missile Crisis, but Reagan is responsible, and that is a Republican political principle that won the day if ever there was one. Done deal. Case closed. Facts are facts. HIS-TOR-Y!

So there you have it. We just know Bill, and probably Hillary, are guilty of breaking any number of laws dating back 20, even 30 years. We just know this, yet we have not been able to nab this cat.

Now, we have Monica. It is a weak case, to be sure.

We are frustrated that Clinton takes credit for the good work of the Republican Party, a party that essentially is a victim of our own success. We are red-faced about how this man has eluded our grasp and escaped justice. So, we go after him where we can get him. J. Edgar Hoover used income tax evasion to nab Al Capone. He would like to have gotten convictions for murder, just as we (and our surrogate—that is what Ken Starr is, whether we like to admit it or not) would rather have the Clintons doing time for phony land deals, unethical billing practices, obstruction of justice (in cases as serious as homicides), graft in connection with a foreign military power, campaign chicanery, and drug laundering.

The only thing we have left is a semen-stained dress. On its own, the Lewinsky lying-about-sex-because-oral-sex-is-not-really-sex scandal is not worthy of our efforts, but you know something? Clinton deserves it. That is why we go after this man so vociferously, with such a
seedy (excuse the pun) legal case. Because he deserves what he gets, because as far as we Republicans are concerned, he is guilty of very serious crimes and misdemeanors, has evaded justice, and now we are determined to see that those other crimes are avenged, even if it does happen in a roundabout way.

There, I said it.

DEMOCRATS ON WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY AGAIN

Franklin Roosevelt was in the White House, and Mao Tse-Tung was leading the Long March in China. The evils of Communism were well known by us, yet Roosevelt’s Administration failed to infiltrate any Communist cells in the United States until 1938, when it became obvious that spies and saboteurs from our European enemies were in the United States. By the time FDR acted, traitors like Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White had ascended to top positions in his government.

The dirty truth is that the U.S. was crawling with dedicated Communist agents like the Rosenberg’s in the 1940s and ‘50s. Because Joe McCarthy was a drunken demagogue, the reality of the Red Scare has been diluted and distilled, for leftist political purposes, into a big hullabaloo about a handful of untalented screenwriters who missed out on plum jobs for a couple years!

Over time, the CIA, particularly during the Dulles era, was excoriated by the Left for the work they did in Guatemala, Cuba, Iran, and other dangerous places where they were trying to prevent exactly the kind of thing that happened to us on September 11.

In the 1970s, Watergate brought down Richard Nixon, ostensibly for committing the same “crimes” that the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations had committed in the 1960s. Despite the success of the SALT agreements with the USSR, and a détente that had been carefully crafted by Henry Kissinger in linkage between China, the Soviets and us after Nixon went to China, the Democrats were willing to put national security and our country’s best interests on the backburner in an orgy of political witch hunting. They took advantage of their “opportunity” and crafted legislation that hurt this country.

The Church Committee hearings epitomized this situation. We all found out that JFK had been using the Secret Service to orchestrate pool orgies, and that he was in bed with the Mob. Despite the high danger of a Cold War raging at that time, the Democrat-controlled Congress emasculated U.S. intelligence capabilities.

In 1979 they passed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), and one of the results of this was that the FBI could only wiretap leaders of foreign powers, not the rank-and-file spies and terrorists in our midst.

Under Reagan, the CIA did good work in the Middle East working with the Israeli Mossad, but the FISA restrictions were still in place, and enforced, during the Clinton years. What this meant
was that the FBI could wiretap Osama bin laden – if he was in the U.S. – but not the guys who took over the airline!

Another aspect of the restrictions is that if the FBI knew a terrorist was a member of Al Qaeda, went to the FISA judge and said they knew he was a member, but not the leader, the judge would be obligated by the law to say that there was not enough information to issue a warrant for a wiretap.

The 1976 Levi Guidelines limited information on subversive groups. These were implemented by Gerald Ford’s Attorney General, Edward Levi, but were in response to pressure from a Democrat Congress that virtually held a gun to Ford’s head from 1975 to 1977.

A Maoist organization called Progressive Labor was allowed to foment “revolution” in the ‘70s. Their literature actually called for recruitment of “progressives” – Communists – into the American Armed Forces.

GOP Congressman Bill Young of Florida went to the FBI to find out what they were doing about it, but he was told that under the Levi guidelines their hands were tied.

Terrorist cells operating in 1975 under the guise of the Socialist Workers Party, a Trotskyite group, were not to be investigated in light of Church, despite the fact that they were engaged in terrorist activity in Spain, Latin America and the Middle East.

When Jimmy Carter was elected President, terrorists, spies and saboteurs, domestic and international, suddenly had virtual free reign. The result: The rise of Fundamentalism Islamic Revolution in Iran, and the rise of Communism in Central America, particularly in Nicaragua.

The capture of American hostages at the U.S. Embassy in Iran was too much for even the liberals to accept in their quest for “human rights,” but the murderers and thugs in Nicaragua gave rise to the old 1960s slogan, “One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.”

What seems to be at the core of this thinking is a failure to understand and act on the concept of realpolitik, or simple reality. We live in a dangerous world, and defending freedom requires dedication that one seems to have only when they understand these realities. Those on the Left allow themselves to be blinded by these realities until it is too late, if then.

Carter’s people, all good and dedicated and well meaning were remarkable in their naiveté. Take CIA Director Stansfield Turner. Attorney General John Ashbrook, a Republican member of Congress in the 1970s, once came upon information about an American who was spying for the Soviet KGB.

Faced with this information, Turner said nothing could be done because the Church-era laws did not allow for espionage on American citizens. A CIA agent explained to Ashcroft and Herbert Romerstein, then a member of the House Committee on Internal Security, that if he discovered
that American was planning to kill a Congressman, he could only warn of the danger after quitting his job first.

Morale was so low in the Turner CIA that the saying was, “You don’t get into trouble if you don’t do your job.”

After the 1993 World Trade Center bombings, Bill Clinton should have led the war against terrorism that George Bush is now faced with. He could have done it with quiet force, the way Ronald Reagan won the Cold War without getting anyone killed. Instead, all we got were “wag the dog” scenarios to deter us from the Monica Lewinsky blow job mess. Bogus complaints about racial profiling and a free-for-all culture of victimhood became the overriding concern of law enforcement and a military forced to be a “don’t ask-don’t tell” social experiment.

Bill and Hillary are moral relativists, the kind of radical liberals who tacitly condoned terrorists like the Weathermen, the Symbionese Liberation Army and the Unabomber. Hillary is worse than Bill. While he is a Bubba opportunist, what V.I. Lenin referred to as a “useful idiot,” she is a calculating Machiavellian who would succeed in any organization or environment, whether it be the Nazis, the Communists or the Democrats. If terrorism were the best available means of advancement, rather than false sympathy for “the children,” Hillary would be one of them.

Clinton’s disgusting recent comments about how “we were hot on bin Laden’s trail” and “just missed him” are the worst kind of CYAs designed to disguise his criminal failure to protect our country from danger. In the end, his legacy will not be impeachment, disbarment or his finger-wagging prevarications. His legacy is the ruined World Trade Center, and this is the legacy not just of this “man,” but of an entire failed, sell-out philosophy.

This great nation is in trouble, and it is time for real leadership and character to replace the James Carville-type slicksters and liars we allowed to turn politics into spin artistry for too long.

**KISSINGER DOCTRINE: SELF-INTEREST AND HISTORY ARE KEYS TO MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY**

Aside from grieving, Americans are doing two things right now for the most part. First, they are calling for immediate revenge in force. Second, they are thumping their chest and bragging about being the greatest country in the history of the world.

The fact that America is the greatest country in world history is important. However, it is of limited value right now.

Self-interest, self-preservation and diplomacy are the more important keys to making our efforts successful, not just in the short run, but 10, 50, even 100 years from now. History is no longer taught very well, but William Shirer, in “Rise and Fall Of the Third Reich”, quoted former Mexican General Santayana prophetically: “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it.”
Right now, some wise people are available to President George Bush as he builds a world coalition. His father, George H.W. Bush, has as much experience as anybody at doing exactly what W is attempting to do. So are his top advisors, among them Colin Powell and Dick Cheney.

Another great mind to be utilized is former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Anybody who wishes to understand what we need to do should read his book “Diplomacy”, along with Barbara Tuchman’s “The Guns of August” (which John Kennedy made note of in determining how nations “accidentally” stumble into wider war).

As good a place as any to avoid “re-living the past” is a study of Austrian diplomacy in the post-Napoleonic Era (1815-50). This period influenced Kissinger’s thinking, and was the key to the Vienna Conference, the development of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and spurred a period of relative European peace lasting a century.

The first reaction is to discredit any correlation of the “civilized” governments of Victorian Europe with the extremist animals running rampant throughout the Middle East. Kissinger, however, reminds us that all politics and diplomacy is rooted in the concepts of self-interest and self-preservation.

It should also be considered that Osama bin Laden might be a diversion. There are other terrorists, and rogue states with terrorist interests. Military planners and intelligence experts should consider the “bin Laden decoy” possibility, the way the U.S. used George Patton to lure Germany into thinking he would lead an attack on Pas de Calais instead of the Omar Bradley-led Normandy Invasion.

Regardless of whether the World Trade Center and Pentagon bombings are the work of bin Laden, his splinter cells, or “legitimate” nation(s), all the players have an interest and an end game. The most difficult to deal with would be if bin Laden’s motive is to create an apocalypse that spurs a worldwide Islamic holy war. However, bin Laden is allegedly human and he and his people have the instinct of self-preservation, at some level. This is the area Kissinger would have us exploit. This concept goes extra and especially for countries with territory, armies, and so forth. Even Afghanistan falls into this category.

The slippery slope is in convincing our adversaries of our steadfast resolve. Saddam Hussein of Iraq calculated that American resolve would end before marching on Baghdad, and he was right. His self-interest (and sense of self-preservation) was based on maintaining power and using his role in the Gulf War to make himself into a defiant rebel in the eyes of a segment of the Islamic world. Had he been positive that we would have gone all out to destroy him and his government, his actions would have been much different.

We are in a chess match with the likes of the Taliban. Now, many are calling for all out bombing and military incursion. This would make a lot of people feel good, and could be beneficial in the short run (see Gulf War). However, long-lasting security in the region and around the globe may
be better served through less drastic actions. What will invasion and occupation mean to Israel and to American security in 2010, 2020, and beyond?

It is instructive to understand that the Middle East is not the same, and the populations not likely to react, in the manner of Germany and Japan after World War II. It is just as instructive to study the fall of the Roman Empire and the end of colonialism, and further emphasize that the new insurgents are not the bomb-throwers of French Algeria. The new rebels have anthrax and maybe worse.

This gets us back to self-interest. If we invade Afghanistan, the terrorists may up the ante. If a huge portion of Americans is wiped out in a biological and chemical weapons attack, we will come back with great and furious anger. That could mean military action that has a major effect on every Middle Eastern nation.

The key countries, surrounding the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Caspian Sea, do not want to become a twenty-first century nuclear/chemical/biological Cambodia or Balkans. We need to explore what the following countries want out of this: Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, India, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, China, and Israel.

History and new realities tell us that to have the locals take care of their business, or at least have a big part in so doing, is a lot better than having the World’s Policemen come in, and leave everybody to clean up the mess. Coalition building based on self-interest is as relevant today as it was when England hooked up with Prussia and other nations to stop Napoleon at Waterloo.

Now, as Kissinger would advocate, comes the concept of linkage, which combined with former House Speaker Tip O’Neil’s adage that “all politics is local,” is how we should go about building a safer world for everybody via a diplomatic solution.

As students of Kissinger know, the diplomatic solution does not preclude military force. He had his Christmas bombings. Bush will justifiably use force, too.

The keys could be China and Pakistan. These two are linked, via the Cold War, by the 1947 break-up of India (with India “going” to the West). China has influence with the Taliban, as well, and is motivated by the chance to increase their image of peacemaker as we head toward their hosting the 2008 Olympics. Pakistan is relatively powerful and more modern than Afghanistan, a country that rivals Caligula’s Rome when it comes to barbarism as spectacle. Pakistan’s chance to get aid and cooperation from the U.S. will benefit their position with neighboring India. However, it should deflate tensions with the New Delhi government, a long-time Western goal.

Back to bin Laden. The worst-case scenario is that his goal is to spur World War III, and a post-Apocalyptic jihad that creates anarchy. However, we also know that bin Laden is motivated by the concept of getting American military troops out of his home country, Saudi Arabia. This is more important to him, we think, than a two-state Israel-Palestine, U.S. backing of Israel, or the
destruction of Israel. He is mostly concerned with U.S. influence on Islam, and a study of Western influence is complete only by going back to Lawrence of Arabia.

All the nations in the region must be made to understand the deterrence factor. They must know the U.S. will do what we need to do to make the world as safe from terrorism as is possible.

Other players include Russia, eager to make themselves relevant in world affairs again. Specifically, they want Powell’s call to “end terrorism wherever we find it” to include a crackdown on Chechen separatists. (It should further be noted that the Powell Doctrine could eventually include using bin Laden-finding tactics in Latin America to smoke out drug lords who kill more people than bin Laden has.)

Iran has tentatively attempted modernism, a hopeful sign. They are motivated to prevent a refugee of Afghans across their border, and to get back into the game economically.

Saudi Arabia wants stability, and knows they are a potential target because of their size, wealth and long standing as a world partner. Iraq is a wild card. Hussein’s motives here are murky. He needs to show joy over American pain to maintain his position as a rebel, but we should explore back channels that could allow him to save face in a way that takes some heat off him and allows him to get Iraq back into the world, like Iran has tried to do, without making Iraq look like they have given in to the pressure. This, of course, would only occur if he could help our cause in some way.

In a lesser way, Syria may wish to use this opportunity for the same reasons. Opportunity, as the Chinese say, is the real meaning of crisis. The Central Asian nations of the old USSR are likely eager to no longer be ragged vestiges of a dead empire, but they could welcome a chance to be partners with the U.S. by supplying logistical, diplomatic and intelligence help, in some cases behind the scenes.

We should explore secret agreements with countries that, for domestic political reasons, wish not to appear to be American puppets. In Afghanistan itself, the question may come down to getting the Taliban to cooperate in some way, or to mount an offensive in conjunction with rebel factions that include A) an American invasion, and/or B) civil war – both with the goal of rooting out terrorist capacity now and as long as possible.

If we successfully do this, future security will be increased only if we upgrade our regional intelligence, through satellites, technology and human resources, on a par with the Israeli Mossad, well into this century. What has happened is that Islamic Fundamentalism has emerged as the biggest threat to peace, and each act committed in its name is a recruitment tool. Because of the importance of oil, the U.S. cannot consider withdrawing interests from the region. Therefore, our strategy must contend not just with destroying the physical assets of our current enemies, but dealing with the ideas that live on. That is why Muslim cooperation is so vital.

Bin Laden was an American ally when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Politics in this region breeds strange bedfellows. Hussein may fear that unless he becomes one of these “bedfellows”
he faces our “finishing the job” in Iraq as long as we are in the area. While “dealing with the devil” is expedient in the short term, we must do so only with a plan to deal with our “friends” when they become our enemies – and in some cases our friends again. Confusing? Welcome to the Middle East chess game.

THE REAGAN THEORY

50 million people died in World War II. However, it is accepted that despite this enormous cost, the political result of the war made fighting and winning worth it.

Now, here is something that nobody has ever really looked at, and it is time, and we are just the people to do it. Suppose that after Reagan’s “evil empire” speech of 1983, the USSR and the U.S. went to war. We fought a conventional war, which lasted from 1983-89. 50 million died in World War III, which spread across every major continent on the globe.

Through superior technology, better leadership, attrition and perhaps a little divine guidance, the United States prevailed, taking the march to Moscow and winning a total victory in the fall of 1989.

The political results of this horrific war were that the Soviet Union crumbled, the Eastern bloc broke up, the Warsaw Pact was disintegrated, Germany re-unified, Communism became an outdated political theory, and with the exception of a few “brushfires” in the Baltics and Iraq, America emerged the sole superpower presiding over a peaceful world.

In other words, the political result was exactly, completely and precisely what Caspar Weinberger, George Schultz, Ronald Reagan, George Bush and the heroes of 1981-93 accomplished, only in your case without firing a shot!

I would say that if we fought that war, and that many people died (say 450,000 were Americans), and the result was what I describe, history would unquestionably state that it was worth it, a great victory despite its terrible price!

ONE MAN'S TAKE ON A NEW KIND OF WAR

1. How the world sees us.

A Harvarad professor named George Santa Anna once said “those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it.” Santa Anna's words were wise. I would add a caveat. It is not just about remembering the past, but also learning the truth about the past. Let me give two examples. A few years ago I met a young, beautiful French girl. She looked like Bridgitte Bardot from the “And God Created Woman” era (which is irrelevant to matters at hand but a nice memory for me). Anyway, she was a typical middle class bourgeoisie Frenchwoman. One day the discussion turned to politics, and she said that America’s involvement in Vietnam was the moral equivalent of Nazi Germany. In case any of my readers are not up to speed, America’s
involvement in Southeast Asia was not the moral equivalent of Hitler’s terror, and the fact that this is so is simply so true that it deserves no explanation on its face.

My friend Brad Cole (the actor who portrays Prince Richard on CBS’s daytime drama “A Guiding Light”) lived in France for years and told me this girl’s views were typical, and that he was a lonely beacon of Yankee patriotism fighting a daily wave of Frenchmen who “hate America.”

Now this is France, not our best friends but still an ally, a people whose favorite sport is running from the Germans, who were twice saved from the Hun by us. However, these revisionist, anti-American sentiments are rampant all over Europe, and God knows what Russian, Chinese, Turkish, Australian, Japanese and African kids are being taught.

My daughter, a junior at a suburban U.S. public high school, was taught that the only reason we bombed Hiroshima instead of Tokyo was because it was cloudy that day, that Harry Truman would have preferred to extract as high a death toll as possible, ostensibly for racial reasons. I have read that Hiroshima was not the first target, that the main target was not bombed due to cloud cover, but the main target was not Tokyo. Again, folks, without getting into this too deeply, this revisionist look at the way we desperately fought and won in the South Pacific Theatre is garbage.

When I served in the United States Army, one fellow in my unit was a Muslim of Middle Eastern ancestry. This kid was a typical American, born and raised in Cerritos, a Los Angeles suburb known for putting out great athletes like Nomar Garciaparra. I was friends with this guy. He was a handsome young man who liked what all guys that age like: Girls, cars, sports, having fun. Then the issue of Salman Rushdie came up. At the time, Iran had issued a “death edict” because of Rushdie’s “The Satanic Verses”. My buddy casually said that, as a Muslim, he would gladly kill Rushdie.

Lastly, I once knew a naturalized American citizen who from India. When Indira Gandhi was assassinated, this otherwise quiet, nice, attractive woman thought it was the best thing since sliced bread.

These people maybe were just mouthing off, but if people like that could be made to believe that killing in the name of Islam was all right, how would harder-edged Muslims feel? Of course, we know the answer.

The point of these anecdotes is that Americans fail to grasp that common sense often does not drive the attitudes of people outside our borders and sometimes within them, and that a failure to teach history has distorted ideas domestically and internationally.

Do you think more than one percent of the Afghan population (and this goes for most Middle Eastern countries) knows the Holocaust happened, and the details of it? Or, if they have heard of it, they probably were taught that it was a lie. How many people anywhere know details of the American Revolution, the framing of a Constitution that was the anvil that destroyed slavery
once and for all, in America by Americans? If they “know” anything they believe
Washington and Jefferson were terrorists. Slavery is of course an ugly fact of life that we have
put in the storefront window to view, anguish over, talk about and learn from.

No doubt our “enemies” are taught that George Patton committed crimes against humanity. The
regrettable conflicts that came about when America expanded into Indian territory are made out
as an all-encompassing feature of our existence, not Manifest Destiny. Western civilization as a
whole is seen as imperialism, colonialism, of Christian Crusaders perpetrating an inquisition on a
world of peaceful, indigenous peoples. No credit for building roads, hospitals, planes, developing
medicines, bringing about the Age of Enlightenment in the form of books, the arts, film, ever
seems to be accorded. Technological advancements of the West that have bettered the lives of
billions of planetary humans for centuries are framed as expansionist tools of the Rudyard
Kipling crowd.

Yes, Western Civilization gave the world guns, disease, smog, and by no means holds an
exclusive patent or morality, but these facts are widely and freely disseminated and used to
educate in order to learn from past mistakes.

Yes, the United States and the CIA rigged elections, fomented coups and backed unsavory guys
in places like Guatemala, Iran, Cuba and Chile. Using 20/20 hindsight, some of these actions
were wrong, but darn it, things were mostly done by men of goodwill who felt justified in doing
it and had good intent. None of it is hidden. It is all displayed. It is us. Compare that to the
despotism of our enemies, and our crimes are modest. Besides, the world starts now, and our
previous adventures are irrelevant to our quest for survival. In that quest we will make more
mistakes. They will be done for what seem good reasons without the benefit of historical
analysis. All of it will be in the American spirit of taking on a heavy burden to provide safety and
security for freedom-loving people.

Common sense is not at play in the way most of the world thinks, because few have been taught
the truth. Who is to blame them, however? We Americans do not teach ourselves about
ourselves, so why should we expect foreigners to do any better. In fact, foreigners who live in the
U.S. often do do better. Coming from miserable huddles of poverty and oppression, many arrive
on our shores and immerse themselves in learning all that makes America so fabulous – aspects
of life that we ourselves take for granted, although I suspect that the locals instinctively believe
something magical is behind the MTV, the Rage Against the Machine and the other hum-drums
of the Dumbillionite class.

Now that I have raged against my fellow citizens’ apathy, allow me to state that the instinct I
speak of is what makes me confident in a new generation of Americans to confront this great
twenty-first century challenge of terrorism, on and off our shores. I see it in my daughter, who
for the first time expresses the vestiges of resolve that so many young people suddenly have
beating within their red-white-and-blue hearts. Millions of kids like her have been taught that we
unreasonably bombed Japan and Germany, that the overriding aspect of the South Pacific War
was Japanese internment, that U.S. businesses exist only to pollute the planet. You know what?
As they stare at CNN and Fox News, read the newspapers, listen to the radio, and join a world
that once seemed to have been built for their indulgence, it seems they have this feeling in the pit of their stomachs, this stirring within their souls that all that anti-American garbage was just that: Garbage.

Failure to know history will help bring down our enemies, too. Tojo thought the U.S. was too rich, too soft, a slothful giant to be brought down at Pearl Harbor. The sleeping giant destroyed his empire and tried his ass. Osama bin Laden and his ilk may have cursory knowledge of U.S. history, but they too believe we lack the will to fight back. They do not know us, but they will. They have bitten off more than they can chew.

They may believe that we used the atom bomb only to terrorize, that we firebombed Dresden in 1945 for no reason other than to export evil. They Are wrong about our motives, but if they think 55 years of Political Correctness has destroyed our will to use the weapons of freedom to defeat them, they are mistaken.

In the battle of wills, these terrorists are badly unarmed. I would also like to add that when these suicide bombers die thinking they are going straight to Heaven, they surely must be terrified when they find themselves in the clutches of the devil informing them that the Western infidels are the ones in the Right (damn it), but they have a special place reserved for their depraved souls!

Finally, however, while an understanding of history is important, we are entering into a battle for hearts and minds. I would suggest as good reading material William Shirer’s “The Nightmare Years”, in which he describes his early years as a journalist traveling the rugged Khyber Pass of Afghanistan in the 1930s. This is a good window into the tradition, religion, and mind of the people of this region.

It is vital that those in the business of conducting intelligence understand that whether these people know the truth is not of immediate consequence. What is of consequence is what they believe the truth to be. Teaching and changing people who have been wrong for so long will not be easy. Lest I allow myself to be completely jingoistic in the manner of a John Wayne character, let me say that an honest approach to our partners and future partners, that acknowledges mistakes where mistakes exist, made by the West from the time of Lawrence of Arabia to our handling of the Israel alliance, is better than a bulls-ahead, America-first approach.

Look, we have tried, sometimes we have failed. Most of the time we had our hearts in the right place, certainly more so than any other nation.

Will a future, peaceful Middle East resemble an alliance of former enemies the way Germany and Japan came around? One can hope.

2. Making the world safe.
Lord Almighty, George W. Bush issued a tall order when he said we would eradicate evil from the world. This makes the Marshall Plan look like the allocation of funds to build a new junior college. What we will do is try to make the world as safe a place as possible for:

A. Americans.
B. Westerners.
C. Peoples of the world.

How do we do this? How do we make it so that the fewest possible people die in future attacks? Unfortunately, the time may come sooner rather than later when the answer to that question is to kill a lot of “their” people to save a lot of “our” people. Right now, our enemies are questioning whether we have the stomach to engage in such a task. Unfortunately, more of “our” innocents may have to die before our government feels they have that will, that mandate to “go all the way.”

The calculation of killing is a chilling one. Take this hypothetical: We know the terrorists will kill 100,000 Americans, and the only way to prevent it is to kill 1 million Muslims. Yes or no?

Consider history. President Truman calculated that more Americans and Japanese would die in Operation Magic Carpet Ride, the land/sea invasion of Tokyo, Japan, than would die in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so he dropped them. It can be reduced to math.

Next, take a look at Dresden, Germany in February, 1945. We firebombed a mostly civilian population with little military hardware. Why? It was not because Truman, George Marshall and Curt LeMay just plain hated German people and wanted as many dead as possible. It was because we had just repulsed the Wehrmacht in the Battle of the Bulge, but they kept coming. Our planners knew we would have to press on in battle march through the Low Countries, towards Berlin, against stiff resistance. They calculated the resistance would lessen, thus saving as many American lives as German dead in Dresden, in this process.

Cold? Yes, but this is the kind of tough decision W might soon be faced with. We also must face the fact killing civilians can be a strategy. Jimmy Doolittle’s raids on Tokyo, like Dresden, helped weaken morale, an important factor in war.

What about biological weapons? If we knew we could send bombs that kill 100,000 Muslims to save San Francisco from an Anthrax attack, do we do it? At what price tolerance, compassion, compromise? These beautiful human traits should of course be tried, but they do not always work. What then?

3. The Saddam Connection.

The conundrum in all this may be the Saddam Hussein factor. Is he or isn’t he? The Bush Administration faces some personal anguish in this regard. If he is behind the bombings, then W must deal with the public fact that his father’s “failure” to march on Baghdad gave the fruit we now reap a chance to grow.
On the other hand, Saddam might not be happy about what is going on. He has a lot to lose, and in the strange alliance of war, in which the “enemy of my enemy is my friend,” there is cogent belief that he could be used by our side the way he was when he fought our enemy of the 1980s, Iran (now our “friend,” reportedly).

As Slim Pickens would say, “What in the wide, wide world of sports is goin’ on here?”

4. China in the Middle East.

Has anybody felt what I am feeling, that China is watching this whole situation and thinking that, in the aftermath of “war,” they would love to swoop in and control the region like the Soviets taking over the Eastern Bloc after World War II?

5. Containment.

Victory in our new war will not likely look like it did in Europe or Occupied Japan. Rather, it may look like our victory in the Cold War. This lets us re-examine the work of George Kennan, who in the late 1940s devised the U.S. policy of containing, rather than outright defeating, Communism. Attrition played a major part in the strategy, which certainly worked against the USSR and is working against China.

6. The role of the media.

Watching rioting protesters in Kabul on TV, I get the sense that the entire Muslim world hates us and desires to protect Osam bin Laden. However, a poll of Afghanis apparently indicates that 62 percent of the nation wants the Taliban to hand over bin Laden. This tells me the media is somehow working against us. Quick film clips and sound bites provide stirring images that lead us to see and believe certain things that are probably not indicative of reality.

7. Quote of the day: “Need I remind you, sir, that we belong to the least exclusive club in the world with the highest dues: The United States of America.” – Purportedly said by McGeorge Bundy to Dean Acheson during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

8. Why we are so influential.

Is it an accident of fate that the U.S. is the greatest, most influential nation in world history? I think our revolution was different from any other revolution, in that educated men with much to lose revolted against King George, instead of the starving peasants of all other uprisings. I think there was Divine Inspiration that gave us such talented men as the Founding Fathers, and this inspiration is evident in our Constitution.

Throughout the twentieth century, the world has faced many dangers. We have come to the rescue every time, taking on challenges others asked us to take on because they could not handle it themselves. People like the way we look, dress, talk, dance, sing, and make movies. We are
cool and fun and on the cutting edge. Folks respond to what we are all about. Our athletes are the best, our women the most beautiful, our freedom the most free, our ability to work and produce the most awe-inspiring.

Our way is the best way and many emulate us. There will always be lessers of the Earth who have an opposing agenda. Frustrated by our popularity, they hate us because it is human nature to do so and they have little else to do.

Later, when these lessers eventually come around, when they are ready to grow and not be lessers of the Earth anymore, we never harbor resentment. There are no reprisals. We open our loving arms and welcome all to our party.

God bless America, land that I love.


If we declare war on all terrorism, then I am all for going after the IRA and Colombian drug lords…

Is it just me, or do others think George Bush is fighting a fight Bill Clinton refused to engage in for eight years? Did Clinton drop the ball after the 1993 WTC bombing? I look at Clinton, and I see a guy who was unwilling to do the heavy lifting, instead favoring various “wag the dog” scenarios to either take pressure of his sex scandals or create false crises for him to look good in…

I am the first guy to admit I do not like Clinton or his wife, Hillary, but I also felt a wave of non-partisanship when Senator Clinton spoke in the immediate aftermath of the recent bombings. She was eloquent and I just felt like we were all in this thing together…

Hey, if Arabs are going to infiltrate this country, let’s use Arabs to infiltrate them, not just overseas, but here. As long as these guys want to come to America, act like average people and be “sleepers,” we can find plenty of smart, courageous Arabs who love this nation, to get in their cells and help us out…

Hey, airplane makers, how about this for an idea? Just like spacecraft that is controlled from the ground by computers, how about devising cockpit controls so that if we suspect a plane has been hijacked, we could override the hijacker and put it in automatic pilot until we figure out what to do? Those “right stuff” guys from Tom Wolfe’s book might not have liked the idea much, but it has merit.

THE AMERICAN INSTINCT

A video store I frequent was closed yesterday because one of the tapes was found covered in white powder. The fire department arrived, and it turned out the powder was not anthrax, but
gypsum. A customer whose house was being re-modeled had returned the tape. The store was re-opened and everybody went about their business; no freakouts, no panic, no big deal.

It occurred to me that in a small kind of way, my country had defeated Osama bin Laden in a small battle in the War on Terrorism.

This brings me around to something else I am beginning to notice, and that is an instinctive kind of Americanism that seems to happen to people here, almost by osmosis. If bin Laden hired me as an advisor on what his enemies – the American people – were all about, I would have some things to tell him that I think would surprise him, and this is why he will not prevail.

I am not an expert on the military, or the government, or the inner workings of the Bush Administration, but bin Laden’s war is not just with those entities. His war is with the spirit of America, by playing on our fears, our phobias, our softness and lack of resolve. When it comes to the inner workings of being an American, by God I am an expert!

I suspect much of bin Laden’s human intelligence comes from a very small group of Arabs who have lived in the United States for five or 10 years, long enough to be very knowledgeable of life here. These guys, many of whom have been working as cabdrivers, hanging out in bars and strip clubs, renting and watching Hollywood movies, listening to rap and angry rock music, are bin Laden’s spies.

Bin Laden has probably heard about disenfranchised teenagers in black goth clothes, pierced and spiked and tattooed. He has heard about kids who have no idea what World War II was fought over and do not care, who eschew church and family and morality for sex and drugs and rock’n’roll. He has heard about girls who live for shopping sprees in which they max their parents’ credit cards, and cannot wait to augment their breasts with silicone. He has heard about boys who slack their time away on skateboards instead of pursuing wholesome activities like baseball or fishing.

Bin Laden must have heard about how Americans are addicted to on-line pornography and videos that depict the flower of our young womanhood getting debauched in extreme gangbang orgies. Or the kids who drop ecstasy, or listen to lyrics that urge them to kill themselves because society has no place for them.

Surely bin Laden heard from his operatives about racial tensions dividing us from each other. Of blacks demanding affirmative action and victimhood, and of angry white rednecks who would just as soon chain ‘em to the back of their pickup trucks on a lonely country road.

Or bin Laden heard about gay pride and official policies that give rights to the Sodomites of the New Gomorrah.

Of course, bin Laden was told all about selfish, wanton Wall Streeters whose very existence revolves around the Almighty Dollar. He heard about parents who do not spend time with their kids, and kids who never see their fathers.
Gleefully, bin Laden’s spies saw all this and more, reported it verbatim, and the conclusion based on all this “intelligence” is that the United States of America does not have the stomach to overcome a challenge.

Bin Laden has bad intel on two fronts. First, he does not understand history, and like the Japanese military leader Tojo during World War II, he has awoken a sleeping giant. But that is very much a military concept, one that speaks to our desire to confront him with our armies, our spies, our technology.

Bin Laden’s biggest mistake is believing all the information he got from his people about the nature of our people, particularly our young folk. What those transplanted Arab terrorists could tell their leader was what they saw, but they lack an intrinsic feel for what makes an American.

A kid grows up in this country, flush with freedom and opportunity, but the schools teach them all kinds of garbage, like the Manifest Destiny of Westward Expansion was nothing more than an Indian Holocaust, or that we dropped the Atom bomb on Japan because the white leaders at the time hated yellow-skinned, slant-eyed little people.

They are told that our Vietnam experience was on a moral par with Hitler’s Germany, that we are warmongers and racists who meddle in the affairs of innocent countries just trying to get by.

They are certainly not told that the leaders of Communist Russia and China were for years unadulterated mass murderers, and that they would have kept murdering if not for our stopping them. On the other hand, they are told that the only reason we have not replaced gas guzzlers with electric cars is because a handful of Big Oil families will not allow it, that the Ozone Layer cannot possibly be a naturally-occurring phenomenon, and that companies that employ millions are nothing more than exploiters of the human condition, especially in Third World countries where folks working for them would die on the huddled streets if not for the jobs created by the “exploiters.”

I know this is what they are being told, because I have a daughter who has been told this kind of thing in the public school system for 11 years. I told you, I am an expert.

It is not just schools that tell our kids what a piece of crap America is. Hollywood is excellent in this regard. Our news media is very efficient at it, too.

So, getting back to Osama bin Laden’s “eyes and ears” in America, they hear all of this stuff and tell him about it, no doubt. What he does not get from them, he gets from CNN.

There is a point, however, that these people are missing. For some reason, there is a common sense factor that young people raised in this nation seem, thank God, to possess. An adult who moves here may possess it after a long while, but they are much less likely to understand it than the young.
What it comes down to is that the young boy or girl growing up here, listening to all the “down with America” rhetoric, is smart enough to figure a few things out for themselves. Okay, we’re warmongers and racists and greedy exploiters, but…but…something does not add up.

We’re free to think for ourselves, to express opinions and live our lives as we see fit. “How can we be racists if every person of color I know seems to be doing just fine, and none of my friends are down on them, and what about all those black dudes makin’ coin in music and sports? Have they accomplished all of that despite our narrow-mindedness?”

A kid looks around and sees streams of foreigners here and thinks to himself, hey, if we’re so bad, how come everybody keeps moving here? Dot-commers especially saw what democracy is in this nation. What about the guy from India who started that Internet company that went public? Or the black-Jewish kid with computer skills who commands a $70,000 salary?

A girl is told that we are a nation of homophobes, but has a hard time squaring this concept with the fact that all the gay people she knows about seem to be doing fine, thank you.

Kids hear about how we just blow people up without regard for human life, but common sense tells them that something is wrong with that picture because they know if we wanted to, we could obliterate a country like Afghanistan from the planet, and instead we painstaking bomb only military targets and strive to keep casualties to a minimum.

Some of the smarter kids even study things like the Roman Empire and colonialism, and make mental note of the fact that the heavy-handed tactics of Rome and the British occupiers are not our style.

Hey, I thought Pat Robertson might have had a point when he said that we had gone so far from God that we had become vulnerable, but Pat missed the point that occurred to me. That is that we are free, and we are human, and we make mistakes, but as Frank Sinatra once said, the fun is in correcting our errors.

The young sense all of this much better than we give them credit for. They see injustice and do something about it. This generation sees racism and they gang up not to keep it going but to stop it.

They also sense instinctively that this is their time. There was nothing really special about the youth of the 1930s and ‘40s who took up the challenge of stopping Hitler, and later the Stalinists. A young man today sees our flag waving, and may not be inculcated by overwhelming patriotism, but they know that flag stands for something really special. They know because they have been here all their lives and that is long enough to understand such things. They know because they have been allowed to think for themselves, and down deep they know this country is the best in the world despite what they were told. They know that because that is precisely what they were told, and they realize that if we were not the best we would never have the confidence to let everybody go around badmouthing us. We are such a great country that we know our greatness can sustain the slings and arrows of anti-U.S. sentiment. They know that the
freedom to speak one’s mind is something special, and that our enemies do not have that right.

So they will fight. They will volunteer. They will sustain us in our time of need. They will not give up, they will never surrender. They will make us proud. In the meantime, our schools, the New York Times, Hollywood, they will for a while depart from the liberal playbook and do their part, reporting the truth in all its glory. Bin Laden will hear of it, and he will not be able to understand it. His prognostications will prove inaccurate, his calculations slightly off.

Eventually, bin Laden and the “thousands who will rise to replace” him will wither. They will become yesterday’s news, like the Kaiser, Hitler, Pol Pot and others who clutter the dustbin of history.

As for future generations of Americans, they will go back to their selfish, cynical ways. God bless ‘em for it.

THE TRUTH ABOUT POLITICIANS

You know what bugs me? People who make fun of politicians. For that matter, people who get down on lawyers, too, but let me say my piece about politicians. Particularly high-ranking politicians, like Al Gore, George W. Bush and even Bill Clinton. Now, I am no fan of Bill Clinton. He and his wife are about as far removed from me politically as you can get, but you know what? The man is a brilliant politician, an expert campaigner, with an amazing grasp for issues. In short, a genius. Al Gore? This guy has survived years of Deep South political wars, and taken on all competitors to rise to the top of his party, poised for the Presidency. George W. Bush? How about running against that wildcat, Ann Richards, and coalescing the disparate elements of Texas politics? He is dumb, say the dumbbells of the radio and thereabouts. Hey, you know what, I do not know one single person who graduated from Yale, has an MBA from Harvard, and learned how to fly jet aircraft, who is dumb!

Society is filled with naysayers and nitpickers, from Don Imus on up (or down) who could no more handle the demands of politics than they could split an atom. Politicians are more educated, more honest, more hard-working and care more about this country than 99 percent of the apathetic populace, who know only to turn these guys into cartoon characters instead of taking the time to learn the issues. The system corrupts them, yes, but the people who complain about it do nothing to change it, and if they switched places with these guys they would be far more corrupt. Most politicians started off as idealists. Just a reminder, but George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill were politicians, and all of them received their fair share of criticism in their time.

As for lawyers, I say go to law school, pass the bar and practice law if you want to get down on these guys (and gals). Criticism of lawyers is more valid than that of pols, but most of the people who do the criticizing are the ne-er-do-wells who are too stupid to understand the legal system.
Overall, I think Stupid People are the ones who should be criticized. Find them and expose them I say! Last Word: As Churchill once said, "Democracy is the worst form of government known to man, with the exception of all others forms of government known to man!"

THE ENEMY WITHIN

If you do not believe in God, then the premise of this essay will not resonate within you. Personally, I do believe, and while I may not take every word in the Bible as literal Truth as it pertains to our knowledge of the physical world, I do feel there are some tenets of Christian theology that are valid to our modern thinking. I do believe some of the prophets were really Prophets. One of the rocks of our belief is that some day will be Judgment Day. Call it Armageddon, The Apocalypse, The Coming – call it what you will, but I do not look at this as merely fable.

For centuries, generations of Mankind have felt that the great crises of their times were The End. If ever it seems Earth met the Conflagration, it would seem that World War II, with the battle vs. Hitler and the dropping of the atomic bomb, would have been that event.

Nevertheless, the Middle East has always had aspects to it of religious confrontation that has given this part of the world the look of a likely place to stage events of Biblical proportion. So it is with our current struggle against terrorism, or evil, or whatever we want to call it.

Now, the United States of America, God bless us, has taken on the burden of this battle like we always do. I do mean God bless us, because it is my personal belief that this nation is special in the eyes of the Lord. This is not an intellectually popular position in the salons of New York society, or with the Hollywood crowd, but it is in my heart.

Without getting into too much detail, I just think there was Divine Intervention, or Inspiration, at play when our Founders orchestrated the Revolution against England, then devised the Constitution, and in subsequent years built and re-built the nation. I think God likes us and guided us through wars and acrimony, until we arrived at a place of power and influence.

Of course, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, or so they say. That said, I think America has done an amazing job of remaining as uncorrupt as we are despite all the power we have.

Now we come to a time of great decision. So far, cooler heads prevail and our government has decided to give peace a chance by working the problem via diplomacy, intelligence, coalition building, favor returning, debt forgiveness, economic sanctions, bank freezing, and all the other tools of non-violence we prefer to employ.

However, what if that does not work? What if limited military action fails to attain its goal? What if the bad guys kill thousands by dropping Anthrax into the air, poisoning the water supply,
igniting tactical nuclear weapons, or some other horrible scenario that makes the death toll in New York look like nothing? What if an entire American city like San Francisco, or Nashville, or Houston were wiped out. What if biological agents rendered a state the size of Oregon uninhabitable for years? What then?

I know some who say we should make a pre-emptive strike against our adversaries, “draining the swamp” as some call it, by simply bombing into oblivion all of Islam until any potential enemy is dead, along with friends and innocents. I have advocated against this policy and continue to do so.

But what if it comes down to this?

We have the ability to do it, and if push comes to shove we might just do it. Then we will be “safe.”

Now comes the question of God’s place in all this. Better yet, what is the devil’s place in all of this?

Yes, that horned, fanged and tailed character of imagination and myth. Does he really exist? I am afraid that he does, and I fear the bastard, both here and in the after life.

You see, you cannot kill evil. You can kill evil people, but evil is pervasive and all encompassing. It is always there. Evil wants these wars. Evil loves this stuff.

If we kill millions, do we lose our special place in God’s eyes? Or are we justified in doing it? Do we reduce the whole moral equation to math, and say that X number of humans have to die in one part of the world to save X number in another, and since we are in the right part of the world, the dead millions will be in the “other” X part of the world?

I am no pacifist and no dove. I think Harry Truman used the A-bomb justifiably. Maybe George Bush will be justified not just in my eyes but in the eyes of God doing the same thing.

I do ask what Jesus Christ would do if he were making the decisions. I am afraid the answer is that he would lie down and die, knowing the meek would eventually inherit the Earth, and the righteous would ascend to Heaven. After all, what is 50 or 70 years of suffering on this planet compared to eternity in Paradise?

Still, we are here for a reason. We have a right to protect ourselves, our freedoms and our way of life. Do we do it without doing the devil’s bidding, being his soldiers of destruction? Are we between a moral rock and a hard place? Yes, we are right and the Osama bin Laden’s of the world are wrong, but that is just the kind of conundrum that makes the devil smile. Knowing this is clear, but are all of our military options so morally unambiguous?
All things considered, I cannot claim to know all. I know we are in danger and I support protecting ourselves, but I say do it with our eyes open. We must not lose our collective soul and never allow the world to be one big Us vs. Them.

It will not hurt to pray that this is not the Apocalypse, but rather just another great challenge, the kind we Americans have always met and overcome. If we overcome this without unleashing death on millions, it will also not hurt to give pause to what is being said here, and consider that we have an obligation to do good work as peaceful children of God.

What makes America great: The MacArthur Doctrine

Throughout history, one constant has remained... man’s inhumanity toward it’s fellow man. The most inhumane acts usually occur when one country’s army invades another country, conquers its army, and occupies its land. The Romans, the Mongol Hordes, Napoleon, even the British, would enslave the defeated peoples.

The Versailles Treaty of 1919 did not enslave Germany, but it did inflict the great burden of guilt upon the nation. 20 years later, that same war had to be fought again.

Then came the Americans.

In Germany and in Japan, the United States could have simply occupied and held those country’s like colonial outposts. In Japan in particular, Doug MacArthur did more to promote American values and good will throughout the world than any diplomat when he allowed the Japanese to save face, to retain their emperor, and to become a Democratic member of the family of nations.

I have lived in Berlin, and to this day there is great, genuine love in that once-divided city, the result of our magnanimous help in re-building Germany, and in rebuffing Communism.

Now I read about the hatred towards the U.S. in Afghanistan. You heard it from me first: When we go in, a large portion of that nation will welcome us. The great fears laid on us by Russian ex-patriates recalling the horrors of their 1980s adventure will be put to rest. We ain’t the USSR, a cumbersome, atheist giant; heavy-handed, as evil as those they were fighting.

It won’t be easy in there, but we will get help, opposition to the Taliban will foment, and we will help win hearts and minds. The Taliban is hated. Human nature despises the intolerance of Muslim Fundamentalism. It is destined for the dustbin of history. We will eventually help feed starving Afghans, and to bring a sense of peace, justice and security to this place. Part of the reason for this is American tradition, as embodied by the MacArthur Doctrine.

THE CLINTON AGENDA

...and why the G.O.P. went after him with everything they had.
It seems so obvious, yet nobody has said anything. Hillary Rodham Clinton does not want to be a U.S. Senator from New York just for the sake of doing that. It is all a well-orchestrated plan to keep the family in power. The Kennedy's had a similar idea. JFK was to be President until 1969, Bobby would take over that year, then either John would come back (he would have been in his early 50s in 1972 and mid-50s in '76), or the reigns would be handed over to Teddy. Obviously, assassins' bullets and drowning girls destroyed Camelot. The Clintons' think they can avoid such catastrophes.

Bill Clinton is a young man who will still be in the prime of his life in four years, eight years, and even 16 years! Does anybody think this guy is going to sit back and watch Arkansas Razorbacks games the rest of his life? Get real. He wants to be President again. He would like to be an American King, like Franklin Roosevelt. This is why he went after the White House in his early 40s. It is his way of circumventing the Constitution, and the Republicans desperately do not want this to happen. That is why the G.O.P. went after him with all they had when the Paula Jones, Monica Lewinsky, Travelgate, Whitewatergate, Mena, and whatever other scandals of his Presidency popped up. They are not about just destroying this Presidency. The Republicans have felt it necessary to destroy the <ital>man</ital>, to put the hurt to his reputation and legacy in such a way that the U.S. Electorate would never be compelled to vote for the scoundrel ever again.

That is why the election of Al Gore and Hillary Clinton in 2000 is about Bill Clinton. Hillary wants the White House, too. She would be running for it this time around--in a heartbeat--if she thought the people would consider such a thing to be palatable. Now is not the right time, but this baby Boomer is no old lady, either. She will be around a long time.

If Bill and Hillary had their druthers, they would trade the White House back and forth every four to eight years. Also, once Hillary has the imprimatur of official electability hanging around her neck, Bill or Gore can make her Secretary of State, or Attorney General, or run her for Vice President. Once in that position, anything can happen.

Watch out for these two. They want your children!

WHAT THE CLINTONS ALWAYS WERE

What it is is very simple, and that is that anybody with an IQ above 100, who can read, had access to newspapers, magazines, radio or television, and lived in America or in just about any other country in the world, had all the information they needed to recognize highly and precisely what the Clintons were by, at the latest, February of 1992. Still, the Democrats nominated them, supported them, elected them, enabled them, empowered them, and eventually elected Hillary. Now, Democrats from coast-to-coast are deserting them like rats jumping off a sinking ship. There is some kind of weird psychology at play, and it is part of basic human nature. People get behind things: Political parties, religions, sports teams, alma maters. These become "our guy," "our team," "our school," and to recognize practical, negative reality about what we invest our faith in is very hard. Republicans faced this conundrum with Richard Nixon, but frankly when it
was time to step up and do the right thing, the GOP faced the hard truth about his Presidency before it was too late. There is no way to honestly assess the Democrats of 1992-2000 and say they did the same thing. The press failed in its duty to objectively investigate and tell the truth. I understand why the liberal media did it, and I can even forgive them for it, but history will not be kind to those who choose to forget who stood up to be counted when the chips were on the line, and learn hard lessons from it. America should have been spared the Clintons for eight years, and we should have been spared Hillary's presence in the Senate. To paraphrase Marlon Brando in "The Godfather", "I blame some people" for what this country has and is being put through, and you all know who you are.

WHAT IF RICHARD NIXON HAD WON THE PRESIDENCY IN 1960?

Richard Nixon, having been fully briefed and better-prepared for Operation Mongoose, would have prosecuted the Bay of Pigs Invasion better than John Kennedy, the result being that the Cuban overthrow of Fidel Castro might have succeeded; and Castro may have been assassinated or relegated to the dustbin of history.

· It has been said that Nixon advocated the use of tactical nuclear weapons at Diem Bien Phu, IndoChina in 1954. Would he have "pulled the trigger" during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October, 1962? Or, considering that Nikita Kruschev had sized him up to be a more substantial leader than Kennedy, and Nixon having succeeded at Cuba in 1961, would Kruschev never dared infiltrate missiles on to the Communist island with Nixon in the White House?

· Would Nixon have okayed the overthrow of the South Vietnamese government in 1963, and if not, how would this have changed the complexion of Southeastern Asian politics?

· Nixon would not have been assassinated at Dallas in 1963.

· Lyndon Johnson would have challenged Kennedy for the Democrat nomination again in 1964. The civil rights situation in the South might have made him the candidate of choice with Democrats to "broker" a deal with Southern governors.

· Would America have had a Civil Rights Act of 1964? What about the Voting Rights Act, the Great Society, and the medical legislation of the 1960s and 1970s?

· Would Nixon have "bombed Vietnam to the stone age," as many Republicans are said to have advocated in the early to mid-1960s? Had he done so, would Vietnam have been a war of attrition involving American troops for nine years? What would have been the reaction of the U.S.S.R. and Red China?

· Would the Space Race have gone on as scheduled?

· What would have been the Kennedy legacy? Robert Kennedy would not have been assassinated in 1968. Ted Kennedy would not have been elected to the Senate. Would JFK have faded away or come back strong for another try at the White House, or would he have eventually lost the drive and attempted to buy the Boston Red Sox from Tom Yawkey?

· What would have been America's relationship with Communist states in the 1970s? Would Henry Kissinger have emerged as a leading statesman, and with what President? What about opening China, "linkage" foreign policy, tri-partite negotiations that played the Soviets against the Chinese, and détente?
Would Nixon have been as "liberal" as he was in signing much of Johnson's legislation?

Would Watergate have occurred? Was Nixon psychologically pre-disposed to seek revenge against perceived enemies, and thus was a Nixon scandal inevitable no matter when he inherited the Presidency?

Without Watergate, would media bias become as prevalent against the GOP? At the same time, what "secrets" now exposed by investigative journalists about medicine and many subjects still be in the closet?

Had Nixon succeeded, would the time ever have been right for Ronald Reagan and his conservative revolution?

NORTH VS. SOUTH:
THE HOMOGENIZATION OF CALIFORNIA

As a fifth generation Californian, I find myself uniquely qualified to talk about my experience as both a San Franciscan and a Los Angeleno.

I was born in San Francisco and raised in the suburbs of Marin County, but I have never held the normal San Franciscan's view that all things having to do with the Southland are plastic. I moved to Southern California in the summer of 1977—18 years old and freshly graduated from Redwood High School, where I played for a prep baseball National Championship team that routinely defeated southern powerhouses, making us giantkillers in the eyes of our local press.

Teams from the L.A. area were always better than teams from the Bay Area, and it did not matter the sport or level. Northern Californians masked their sports inferiority complex under the guise of some sort of Chablis-drinking intellectual superiority.

So it was that my perspective on the state was viewed through a sports-oriented lens, but I broke ranks by rooting for L.A. teams. Yes, my favorite baseball club was the Oakland A's, winners of three World Series from 1972-74, but they wore ugly uniforms, played in an empty, gray stadium, and by 1977 were being referred to as the "Triple A's." My dad had always favored the Dodgers before they moved west, so I never liked the Giants, and I particularly dislike that dreary slab of fog-shrouded concreted called Candlestick, or 3 Com, or whatever the heck its name is.

I started to listen to Dodger broadcasts on KFI, which carried Vin Scully clear and bright 400 miles on summer nights. I defy anybody to listen to Vin Scully and not love the man, and the Dodgers were so stable, their uniforms never changed, their broadcasts were professional compared to Charlie Finley's cheapskate radio deals, their stadium looked so awesome on television, and it was always packed.

I loved the Oakland Raiders, a truly great football team in those days. It did not matter to me that the Raiders and A's represented a city Gertrude Stein had once said of, "There is no there there."
was never imbued with San Francisco snobbery, and
I certainly never was a "49er Faithful."

Then there was college sports. Cal? Stanford? Give me a break. The University of Southern
California football team, in the 1960s and '70s, was in the midst of a run of dominance probably
never seen before or since. The incredible array of talent that wore Cardinal and Gold has never
known its equal, and the Trojans dominated baseball, track and others sports as well. I grew up
Let's see, all they did was win 10 national basketball championships in 11 years. They ran a
string of hoop wins over Cal that lasted from Eisenhower to Clinton, or something ridiculous like
that.

From 1977 to 1998 I lived in Marin County, San Diego, Colorado, Santa Monica, L.A., Lake
Tahoe, Reno, Canada, Tennessee, Idaho, Orange County, Redondo Beach, Berlin, Germany, and
Northwest. Alaska and Hawaii. The Deep South, the Southwest, the Pacific Northwest. The
Midwest and the Rockies. The former Communist East Germany. Rural France, the English
countryside, Amsterdam, Rome, Belgium, Mexico.

Most of my travels were the result of a baseball career in which I got as far as the Cardinals and A's
farm systems, and coached at U.S.C., Cal and in Europe. I was married, became a father, bought a
house, attended law school, served in the Army, got divorced, became a Hollywood screenwriter.
Why not? Once you have seen it all, done it all and been everywhere, you might as well write about
it.

San Francisco's inferiority complex received badly needed therapy beginning in 1981, when a guy
named Joe Montana led the previously horrible 49ers to the first of their five Super Bowls.
In the '80s and '90s, the Niners would establish themselves as the greatest team in the history of the
NFL. Pro football's model organization, the Rams, spiralled into mediocrity under the abominable
ownership of Georgia Frontiere, eventually ending up in St. Louis. The Raiders were seduced by
Hollywood into moving there, only to discover that Los Angeles' political will had dissipated like
that of the British Empire. After a couple glory years they became average. The sordid story of the
Los Angeles

Raiders characterizes the undoing of L.A. sports, politics and prestige more symbolically than
anything in the past 17 years, and now, unforgivably, the N.F.L. does not have a team in the Los
Angeles Basin. 3 Com Park is now perpetually packed with haughty fans who take winning for
granted. The Rams, meanwhile, played in front of a half-filled stadium run by uncaring city
bureaucrats, and Raider games deteriorated into gangbanger gatherings in a place that had
not been state of the art since the Roman Empire. The chances of building a new football stadium
in L.A. are no better today than when Al Davis abandoned some of the most loyal fans in America
for the unkept promise of one. Talk of building sports complexes, stadiums and arenas in L.A.
is...just talk. Meanwhile, San Francisco has taken on the serious task of building a new baseball
stadium, with football and basketball venues to follow.
Turnaround!

The classy Dodgers have not stayed ahead of the learning curve in an ever-changing economic system, relying instead on out-dated methods. Furthermore, while Dodger Stadium is still beautiful, it is no longer the Taj Mahal of baseball--Camden Yards, Jacobs Field, Coors Field--all are at least as impressive. The impending sale of the team to an Australian media mogul might actually be the shot in the arm the club needs, which says as much about changing times as anything else.

The A's put on a terrific run in which they finally got it together --uniform style, a spruced-up Oakland Coliseum, terrific farm system, tons of dough spent on superstars, modern marketing, good t.v. and radio coverage. The result: Three straight World Series appearances.

The Giants? Well, they are occasionally competent, but that is about it. The two Bay Area clubs have drawn creditable attendance--2.5 million-plus in good years--compared with the 1970s, when a miserable 700,000 people would enter the turnstiles of Candlestick and the Coliseum. The economic gap with the Dodgers and Angels narrowed for awhile, but the current small-vs.-large-market imbalance seriously threatens our National Pastime.

At the collegiate level, U.S.C. has fallen precipitously, and not just in football, where they manage to lose to Cal every few years. Once kings in baseball, they were replaced by Stanford (National Champions, 1987-88). UCLA is still a top notch sports school, but when they lose a basketball game it is no longer worthy of headlines the same size as BERLIN WALL FALLS. They even trade wins and losses, for the most part, with...Cal!

Parity has reached the preps, too. De La Salle High School of Concord, an East Bay suburb half an hour from Oakland, has developed into one of the greatest prep football dynasty's of all time. Serra High School of San Mateo has produced many stalwart sports heroes, including the Giants' Barry Bonds, and they reached the number one ranking in the U.S. a few seasons ago. St. Joseph of Alameda won the state championship two years running with Jason Kidd, a basketball feat that used to be unheard of for a Northern California school, unless you go back to the glory days of Bill Russell at Oakland's McClymonds High.

The L.A. Times--reading a piping hot Times always seemed to define the biggest difference between waking up in the south and waking up in the north--once was on equal footing with the Washington Post and the New York Times, but they have fallen under poor stewardship in recent years. The San Francisco Chronicle remains pedestrian.

Cable television has created a sense of sameness in both regions. Everybody gets CNN, TNT, WTBS, and all the rest. In the 1970s, when I first moved to Los Angeles, I remember how awesome it was that there was a station, Prime Ticket, which showed actual home games of the Dodgers, Angels, Kings, et al. There was no such channel up north. Now, of course, there is Sports Channel, Fox Sports West, Fox Sports West 2, ESPN, ESPN2, all available everywhere. In the old days there was a sense that there was not enough interest in the northern teams to justify these newfangled cable and pay-per-view stations, whereby L.A. teams were all the rage.
Sameness has taken over much of America. There was a time in which the West Coast and the East Coast were on the cutting edge of what Rush Limbaugh calls "societal evolution," and of course both coasts always will be, but in the 1970s Los Angeles was leading the way in terms of style and change, and now everybody everywhere knows--much sooner than before--what L.A. knows first. Why is this? Cable TV, the Internet, the increasing mobilization of society...

I can remember kids in L.A. just looked different. Long hair was in during the turbulent '60s, and continued to be popular as the years passed, but the shabby clothes were replaced over time. The problem with long hair was that if it was frizzy or curly, it would not grow long and straight to the shoulders, but rather outward in a manner reminiscent of the Bernie character on "Room 222".

Long hair, once a political statement, became a style in the 1970s, but everybody wore it like that whether it looked good or not. In L.A. I started to see the "surfer" look and the "rock star" look. This meant long, straight hair grown to the shoulders, but nicely groomed, clean, hairsprayed. David Lee Roth or David Bowie. If your hair did not look good long, you wore it short. Short hair made its comeback in Los Angeles. Today, short hair is in, unless you can get away with looking like Fabio.

Interestingly, long hair, once an anti-Establishment badge of honor, is now as likely to be worn by a Reagan Republican. Maybe more likely, L.A. took the dirty look of hippies and changed it into a surfer thing. There they were in Santa Monica in 1977, kids with long hair, longer shorts, and skateboards. The "grunge" look did not start in Seattle, it started here. It just spread fast, and now you see it everywhere, not just in the Bay Area but in Iowa and New York and Texas and, yes, in Berlin and Paris. I was struck by the sight of people in Europe I just knew had to be tourists, wearing UCLA hats and Atlanta Braves sweatshirts and San Jose Sharks jackets, and their grandfathers might be the guys who fought for Hitler.

The "gangbanger" look? Of course that started in L.A. Isn't that something to be proud of? The Bloods and the Crips brought us this new fashion statement, and it has spread worldwide. Did you know kids in Nairobi like to look like gang members? They may have no idea what real gang members do (unfortunately they may not remain as ignorant to the situation as we hope), but they do know the look, and they want to emulate it.

The one thing that really has remained separate is the experience of life in the city of San Francisco, as opposed to the city of Los Angeles. L.A. is a big, spread out place that intercedes with its incorporated, unincorporated, county, urban and suburban neighbors, but San Francisco remains physically and spiritually separate from its surroundings.

For one thing, San Francisco weather is actually different L.A. experiences the same weather as the rest of the Southland. Oh yes, maybe the beach areas get more fog and the temperature might be a few degrees colder. San Francisco, surrounded by the bay and the ocean to its east, north and west, is very often foggy and 55, but 30 minutes to the north in Novato--heck, 15 minutes away, in Corte Madera--it can be 85 degrees.
The suburbs of the north are pretty much like the suburbs of the south. Life in, say, Walnut Creek is comparable with life in Villa Park. Marin County is like Palos Verdes. San Marino is similar to Atherton. Hayward and Van Nuys are alike. San Jose and Anaheim. Sausalito and Beverly Hills. West Hollywood and the Castro District. Malibu and...well anyway, freeway traffic and congestion in the Bay Area is catching up with L.A., and while it is not as bad and probably, thankfully, never will be, it is definitely getting worse.

Oh yeah, smog. That has always been the hammer that the "No Cals," as popular sportstalk host Jim Rome calls them, have held over the "So Cals," but to my great surprise I am here to report that the air in the L.A. Basin is not nearly as dirty as it used to be. Somebody is doing something right. "No Cals" still say they hate "So Cals," and "So Cals" are still very blase about it. They actually like the Bay Area, think San Francisco is pretty and quaint. Maybe that is because so many of us interchange with each other. People from both regions attend each other's schools, take jobs, intermarr, move back and forth. Many people commute not by car but by P.S.A. commuter flights between L.A. and S.F., Orange County and Oakland, Burbank and San Jose.

San Francisco will always have a distinctive look to it, probably because it cannot expand and is locked by its water, its bridges, its hills. The roads go up and down, they wind around, they end, they go one way, but wait, because if you look closely, their financial district looks pretty much the same as downtown Los Angeles. A skyscraper is a skyscraper, know what I mean?

San Francisco has bridges and vistas of the ocean and bay. L.A. has vistas of mountains and beaches and the ocean. San Francisco is truly beautiful, but on a clear day in the winter, when the mountains are snowcapped, if you really are honest with yourself, one has to make the difficult admission that Los Angeles is...well, it is a damn beautiful-looking city. I mean, yes, it has its drawbacks, but it is more pleasing to the eye than Cleveland or Philadelphia or Houston. It is nicer looking than Berlin. Its geographical surroundings are far superior to New York, London and Paris. Give me a break with all the L.A. bashing okay, it's nice out here. I like it. I admit it. So sue me.

What about the age old saw that San Francisco is a more culturally elegant place? In what way? L.A.'s museums are just as world class as San Francisco's (the Getty should put that misnomer to rest once and for all). San Franciscans dress better than Los Angelenos. Oh really? Care to walk around Beverly Hills, and report back to me?

The theatre? Hey, L.A. theatre is cutting edge, probably because so much acting, writing and directing talent displays itself to the film industry. It is not Broadway or London's West End, but it is world class!

One thing will never change. Los Angeles has way better-looking women, but then again L.A. has better-looking girls than just about any other place. I know. I have researched the subject. I sure remember being awed by those fine USC cheerleaders when I was growing up. San Francisco opened some pretty fair night spots a few years back, but they died down. L.A. night life still runs
rings around it.

L.A. is Hollyweird, plastic, a bunch of phonies. At least that is what they say in San Francisco (and every place else), but that is a bunch of bull, if you ask me. Lying, cheating, stealing, vanity--these are common traits found in any business or industry, including politics, aerospace, computers, insurance, the law, real estate, you name it. Hollywood just interests people, so its flaws are publicized more. Besides, the Bay Area is making a bid to become "Hollywood North." LucasFilm is in Marin County. Numerous films and television shows have always been based there. Now, with the end of the Cold War, many military bases--Treasure Island, Mare Island, Moffett, Ft. Ord--have already, or plan to convert into movie studios.

The state economy is evening out, too. First L.A. had aerospace, then the Bay Area became the computer capital, but no these and other industries are becoming less characteristic of one or the other region, and more like the state as a whole.

Even politics, once a very defining characteristic separating north from south, is becoming more centrist. There is no way that two Jewish Democratic women, Diane Feinstein and the very liberal Barbara Boxer, could have been elected to the U.S. Senate without large blocs of votes from Orange County, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego and other so-called bastions of the Far Right.

Orange County is still Republican, but is not the John Birch stronghold it was when they boosted the Presidential aspirations of Barry Goldwater in 1964. By the same token, the tree-hugging liberals of the north coast have elected Republican Frank Riggs, off and on (more on than off) since 1990. Re-districting after the 1990 census, under the stewardship of Governor Pete Wilson, created more Republican-friendly districts north of the Golden Gate, and it is more possible for the G.O.P. to make their mark in the East Bay and Peninsula suburbs stretching to San Jose, a place where computer executives tend to be moderately conservative. The old days, in which Republicans conceded the north and relied on garnering a bloc of southern votes, has been replaced by the Bill Morris brand of moderate centrism that now dominates American and British national politics, serving also as a metaphor for the "country" of California.

The phenomenon of Republicans Rudolph Giuliani and Richard Riordan running New York and Los Angeles is not so much of a groundbreaking event when one recalls that Frank Jordan, who calls himself a Democrat but for all intents and purposes is a Republican, was elected Mayor of ultra-liberal San Francisco in 1991.

In an age in which a Democrat sits in the White House and Republicans control both houses of Congress in the post-Cold War world, politics has become a middle ground business, and in many ways the differences between Northern and Southern California, between San Francisco and Los Angeles, have dissipated. These two wonderful places have emerged looking more like each other, while each is, and always shall be, unique in wonderful ways.

The homogenization of the north and south is a product of the modern age, but rather than lament, perhaps it is better to celebrate the fact that we live in a fabulous state, a place I still think is the greatest place in the world. I know. I have researched the subject.
AMERICA'S DESTINY AND ITS DOCTRINE:

TERRORISM WILL BE REPLACED BY DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Proposed speech for President George W. Bush
Written by STEVEN TRAVERS

Ladies and gentlemen, as we approach the Presidential elections, I would like to address in detail the subject that motivates a large percentage of the American public to vote; a subject that also plays a major role in the international as well as local politics of most countries in Europe, the Middle East, and throughout this "shrinking" globe of ours.

The questions that dominate discussion the most during these trying times are, Why is America in Iraq? What is our role throughout the Muslim Arab world? and to what extent do all these disparate elements play out in this new challenge to our generation, the War on Terror? There are very good answers to these and other questions, which I endeavor to answer herein. A great political scientist once said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to re-live it." This is a true statement, and the longer I live, engage in political discourse, and study history, I have come to believe that sometimes history does not merely repeat itself, it rhymes. The lessons of history are so important that I feel the need to bring the subject up as I engage in this discussion.

There are many more misconceptions about the role of America, Europe and Israel in the Middle East than there are known truths. There are many who feel that events of recent years and decades - wars, terror and chaos - are the result of some kind of "blowback" against the forces of Judeo-Christianity, Democracy, Europe and the more recent development of American power. This has led to a fuzzy kind of moral relativism, which seeps away at the fabric of our society like a cancer. When it comes to the modern Arab world, there are no easy answers or black-and-white solutions, just as the "cause-and-effect" of historical forces is myriad.

The Middle East is deeply rooted in civilized Mankind. It is a place we call the Holy Land. People of this region wrote the three great religious books of history - the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Koran - about people and events of this region. These events have and continue to shape the destiny of humanity. Revelations tells us that a fiery Final Judgment, which effects the entire planet, will emanate from this land. I am a man of faith, and this faith leads me to believe not in such gloomy scenarios, but rather I am strengthened by the belief that God has given us the choice to do His good works, and in so doing to come together as a world and avoid the Apocalypse, Armageddon, or whatever doomsday plan that the forces of evil would have us blindly follow.

Judaism came to the Holy Lands first. Moses led his people out of bondage to the Promised Land. God taught him the 10 Commandments, which are the tenets that separate civilized society from lawlessness throughout the world. We were taught, as the Jews escaped slavery, that
freedom is bestowed upon humanity not by other men, but is a right bestowed upon us by our Creator.

Christianity emanated from the Jewish religion, and with it came a message of hope. To understand Christianity is to understand the nature of Man, and to shed light on the greatest deal ever offered to God's people, which is forgiveness of our sins and along with it, everlasting life.

Some 400 years later, the prophet Mohammed began the Islamic tradition. The Koran took many of its tenets straight from the Bible. They respected Jew and Gentile alike as "people of the book." They shared the common heritage of ancestry in ancient Israel, surrounding Palestine, and the holiest of cities, Jerusalem. The people of the Koran have a long tradition of charity and hospitality.

I want to say this, and be very clear about it. I have a message for Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and followers of all religions throughout this diverse world. Whether you call Him God, Jesus, Allah, Buddha, or any other name, He is one and the same; the Creator of all peoples, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or belief. We are all His children, and He loves every single one of us equally. Every person's life has meaning. Our sacred duty is to justify that meaning and love by loving each other.

There are in this world competing forces, forces of good and forces of evil. These forces manifest themselves in our politics and religions, and always the forces of evil attempt to foment the spread of lies and mistrust. Thus did the seeds of mistrust begin to spread among the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims. Love and respect were replaced by hatred, eventually under the guise of politics and military affairs. As if controlled by the unseen hand of evil, divisions spread the peoples of the Middle East apart, replacing understanding with religious nationalism.

Thus were the Crusades fought, over a period of centuries. There is little point in attaching "blame" to any one group. Atrocities were committed by both sides. European Christians attempted to conquer the Holy Lands, and were repelled. Muslim armies attempted to conquer Europe, and while they indeed did occupy large swaths of this part of the world, they too were eventually repelled. The Jews found themselves uprooted from their homeland, left to wander through centuries of "wilderness" and persecution.

Eventually, a commingling of civilizations occurred. The Roman Empire, which had dominated Europe, Asia and the Middle East, found itself peacefully dissolved when Christianity became the dominant ethic of its peoples and government. The Byzantine Empire became a worldly and successful combination of both Muslim and Christian faiths. Great commerce, art and learning emanated from within it. In the 19th Century, the British and the Russians attempted to gain a foothold in the "great game," as Rudyard Kipling called Afghanistan, but they were defeated by local tribesmen. The Ottoman Turks eventually created political hegemony throughout the Islamic world, and a relative peace existed until the 20th Century, a century of more violence and beauty, of more evil and more goodness, than has ever occurred in 2,000 years of history.
In 1914-15, an effort was made to establish an empire between East and West. The Model T had been invented, as had the aeroplane, and the modern world thirsted for a new, precious resource: Oil. Control of the world's oil supply would mean control of the world's economy, and with it, control of the world. The most vast of the oil supplies were in the Arab lands, and the lands of Central Asia. This was on the mind of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm, who created an unholy alliance of Central Powers that included his nation, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Ottoman Turks. The idea was that a linkage, from the Asian Steppes, through Armenia, into the vast lands of natural resource that lie between Turkey and Russia, would be controlled by the Central Powers, who would meet in victory after the Germans conquered and won on the Russian Front. The rest of the world would be forced to bow to the dictates of this new empire.

It was Winston Churchill who recognized this threat first and foremost. In an effort to quell it he organized an amphibious task force of English and Australians to do just that, but they were soundly defeated at Gallipoli. However, T.S. Lawrence successfully organized an Arab Revolt, which forced the Turks to defend their empire instead of pursuing unfettered advance through Europe's "back door." When the Americans entered the fight, the Central Powers were eventually overwhelmed. The world was made "safe for Democracy." However, political mistakes at the Versailles Treaty created conditions that we are paying for to this day.

The English and the French forced Germany into paying reparations which created an economic depression so terrifying that extremist elements became popular in the Fatherland. Hitler rose to power, determined to win what was lost in World War I. His goal was to expand his empire into Russia and North Africa, hoping to plunder further into each region until the oil, iron ore and other natural resources within his reach were his.

Lawrence had promised his Arab friends that the British fight was their fight, and that with the Turks gone they would have political freedom. However, the Arabs of that time lacked a modern infrastructure, and they found themselves relying on the presence of British know-how to build the region into a functioning part of the 20th Century. Furthermore, the French, despite having not fought on the Arab Peninsula, insisted that they be given part of this region, too. The Sykes-Picot Treaty created and extended the French presence, dominated by their Foreign Legion, in Algeria, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon and throughout the area.

England, already in control of an empire so vast that the Sun never set on it, now controlled most of the Middle East, including Jerusalem in what was known as Palestine. English statesmen "carved up" a new map of the region, creating Iraq and other nation-states. While well meaning, these hastily devised countries often were formed without great knowledge or concern for the ancient rivalries, clans, tribes, and religious sects that have made up the region for centuries. Unfortunately, too many Europeans came to think of all Arabs as being the same, without great thought for the differences between Persians, Shiites, Sunnis, Wahabbis, and other sects of Islam.

Despite the ramifications of all the aforementioned events, it was the shake-up of Russia that had the greatest impact. The Tsar was deposed, his family killed, and Communism reared its ugly head. Russian Jews became the targets of persecution. With the Ottoman Empire no longer in
control of Jerusalem, they immigrated by the hundreds of thousands to the now-British controlled lands.

Between 1919 and 1936, Russian Jews changed the face of Palestine. Once a backward country, the Jews transformed Palestine into an economic marketplace. By 1936, Jews were the largest employers in Palestine. A strong Zionist lobby emerged, advocating the return of Palestine to ancestral Israelis. This lobby found its most receptive ears in the United States, but Palestinians seethed with resentment.

During the years prior to and after World War II, much of the Middle East was de-colonized back into Arab hands. Many of the new governments were monarchies, and arrangements were made ensuring friendly relations and free trade between the Middle East and the West.

The Holocaust, however, created a dynamic so powerful that it would create unstoppable changes with repercussions still felt today. After Hitler's attempted murder of European Jewry, coming on the heels of Communist Russia's persecution of their Jews, and with the emergence of a Zionist-friendly American government, which was now the most powerful in the world, the creation of the state of Israel became inevitable in 1947.

Looking back on that event and the world we live in today, the thinking man ponders the wisdom of Israel's birth. For those who rely on expediency, this event might be viewed as having caused more problems than it was worth. Perhaps the Jews could have been re-patriated back into Europe, to Africa, or even a remote state in the American West, such as Nevada. This concept might be a source of amusement for you on your next trip to Las Vegas. However, when moral relativism is removed, and in light of Israel's historic role of military, intelligence, and trading partner; and more importantly, its role as friend to America and beacon of Democracy is considered, then the creation of Israel becomes a blessing.

Towards the end of World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt, en route from one of his Big Three summits with Churchill and Josef Stalin, met with King Saud of Saudi Arabia. A deal was hammered out between the two countries. In essence, the U.S. would offer permanent military protection and alliance with Saudi Arabia, and in return would receive the free flow of oil at market prices. To those who relish conspiracy theories, this deal is pointed to as the genesis of an unholy, corrupt conglomeration known simply as Big Oil. To Americans and other citizens of the world in the 1950s, now driving cars and operating the machinery of a prosperous and peaceful post-war world, the safe flow of cheap oil became more than a benefit, it became a necessity.

Israel, however, had to fight for its creation and survival. In its first war in the late 1940s, Israeli commandos committed acts of terrorism, against the British and the Arabs. Israel prevailed militarily, and President Harry Truman mandated that the land formerly known as Palestine become Israel. Coalitions of Arabs opposed this. Military action was sporadically taken against Israel in its early years. The use of terror became a tool used to attempt to thwart Israel's successful growth. This tactic consistently failed. In 1956, Israel and Great Britain were disappointed when President Dwight Eisenhower sided with Egypt on the matter of nationalizing the Suez Canal.
As the Cold War ground on over the years, the Middle East became an important region, its leaders and governments cultivated by the forces of freedom as well as the forces of Communism. By 1967, Soviet expansionism and sponsorship of Arab governments, combined with the false impression that America, distracted by the Vietnam War, was no longer a strong backer of Israel, gave the Arab coalition the impetus to attack Israel. An all-out assault was mounted with the express desire of wiping Israel from the face of the Earth. The Israeli military repelled the attack, and in so doing captured Arab lands that they deemed necessary to maintain in order to assure their security. In 1973, the same Arab coalitions attacked again. Their purpose was the same as it had been in 1967. The result was the same, as well.

A courageous Egyptian leader, Anwar al-Sadat, chose to negotiate with Israel. Led by the moral courage of President Jimmy Carter, President Sadat and Israeli leader Menachem Begin achieved a historic peace in 1978. Sadat traveled to Israel, and hope spread throughout the world. Unfortunately, opposition to the forces of peace and Democracy emerged. A constant struggle between the spirit of Sadat, who was murdered by Islamic terrorists a few years later, and the desire for revenge and destruction, have been in conflict ever since.

Just as Great Britain hastily re-mapped the Middle East after World War I, without full regard for the sensibilities of the region, so too did America and the West fail to understand the dynamics of the Arab citizenry after the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The mindset of the general Arab population is one of great pride and self-reliance. Defeat at the hands of Israel twice in six years, coming on the heels of decades of political maneuverings in which their fate was too often determined by non-Arabs, left many people feeling humiliated, left out of the process, and not in control of their own destiny.

Thus did the terrible method of terrorism begin to explode as a political tool of a desperate people. In 1972, Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization kidnapped and murdered 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics. The Soviets sided with the Arabs, and by 1975 a nascent, Communist-fueled anti-Americanism had seeped into the mindset of "useful idiots," as V.I. Lenin once referred to them, in the West. In 1975, the United Nations outrageously authored a declaration that equated Zionism with racism.

By the late 1970s, a new dynamic was in play. England had de-colonized. France had either de-colonized or been militarily defeated in the Middle East. Some of the governments installed by Western powers were overthrown in various coups and uprisings. The American CIA had their hands in the internal politics of several Arab countries. Iraq had been de-colonized, but its monarchy was thrown out by a military coup d'etat. In 1969, the Ba'ath Party, formed under the Socialist model of Joe Stalin's Russia, took power. Out of the "dog-eat-dog" world of Ba'athist politics, a thug and murderer killed his way up the slippery slope of power. In 1979 he became President of Iraq. His name was Saddam Hussein.

For centuries, a little-known sect of Islam known as Wahabbism had existed and grown. This is a sect that takes the peaceful teachings of the Koran, takes a few questionably violent phrases, and attempts to usurp the "religion of peace" with misguided instructions to "kill Infidels" and pursue
a form of totalitarianism, completely intolerant to other religions or even moderate elements within Islam. It rose within Islam, drowning out moderation. To this day, it is so violent and repressive that good Muslim clerics the world over fear for their own safety should they publicly oppose it.

At one time, Judaism was beset by violence, its kings often leading military campaigns, its religion subverted by death and destruction. Over the years, scholarship and tolerance replaced their violent trends. Christianity became a religion of Papal intrigue, funding armies and wars that controlled the formation of modern Europe. Spanish Catholics occupied Latin America, and engaged in a frightful Inquisition. Christianity, so beautiful and peaceful, was infiltrated by the forces of darkness until the Reformation and the creation of Protestantism began the painstaking process of creating peace, tolerance and pluralistic understanding, just as it had with Judaism.

Two of the other great religions, Buddhism and Hinduism, had for the most part managed to grow and prosper spiritually while avoiding the mistakes of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. But Islam is the youngest of the great religions, and we have seen in the 20th Century and beyond the same kinds of violent growing pains that occurred in the other religions. As a result of a lack of say in their internal affairs, as Democratic reforms failed to take hold, and in response to the humiliations imposed upon them by Israel fending off their attacks in two wars, Islam saw instead the rise of Wahhabism. This resulted in a new fundamentalism, and in 1978-79 a violent revolution in Iran occurred.

In the 1980s and 1990s, war and terrorism characterized events in the Middle East. The Iranians held Americans hostage for more than a year. The Soviets became more adventurous in the Third World, and throughout the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America, a terrible game was played between the United States and the U.S.S.R., in which the countries of these regions were often little more than pawns in this game.

The result of this development was a rise in CIA and KGB activities. Sides were taken, often with little moral justification beyond naked self-interests. In 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. The U.S. backed a forceful resistance that lasted almost a decade, and successfully forced the Soviet out of the country. This war created some interesting developments. The Muslim resistance was energized to oppose atheistic Communism, and viewed the Americans, while not their best friends perhaps, at least as "people of the book" because we are largely a religious folk.

Critics have said that the CIA's backing of the Mujahedin created the three-head monsters of the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. This is not true. While America did back fundamentalist Muslims opposed to the hated Communists, the Taliban grew out of the post-war period, and there is no evidence that bin Laden was ever aligned with American intelligence or paramilitary units.

In 1980, Iraq invaded Iran. In light of the recent Iranian hostage crisis, the U.S. decided to back their enemy. Thus did we engage in arming and supporting Saddam Hussein. In retrospect, this might be viewed as a mistake, but events must be judged in the prism of their times, not through
the benefit of 20/20 hindsight. This great nation armed and supported military governments
in Latin America and throughout the Third World - in El Salvador and the Philippines, to name
two. This great nation supported the Contras in their struggle with Nicaragua's Sandinistas. This
great nation, locked in a death struggle with Communism, found itself forced to align with
morally questionable regimes. It may be reasonable to criticize these choices, but this does not
make the alternatives to these choices better. Unfortunately, the Third World suffered as a result
of their all-too-often position as proxies of the Cold War.

In 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, Communism imploded, the West won the Cold War, and
everything changed. When Saddam invaded Kuwait in 1990, he was no longer a nominal Cold
War ally. The U.S. refused to allow him to succeed, removing him from Kuwait.

In what President George H.W. Bush called the "New World Order," America now stood alone,
the sole superpower in the world. In the Middle East, a region that had at one time been aligned
with the Soviets and found themselves left out of the Cold War's symbolic "victory celebration,"
resentment against American power grew. No longer did the extremists have the British, the
French or the Russians to hate. In America they saw in freedom and Democracy a pluralistic,
egalitarian system of inclusion that did not square with their narrow ideology. They also saw the
inevitable perversions of those freedoms - pornography and indecency. This offended the
sensibilities of fundamentalist Islam. But what stirred the greatest ire against America was the
dawning realization that the United States was more powerful than ever. We possessed weapons,
technology and military might so powerful that no matter how peaceful were our assurances, our
sheer size and strength was frightening. Throughout the world, and not just in the Muslim world,
many people, some of them long-held allies, became suspicious of this power, unsure of our
motives, and uncomfortable that any single nation could be so rich, so strong, so influential and
so successful.

A study of history allows us to understand this thinking. Through the travails of ages, all
countries, empires, regimes and armies that became disproportionately more powerful than their
neighbors tended to attack, enslave and plunder from their neighbors. Here was a new,
benevolent power, but while the great majority of the world's population understood our
benevolence to be genuine, it was sometimes difficult to accept on faith. It is a benevolence that
we must prove over and over again.

While European allies, among others, may have been uncomfortable but accepting of this post-
Cold War reality, the Arabs were less trusting. They had a long history of conflict, a clash of
civilizations that had occurred throughout history. Combined with American support of Israel,
their mistrust grew. While ordinary Muslims harbored no ill will towards America, preferring to
trade and do business with us, and often to educate themselves in our universities, a small group
of terrorists made the decision to cross a modern Rubicon.

In the 1990s, Osama bin Laden and other terrorist organizations girded for a fight with the forces
of freedom and Democracy. They bombed the World Trade Center, the Khobar Towers and the
*U.S.S. Cole*. In a new world in which peace was breaking out all over, in which the Russians
were no longer our sworn enemies but our allies, and the old Warsaw Bloc had been transformed
into grateful, liberated partners, America was lulled into believing the pundits, who said we were living through the so-called "end of history."

Everything changed on 9/11. With the World Trade Center in flames, with a plane crashed into the Pentagon, and with more than 3,000 American citizens dead, the War on Terror now confronted us. It was our generation's challenge, just as those before us faced a battle for freedom during a colonial war; a fight to maintain Union and end slavery; the winning of the Wild West; the threat to Democracy posed by the Kaiser; the imposition of darkness and evil like nothing ever witnessed during World War II; and finally, as President Kennedy called it, the "long twilight struggle" to overcome international Communism.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, much of the world rallied to our support. Frenchmen, Canadians and other citizens of the world stated that "we are all Americans now." This was an interesting development, and worth reflecting on now. While this nation appreciated the sympathy and love of our friends, we understood that this was a condition that could only last a short time. America must lead. America must be strong. America knows that it is more important to be respected as a powerful nation whose word is its bond, rather than maintain the uncomfortable role of an injured giant. Our normal condition does not lend itself to love and sympathy. It makes some people uncomfortable, but it does not change the fundamental nature of leadership, especially in a dangerous world.

As President, I knew what had to be done, and this task was accomplished. We had bi-partisan and international support to go into Afghanistan, destroy the Taliban, restore freedom to that beleaguered country, and force Osama into hiding.

In 2003, we had less enthusiastic support when we entered Iraq, defeated the Republican Guard, uprooted the Ba'athists, captured Saddam and killed his evil spawn. During this political season, the events leading up to that conflict, the fight itself, and its aftermath, have been the subjects of much national and international speculation. It is time to set the record straight.

In the Fall of 2002, the U.S. Congress gave approval to the military action this administration engaged in Iraq. At the same time, the United Nations gave approval to military action in Iraq if Saddam failed to cooperate with weapons inspectors. Over the following months, Saddam's regime played nothing more than a "cat'n'mouse" game with inspectors, leading them on a "wild goose chase" that left us no more sure about the existence of weapons of mass destruction than we had been prior to the U.N.'s resolution.

In light of 9/11, I was faced with certain facts, intelligence and options. A decision needed to be made. Here is what I knew.

Saddam had attempted to develop nuclear weapons. The Israeli Air Force had destroyed them in a daring secret raid in 1982.

Saddam had used chemical and biological weapons on a number of occasions, most notably against Iran and on his own people.
Saddam had used weapons of mass destruction, launched against Israel and Saudi Arabia during the Persian Gulf War. Mainly thanks to U.S. Patriot missiles, the damage was held to a minimum.

Saddam had unsuccessfully attempted the assassination of President George H.W. Bush in 1993.

The terms of his defeat in 1991 were that he had to destroy all his weapons of mass destruction to the satisfaction of the United Nations. He failed to do that, and eventually kicked weapons inspectors out of his country, leaving the world to speculate as to the nature and development of his stockpiles.

President Bill Clinton's Administration stated as policy that Saddam had WMD. They used military force in an effort to get him to comply with terms of the 1991 cease-fire, to no avail. They declared that Iraqi "regime change" was the goal of the United States.

There were numerous contacts between Saddam's regime, Osama's Al Qaeda network, and with other terrorist organizations in the decade prior to 9/11. We do not have complete evidence that Saddam and Osama consummated a collaborative relationship designed to inflict terrorist acts upon the world. We do not have evidence that they did not. As the facts are sifted through, over time, we believe the truth will come out. Osama was a fundamentalist Muslim extremist, Saddam a secular tyrant. There were differences in their approach, their goals and worldview, but there certainly were many common interests, not the least of which centers around the old Chinese proverb that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

The recent 9/11 Commission reached the conclusion that Saddam and Osama did not collaborate on the September 11, 2001 terror acts. This administration never maintained that they had. It would seem inconsistent with the need for secrecy, that such a sensitive operation be launched in such a widespread manner. Critics, however, have mistakenly taken the Commission's findings and twisted them around, stating that there is no evidence of any collaboration between Saddam and Osama, when in fact there was.

Pundits have asked why neither President Clinton, nor I in the first nine months of my Presidency, chose to launch a military strike against the Taliban, against Saddam, or on the general War on Terror. It is instructive to recall that there was neither American nor international support for such an aggressive campaign at that time, and that the term War on Terror came about only in light of 9/11.

Critics have pointed out that when my administration was formed, I made inquiries about the viability of removing Saddam from power, whether it be through military, paramilitary, political or other means. I freely admit this and stand by it. Saddam had used WMD. We believed he possessed it. He had obfuscated with weapons inspectors. He had attempted to kill my father. He had cooperated with and supported terrorist organizations, Al Qaeda very possibly being one of them. He had given safe haven to terrorists, and provided his country to Hezbollah as a site for training camps. The previous administration publicly stated he had WMD, used military strikes
in order to get him to destroy them, and wanted him out. For these reasons, his removal was seen as a very positive scenario prior to 9/11.

It has been noted that, when 9/11 occurred, I immediately called for an investigation of Iraqi involvement. In light of all that we know, would anybody argue that such a connection seemed a logical possibility?

It has been stated that I decided to launch military action into Iraq regardless of the U.N.'s approval. This misses the point that all legal arguments at my disposal determined that U.N. Resolution 1203 of October, 2002 provided just that approval, as did the American Congress. That being said, I state unequivocally that if the security of the United States is in jeopardy, I will not wait for anybody's approval if I feel I must act to protect my country. I always have and always will listen to advice, consultation, argument and dissent. In the end, as Margaret Thatcher once said, "consensus is the absence of leadership," and when it came to the security of America and the free world, I also heard the words of another great statesman, Robert F. Kennedy, who when faced with difficult choices remarked, "If not now, when? If not us, who?"

The issue of weapons of mass destruction has become an overriding political theme since before the invasion began in March, 2003. Let us start by trying to understand the twisted mind of Saddam. He was given the opportunity to demonstrate to the international community that he had destroyed his arsenal. We presented to the U.N. examples of other rogue governments that had decided to join the community of nations, and how they had convinced weapons inspectors of their intent by destroying their arsenals in no uncertain terms. Saddam failed to do so. Why? Perhaps he had destroyed them, but wanted to maintain the image of a Middle Eastern tiger. Perhaps he still had them. Perhaps he hid them, in underground bunkers, in the Tigris River, or some other location that we have not yet found. Perhaps he shipped them to Syria or another friendly regime. Perhaps he wanted to confuse us or make us look bad. Either way, none of these possibilities allows us to definitely determine that he did not have them and was not a threat.

Statements were made regarding nuclear weapons, mushroom clouds, enriched uranium from Africa, and other clandestine events revolving around this issue. In the light of further knowledge, we now know that some of the statements may not have been true. We are still in a relatively early stage of intelligence acquisition. The CIA admits that they made some mistakes. As they say at Langley, their successes are unknown, their failures are headline news.

It has been said that this administration urged the CIA to tailor their reports to the concept that Saddam possessed these weapons, and there is some truth to that. This was done not to obfuscate or create false impressions, but rather to build a case that we believed in, to "look outside the box," as some might call it, to be "forward thinking," as Secretary Don Rumsfeld calls it. In Great Britain, Prime Minister Tony Blair's government was accused of "sexing up" their intelligence, although a subsequent investigation found they had not. Much of our intelligence indeed was based on British reports, which they stand by to this day. Russian President Vladimir Putin further warned the U.S. that they had uncovered an Iraqi plot to militarily attack the U.S. or its interests. The desire was not to rely on bad intelligence, but rather to get the most out of the intelligence we did have.
There was hubris in our efforts. There was overconfidence. There was aggressiveness and a desire to extract justice on a regime that had proven itself to be one of the worst since Hitler's, and certainly the worst since the fall of the Soviet Union. There was a strong feeling that removing Saddam and replacing him with peaceful allies would help end the War on Terror sooner rather than later. There was undoubtedly a determination on the part of this administration that Saddam and Iraq were indeed an integral part of the overall War on Terror. I stand by all of it.

It has been said that this administration relied on unstable CIA intelligence and inaccurate reports of Iraqi WMD capability to build our case with the international community and in the U.S. Now, with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, it appears some mistakes were made. A different approach might have been tried.

Domestic political opposition and international skepticism was not enamored with this administration's strong belief that to depose Saddam and his government would not just reduce the immediate terrorist and military threat to America and other nations, but would also play a major historical role in improving conditions in the Middle East. This is a malady that occurs during a time of crisis, such as the uneasy Summer of 1914, when the world seemed unable to "see the forest through the trees," thus blundering into World War I.

Rather, the issue that most of the world insisted on concentrating on was WMD, just as Austria's reaction to Balkan nationalism fogged diplomatic minds in 1914 enough to cloud the reality that it was a smokescreen of sorts for the creation of a Germanic Empire. For this reason, this administration concentrated its strongest arguments on the immediate threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Critics have pointed out that we entered into a war based on this premise alone. They are partially wrong.

This nation entered Iraq because of the threat of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, but we also entered Iraq in light of all the historical reasons I have outlined today. Looking back, these reasons should have been more clearly expressed. That said, I must advise you these reasons were indeed discussed and argued, as appropriate reasons to effectuate our goals in Iraq. They just were not argued loudly enough, long enough, or forcefully enough, and were drowned out in the hysterical drumbeat of discussion regarding weapons.

At this point in time, I can only paraphrase Winston Churchill and state, "There were absolutely no weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq, with the exception of the weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq."

I can say that mistakes were made. Plans had to be altered. Is this possibly a statement that does not apply to every other military action in the history of Mankind? Regardless of the post-mortem, our military forces proved all the naysayers wrong. Prior to our Afghanistan action, we heard former Russian soldiers and old Rudyard Kipling poems announcing that nobody could succeed in that forbidden land. America's overwhelming victory there proved that all the old
lessons about military strategies, while important to understand, are being re-written by the new masters of military power.

The critics predicted that, in Iraq, a million civilians would die. Some 50,000 soldiers, a figure approaching Vietnam War dead, would perish. A refugee crisis of Iraqis fleeing into Turkey, Iran, Syria, and throughout the region, would be a human disaster. Saddam would explode his weapons of mass destruction on the heads of our soldiers and his own people, a curious assertion since it came from the same "experts" who said he did not have these weapons in the first place, despite no proof that he did not. Saddam would destroy his oil supplies. An environmental crisis would cause years of damage. None of it happened.

U.S. military technology was not able to save all Iraqi civilians, but it did mean that an amazingly low casualty figure emerged from the war. There was no refugee crisis, only a steady influx of exiled and homeless Iraqis joyfully returning to the land of their origins. To date, some 800 Americans have died in Iraq. Every life lost in Iraq, whether Iraqi, American or coalition ally, is a life of meaning and purpose. Every loss is a tragedy, felt by family, friends, loved ones and communities. No life lost is taken lightly, even those of our enemies; the terrorists and also the poor men who were conscripted to fight in Saddam's army. But it is worth pointing out that in 1991, President George H.W. Bush engaged in the Persian Gulf War. Some 1,450 Americans, almost twice the number lost in Iraq in 2003-04, died in that conflict. President Bush received 91 percent approval ratings in the immediate aftermath of that war.

It is also worth pointing out that President Bush chose not to pursue Saddam's army on a "march to Baghdad." At the time, it seemed to be the right thing to do. In retrospect, it was a move that placed faith on Saddam to comply with the rules of civilized nations, and it was a mistake. It left us with another war to fight, and it is also worth noting that many political critics at various times between 1991 and 2003 have said this very thing, yet now that the task has been completed, they find it conveniently easy to criticize.

On May 1, 2003, I flew a jet onto a Naval aircraft carrier and announced, "Mission accomplished." Indeed, the troops deserved that kind of recognition and celebration after one of the most brilliant military victories of the modern era. It was my way of saying "Thank you," and indeed they had accomplished their mission. Major military operations came to an end, to be replaced by an administration of the country devoted to providing security against terrorism. As I outlined that afternoon, much difficult work lay ahead, and in that I was prescient. Our planners had stated that a liberated Iraqi people would welcome our troops with flowers, and in fact they were. Scenes of the early days after the victory was achieved resembled France during World War II, with jubilant Iraqis celebrating freedom by knocking down statues of the deposed tyrant.

Were we wrong in "failing" to predict the influx of foreign terrorists into Iraq, causing the insurgency that our coalition has battled ever since? No. We knew it would happen. We were prepared for it. The "plan" was followed, and the plan was exactly what the world has seen and continues to see every day. The plan was and is, day by day, to quell the terrorists, to do the hard, dirty work necessary to ensure the security of this long-suffering country. In this regard, the
world owes the men and women of the U.S. military, and of our coalition allies, as thorough
and complete a debt of thanks and gratitude as can be imagined.

It should also be pointed out that many terrorists who might have wreaked havoc in other parts of
the world instead congregated in a single place, Iraq, with the intention of dying a martyr's death.
Our forces have been more than happy to help them achieve that very goal, and Americans can
take comfort in the knowledge that it is a better thing to kill many terrorists in a single place than
to kill them, scattered throughout the globe, only after they have taken their fight to civilian
targets in the U.S. and other locations.

All of this leads us to the present and the future. At present, Afghanistan has a loya jirga, and
plans free Democratic elections this Fall. Pakistan, once a Taliban ally, is now an American
friend. Libya approached us and asked that they be forgiven their sins, offered to help in the War
on Terror, and become a member of the world community. Iraq is sovereign, a nation controlled
by Iraqis. They will hold free Democratic elections next January. These facts contradict the
despicable assertions that our actions were an "oil grab," or part of a conspiracy to enrich the
Bush family because we have been in the oil business. The people who say these things know
they are not true, yet they say them anyway. There is a word in Webster's dictionary that
describes such a thing.

All of this is part of the larger, less-explained purpose of our being in Iraq in the first place. It
goes beyond weapons of mass destruction. It is about replacing centuries of historical repression,
fear, humiliation, religious hatred and mistrust with new confidence, with self-determination and
freedom.

The lesson the 20th Century taught us is that appeasement is the worst possible course of action.
What the War on Terror has taught us is that while the only thing terrorists understand is naked
military power, in the end the only way to achieve lasting peace, just as we did in Germany and
Japan, is through benevolence and honesty. This is how we are winning hearts and minds.

America is a nation that does not desire colonies or proxies. But after 9/11, we were faced with
the realization that action was required in the Middle East if the course of Islamo-Fascism was to
be defeated. The only way to do it was to take the fight to the enemy, which we did. The only
way to create a lasting peace is to establish a beachhead of freedom and Democracy in the heart
of the Islamic world. This mission has been accomplished, too. This is, however, an ongoing
mission, and it is of the national interest of every single government on this planet to help that
mission succeed. Of this, I ask your help and support.

As Iraq is stabilized, and as Arab fear and mistrust is replaced by the flowering knowledge that
the United States is indeed their true friend, I believe we can turn to the essential issue of
establishing lasting peace in Palestine. I believe that we are at a historical point in history, one
that will give us the impetus to achieve Palestinian statehood in 2005 while maintaining Israeli
security. I believe that the spirits of Anwar al-Sadat and Menachem Begin, and the approval of
our own President Carter, will smile on us as we finally see their beautiful dream come to
fruition.
There will come a time in which the War on Terror will be declared over, and the victor will be
the whole world. Our challenges will not be over, however. Now that the Cold War is won, and
once worldwide terror has, like slavery, Nazism and Communism, entered the dustbin of history,
it is the responsibility of the industrialized world to end war, hunger and poverty in the Third
World - not just in the Middle East, but in Latin America, in Asia and especially in Africa. We
can do it. We must. No amount of selfishness or indifference can be allowed to prevent us from
helping all of God's children, in every corner of the globe, from discovering the rich joys and
successes that too few of us actually enjoy.

Before I close, I want to just add a few more words about the "elephant in the corner," as they
say. Over the decades since World War I, oil has become the dominant theme that controls
political discussion in the Middle East. It has created powerful oligarchies in the Arab lands, and
its profits have not always been evenly divided. In the West, and particularly in America, a
desire for alternative sources of oil, and alternative sources of energy, have fueled debate. To this
day, discussion of further oil exploration, whether it be in Alaska, off the California coast, or in
other areas, creates intense debate. For years, the American auto industry has researched the
viability of electric cars, or autos that are powered by water-based fuels. In the 21st Century,
modern technology offers a future in which these alternative, clean fuels will fill our engines, but
at this time we are forced to accept a reality that is not about to change in the immediate future.
That reality is one in which the main source of world oil is in the Middle East. We must
effectively deal with this reality. To deny that oil and business interests are not important parts of
the equation would be disingenuous.

Right now, in 2004, America and the world have come to a distinct realization, and there is no
denying it. The United States is today the most powerful nation in world history. Not Alexander's
Greece, Caesar's Rome, Napoleon's France or the King's England has been as powerful
militarily, culturally, economically, socially and influentially as we are today. This is not
bragging, it is fact.

Some have even come to regard our hegemony as the new American Empire. In the spirit of
honesty, this is true, but it is very important to understand that if we indeed are an empire, we are
a new, different kind of empire. We are not conquerors, we are liberators. We do not leave
colonies but rather allies. Our empire is one of ideas, of goodness and decency, not one of
coercion and oppression. We are a great power that allows for the most virulent political dissent,
from amongst our citizenry as well as throughout the world we are so involved with. At the end
of the day, this is the source of our legitimacy.

America is still a young country, in search of the "more perfect Union" that our Founding
Fathers strove to attain. We make mistakes, but our mistakes are displayed in the storefront
window for everybody to gawk at. When a scandal erupted in an Iraqi prison under our control,
we did not cover it up. We handled it, and we allowed the world to conclude that in so doing
there is a contrast between the American way and the way of terror, kidnappings, beheadings and
cowardice exhibited by our hooded enemies.
As I have said, I am a man of faith. I do not ask that any other people or countries adhere to my faith, although if asked I will happily tell you about the Lord Jesus Christ. But as I said earlier, I believe that all religions pray to the same God, and that we are all his children. We are also all, as John F. Kennedy once said, "mortal." We have a responsibility, to this planet and to ourselves. Apocalypse is not inevitable. Armageddon does not have to be our destiny. As a man of faith, I look at my young country with awe. I have to ask how a small group of agrarian colonies, removed by an ocean from the centers of commerce and politics, could in such a short period of time rise to such unprecedented power.

Perhaps I do believe in American exceptionalism. Perhaps I do believe that God has placed the responsibility of leading and even saving the world on the husky shoulders of America. Do I know this to be true? No. I only have my instincts. God has never whispered any of this into my ear. I am just a man, with no more insight into the mysteries of the Universe than any other man. What I do know is that in this time and place, for whatever reason, America does shoulder these responsibilities, and it would appear that we shall continue to do so for some time to come. If we are an empire, we will not hold onto empire. We will pass the mantel of responsibility when the time is right, with no quarrel, just as Churchill did with Franklin Roosevelt. However, what I also know is that in this time and place, I am the President of the United States. The beauty of our system is that, while this is a position of immense power, when I leave office I will be just another citizen. But until then, I understand my countries' responsibility, and I shall continue to live up to those responsibilities as God gave me the vision to see them through.

So I say, to all the citizens of this beautiful world, let us come together, in peace and understanding, in the knowledge that all men are created equal. Let us see the light, which when shed upon us reveals that every single man, woman and child is our brother and our sister, and God bless every last one of us!

LEFT NEEDS TO GET THEIR STORY STRAIGHT

Let me get this straight. George Bush is mired in a Vietnam-style quagmire in "his" War on Terror.

On the other hand, there is no War on Terror.

Teddy "Chappaquiddick" Kennedy says this war is "Bush's Vietnam." Such perfidy. He should examine the history books, which reveal mistakes his brother, JFK, made, and the lessons Bush has learned from this in order to avoid a repeat. JFK should have immediately recognized that the best way to win the "hearts and minds" of the Vietnamese in the early 1960s was to spread freedom the way Bush is doing now. Teddy's sainted older bro sat in the Oval Office listening to Henry Cabot Lodge give him play-by-play of the 1963 coup, either orchestrated by JFK's CIA or given tacit approval by him, resulting in the assassination of the South Vietnamese political leadership (read David Halberstam's "The Best and the Brightest"). Instead of this tawdry event he could have been watching the elections that he and the "moral" Robert Kennedy should have insisted on. To those who believe in such things, the Karmic significance of the Kennedy's
allowing the murder of political leaders one month and five years, respectively, before their own demises cannot be dismissed.

Elections in South Vietnam may have created the kind of investment in freedom among the Vietnamese people that could have prevented the escalation of the war, which escalated in part because disenfranchised people supported the Viet Cong and gave sanctuary to the Communists. Compare JFK's assassination strategy to Bush's Democratic one, Teddy. You will see that Bush's strategy of spreading freedom and liberty has helped prevent the long-anticipated rise of the Arab street; Islamic fundamentalism dominating Afghan and Iraqi politics; popular support for insurgent terrorists; the rise of Islamo-Fascism on par with Soviet support of the North Vietnamese; and finally, do the math and compare 58,000-plus Americans dead in JFK's Southeast Asia, compared with Bush's 1,400-minus fighting terror in Iraq.

Teddy sees only quagmire, which he conveniently equates not with his brother's strategy but with that of his successors. Other unpatriotic Leftists prefer to insist that there is no War on Terror. Instead of rootin' for America, the likes of Michael Moore and Robert Scheer, who no longer have international Communism to hang their hats on, do not see the spread of Democracy. Instead they see mindless violence and an oil grab that never occurs.

The "there is no terror threat" argument leads the Left down a perilous road of great irony that only favors Bush. Consider the fact that terrorist acts have been orchestrated throughout the world, in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. In the 1990s, the acts began to occur on U.S. soil - the World Trade Center in 1993 - and increasingly against American targets in the Middle East. Along comes 9/11, an act that cannot be explained in the prism of Leftist "moral relativism."

In response to 9/11, Bush launched the War on Terror, both at home and abroad. The results so far include Democracy in Afghanistan and elections in Iraq. No further terror acts have been made against Americans. The Left now says there is no threat.

Based upon the "but-for" theory of legal proximate causation, if one takes the Left's argument to its logical conclusion, there were terrorists acts, followed by Bush's reaction, resulting not only in the cessation of terrorist acts but the cessation of the THREAT of terrorist acts. Therefore, the only conclusion available based on this argument is that Bush has WON the War on Terror by eliminating it from all possibility.

President's get re-elected on that kind of record.

**BUSH SHOULD WIN NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**

Afghanistan just held highly successful, peaceful elections. Democracy and freedom now have established a beachhead in the Islamic Middle East. This is a part of the world that was once controlled by the Taliban. Evil hijacked a great religion and kept Muslims in bondage. This has now been replaced by hope, courtesy of the Red, White and Blue! This is the kind of monumental victory - like winning freedom over England, ending slavery, building the Trans-
Continental Railroad, making planes fly, building the Panama Canal, ending the Kaiser's attempt to Germanify Europe, ending Hitler's and Tojo's attempts to rule the world, kicking down the doors of the concentration camps, the Manhattan Project, creating Democracy in Germany and Japan, landing a man on the Moon, and sending Communism into the dustbin of history - that is only accomplished by America.

Some Truths remain self evident, and one of those is that if President George W. Bush were a terrorist (like Yasser Arafat) or a Democrat (like Jimmy Carter), he would win the Nobel Peace Prize for engineering this miracle. Next on the agenda is Iraq, which will be also be a success.

Let's see, now. Nobody in the world is more affected by the policies of George W. Bush than American military personnel. Stars & Stripes, the military newspaper, polled its soldiers, sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and airmen. The result? They favor Bush over John Kerry, 73-17.

The economy? Historically, U.S. economies that are doing as well as ours is right now reward incumbent Presidents with 57 percent of the vote. If Bush were a liberal, the fawning press would propel him, based on all his accomplishments, to 70 percent and 49 or 50 states.

Bush will win anyway, because the Truth is marching on! In his second term, he will reduce troop levels in Iraq. He will keep terrorism on the run using our superior technology, and eventually this will create lower military budgets that allow for an economic dividend. Following his conservative instincts, he will veer to the right, reducing the deficit. He will appoint judges who interpret the Constitution instead of usurping the will of millions of voters on issues like gay marriage. He will make major advancements that may just win the War on Terror before any Democrat ever ascends to the Presidency. Because of what Bush has done, Palestine will establish independence under his watch. This will allow the U.S. to address the next great crusade, which is replacing evil in Africa with freedom from AIDS and despotism.

The Democrats? Their plan is to root against America. Every time a truck bomb explodes in Baghdad, they think it is a campaign commercial for their guy. Frustrated Democrats have even fired shots at or started riots in front of Bush campaign headquarters. Kerry's plan? "Rescue" by the U.N., Germany, France and Russia. These are the most corrupt political organs, maybe of all times. They were doing business with Saddam Hussein and did not want the gravy train to end. Their opposition to Bush had nothing to do with principle, and everything to do with naked self interest. These organs of world government are not a pimple on the buttocks of Halliburton, a courageous company that is the only one capable and brave enough to do the hard, necessary work of re-building Iraq. They should get more money.

The irony of it all is that if Kerry did win, he would have a good Presidency, for the same reasons that Bill Clinton achieved some success. Thanks to Ross Perot and the fact the Republicans were victims of their own success (winning the Cold War under the Reagan/Bush watch), the GOP was robbed of its best issue, defense against Communism, giving Slick Willie the White House. Making full use of the post-Communist "peace dividend," with his feet held to the fire by a Republican Congress, Clinton tilted to the right. All those smart techies, displaced
by the break-up of the Military Industrial Complex, fueled the "information superhighway" of the peaceful 1990s, which gave him the great economy that he took credit for.

Similarly, if Kerry were to take over, he would inherit a successful, post-election Afghanistan, a post-election Iraq in which freedom is on the march because America has made it the most important prerogative of our times, and a rising economy, not the kind of dot-com bubble that created unrealistic stock markets and overnight 20-something millionaires. The American people, however, will not hand over all the emotional investment, all the hard work, and all the world-changing aspirations of a bold, optimistic President to the most liberal Massachusetts Senator in America! In addition, the Republicans will increase their majorities in the Congress, the Senate, the governors and the state legislatures. Don't look now, but for the last four years there are more registered Republicans in America than Democrats.

A divided world? A polarized America? No. Bush's victory will send incredible messages to terrorists, Europeans and Americans. Terrorists would view Bush's defeat as a victory, the toppling of the American Presidency just as the North Vietnamese Communists viewed defeat of Lyndon Johnson in the same light. Instead, they will be forced to observe the electoral process working against them in Afghanistan, Iraq and America. They will not just fade away, but they sure as heck will have to re-think their plans.

Europeans will realize that they have no choice except to work with Bush, and to accept the fact that the U.S. is now the most powerful empire in the history of the world.

Americans, even Democrats, are sick and tired of the vitriol of this campaign season. After the Michael Moore's of the world threw everything but the kitchen sink at W, and after he wins anyway, he will rise in stature, the "man in the arena" who has survived the relative "war" of Presidential politics - twice. He will use his second term to build a legacy of Rushmore status.

The future will include the erection of statues honoring George W. Bush in Kabul, Baghdad - and maybe even the World Trade Center. The Democrats will take one last stab with would-be "savior" Hillary Clinton in 2008. She will be formidable, but if she loses, too, the Democrat party will split up like the old Whigs, and by 2012 they will look like something entirely different.

God bless America!

**BIN LADEN: THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING**

Osama bin Laden has released another tape, and it appears to me that he may not be the world's worst terrorist, but rather an actor hired by the Republican National Committee to promote George Bush's Presidency. At least it sure seems that way. This guy keeps threatening to commit acts of terror on U.S. soil. The thinking American absorbs this knowledge, makes note of the fact that he has failed to do so, then arrives at the conclusion that President Bush has successfully prevented him from so doing, all to our great protection and benefit.
Then he offers another truce (he first offered one to the Europeans, now to the U.S.). The thinking American absorbs this knowledge as well, then makes note of the fact that he would not offer a truce unless he was winning the War on Terror. A truce is better for bin Laden than losing the War on Terror. Bin Laden, sitting in a cave with a video camera but no phone, no computer, no command and control, is somewhere between losing the War on Terror and actually having already lost the War on Terror. He offers a truce in order to persuade those without a grasp of the truth to believe he is relevant and has not lost the War on Terror. Conclusion: President Bush has set in motion events that have already resulted in victory, and the fact that it is Total Victory will become apparent in due course.

Which leads to some more observations. Machiavelli theorized that people would rather be secure than free. He sold that idea to his patrons. It became an article of faith among despots and dictators, and is the driving force behind the movements that spawned Hitler, Mao, Stalin and Hussein.

Along came America, and the notion that security is more important than freedom was debunked, which is of course the rationale for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The U.S. mission, which was to loose the power and good works of democracy and freedom upon the Middle East, is somewhere between accomplished and close to accomplished.

Which leads back to bin Laden and the question, What was HE trying to accomplish? Before answering that question, consider history. For lack of a better "person," say that Satan crucified Christ so that Mankind would be his. The opposite happened. Mankind instead had its sins paid for by Christ, thus saving Mankind from Satan.

Fast forward to the American Confederacy. They started the Civil War to ensure the continuance of slavery and to secede from the Union. The opposite happened. Slavery ended and the South was made the Union's step-child.

Kaiser Wilhelm tried to consolidate Europe and create a trans-Russian Empire in conjunction with the Ottoman Middle East. The opposite happened. Germany was marginalized, Europe fragmented, Russia went Communist, the British Empire allowed to continue just when it appeared ready to dissolve, and the Ottoman Empire ended.

Hitler wanted to conquer the world and destroy the Jews. The opposite happened. America, instead of Germany, became the most powerful empire in the history of civilization, and Israel, in answer to Biblical prophesy, emerged.

Back to bin Laden and what he tried to accomplish on 9/11: Bring America to its knees, destroy our way of life, "free" the Middle East from Western influence. Hmm, let's see. On our knees? American came together in a manner not seen since World War II.

Our way of life? A month after the World Trade Center attacks capacity crowds were livin' it up at a World Series in Yankee Stadium, which was in fact when the War on Terror was actually won and when bin Laden, upon hearing the news, surely realized that all he tried to do was for
nothing (would have LOVED to have seen his face when he saw the images of Giuliani and Bush tossing out the first balls at the Yankee-Diamondback games of '01).

"Free" the Middle East from Western influence? Well, having the 101st and 82nd Airborne, the CIA, Navy SEALs, Delta, Special Ops, U.S. diplomats and Halliburton crawling from end one of Afghanistan to the other end of Iraq, with Syria, Iran and Lebanon next on the agenda, all while 70 percent of the Arab population of free will votes in elections that, for all practical purposes, tell the world that they are happy we are there, all add up to one thing:

The very polar opposite of every single possible thing that Osama bin Laden wanted to accomplish is what actually was accomplished. Courtesy, as Toby Keith might call it, of the Red, White and Blue.

Conclusion of this history lesson: There is good and there is evil. America is on the side of good, and good triumphs over evil. When George Bush exposed the fact that Iraq, Iran and North Korea were the "Axis of Evil," he spoke Truth to Power. One is either with us or against us. To be against us is to be against the winning side of 2,000 years of history. This is, frankly, not even an argument anymore. In a free world, one can argue against this premise, which leads those with access to facts observing the promotor of that argument and making silent note of the fact that to do so is to be an idiot on the wrong side of history.

Res Ipsa Loquituer.

The Los Angeles Times

THE FALL OF A GREAT NEWSPAPER

The Los Angeles Times was one of the finest newspapers in the world; the voice of the New West, a land of electoral votes, emerging trends and Pacific Rim power. In the Jim Murray era, they presided over the "sports capitol of the world." During Watergate, the Times maintained balance and in-depth coverage while its Eastern counterparts became spigots of anti-Nixon vitriol. However, in stages over many years, their integrity became another casualty of liberal media bias.

Formerly run by the conservative Chandler family, they once reflected a conservative, Christian Southland. A look at historical Times headlines from their entertaining, self-published coffee table tome "Front Page" is revealing. The paper routinely screamed about "REDS" in their coverage of Alger Hiss's perjury case and the Korean War. During the McCarthy years, they took the position that Communism was a menace on a par with the Nazis defeated just a few years earlier. Part of the evil of Communism, the Times asserted, stemmed from its Godless atheism. The modern L.A. Times does not dare take a true stand in pointing out the failures of Islam to control terrorism within its midst.
In the 1950s, the *Times* understood that Communism was a threat not just from Moscow and Peking, but within our ranks. They were an early backer of Ronald Reagan, then the president of the Screen Actors Guild, who was weeding out Reds in Hollywood. The *L.A. Times*, unlike the apologist *New York Times*, recognized the threat and made sure their readers did, too.

The *Times* endorsed California Senator Richard Nixon's assertions, eventually bolstered by the Venona project, that Mao Tse-tung's victory was preventable. Later, the paper sided with Nixon's backing of General Douglas MacArthur in his battles with Harry Truman.

In the 1960s, Otis Chandler decided to make his paper a world class outfit. Accusations of conservative bias were no longer valid, but the *Times* did not allow itself to become Leftist like its New York and Washington counterparts. They endorsed Nixon against John F. Kennedy in 1960, but gave fair coverage to the 1962 Nixon-Pat Brown gubernatorial campaign, pointing out correctly that Governor Brown had created the state college system, modernized highways, and built aqueducts that brought needed water to the desert-like Southland. They also veered away from the "REDS"-style headlines, choosing smaller typeface that allowed them to put more stories on its front page.

Chandler took a hard line on the 1965 Watts riots, which set the tone for the remainder of the decade. His paper supported the L.A.P.D. and Reagan's law 'n' order policies. They pointed out that order was restored on California's college campuses during the Vietnam War, while at schools such as Columbia and Kent State, anarchism ran wild.

Washington bureau chief Jack Nelson, a Southerner and veteran professional journalist, was tough but fair. But Chandler ceded control over time. By Reagan's second term, longtime *Times* subscribers realized they were reading an increasingly liberal paper.

By the 1990s, *Times* editorials during the 1992 Bush-Clinton campaign failed to attribute the California recession to victory in the Cold War. The Republicans were victims of their own success, when much of the L.A.-based Military Industrial Complex shut down in light of reduced need to defend against the beaten Soviets. Instead of pointing out this truth, the paper went to the old Democrat playbook, portraying an imperial George H.W. Bush as "out of touch" with average citizens.

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The *Times* saw merit in Hillarycare despite mounting evidence that it was disguised socialism. They did not back off, however, when Bill Clinton was impeached in 1998, providing hard-hitting coverage that shed light on the President's seedy lies. But they played a major role in upending several California Congressmen who had supported Clinton's impeachment, most notably Representative James Rogan of suburban Glendale. Thanks in part to liberal *Times* coverage, California was saddled with Governor Gray Davis in 1998 and 2002. The paper helped to chip away at the gains made during the 1994 Newt Gingrich-led "Republican Revolution." The result was a state eventually dominated by Democrats at the Federal and state legislative levels, leading to gerrymandered districts assuring more of the same. This scenario produced one of the great disasters in American political history, which was the genesis for the 2003 Recall.
The paper has certainly taken its share of principled stands. Eventually, they championed tough environmental regulations. Nobody who ever experienced L.A. smog in the 1970s could argue that it was not necessary. But on the hot button issue of illegal immigration, the paper sold out, failing to strongly endorse conservative attempts in recent years to control its porous borders.

When the paper was officially bought by the (Chicago) Tribune Company at the end of the decade, its liberal slants and biases under editor John Carroll were no longer balanced against the myth of "fairness," much less its former conservative character.

Carroll has tried to paint a different picture. He held an editorial meeting, prominently described for public consumption, in which he exposed talking points in stories that could be perceived as slanted, urging re-writes. This is the new falsehood of metropolitan news coverage. They apply minor triage on local crime stories in order to create the impression of straight journalism, but on the big political issues they are the mouthpieces of the DNC.

In the final days of the California Recall, the Times published "last-minute" stories of Arnold Schwarzenegger's womanizing. The stories were a re-hash of a piece in Premiere magazine, printed years ago. Schwarzenegger's past is an open book. The stories represented less salacious details than most people imagine Arnold's rowdy life has actually been.

The Premiere piece indicates that while it was a legitimate "story," it was "old news." Instead, the Times became the willing partner of lame duck Governor Gray Davis, practicing the "puke politics" that have become the hallmark of desperate Democrats. In 2000, Al Gore's allies in the press held a similar story about George W. Bush's drunk driving arrest in the 1970s until they could explode a "last-second bomb."

Carroll's insistence that the stories and their timing were merited does not hold water in light of the Gray Davis stories they ignored. Governor Davis had for years engaged in foul-mouthed tirades, while physically abusing employees. One woman quit and needed therapy. Davis left a message on her voicemail stating, "You know how I am!" Instead of honest, balanced coverage, the Times backed Davis and the "Democrat scenarios." In so doing, they fell in line with San Francisco (who was outvoted by the rest of the state by 4-1), and out of line with the good people who make up the increasing population of the California hinterlands.

As a result of their longtime liberal trend, the Times is less influential now. While L.A. proper has gone Democrat, its surrounding environs - Orange County, the Imperial Empire of Riverside and San Bernardino, Kern County, the Navy town of San Diego, and North County - are Republican, choosing to read the sensible Orange County Register or other alternatives.

After Whittaker Chambers exposed the Communist Alger Hiss, an escaped dissident from Stalin's Russia explained to him that, "In America, the working class is Democrat, the middle class is Republican, and the upper class is Communist." While the New York Times chose to make themselves the party of the "upper class," the L.A. Times did not. But over time the
motivations of the Left coalesced into anti-Americanism, and as they swung further from the leadership of Otis Chandler, so too did a once-great newspaper.

**TRUTH, LIES AND THE GREAT AMERICAN DIVIDE**

*Explaining the history of the anti-American Left*

As we approach the 2004 Presidential election, the pundits are talking incessantly about the "polarization" and division of the American electorate. There is no question that we are a divided nation, but is this a new development? This dynamic deserves some historical reflection, which in my view sheds light not so much on the fact that a divided America is our natural state, but that the recent tactics of deception and lies have fomented much of that divide. At the heart of our great divide is the fact of continuing, astonishing, unprecedented American success, and those who insist on apologizing for it, or worse, calling it something other than success.

**Overcoming slavery in order to become a superpower**

Americans have always been contrarians, starting with the Puritans who, rather than adhere to English religious laws, chose to plant stakes in a forbidding New World where they could practice the kind of Christianity they desired. Right from the beginning, these new Americans were faced with forces that disagreed with them, the Indians.

When the English followed the settlers to America and claimed it as their own, they were eventually faced with violent Revolution. When the Revolutionaries prevailed, they found themselves deeply divided over the issue of slavery. Out of economic and agricultural necessity, the country agreed to be formed as a single Union, with slavery remaining as a bone of contention.

Slavery came to a head with the Civil War some four score and seven years later. Never before or since has the United States been more divided than the period prior to, during and after the war. Reconstruction was even worse than the war. The result of this divide was a century of Jim Crow laws.

Still, the U.S. grudgingly decided to put most of its differences aside as we grew, prospered and expanded into the Modern Power embodied by Teddy Roosevelt's "Big Stick" policies. The Industrial Revolution followed on the heels of Westward expansion. The mindset of the American citizenry was one of Manifest Destiny, a God-given exceptionalism that "justified" our wars with Mexico and the Indians; our increasing military empire in the Pacific; and the Spanish-American War which put Latin America into our sphere of influence. Some intellectuals opposed our use of power. Mark Twain became a loud voice of protest, but most Americans were of the Rudyard Kipling school, which was a semi-racist attitude that the "white man's burden" was to replace chaos and ignorance with enlightenment, sometimes at the point of a gun.

Nobody could have predicted the upheaval of the 20th Century, a 100-year period that saw more change, more chaos, more evil and more goodness than perhaps had occurred throughout all of
Christian history. World Wars I and II brought America together in a way we never had before, and very likely, hopefully in fact, never will again.

The reason I say "hopefully" is that, if America is ever "forced" to come together again as we did during World War II, that will mean that we are facing a deadly challenge to rival that with which we faced when the Nazis and Tojo's Japan were on the march. The U.S. ended those threats and created conditions that promise a thousand-year period of relative peace, the anti-dote to Adolf Hitler's vision of a "thousand-year Reich."

**Anarchism and Communism shadow the American Left**

This is not to say that there was not dissent in the ranks. During World War I, a Russian émigré named Emma Goldman fueled the anarchist movement. The Michael Moore of her time, she argued that America had no business fighting a war in Europe, which she said was not to "make the world safe for Democracy," but rather was an (successful, as it turned out) effort to make America into a global power. Goldman excoriated President Woodrow Wilson for lying in his 1916 re-election campaign, when he promised to keep the country out of the Great War in Europe. Six months later the first doughboys were signing up to fight.

Goldman represents something that has never gone away in America, and in fact is here to stay. The question is whether her ghost will prevail or continue to be shunted as part of the "lunatic Left." She was everything that the Left has come to embody. A woman raised by a totalitarian Russian father, she despised men as patriarchal despots. A non-practicing Jew, she saw religion as the worst kind of oppression. She advocated "free love" decades before Dr. Timothy Leary came along. Few realize that this was a tool of Communism, who saw sex and immorality as key ingredients in the engine of anti-capitalist values. In America she saw only oppression and indecency.

The question one might ask of Goldman might have been, "What is your complaint?" After all, here is a woman from Tsarist Russia who found a country that gave her a platform and a place in history. In any other nation on Earth, Emma Goldman would have been imprisoned for her views. In America, she became a folk hero of the anarchist movement, which had been met with armed resistance by the Europeans who dealt harshly with their own 19th Century revolutions.

What Goldman hated was American power. She saw the future. It was a future in which America would become the dominant military, social and cultural influence of this Earth. She saw a country forged by victory in the pivotal wars of history, inculcated with Christianity and family values, fueled by a capitalist system she saw only as exploitative and racist. At the heart of the Goldman question, certain Truths emerge as self-evident. American values are, at least in the view of most patriots, values of goodness and decency. They are the values behind the laws and social movements that have confronted our worst traits - slavery, segregation, inequality - and defeated them. This leaves us in a sticky corner, confronting the emerging reality that if America is truly good, then Goldman and her ilk, by opposing core American values, are the anti-good. For those of us who believe not only in a loving God, but believe that forces of good and evil battle each other on Earth - in the media, the fields of military strife, the courtrooms, the salons of politics and intellectual argument - then Goldman is more than just an anti-American kook.
Rather, she becomes an apostle of evil, which is much more dangerous if you are pre-disposed to believing that evil is manifest in its existence.

Furthermore, like a good lawyer who uses history to weave a case together, this leaves us looking at what is called proximate causation, the "but-for" theory that fuels tort and criminal law. If Goldman is "evil," then those who follow her, practice her form of "religion," and pay homage (even without knowing who she was) to her memory through decades of imitation, are "evil." Whether the practitioners of this form of evil are witting or unwitting is something only those who practice Emma's religion know in their hearts.

Emma's ghost has hovered over several movements over the years. Her own anarchism became dangerous in the eyes of the law after Sacco and Vanzetti were caught trying to blow things up. In light of this, Emma was no longer tolerated. In a move that pre-cursors the Patriot Act, she was re-patriated to her native Russia. At first Emma said she was thrilled to find herself in the Leninist-Stalinist "Utopian paradise" of the new Soviet Union, but after a short time she discovered, to her horror, that everything she had stood for, advocated and trumpeted was a lie. The U.S.S.R. was hell on Earth. Emma died a broken woman. If she saw Communism up front and was appalled by it, that at least gives credence to the possibility that she herself was not evil, but a tool of evil, a "useful idiot" as V.I. Lenin identified her kind.

Emma's legacy, however, lived on. It lived on in the voices of Ezra Pound, "Tokyo Rose" and "Hanoi Jane" Fonda, American citizens who broadcast treasonous messages from our enemies' capitals during World War II and Vietnam. Communism replaced anarchism - before, during and after World War II. Anarchism was amorphous. Communism had a manifesto, a growing number of countries utilizing it as a governmental system, and it had faces to symbolize it. What really jangled the spurs of anti-American Americans, however, was the fact that it was the exact opposite of America.

**The Left paints their image of the new America**

Goldman's ghost was right there, urging the Communist spies and provocateurs that infiltrated Democrat administrations, the State Department, the United Nations, American colleges, and eventually the protest movement of the anti-Vietnam War 1960s. It was a way of allowing Communism to morph into the American mindset. Whereby real and actual Communism looked far too harsh, too militaristic, too rigid and unsexy to average "useful idiots," the anarchist ideology did not. McCarthyism and the clumsy political machinations of the Republican party in the 1950s created a backlash of unprecedented proportions. In the new anarchism, the Left found the kind of chaos and upheaval they were looking for all along. When one views footage of Woodstock and violence on campuses from Berkeley to Columbia, one sees just that.

"Tear it down, man," was an analogy for their anti-American sentiment, a desire to destroy all that America had built. It was the anti-Establishmentarian theme, and to those who found solidarity in its message, a new set of heroes emerged. These were the "little brown brothers" of the Third World, embodied by the Argentinean terrorist, Che Guevara.
The Left watched in increasing frustration as events unfolded, exasperated by the fact that their greatest victories were snatched away from them just when they thought they had prevailed. Democrats controlled the White House from 1961 to 1969. They controlled, for the most part and for much of that period, the Congress, and symbolized the political sentiments of the New Frontier. They watched gleefully while American power was rendered impotent in Vietnam, and embraced détente with Communism, which supposedly made the term "Cold War" obsolete. They deposed that most hated of anti-Communists, the prosecutor of Alger Hiss, Richard Nixon. They exposed the CIA in the Church hearings. They legislated the Great Society, which after 20 years of rollbacks brought back the New Deal. They cheered when the Civil Rights movement resulted in a nation of guilty white liberals, full of self-hate.

They cheered the new "uniforms" and morals of the Left; hippies, long hair, tie-dyed t-shirts, dirty rags, unwashed bodies immersed in the smells and excesses of mindless sexual deviancy. Here was the most spoiled generation in American history reacting to the sacrifices of their forefathers, the Greatest Generation that had won World War II. En masse, a psychological backlash had occurred. Baby Boomers realized they were totally incapable of being nearly as good as their predecessors, and instead of nobly struggling to live up to their fathers, they rejected them completely.

Drugs became the New Sacrament of these losers. Christianity and traditional values were the enemy. Rock concerts became the new church choirs of Leftist rant, deviancy and immorality. Hollywood and the entertainment industry rejected the old patriotism of Daryl Zanuck and John Wayne, replacing it with pent-up liberalism and post-Watergate conspiracy movies. The media, its members now graduated from the elite Leftist colleges where professors had spouted their anti-American nostrums since before William F. Buckley's "God and Man At Yale", were now dominating the newsrooms of the New York Times, the Washington Post and CBS. A malaise overtook our economy, our military and our youth. We watched in impotence while Communism spread to the Third World, terrorism emerged, and our children became myopic, longhaired ne'r'dowells. America was in decline, and this was highly, precisely and to quintessential effect that with which the anti-American Left had fought for, hoped for and desired since Emma Goldman's time.

The 1960s and '70s, on its face, might have appeared as the "end of history" for triumphant liberalism, the endgame in which they could congratulate themselves on a job well done and a victory won. They were wrong. What they saw as a final conflict was really the impetus for the greatest backlash in American history, a period in which all that the Left hated most came to fruition. Like Osama bin Laden, who set off the opposite of his political goals through 9/11, the Left came to see that their actions had resulted in a near-polar opposite of the America they had envisioned and falsely thought they had achieved.

Start with the 1968 Presidential election. The nation was in turmoil, shocked by the anti-military media's images of the Tet Offensive. They were propelled by the martyrdom of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Bobby Kennedy became their anti-war standard bearer, and when he too was murdered the Left had a Eucharist of saintly heroes giving spirit to their calls for "peace," love and dope. In retrospect, it seems almost impossible to believe that in the midst of
all of this, the buttoned-down, totally uncool Dick Nixon could become, after so much angst
and high anxiety, the President of the United States. Not only did this happen, but after four
years of unprecedented hatred expended against him, it happened again. Nixon never gave in to
the Left. He bombed the hell out of the Communists and called the protestors "bums."

In 1972, Nixon was escalating a brutal war in its eighth year. The Pentagon Papers had exploded,
and all the major media - the Times, the Post, the networks, Hollywood, the colleges both in the
classrooms and on the plazas - opposed him with every ounce of vitriol available in their over-
intellectualized arsenals.

Nixon did not have talk radio or Fox News.

The result? Nixon won the biggest victory in U.S. Presidential history. He garnered 49 states and
62 percent of the vote. The shock and awe of the liberal Left was embodied by New York Times
film critic Pauline Kael, who exclaimed, "How could he have won? I don't know a single person
who voted for him."

What happened after that election is instructive in order to apply historical lessons to our modern
polarization. Watergate hit. Here was a "third rate burglary" and wiretapping, no different than
the ones authorized by Democrats Franklin Roosevelt and Robert Kennedy. The Democrats
played it strictly for political gain, and in so doing sacrificed our allies in Southeast Asia.
Unseating and de-clawing Nixon became more important to Ted Kennedy than protecting our
interests in the Cold (and hot) War.

The Nixon-Kissinger peace, one of the most beautifully crafted acts of triangulated global
diplomacy since the post-Napoleonic era, was sacrificed, and along with it millions of South
Vietnamese and Cambodians. The very essence of why we were right to be in Vietnam in the
first place was embodied by the acts of Pol Pot's murderers in the "killing fields," but without
Rush Limbaugh or Bill O'Reilly, this nation's liberal media almost pretended it did not happen.
To the extent that they eventually did acknowledge it, they attempted to proffer the lie that it was
"blowback," a violent reaction only to our own imperialistic endeavors. The Left alternated
between loving the chaos in the world and becoming insulated with defeatist isolationism.

The Reagan Revolution

Then along came Ronald Reagan. Everything the Left had stood for over decades of American
history was refuted, totally, thoroughly, and completely, by the Reagan '80s. Reagan was the
"right man at the right time," and a product not only of the American spirit he embodied, but he
was right wing "blowback" against the Left. He had emerged as an anti-dote to Communism in
Hollywood. The stern Reagan who opposed the Black Panthers and college anarchism in the
1960s was not the same kindly older gentleman we remember from his White House years. He
was a symbol of conservative anger mixed with a healthy dose of optimism. We wanted back
this beautiful nation that we had built and turned into the greatest country on Earth. Reagan was
the anti-liberal. His success in the '80s, the love felt for him, his enduring legacy and ascension
to Rushmore status, is the single greatest weapon that puts the lie to the Emma Goldman wing of
the anti-American Left. Every lie was spouted against Reagan. Every means was used to
discredit him. The Truth about Reagan, and about America, was never tarnished. To paraphrase his words, "the turkeys never got him down."

The ultimate refutation of the Left, the high quintessence of their perfidy and the exposition of their historical lies, came with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Communism was defeated. Reagan, allied first and foremost with unrelenting conservative Republicans, had won the Cold War. This fact sheds light on some very distinct realities. The 1990s and early 21st Century has become the age of what George H.W. Bush called the New World Order, and others have termed the "end of history." Above and beyond all other developments, it has seen America emerge from superpower status to a lofty position above all previous countries and empires. We are now the most powerful political entity in the history of the world. To those of us who believe in American exceptionalism, we view this status as the direct result of God shedding "his grace on thee." The Left despises such religiosity.

**America's new Manifest Destiny**

To understand the Left in the post-Cold War era, one must have some understanding of psychology. Some have even gone so far as to deem liberalism a disease. To the extent that some diseases come about by virtue of experience, the experience of liberalism in the 20th Century helps explain why this theory may have some credence. Defeat, frustration and humiliation fuel the emotions of revenge and hatred. Whether it be a child-turned-grown-up who thirsts for retribution against long-ago tormentors, an athlete on the losing end of a bitter high school rivalry, or an entire race of people, such as the Islamo-Fascists dealing with the fact that they are on the losing end of modernism and religious tolerance, the psychology of defeat leads in one of two directions. The "loser" can accept his situation graciously, see the light, and join the tide of progress. Or, the "loser" can withdraw into bitterness and delusional hatred.

Take two of history's biggest losers, the Germans and the Japanese of World War II. Both of these countries were wiped out, their defeats so thorough and undeniable that they were left with no alternative than to accept their fate and refute their past. But America is not a vengeful place. The "defeat" of liberalism never saw a shot fired. There were no concentration camps uncovered. Their foot soldiers were left to live and to stew.

Which brings us back to the ghost of Emma Goldman. Her legacy, transferred from the relics of anarchism to Westernized Communism, now, with the fall of the Soviet Union, needed a place to hang its hat. In the film "Fallen" starring Denzel Washington, evil never dies. It transforms itself. So too does anti-American Leftism.

In the 1990s, the Left found itself in an uneasy state. On the one hand, their people, the Clintons, were in the White House, but Bill Clinton represented something they could not come to grips with, the New Democrat. Worse, a Southern Democrat. The South was a place the Left despised as bigoted, Christian and jingoistic. The fact that this region, husbanded for the most part by the G.O.P., had made the greatest positive social change of any geographic region in the world in the 20th Century, did not play right with their perceptions. Not unlike the right, who needed Communism as an enemy, the Left was discomfited by a genuinely moral American South, transformed as much as anything by their collective Christian conscience. In addition, liberals
had to reconcile the Clintonian success with the fact the Reagan/Bush triumphs had paved the way for the peaceful world they ruled. A Republican Congress had kept their feet to the fire. Displaced Military Industrialists fueled the Information Superhighway. Officially identified lies and Impeachment robbed them of their bragging rights.

Oddly, the Cold War and the War on Terror have produced as much division as alliance. While this is a frustrating state of condition, it is again a by-product of American success. We won the Cold War, and we are winning the War on Terror, leaving us with battles of words, which are annoying but are far preferable to battles with guns. What brought the Left out of hibernation was not the razor-thin George W. Bush victory in 2000, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but rather, the belated realization that Bush 41's promise of a New World Order had come to fruition, and its corporate offices were in Washington, D.C.

While America's increased power came about from 1989 to 1991, when the Wall fell, Apartheid died in South Africa, the Sandinistas lost in Nicaragua, and "peace broke out" in every corner of the globe, there were chinks in the jingoistic armor. America's victory march was slowed down by recession and the resultant loss of the Cold Warrior George Bush. Clinton, with his "feel your pain" attitude and distinctly isolationist approach to terrorism and international diplomacy, assuaged Leftist fears of American global power. British Prime Minister Tony Blair seemed to symbolize a kinder, gentler approach with his widely hailed Third Way. The Left took a few shots here and there. Their mobs rioted global capitalist conferences, such as in Seattle. The Unabomber sent a few mail bombs to technology gurus, but the right had their kooks, too, namely militias in Idaho and Michigan, plus Timothy McVeigh, who blew up the Oklahoma Federal Building.

The 2000 election was all about domestic American politics, and W expressly asserted that he had no ambitions for increasing our power in an increasingly interdependent world. As it has been said many times, 9/11 changed all that. At first, the bombing of the World Trade Center made us look sympathetic in the eyes of the world. Everybody "was an American now." In retrospect, this attitude is telling in its psychological repercussions. People enjoyed seeing the superpower humbled and brought down. However, and let us face the facts, this is not the real America, it never will be, and for the sake of the world, it cannot be. We cannot be the Yankees going through a prolonged bad stretch, which is bad for baseball. A weak America is bad for the world.

George Bush was forced to transform himself from a "humble" internationalist into a Big Stick President reminiscent of Teddy Roosevelt. Afghanistan went over well enough. It was necessary and anybody, Republican or Democrat, would have followed that course. But Iraq was a different story.

When George Bush invaded Iraq, our forces accomplished their mission in a month, killed the Hussein spawn and captured the old man, all the coalesced fears of the Left, not just in America but throughout the world, were realized. The U.S., for over a decade, had been the elephant in the corner, the reluctant empire. Now there was no question that we were asserting a power that this globe has never seen before. Whereby the 20th was the American Century, hopes that the 21st
would be something else were now replaced by the reality that we were experiencing the relatively early period of a new, albeit very different style of Roman Empire. An empire not of colonization but of liberation, yes, but in so doing it provides America a sense of legitimacy that the rest of the world feels overshadows them.

**Old Europe**

Internationally, this fact was jarring. England, once the most powerful empire on Earth, was now a junior partner and a welfare state. Germany had to contend with their guilty past. France's revolution had faltered after ours succeeded, their Napoleonic wars had failed, and they were a country with a scarred history of bail-outs at home and in Vietnam, not to mention the little-said reality that their bungling of Arab colonization after the Sykes-Picot Treaty probably explains the Middle East predicament as well as any other factor. Russia? How would you feel if your sworn enemy now dictated the terms of the world they allow you to live in? Spain? If their Inquisition was not enough, they were silently aligned with Hitler. Canada has to live with the fact that they were handed many of the same advantages as we were, but have to ask why we do so much better. The answer to that question is one that does nothing for Canadian self-esteem.

An interesting further development seems to feed the strange notion of European liberalism. American success (and the fact that our world war victories have been on the road, leaving no damage at home) has created the impression that God favors us, and for this reason, Americans are decidedly religious (and mostly Christian) people. Christianity and conservatism have fit each other like a glove.

It is different in Europe. Two world wars have stripped them of idealism. They have seen the worst of humanity, on their home soil, committed by their own against each other. The 20th Century has left them favoring socialism over entrepreneurialism, devoid of Plato's "warrior spirit." They drink too much. They like their drugs. Sex is not sacred any more. After seeing the Holocaust and the Blitzkrieg, Europeans just do not believe in God much any more. They live with a collective guilt and shame, their histories rife with racism, religious intolerance, Papal politigue, Catholic corruption, revolutions, monarchical abuses and the rest of their past. They are a people who were blessed by God with intelligence and natural resources, yet seemed to have squandered it all. They look at America with envy, and many feel we will make the same mistakes they did. This attitude misses the essential point of America, which is that we were given the biggest advantage possible: Europe's history lessons as a primer on how to form "a more perfect Union!"

**Emma Goldman's ghost**

But the American Left is even more frustrated. The Europeans can at least excuse their anti-Americanism on national identity. American Leftists are left with no straws to grasp. They have only the ghost of Emma Goldman telling them to stir up trouble, to feel resentment, to complain and wine and accuse, to fill their void with lies and conspiracy theories. They are like those odd New Yorkers who hate the Yankees. Anarchism as a political philosophy is no longer viable. Communism is in the ash heap of history. For now, they find themselves loosely affiliated with terrorism, but of course they cannot hold onto this too tightly. They do rail about Israel asserting their power in order to exist, and ignore France's role in the Middle East in favor of worn-out
theories that conclude that a few CIA operations have created the "blowback" of 9/11. Horse manure.

The Left just plain hates American success and power. They do not trust America to use its power wisely. They consist of natural born losers who cannot identify with the success ethos that is at the heart of the American Dream. Does this mean they are un-patriotic and hate America? This is a general concept and cannot be answered using all people lumped into "the Left" as a single bloc. It certainly applies to many of them, but not all. They want an America that acts a certain way, but if they got what they wanted, hook, line and sinker, would they be happy? Happiness does not seem to be their natural state, so the answer to that question is, Probably not. Their frustration is not helped by the fact that when one of their "own" occasionally holds power, they tend to actually govern to the right because that is the only realpolitik approach to actual problems.

The fact that Bill Clinton was found not just to be an accused liar but an official one has not helped. After Florida 2000 and the suddenly muscular Dubya, Bush's critics are now desperate to assert that he, too, is a "liar." This is the buzzword of the New Millennium, and it has created a terrible conundrum. It has created a conspiracist philosophy on the Left. This thinking has long permeated the lunatic fringe of the right, who were given no credence by the rest of the right because they always had Truth to turn to. The Left does not have that option, and therefore they can, at least for now, not be talked to. They will not believe the Truth. They will not accept the facts. Their blind, unsparing efforts to "get" Bush have fueled a cottage industry, a vitriolic campaign of hatred, lies, exaggerations and misrepresentations that are unprecedented in this nation's history. This time, however, there is a thriving conservative media that refutes them.

In showing their hand, the Left is doing themselves no favors. During Vietnam, their atrocious hatred of returning soldiers left them so unpopular that they were crying in their tofu during 12 years of the Reagan/Bush Administration. Any façade of moderation and patriotism is again being scraped away by their own unruly hands during this political season. The American public is left with the realization, and this is by no means the first time they have reached this conclusion, that the Democrat Left does not root for America; that they, in fact, will root against American interests if it increases their chance at attaining power; and that American failure is the only way they can achieve that power!

The Democrats: Savior Hillary or way of the Whigs?

The ghost of Emma Goldman might be prevalent, in that her anti-American philosophies may have been the nascent forces behind anarchism, Communist espionage, and now a reaction to American hegemony. But a new development is rearing its ugly head. The traditional American Left, as embodied by liberalism and the Democrat party, may be approaching its final death throes. First, let me just say that the Democrat party is a great political organization with a proud and storied past. Thomas Jefferson once symbolized it. The party hit a roadblock when it became the de facto replacement of the Confederacy after the Civil War, and they were the official faces of the Jim Crow South because of it. But the Democrats came of age during the Depression. In contrast to country club Republicans, the Democrats oversaw America's journey through Depression, World War II, Communist threat of war and finally hot war in Korea.
By the early 1950s, the Republicans faced near-extinction. They were then where the Democrats are soon going to be. Two generals saved the G.O.P. When Harry Truman fired the Republican Douglas MacArthur, forcing him to retreat after the brilliant Inchon campaign, this assured that Truman would not be re-elected. When Dwight Eisenhower agreed to run as a Republican, he assured that no Democrat would replace Truman. What followed after that were a series of tactical blunders. It is my opinion that the Republicans, finally, have learned from these blunders.

The Republicans took control of Congress and officially rolled back the New Deal. It was a conservative time of peace and prosperity, and the G.O.P. had the opportunity to create a Republican power bloc that would last until the end of the century. They blew it first and foremost when Senator Joseph McCarthy took a legitimate threat, Communist infiltration, and twisted it around for the sake of political grandstanding. The current Democrat party would be very wise to learn from this lesson.

The second blunder came when Presidential candidate Richard Nixon did not come to the aid of Martin Luther King, Jr. when he languished in the Birmingham, Alabama jail in 1960. John F. Kennedy did. Republican baseball icon Jackie Robinson withdrew his support for Nixon, JFK won, and the black vote has gone overwhelmingly to the Democrats ever since, reinforcing the New Deal sentiment that the G.O.P. was full of racist country club elites.

The third blunder occurred when, after a victory in 1972 that could not have been a greater national mandate, Nixon covered up Watergate, which created the conditions that led to one of the worst seven-year periods this nation has ever endured.

The fourth blunder came in 1991-92, when George H.W. Bush, riding 91 percent approval ratings after winning the Persian Gulf War, somehow, by means I still cannot fathom, managed to let a minor recession be defined as "the worst economy since the Great Depression," then failed to negotiate a settlement that would have prevented egomaniacal Ross Perot from entering the campaign. At a time in which the Republican party should have been anointed mythical status for its all-consuming successes, they instead found itself conceding to Bill and Hillary Clinton.

Despite the personal popularity that nobody can deny the Clintons, as a political force they have done the Democrats more harm than good. The reality of eight years of the Clintons, contrasted with the Bush performance post-9/11, places the Republicans in the position of picking up where they left off in 1992 and going well beyond that. Mostly as a result of "Clinton backlash," the Republicans have controlled both the House and Senate since the 1994 midterms. They hold the majority of gubernatorial offices and state legislatures. For the first time since - when? - there are more registered Republicans than Democrats in America.

John Kerry is the current Democrat nominee. He is putting up a good fight, is a strong candidate, and many hopes are invested in him. He will not win. The fact that he will not win is something that seethes as a gut truth within the Democrat Left. They hate Bush, are pouring everything they have into beating him, and have found some hopeful polling data. But they have, from the very
beginning, understood that this is an uphill battle that is really only a pre-cursor to Hillary's run in 2008.

Had the Iraq War "ended" with Bush's aircraft carrier "mission accomplished" speech, we would very likely be looking at Bush capturing 45-50 states and 60, maybe even close to 70 percent of the vote. This is now almost impossible to hope for, but with Iraq stabilizing, the economy rolling, and momentum his way, Bush very likely will turn this close race into a late surge, a la Nixon in '72, which could give him re-election with a mandate. California, for instance, considered a Kerry shoe-in, is experiencing a lowering of gas prices and an economic surge greater than the rest of the country, and could just possibly go to Bush in a narrow, Arnold Schwarzenegger- and Ralph Nader-influenced surprise. New York, flush with 9/11 memories, a late G.O.P. convention, and Ed Koch and Rudy Giuliani campaigning for Bush, could switch from the Democrat column, too. Whether New York and California vote for him is likely immaterial to whether he is re-elected, however. Bush has the South and the Christian vote, and this is the Silent Majority, the greatest "secret weapon" in the history of electoral politics. This is a fact of such weight and substance, and is so misunderstood by the Left, that I cannot urge too strongly its impact on our country. The Left fills the airwaves and the newsprint with loud noise, protest, rage and disrespect. This creates the shocking misrepresentation that they have political power. The Silent Majority despises them and outnumbers them by the multiple millions. Time after time on election day, the noisy Left is shocked to discover that despite their screaming and yelling, the attention devoted to them by the liberally biased news media, their candidates and their causes are in a retreat that resembles the Union running from Confederate guns at Bull Run I.

Furthermore, there are domestic issues - gay marriage, the need to get filibuster-proof majorities that will assure Bush's judges can replace the activists who are Clinton's legacy, trial lawyers and their role in high medical, insurance and consumer costs - which may very well increase the Republican majorities in lesser offices. The census of 2000 favored Republicans, and in Texas alone, where a great re-districting debate has been won by the G.O.P., they could add nine Congressmen to the House.

Finally, don't look now, but Canada's Liberal Party took hits in recent elections. Conservatives in France are moving up in reaction to Arab immigration issues. English local elections went against Labor, and while Tony Blair is a friend of Bush, so too are the Conservatives who could replace his government next year. Spain's new liberal government was an aberration caused by the terrorist bombing of their trains, but European-wide elections indicated that the electorate is not in favor of a powerful E.U. designed to counter American hegemony. Then, of course, there is the U.N., which has zero moral authority and, through its cowardice and corruption, simply makes Bush and America look good by virtue of their contrasting existence. On top of that, the U.N., Russia, France and Germany all did business with Hussein. They opposed the U.S. invasion not out of the slightest sense of altruism or desire for "peace," but to avoid exposition of their lies, greed, corruption and cozy relations with dictators and enemies of the world. They do not deserve any "profits" from America's hard-won peace. Halliburton (and its subsidiaries) is the one company that is brave enough to go where the cowards will not, has the capacity to do
the necessary work the others are unable or too scared to do, and is the one who deserves most of the profits they earn through this bravery and skill.

Perhaps this is a hopeful conservative analysis, but I think it is more realistic than optimistic. While the November elections are going to be a very big deal, it is my prediction that it will pale in comparison to 2008. Hillary Clinton will likely be the Democrat nominee, and that in and of itself will be cause for terrible polarization. If the Republicans continue with their current dominant trend, then Clinton will represent a last, best hope for a party that will face some form of dismantling, just as the Republicans feared their party was headed until Ike saved them in 1952. The fact that Eisenhower saved the Republicans while the Democrats face hanging similar hopes on Hillary Clinton is a contrast that requires no commentary. *Res ipsa loquitur.*

The Republicans will have their work cut out for them. Bush may be closing out a very, very successful Presidency, but his Vice-President, Dick Cheney, will not be his successor. Who will? Giuliani comes to mind, as does John McCain, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Bill Frist and Jeb Bush, all of whom may be attractive, but are far from perfect candidates. However, if Hillary loses in '08, the Democrats could go where it looked like they might go after '72 and '91.

If they do not regain some of the power they held for so long, then the Left senses, if not openly acknowledges, that they are fighting for their very survival. If they do not succeed, if Hillary is their last line of defense and does not hold back the onslaught, they may go the way of the Whigs. The Democrats could splinter into two or more semi-independent parties. The Left is like a cornered animal, scratching and clawing, lying, cheating, spinning and obfuscating.

There may be some glee on the part of the Republican party at the prospect of such a nail-in-the-coffin defeat of the Democrats, but this is not a good prospect. America benefits from honest debate, spurred by patriotism based on love of country that results in a certain amount of self-sacrifice. An all-powerful Republican party, unfettered by a loyal opposition, would not be healthy. They would not go the way of the old PRI in Mexico, who veered into total corruption, but they need to be checked and balanced by the Democrats just as the Founding Fathers wanted us to be.

**Meet the new boss, same as the old boss: The Left in the 21st Century**

All of these historical forces are coming to a head in the middle of a relatively brave new world of Internet, talk radio, and cable news competing with the traditional media. Into this world, enter the lies, the conspiracy theories and the shrill accusations of the anti-American Left. What we are seeing now is the Democrat party bereft of official spokespeople, and replaced by surrogates of wild-eyed liberalism. Within their ranks, Ted Kennedy has lost any semblance of patriotism out of frustration at his, and his families', loss of their supposedly royal power. Howard Dean is a *bona fide* member of the Far Left, but in actuality, being Governor of Vermont is not a position of real influence. Dennis Kucinich was never taken seriously.

So who is carrying water for John Kerry and the Democrats? In 1998, Hustler pornographer Larry Flynt assumed the role of *de facto* public relations firm for the party. Michael Moore said he is an independent, not a Democrat, but this was exposed as just one of his lies when it was
shown that he in fact is a Democrat. In 2004, he has veered from plain ol' anti-Americanism to Kerry's best hope (as well as a millstone around his neck). Then there is Howard Stern, who out of retaliation for FCC rulings that pressed fines on him for indecency, has decided to campaign against George Bush.

These people are all part of the "new religion" of modern media technology. They are also very much examples that work against their own themes, which is that they are censored artists, silenced by a Big Brother of corporate Republicans. In fact, since 1998 Flynt has expanded his empire further into the Internet and gone from disgusting porn to a more artistic, European style of hardcore fare. He is hardly silenced.

Moore said Disney censured him by not distributing "Fahrenheit 9/11", but this is another lie. Their agreement was to help him produce it, never to distribute it. He used that line only to further the myth that he is being restrained by corporate interests, found a huge distributor, Miramax, and is hardly silenced. It was all part of his plan. Disney released another documentary, "The Heart and Soul of America", which came out the same time as Moore's. "Heart" made no attempt to discredit or mention "Fahrenheit". It simply is an affirmation of true, good facts about this great nation. Moore called it the work of "right wing extremists," which is like calling the reporter who wrote the article describing the Yankees fourth World Championship in three years in 2000 a "Yankee propagandist." Speaking of things in New York, Moore expressed anger at the terrorists who bombed the World Trade Center. That makes sense, but wait. He was frustrated that they chose to kill New Yorkers, since the Democrats are strong in the Big Apple. He would have preferred Osama to have killed people in a Republican stronghold. Is commentary really necessary?

Stern was in fact burdened by FCC fines levied against Clear Channel, who carried his radio program. They dropped him, and he claims that Bush will eventually get him off the air. This lie is contrasted by the fact that he continues to be on the air, where he lambastes Bush, and he shall continue with his show for time immemorial. He, too is hardly silenced.

Flynt, Moore and Stern are, in reality, examples of how, as America has become the dominant power in world history, our themes - freedom of press, of expression, of dissent - are not censured but allowed to magnify.

What the Left does not understand is that the likes of Flynt, Moore and Stern do damage to the Democrats, and are of great value to the Republicans. They forget that their anti-war protests in the 1960s did not win them any elections but gave them instead Nixon and Reagan landslides. Actually, they may understand it, but they are obsessive-compulsives who cannot control their impulses.

While Flynt, Moore and Stern are not part of mainstream Hollywood, they are certainly part of the dominant media culture that the film industry embodies. Flynt's biography was told in a 1996 film produced by Oliver Stone. Moore's documentaries get bravura responses from Hollywood and Cannes. Stern's self-reflected story was a hit on the big screen.
What Hollywood just does not understand is what kind of economic windfall they would reap if they made conservative-theme films. If they depicted the bad politicians as actual Democrats, the word of mouth among conservatives would fuel boffo box office. On the few occasions when they stray to the right, as in the "Dirty Harry" franchise, they reap a whirlwind of success.

What Democrats do not grasp is that Flynt, Moore and Stern are terrible role models, and that true knowledge of who they are, combined with the fact that they are spokesmen for their party (whether they own up to it or not) is simply a negative reflection of that party. This fact is obvious on its face and needs no commentary from the right. I will offer more anyway.

Flynt has specialized in the most disgusting form of racist pornography. Discrediting him has nothing to do with discrediting porn in general. One could argue that there is such a thing as "classy" or "artistic" porn, and in fact Flynt now features this kind of work on his videos. However, for decades his work was the filthiest possible kind of degradation. A member of the Democrat party? You people can have him.

Stern is a little different. He is intelligent, educated, and independent. He has endorsed Republicans, and there is little doubt that his 8 million listeners/viewers are a powerful force. However, it is not entirely realistic to believe they will vote as a bloc if he tells them to be his minions. Stern attracts many different people who watch and listen to him for a variety of reasons, but getting their politics from him is not one of them. Stern's show is disgusting, featuring porn, nudity, racism, homophobia, making fun of the disabled, fart jokes, gross humor, flatulence and a myriad of other like items. It is not the end of civilization as we know it, and truth be told it is in good fun and plenty of conservatives occasionally enjoy it. They will not be swayed to vote against Bush just because Stern is miffed about an FCC ruling. But considering the nature of what he does, if Stern offered to be a Republican spokesman, the party would politely decline. Stern opposing the Republicans offers some real possible value to Republicans.

Then there is Moore. For years, his work has been discredited, whether it be his documentaries or his books. Those who have seriously studied his work have consistently found him to be a liar in the main. He is a propagandist who takes 15 percent of truth, 70 percent lies and 15 percent exaggeration, and attempts to foist it off as journalism. The fact that he is a darling of the Left is as telling a true statement of their wacko views as any. Moore, more than the other two, is the torch-carrier of Emma Goldman. He wishes he was Hunter Thompson, a gonzo journalist and a real talent, but he is a pale imitation.

To believe Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" (the title stolen without permission from Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451"), one must accept the fact that George Bush knew about 9/11 ahead of time; allowed it in cahoots with Osama bin Laden and the Saudi royal family in order to justify the long-desired American invasion of the Middle East; spirited bin Laden's legitimate family out of the country because they were part of the plot (which would be done to bring oil profits to the Bush family while satisfying their personal vengeance against Saddam for attempting to kill Bush 41). The fact that Bush 41 invaded Kuwait to oust Saddam in 1991, then left without the so-called oil grab, combined with the fact that Bush 43 is in the process of leaving Iraq without
the so-called oil grab (again), are just the first two of 6,778 pieces of factual evidence that have been determined by the world to discredit Moore's work as lies.

After "Fahrenheit 9/11's" first weekend, the liberal press hit us with big headlines telling us that it "broke records" and is reaching the largest audience in history, selling out theatres and influencing the election. It may have sold out theatres, but only because it played in a limited number of art houses. The fact is, it made $21 million. "The Passion of the Christ" made $117 million in its first weekend. The truth is that "Fahrenheit" finished with the 228th best opening weekend ever, just behind "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider". They were right about one thing, though. It will influence the election. In favor of Bush.

Still, Moore is a hero of the Left. Because of all the historical reasons cited herein, because they are desperate and see their only source of joy, political power, being pulled away from them more and more each day, they are beyond the Truth. They lie, and we have little choice but to be merciful for those who lie. This charade, however, is getting tiresome.

The bottom line becomes a self-evident set of Truths that emerge when one simply observes the facts of the American landscape. On the one hand we have conservative Republicans. This is a party that, of its own accord, sheds itself of undesirables not deserving of membership within its ranks. When the racist David Duke attempted to portray himself as a Republican, the G.O.P. told him to take a hike. When separatists and militia groups, tainted by the whiff of racism, try to leach themselves to the party, they are distanced. When Trent Lott made intemperate remarks, it was the Republicans who took him down a peg. When Republicans are caught in adulterous affairs, they are removed not by their opponents, but by their own party, intent on upholding their high standards.

This is a party that has learned lessons from its past mistakes, and in so doing they have put these lessons into practical effect. The result, above and beyond all their great accomplishments, has been husbanding the American South, as sportswriter Jim Murray eloquently wrote in 1970, "back into the Union." I accept the premise that religious people who go to church are more likely to be good and decent than those who do not. These people are more likely to be conservatives. Conservatives are more likely to be family people, hard-working taxpayers, law abiders, and all other empirical criteria that average people use to determine "good" vs. something else.

Now, take a look at the Democrat Left. We have examined three of their most prominent current mouthpieces, Flynt, Moore and Stern. An honest appraisal of their character - their activities, morals, honesty - reveal portraits of people who, using standards of decency that average people would apply, show that they are men who either approach, or are actually of, low moral character. Still, they are held up as the face of modern Democrats.

These Truths remain self-evident. Res ipsa loquitur.

This is not a new development. Ted Kennedy has a long history of womanizing and alcoholism. These are not descriptions of his Harvard youth (when he paid a classmate to take his Spanish
exam for him), or his cowardice in the face of Mary Jo Kopechne's demise. As recently as 1991, his nephew brought a girl into his Palm Beach mansion and sexually assaulted her, while Kennedy, wearing a shirt and nothing else, approached in the hopes of turning it into a tag-team match (as opposed to helping the poor girl in distress). He is a hero in the Democrat party. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

Between 83 and 200 human beings who had close associations with the Clintons, in Arkansas and Washington over many years, have died of mysterious causes in their relative youth. Many were said to know damaging facts about them. Compelling evidence exists that Bill sexually assaulted and may even have raped women. These women were subjected to the Hillary/James Carville destruction machine. One Leftist media woman's response was that she would happily blow Bill just to thank him for maintaining the legality of abortion, which of course is to suck a living baby out of the womb of some girl who, more than likely, let her morals slip during a drunken one-night stand. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

In the 1980s, Al Sharpton orchestrated the lie that Tawana Brawley had been assaulted by white racists gone wild in New York City. It was all a hoax. If he were a Republican, he would be sharing the same Siberian dog house as David Duke. He is not only a Democrat star, a standard-bearer and "black leader," but a Presidential candidate. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

Jesse Jackson once said Christian things about black responsibility. Now, he is a charlatan who blackmails, greenmails and shakes down corporations into silencing his false accusations of racism. His brother was convicted of murder, which the press says nothing about even though he is on the RAINBOW PUSH payroll. A couple years ago, Jesse used his influence in corrupt Chicago to help a nightclub avoid the bureaucracy of a fire permit. When fire broke out, many were burned alive. The press remained largely silent. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

One former member of the Roosevelt/Truman Administration, determined by the Soviet archival opening of the Venona papers in 1995 to have been a Soviet spy, returned from exile in 1996 - to vote for Bill Clinton. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

When Hillary Clinton defeated Rick Lazio for the New York Senate in 2000, a post-election study determined that her voters came from a preponderance of high-crime precincts. Those who lived in decent neighborhoods were more likely to vote for Lazio. This evidence seems to reveal something that cannot be plausibly argued, which is that law abiding Americans prefer Republicans, while drug dealers and criminals are all for the Democrats. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}

Congressman Barney Frank once ran a gay prostitution ring out of his apartment. Had he been a Republican, he would have been removed from any official association with the party, by Republicans who, upon deciphering the true reports of his activities and for this reason, would have concluded that he was a man of low morality. He is a national spokesman of the Democrat party. \textit{Res ipsa loquiter.}
U.S. Senator Robert Byrd (D.-West Virginia) was once a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Had he been a Republican, he would never have been allowed to continue to be one. Is commentary really necessary? *Res ipsa loquiter.*

Comedian Al Franken wrote a book called "Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them". It was about the Fox News Channel, which is a fair, balanced news organization that roots for America. The Left says they are conservative. They are not. They just look that way compared to the liberal CNN, CBS, and most of the other network and cable stations (except for MSNBC). Fair and truthful analysts have concluded that Fox is the most believable and trusted news organization. Fair and truthful analysts concluded that Franken's book was, like Moore's books and documentaries, filled with lies and half-truths. Franken was fed information by the Democrat-leaning Kennedy School of Government, and funded by George Soros, a socialist billionaire, who started Air America. Air America failed immediately. Conservative talk radio succeeds where liberal talk radio fails because conservatives, like Christians, are starving for Truth and decency in a world of anti-Americanism, religious intolerance and negativism. Conservatives are more likely to be educated people who prefer to improve themselves by learning about the world by listening to talk radio. Liberals are more likely to be old '60s rockers who prefer to listen to Santana and The Grateful Dead on FM. *Res ipsa loquiter.*

Throughout the Cold War, does anybody really doubt that, all else being equal, the Communists "voted" for Democrats over Republicans? Is their any doubt that terrorists prefer Democrats to Republicans? Is commentary really necessary? *Res ipsa loquiter.*

Take the two great political dynasties of the post-World War II era, the Kennedys on the Left and the Bush's on the right. Consider the royal snobbery of the Kennedys, then compare it to the down home values of the Bush family. *Res ipsa loquiter.*

Hollywood and the rock'n'roll world is solidly Democrat. This is a world of drug abuse, alcoholism, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, atheism and immorality. The country 'n' western community is overwhelmingly Republican. This is a world of religion, family values, patriotism, respect for the military and overall morality. *Res ipsa loquiter.*

Finally, allow me to remind a forgetful world about the struggle between the forces of freedom, represented by the right, and the forces of Communism, represented by the Left. At the end of World War II, when Allied forces liberated German concentration camps, General Eisenhower ordered camera crews, reporters and townspeople into the camps to witness the atrocities. 12 million men, women and children were murdered in those camps. Because of those reporters, photographers and witnesses, the world has never forgotten the Holocaust. However, **100 million human beings** were murdered by international Communism in the 20th Century. 100 million people! Just think about that for a second. The Holocaust, times eight and a half. They were killed in the Soviet Union, East Germany, China, North Korea, Eastern Europe, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Africa and wherever Communism reared its ugly head. Some 20 million died under Josef Stalin. 40-50 million died under Mao Tse-tung. A million perished under Fidel Castro. A million died in Vietnam when, after Watergate and for purely political reasons, the majority party in Congress chose to withdraw American protection. Pol Pot's regime
killed an additional 1.5 million in the "killing fields" of Cambodia. Unlike the Holocaust, most of these atrocities were never subject to the full light of disclosure. The Soviet gulags have been paved over, replaced by roads, warehouses, even shopping centers. Those 100 million souls are highly, precisely and to quintessential effect the very reason why we sometimes aligned ourselves with morally questionable regimes, in order to destroy world Communism once and for all.

Time has forced many of the facts to recede in our collective memory, replaced by a fuzzy kind of Leftist thinking that has even romanticized Communism among our youth, who do not always know the complete facts. How else to explain the popularity of Che Guevara t-shirts and posters? Some celebrities - Chevy Chase, Oliver Stone, Steven Spelberg, to name just a few - have gone so far as to travel to Cuba and meet with Castro, returning with glowing reports about the Cuban dictator's "charisma" or some such malarkey.

Based on the undeniable Truths of empirical evidence, one is left to determine the simple fact that those aligned with the right are more likely to be good and decent people, while people aligned with the Left are not. To deny this is to be a sophist and rely on various and sundry lies, identifiable by those who can read, write, see and have access to facts.

As for President Bush, I have only this to say: History is on your side. With this in mind, I would like to see the man's speechwriter's use more of this history, giving the President the opportunity to educate the electorate on why his policies are part of America's Manifest Destiny for the 21st Century.

Finally, a last word about non-partisanship. This essay is decidedly partisan. It is written from a conservative, Christian worldview, and it details negative descriptions of Left wing politics. However, the history of America, and more recently, the Cold War, is a history of people of all persuasions coming together to achieve a common goal. Winning the Cold War was an achievement of both the Republicans and the Democrats, because administrations of both parties battled Communism for 45 years.

Right now, the War on Terror has "officially" been conducted only by a Republican White House. The Democrats, whether they understand this dynamic or not, must feel left out. I am by no means advocating voting for Democrats, and in fact will continue to campaign against them. That being said, it probably will take the election of a Democrat administration, which must fight this war in their time, to invest the Left in this noble struggle. Unless the Republicans successfully end the struggle before that occurs.

ORANGE COUNTIFICATION: THE TRUE STORY OF HOW THE G.O.P. HELPED THE SOUTH RISE AGAIN

September 12, 2005 will be the 35th anniversary of the football "game that changed a nation" played between USC and Alabama. This event did not simply integrate the South. Steven
Travers, the author of a book about the event, September 1970, explains how it changed the political landscape that is now called "red states" and "blue states."

It is an article of faith among the American Left that black opportunity in the South came about strictly because of their efforts, via the civil rights struggle; and that the Republican Party callously played to racist tendencies in order to take advantage of political opportunity. Even current Republican chairman Ken Mehlman recently went so far as to apologize for Richard Nixon's 1968 "Southern strategy" while speaking before a black audience.

In researching my latest book, September 1970, the true story of how the USC-Alabama football game played that year helped end segregation once and for all, I found something entirely different; something to thoroughly refute the liberal revisionism of our history. "McCarthyism," as another example, was based on a real threat of Communist influence, yet the punditry in this country has played it as pure conservative malevolence. The same forces have tried to paint the Right, and its greatest hero, Ronald Reagan, as being somewhere between overtly and covertly racist. This is a lie.

Slavery, Lincoln, Reconstruction and Jim Crow

The United States inherited slavery from England. The sordid practice had thrived among most of civilized Europe and beyond for centuries. The Founding Fathers had a plan, which was to end the importation of slaves. The theory was that the living slaves would eventually die, and with their passing, so too would slavery. In 1808 importation of slaves did end. However, slaveowners often allowed slaves to marry and have children. Thus did succeeding generations of slaves become "Americanized" and "Christianized." Out of Puritanical Christianity in the North did the abolition movement arise, and eventually the issue drove the country into a Civil War.

This issue also helped give birth to a new party, the Republicans, and propelled Abraham Lincoln into the White House. Lincoln led the Union to victory and declared the Emancipation Proclamation. Within four score and seven years, America, using laws written by Americans, ended a practice that even the Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had deemed "natural." No foreign power came to our shoes, defeated us, and dictated that we end the practice. Had America not done it, slavery might have existed until the 20th Century. When we ended it, it never came back as legitimate trade between nations.

After Lincoln's assassination, the Republicans became divided and Reconstruction failed. The Democrats, the shadow party of the Confederacy, took over in the South. A century of "righteous indignation" followed. During this time, the Ku Klux Klan rode roughshod over the black citizenry. Lynchings were common. Few blacks were allowed to vote. Arcane literacy tests and poll taxes were among the nefarious methods used during the Jim Crow era to suppress black civil liberties.

Up until the 1930s, had Southern blacks been able to vote in demonstrable numbers, they would have voted with the "Party of Lincoln." In that decade, however, the Depression gave rise to an uneasy alliance between President Franklin Roosevelt and Louisiana "kingmakers" Huey and Earl Long. The welfare state created a dependent culture that tilted Northern blacks towards the Democrats. The populist Longs were able to garner black votes in conjunction with manipulation of congressional districts, all the while consolidating power for themselves. Throughout the 1930s, '40s, '50 and '60s, the Democrats held a stranglehold on the South.
Eleanor Roosevelt may have complained about Southern prejudice, but there was little effort on the part of Northern Democrats to reform Jim Crow Democrats.

President Dwight Eisenhower attempted to secure civil rights legislation in the late 1950s, but he was blocked by Southern Democrats, led by Bill Clinton's mentor, Arkansas Senator William Fulbright, and Al Gore's father, Tennessee Senator Albert Gore, Sr. In Alabama, moderate gubernatorial candidate George Wallace lost the 1958 election when he tried to reach out to black voters. The KKK and the official state Democrat Party backed his opponent. After Wallace lost, he vowed "never to be outn------d" again.

In 1960, few blacks in the South could vote, but nationwide the black vote was evenly split between the G.O.P. and the Democrats. Much of the split mirrored W. E. B. DuBois' "intellectual" wing of black America vs. Booker T. Washington's "conservative" wing. That year, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was arrested and jailed in Birmingham, Alabama. Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon and Democrat candidate John Kennedy were implored to intervene. JFK courageously did just that. Nixon, unfortunately, chose not to, fearing Southern backlash. Retired baseball hero and black icon Jackie Robinson, a friend of Nixon's and a Connecticut Republican, threw his support to Kennedy. Kennedy effectively stole the election, but Nixon's failure to come to King's aid effected not just that campaign but future campaigns. While the 1960 black vote in Texas was suppressed enough to render it impotent, it very well might have swung Nixon's way in Illinois, where the "dead man's vote" in Cook County was used to steer just enough electorals to JFK to give him the election.

President Kennedy did little in the way of civil rights from 1961-63, engendering frustration from King and others who felt his New Frontier policies would bring more. To JFK's credit, he did stand up to Democrat Governor Ross Barnett during the James Meredith enrollment at the University of Mississippi, and he did defy Democrat Governor Wallace (who had lived up to his promise not to be "outn------d again") when black students enrolled at the University of Alabama a year later. To his further credit, Kennedy historians are confident that had he not been assassinated, he would have proceeded with civil rights legislation in his second term. Attorney General Robert Kennedy has been iconized as a hero of the civil rights movement, but under Lyndon Johnson he authorized Watergate-style buggings of Dr. King, because he had some Communists in his organization. These buggings revealed King to be a womanizer and less morally upright than his sainted image would have many believe.

In 1964, Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater failed to back Johnson's proposed Civil Rights Act. Texas G.O.P. Senate candidate George H.W. Bush also failed to endorse the legislation in his losing campaign vs. Ralph Yarborough. However, when Johnson's monumental bills came before Congress in 1964 and '65, Southern Democrats voted against it as a bloc constituency. Republicans stepped up and gave it their majority, pushing the bills into law. Rightfully, Johnson deserves and took credit for the leadership he exhibited.

The "Southern Strategy"

In 1964, Goldwater captured the Republican presidential nomination over New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller on the strength of his popularity in Orange County, California. Orange County, an L.A. suburb located just south of the city, was the home to Disneyland, great athletes, world class strands, and the beautiful "California Girls" of Beach Boys fame. It was filled with wealth and was predominantly white, but the folks were (and still are) too tanned, too good-looking, too laid-back in a surfer kind of way to give themselves to virulent racism. It was
"the OC" and its surrounding environs - the L.A. suburbs, the Navy town of San Diego, and
the Imperial Empire - that gave Goldwater the electoral prize of California which he needed to
win. It was a paradigm shift in American politics, but few saw it at the time. By 1966, America
was becoming divided by the Vietnam War. That year, two Republican political figures whose
bases were strongest in Orange County emerged.
Richard Nixon, born in Yorba Linda, was now seen as less "extreme" than Goldwater but more
conservative than Rockefeller. He campaigned relentlessly on behalf of G.O.P. candidates,
helping the party make enormous gains in that year's midterms. This helped him capture the
Republican nomination in 1968.
Ronald Reagan was a Midwesterner but he embodied the John Birch conservatism of Orange
County: stridently anti-Communist, a small government advocate, but racially moderate. Reagan
had made a famous speech at the 1964 convention in San Francisco that propelled him into the
national consciousness. In 1966 he defeated Pat Brown for Governor of California. Reagan was a
law 'n' order man who vowed to take a hard line against campus protesters at Berkeley and other
California colleges, where Communist agitators were stirring opposition against the Vietnam
War.

The Shakespearean ironies that surrounded the lives of Nixon, John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy
and Teddy Kennedy, were never more at play than in 1968. RFK most likely would have been
elected president had he not been assassinated in Los Angeles that June.
The general election pitted Nixon against Democrat Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and
Wallace, who departed from the Democrats to run as an independent. It was a close election, but
whether Humphrey could have defeated Nixon without Wallace in the race is debatable. What is
not debatable is that Nixon made the most of the opportunity Wallace provided. The South had
been almost 100 percent Democrat since the Civil War. Not even Eisenhower had won there! But
conservative, anti-Communist, Christian Dixie favored victory in Vietnam without appeasement
of the hippie elements on America's campuses. In this regard, the liberal Humphrey was
decidedly out of favor.
Wallace drew conservative Democrats away from Humphrey, depriving the party of their
traditional base. Mehlman, along with liberals over the years, advocated the idea that Nixon
played to pro-segregationist tendencies. This is not entirely true. Nixon indeed did advocate
"states' rights," which in Dixie was code for "segregation now, segregation forever," as Wallace
had thundered on 'Bama's schoolhouse steps in 1963. But states' rights meant far more than that,
and had been (and continues to be) a Republican mantra that stands for local control over issues
as wide-ranging as abortion, education and taxation.
The buttoned-down Nixon had not grown up amid Orange County wealth. He had been, like
many in the South, dirt poor and given to hard work. He had attended law school not at Harvard
or USC, but at Duke, which had just opened for business. He was so poor he had subsisted in a
janitor's shed, studying like Lincoln by candle or flashlight. In the 1930s, Nixon had engaged in
long philosophical discussions with his Southern classmates over the race issue. Nixon held firm
to his Quaker beliefs in man's inalienable right to be free, in body and spirit, but maintained a
laywerly collegiality with his peers that kept the discussions on a gentlemen's level. There was
palatability to Nixon that endeared him to his fellow law students.
The admiration they felt over his steadfast work ethic and debating skills foreshadowed the
Southern sensibilities towards Nixon in 1968. Nixon held a big lead in the polls and saw
Humphrey make a big run late, based on reports over possible withdrawal from Vietnam, but in the end he was California's first president.
Shortly after his election, Nixon consolidated his Southern base when he attended a Billy Graham "Crusade" at a Southern football stadium. The liberal media either ignored it or chastised him for pandering without regard for the wall between church and state. But Nixon's friendship with Graham, cemented by his Christian faith, rang true in the Bible Belt.

The Turning of the Tide

Nixon loved football. Reagan, of course, had risen to fame playing the role of a famous football player in Knute Rockne, All-American. The denizens of the American South are steadfast churchgoers who love the Lord Jesus Christ, but football is also religion in Dixieland. In the 1960s, pro sports had barely made a dent in the South, where their pride and joy were their college football teams. None was more loved than the University of Alabama Crimson Tide. By 1970, coach Paul "Bear" Bryant literally walked on water - at least according to Coca-Cola billboards on the highway outside Birmingham!

"The South had a chip on its shoulder," explained writer Keith Dunnavant, the author of a Bryant biography. "What Bryant brought to the region was excellence. In a region in which people felt inferior, or were made to feel inferior, because of the race issue and other social factors, here was a man who was the best on a national level. You can't underestimate what he meant to people."

In 1970, Bryant's segregated Alabama squad hosted the integrated University of Southern California Trojans at Birmingham's Legion Field. A black running back named Sam "Bam" Cunningham earned his nickname in a huge 42-21 stomping of the Tide. That game has been mythologized into the single event in which the performance of the Trojans' great black stars cowed the white fans into forcing integration.

"Alabama welcomed back into the Union," read Jim Murray's L.A. Times column the next day. Integration did indeed follow up on the heels of this game, with the result being not just another decade of 'Bama grid dominance but the opening of social doors for blacks from Texas to Florida.

However, the event was part of a larger political context, involving Wallace, Nixon, Reagan…and Bryant, who has been portrayed as kicking and screaming into a new world he never wanted to see happen. Nothing could be further from the truth! The truth is, Bear Bryant orchestrated the events of September 12, 1970, and everything came down according to his master plan. In analyzing this, one sees parallels with the Republican Party's successful husbanding of the South into the mainstream of American politics.

Dr. King had been killed in April of 1968. Bobby Kennedy was shot in June. The civil rights movement lost its moorings, and between 1968 and 1970 had morphed into violent militancy with little resemblance to Dr. King's "dream." White Americans were afraid of it. They saw the Oakland, California-based Black Panthers, leather clad, gun-toting black youth with rebellious Afro hairstyles. They saw scary Black Muslims who had veered from Malcolm X's epiphany of brotherhood. They heard the voices of Eldredge Cleaver, Bobby Seale, Huey Newton and Stokely Carmichael advocating violence. It would spawn liberal "armies" like the Weathermen and the SLA, dedicated to "bringing it all down, man."
The "New Breed" of black society demanded "justice," and it was that way on the athletic field, too. Bob Gibson and the St. Louis Cardinals, a mixed team of talented blacks, Latinos and whites, had defeated the mostly-white, country club Yankees in the 1964 World Series, an accurate metaphor for the changing America of that year. But whites wanted incremental change, not violent overthrow. The inherent sense of justice and fair play that lies at the heart of the American ideal tolerated rights for the long-suffering black citizenry, but did not tolerate the demands of anger and militancy. It was this sense of moderation, politically embodied by Nixon and later Reagan, which appealed to the South.

It was this approach that Bryant took. No endeavor embodies fair play more than sports, an egalitarian occupation in which performance is earned and easily measured, not doled out like patronage. Sports had flowered more so in America than any other country, and it is not coincidence. Sports, as former L.A. Times sportswriter Jeff Prugh, who covered the USC-Alabama game, says "is the cement mixer of society." Indeed it had previously been the door through which Jewish and black boxers had walked through on their way to better lives. It had given blacks a chance to shine in the Olympics (Jesse Owens in 1936) and, after Jackie Robinson had broken baseball's color barrier in 1947, it had provided further professional opportunities to blacks and other minorities in the team sports. When integration finally came to the "white" colleges in the South, it changed hearts and minds.

"My brothers were not racists," says Dunnavant, "but I started school in 1971, which by that time was integrated. As a big 'Bama fan, the difference is that by then my heroes were Ozzie Newsome and Wilbur Jackson. My brothers never had black heroes to root for. This had a profound effect on me."

Bear Bryant's critics maintained that he was at least a product of his racist geographic background. In truth, his poor youth had inculcated him with a sense of charity towards the less well off. He was also worldly; he befriended (and almost was thrown in jail for a petty offense with) a black friend as a youth, had played at 'Bama, managed a blues band, served in the Navy, and coached at Maryland, Kentucky and Texas A&M prior to taking the 'Bama job. He cultivated friendships with coaches and colleagues from one end of the Fruited Plain to another. Bryant traveled extensively to coaching clinics and golf tournaments in the off-seasons.

He had taken on the segregationist establishment by accepting a 1959 Liberty Bowl invitation against an integrated Penn State team. He understood the power of George Wallace and was smart enough to know when to pick his fights; in fact, he made his fights look like opportunity to those who otherwise would resist. By 1970, Wallace had moderated somewhat in order to broaden his national appeal, and Bryant's success had given him the imprimatur of a legend. Furthermore, in 1966 the Tide had been denied a third straight national championship when the Catholic vote went to Notre Dame, ostensibly a reaction to Alabama's all white team. After a sub-par 1969 season, Alabama fans knew that change had to occur in order to stay competitive nationally with integrated powers like Southern California, Ohio State, Michigan, and Penn State.

In 1956, USC had thoroughly beaten Texas at Austin behind a black running back named C.R. Roberts, and 10 years later ex-Trojan football player John Wayne saw his integrated alma mater again beat the segregated Longhorns in their stadium. These games could have had the effect of the 1970 USC-Alabama game. They did not. It was Bryant who understood these kinds of things, and he sensed that now - finally - the time was right.
What is not known is that, while Bryant did not plan to lose to USC, he understood that he might, and had a contingency plan to turn "lemons into lemonade." He had already recruited a black star named Wilbur Jackson and "stole" another black JC product, John Mitchell, out from under USC coach John McKay. He needed to create an atmosphere that would be amenable to these black players and those who would follow.

McKay was Bryant's close friend. He was a quipster; a cigar-chomping Catholic from West Virginia who shared a love of whisky and duck hunting with Bear. "Dad was conservative," said McKay's son, J.K., who starred at USC and played for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, "but he was totally race neutral."

"USC provided more opportunities for black athletes," McKay said in one of his last interviews, in 2000 (he died in 2001), "than any other school in the 1960s, yet liberal colleges like Stanford, who were trying to tell everybody how to live, were criticizing us, sometimes with vile, foul racial epithets coming from their supposedly 'enlightened' student rooting section."

The truth is, Bryant was a Lincolnesque figure who fought forces both allied with him and arrayed against him to bring about social change. McKay was a football Moses of progressivism, but he (like Nixon and Reagan) was palatable to Alabamians, by virtue of his friendship with Bryant, the classy, excellent program he ran (USC had won two national titles, had two undefeated teams, won three Rose Bowls and two Heisman Trophies in the 1960s), and the conduct of his players. Cunningham in particular has been described by ex-teammates as a Christian man of uncommon maturity and leadership skills at a young age.

It can be argued that USC, as opposed to almost any other school, was the "perfect" visiting team in this tale of near-Biblical effect. They played a big part in parting the Red Sea of segregation, which would allow this nation to be the Promised Land of not just some but all.

**Orange Countification**

"All I can say," says Wilbur Jackson, the first recruited black football player in 'Bama history, "is that I entered school a scared freshman in 1970, not sure what would happen. I left as captain of the team. We had eight black players voting that year, so obviously I had the respect of my white teammates. If I'd had a bad experience, I would not have sent my daughter there. We recently had a re-union of the 1973 team, and it was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life."

John Mitchell and Sylvester Croom would go on to become assistant coaches under Bryant (who hired well ahead of "schedule"), and they echo the sentiment of all the black players and coaches associated with Bear: had he been racist, over the course of many years, it would have shown up.

"Nobody's that good an actor," said Croom, now the head coach at Mississippi State. It never did.

The magic of America is that social change that takes decades, even centuries, in other countries, happens with Godspeed here. Thus was the transformation of the modern South. The true irony is that the liberals who had fought for civil rights through protest and marches in the 1960s, and would naturally have assumed that when the time came would have benefited from its success, did not see this. Instead, the conservatives were viewed as having husbanded the region into the mainstream, and they have reaped the electoral rewards.
"We just handed the South to the Republicans," President Johnson told an aide after signing the 1965 Civil Rights Act. Despite Ken Mehlman's wrongful mea culpa, and liberal revisionism, the Republicans are deserving of credit, having used Lincolnian approaches, much like Bryant, to moderate the shock of racial integration. Certainly, history provides a kind assessment, in that the South rose again in college athletics, economically, saw population explosions, a dynamic business and housing environment, expansion of major sports franchises into the region, hosted Super Bowls and the Olympics; all the while seamlessly incorporating not just black opportunity, but black political leadership, especially in its cities.

Dr. King had chosen to inculcate the civil rights movement with Christian phraseology because he knew that the power of His religion would ultimately soften the hearts of Southern whites. It was this softening that was at the heart of Nixon's Christian partnership with Graham, and is seen today as the nexus of the "moral values" that voters said drove their choice of George W. Bush over John Kerry. It was the palatability of 1960s California conservatism moderated by Christianity that created the "Orange Countification" of the South.

This political phenomenon had played out over a period of decades, but in analyzing the South one finds almost scientific "proof" that conservatism and Christianity are the "winning ideology" of 2,000 years of history. For years, modern amenities did not exist in much of the South. People were often backwards, uneducated; "hillbillies" of the Deliverance stereotype.

The creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority and like works projects brought electricity and conveniences to the region. Air conditioning made it easier to do business in the summer time. Eventually, cable TV, talk radio, the Internet and the Information Superhighway created a world in which people who lived in outlying rural areas had access to knowledge.

Despite modernity, residents continued to put their faith in a religion that had existed for 2,000 years. But the point is really quite simple. In all the years in which Southerners actually were ignorant and uneducated, they:

Were racist.
Voted Democrat.

In all the years in which Southerners gained access to knowledge and became educated, they:

Are no longer racists.
Vote Republican.

Res ipsa loquitur, or as Jesus says in the Gospel According to John, "The Truth will set you free."

The South had despised liberal perfidy over Vietnam, viewing the Democrats as a party that had been hijacked by the Jane Fonda wing of the Democrat party. Ronald Reagan was popular there, and expanded the Republican base in the 1980s, not just in terms of his own campaign victories, but in the escalation of G.O.P. House and Senate representation in the region. In 2004, history did not repeat, it all but rhymed, when the Fonda role was taken over by Michael Moore. Southern response, as well as much of the rest of the nation's response, was to repulse the party
that embraced Moore and take the advice of a Boston policeman directing delegates outside
the Democratic National Convention: "Go forth and vote Republican."

OSAMA'S MIND

Amid all the angst over Iraq and the War on Terror, I never hear anybody talk about what our
enemies are thinking, yet any military commander knows that to know the enemy - his
intentions, fears and internal dissensions - is vital intelligence. With that in mind, let's just say
that in 1861 some guy from the future was able to go back in time and tell Confederate leader
Jefferson Davis what would happen if he went forward with the South's prosecution of the Civil
War. "Well, Jeff," he goes on, "you can attack the Union at Ft. Sumter, but the war will last four
years, slavery will end, hundreds of thousands of Confederate soldiers will die, not to mention all
the Union soldiers and civilians, mostly your Southern neighbors; including women and children.
Your land will be taken from you, your political power stripped, you'll end up in jail, Abe
Lincoln will become a sainted figure, and the South will take 100 years to 'rise again.' " Unless
Davis was out of his mind, a vivid portrait of the war (use Ken Burns's documentary) would
surely have made him realize that the very essence of what he DID NOT WANT is what he
would - and indeed did - get.

The same might (or might not?) be said of Adolf Hitler contemplating World War II, or the
Kaiser before World War I, or any number of wars. Hannibal may well have chosen not to take
his elephants over the Alps, for instance if he knew the Romans would salt Carthage and he'd be
forced to swallow poison.

Okay, so it's the summer of 2001, and this guy in the time machine is allowed into Osama bin
Laden's compound and shows him what will happen if he launches those planes into the World
Trade Center and other locations. "Do what you want, Osama, but here's the deal," the man says.
"The Americans under the Republicans are not like they were under the Democrats. They won't
send some drones into the desert and kill camels. They will invade Afghanistan, defeat and
unseat the Taliban, capture Kabul, and install a friendly government. These people telling you
they will lose like the Russians did, or like the Rudyard Kipling poems describe British and
Russian misadventures - the Great Game of the 19th Century - are as wrong as wrong is."

Osama scratches his head.

"What will happen to me?" he asks.

"Well, you will become a fugitive, living hand to mouth in a cave someplace in the freezing
mountains of Pakistan, only Pakistan will side with America. You will have to rely on the loyalty
of local villagers, that is until they accept money or somebody whose family you killed turns,
and they in turn give you up. At any second a drone missile will blow you up without you
knowing what hit you. Your chances at survival won't be good. The Taliban will become a rag
time group blowing up a few cars and whatnot, but they will be essentially irrelevant."
Osama looks strange.

"Furthermore, and maybe worse, the Americans will consider you relatively irrelevant, too. You'll occasionally make a video tape (long after DVDs have become the thing, but you won't have access to that technology or much of anything). Nobody will take you seriously. Your advisors will tell you people do, but, well, sorry, they won't. Oh, most of your top commanders will be killed, mostly by these drone missiles the Republicans, I mean the Americans, have at their disposal.

"In 2003, George Bush will invade Iraq. In what will go down in history as one of the most brilliant military campaigns ever waged, he will destroy Saddam Hussein within a month or so and take over the country. There will be backlash and a lot of violence will occur, but your biggest allies will be the American Democrat party?"

"Who?"

"Some guys named Harry Reid, Dick Durbin, John Murtha . . ."

"Are they Muslims?"

"Well, no, their infidels?"

"Then why will they root for me?"

"Well, that's a good question, but it really won't do you any good because after a few years the Republicans, I mean the Americans, will achieve victory in Iraq. They will turn the place into the beginnings of a democracy. Iran will be very bitter, but with an American military next to them they will be marginalized and it probably will lead to a student revolution turning THEM into a democracy - that's in the future so far so I can't give that to you for sure but it's starting to look that way."

"But won't the Arab street explode?"

"Well, that's what all the liberals said would happen, but they were, well, wrong."

"They will love the Americans?"

"No, but the average Arab will recognize they are the winners, probably the winners of all history, and people tend to jump on bandwagons."

"What if I nuke an American city?"

"Well, can't say, but you got to understand. Even though the Americans will blow you away in Afghanistan and Iraq, people will say they fought with one hand tied behind their back."
"They will beat me with one hand tied behind their backs?" Osama asks.

"Yeah, pretty much, so if you managed a nuke they'd probably just turn the whole Mideast into fire - blow up Mecca and Medina, just take it over, and worse, the Chinese would be their ally. They'd be really mad because they've got a lot of investments in America and would not much like you blowing 'em up. Can't advise it."

"So, let me get this straight," Obama. "The absolute opposite of what I WANT will be what I ACTUALLY GET?"

"Hey, you said it, not me."

**MCCAIN AND THE "GANG OF 14"**

I am a total, complete conservative Republican, and like many in my party I am watching with a combination of curiosity and distress at the Right's reaction to John McCain, the presumptive GOP front-runner. Okay, I get it on waterboarding, climate control, campaign finance reform, and other areas of disagreement. The Republican's have been the governing party for a long while and it has turned us into politicians. Fine. But Senator McCain still gets excoriated for his role in the "Gang of 14," and I'm perplexed at this. Unless I am missing something, as best I can tell that deal broke a longtime logjam in which Democrats blocked all of George Bush's judicial appointments and led to conservative Justices Sam Alito and John Roberts. Would Alito and Roberts, who are both fine with conservatives, been nominated and approved had it not been for the McCain-brokered deal?

**CHAPTER SIX**

**PORN STARS**

Hey, gotcha. I thought you would turn to this chapter first. How about a chapter called "Porn Stars" that follows a chapter about politics with a "Christian worldview"? What can I say, I am a man of diversity.

**BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR**

This is a freelance fiction story I wrote, using characters based in part on my novel, "Angry White Male".

When I was a little boy, growing up an only child in Palos Verdes Estates, California, my mother used to read to me every night before putting me to bed. I remember two things about the experience. First, Mom read books about dogs, and the dogs always died in the end, saving their masters from freezing in Alaska or something like that. Second, Mom usually wore her negligee
when she read to me. Mom was a looker, and built like a brick house. That is when I became a breast man.

My father, Daniel Taylor, was a lawyer with a white shoe firm in downtown L.A. My family is a Who’s Who of American politics, law, journalism, Hollywood and sports. A lot is expected of a Taylor, and a lot was expected of Dad. My great-grandfather was a confidante of Teddy Roosevelt. His son helped bridge the gap between silent movies and “talkies.” He met a football player at the University of Southern California named Marion Morrison, and introduced him to Clara Bow, the “it girl” of the 1920s. Clara was a nymphomaniac, and enjoyed getting group sex with the Trojan football team. So you thought their fight song, “Conquest” was about beating Notre Dame? I do not think so. Marion Morrison changed his name to John Wayne.

Dad’s older brother was a high muckaty-muck in Republican politics, and Dad thought he was heading in that direction, too. He was a helluva of a baseball player, but after injuries cut his career short, he went into the law and became a protégé of Richard Nixon. He was left behind when Nixon took off for Wall Street and later the Presidency. Dad should have been relieved that he was not one of the “unindicted co-conspirators” of Watergate, but instead he became bitter, as if his ship came and went without him.

So Dad put all his hopes on me. I took to baseball early and Dad lived his life vicariously through my successes on the diamond. But he was too enthusiastic, and my teammates, opponents, classmates, and the parents in the Palos Verdes baseball community did not appreciate his enthusiasm.

“Run, run, run, RUN YOU BASTARD RUN,” Dad would yell at some sixth grader rounding third and heading for home. For some reason, this did not go down well with the post-'60s California parents in the stands. What a surprise! They were all reading “I’m OK, You’re OK”, but my dad was not OK as far as they were concerned.

As a consequence, I found that junior high school was a snake pit of adolescent hate. There was nothing laidback about the barbs I heard. The old man knew we were not very popular, but he could head off to his law office and afterwards, a few belts of Bourbon. Me? I had to listen to 13-year old jackals say stuff like “You’re old man sucks, Taylor,” and “Go suck your old man’s dick, Taylor,” and “Hey pussy boy, you’re a faggot,” and other pleasantries. I was pretty unsure of myself in a lot of ways, but I knew one thing for certain. I was no faggot!

I was tall and athletic, with blonde hair and blue eyes. Looking back at pictures, hey, I was a good-looking son of a gun. But being called a “faggot” in the schoolyard was not a recipe for success with the chicks. I was uncool, unpopular and singled out, which is the worst thing to be in junior high school. I came from a family of womanizers. Granddaddy had chased broads with the Duke and invented the modern gangbang. My father was a hit with women at USC. When my formative years came around and I was not fighting off girls with a stick, I was immediately suspect in his eyes.

Girls were this great mystery to me. It was as if they existed only to intimidate me. The last thing I thought girls wanted was to be with boys. There were a select few guys who were popular with females, but becoming an all-star big league baseball player was a far more realistic prospect than to ascend into that clique of popularity. I wanted a girlfriend in the worst way. Instead, all I found was repression and frustration. I fantasized about girls who were sexual, free and easy. They were fantasies because they did not exist for me in real life.

The one thing that saved me in junior high school and high school was baseball. I was good at it. I gained attention and notoriety. I went on to play at USC, and a few years of
professional ball. But I never did very well with women. I always said the wrong thing. My jokes fell like dead weights. I had no rap.

My buddy Skoal and I went to the Pussycat Theatre in Santa Monica to watch “Deep Throat”. I was both repulsed and turned on by the site of Harry Reems’ semen drooling out of Linda Lovelace’s mouth. I started watching porn movies.

In my late teens, I was proselytized by a classmate who introduced me to the Lord Jesus Christ. Ever since then, everything I did came back to this. Questions of morality, sin and asking what the right thing really was.

Finally, I met a girl who seemed suitable. We hooked up and got married. It was nice to have sex on a regular basis for the first time. Unfortunately, she was about as exciting as a yeast infection, which she was always coming down with. It was not very long before I started watching x-rated movies on the sly. The likes of Seka, Ginger Lynn, Amber Lynn and Christy Canyon were much more exciting than my bitchy old lady. My Christian side told me I was committing a sin. My practical side told me that an affair with the VCR was better than cheating on my wife with a flesh-and-blood woman. Thankfully, the marriage did not work out. Neither did baseball. Like Dad, injuries cut short my promising career. I still had a lot to live up to, being a Taylor. Like my grandfather, who was a screenwriter, playwright, producer and director who named names during the McCarthy Era, I started writing for Hollywood. I was good at it.

I had a friend from USC baseball who got married, and I was invited to his bachelor party. There must have been 100 guys there. The “entertainment” was a porn chick by the name of Cumita. It was an apt nickname. This girl was a freak! She provided a full service bachelor party. Anybody who’s ever dealt with escort services knows what full service means. Cumita was very popular with the guys, but she was not exactly treated with respect. I befriended her and had a nice conversation. She turned out to be friendly and intelligent. Right then and there, I asked her on a date. She gave me her card and said sure.

A couple of weeks later I called and asked her to dinner. We set a date and she told me where she lived. There was still some doubt in the back of my mind how this “date” was to be interpreted. I had no intention of paying her for her services, but wondered whether she expected to treat the evening as business or pleasure. I decided to just go with it.

Cumita was not the best-looking girl in the adult film industry, but let me tell you something; in person, she was fine. She was half-white, half-Filipino, a petite thing with long, silky black hair. She knew how to fix herself up, with the make-up, the “slut red” lipstick, and outrageous lingerie under a leather mini-skirt, a halter-top exposing her tanned belly, smooth skin and perky breasts, all capped by high heeled stilettos.

My johnson immediately got angry, and I knew I was in for a night of fun. I had no idea! We went to dinner at a family place in Hermosa Beach, where I thought every man, woman and child knew who Cumita was. I drank until I did not care. Then we went to the Lighthouse on Pier Avenue, where a Zeppelin tribute band was in full jam. The place was crowded with hot rocker girls, including one tall, dark-haired lovely who kept making eye contact with Cumita. When Cumita asked me if I wanted to do a ménage a trios with her, I knew I was not in Kansas anymore.

What happened over the next few days matched all the fantasies I had had watching porn flicks to help forget my wife’s yeast infections. First the rocker girl came to bed with us. I got her and Cumita on all fours and took turns tonguing them from behind. Then they went to town on each other, alternately blowing me. In the end, I shot enough jizz to fill a bath tub all over
Cumita’s face, and rocker girl licked it all off. Then she gargled with it, and spat it back in Cumita’s mouth. Cumita and rocker girl repeated this foul yet exquisite act several times. Wow!

I thought that was it. Oh, how wrong I was. The next day, after rocker girl was given a kiss good-bye, Cumita called her friend Anna, who was shooting a porn flick in Chatsworth. We drove out there just in time to see the “money shot.” Anna came over and greeted us with two loads of cum on her face. Par for the course in the porn world. We drove to her hotel room. Her husband was watching football. I had a conversation with the guy about the true red-dog blitz. It was just like any two suburban neighbors talkin’ ball over a picket fence, except that Anna and Cumita appeared in lingerie from the Touch of Romance catalogue, and you know what happened next.

After a couple hours swapping porn stars and screwing his wife hubby urged me on, I was drained and we drove back to Cumita’s condo. I figured I was done until nature took its course, which would take a week or so. Cumita would have none of it. She jumped my bones as soon as we got back, and to my surprise I performed my man-beastly duty. The next morning, I was ready to re-join the known world, but Cumita was already on the phone, calling all her slutty friends and bragging about my staying power.

“What’s up?” I asked her.

“We’re going to the Rainbow tonight,” she said. “There’s a party there.”

I did not know how much I had left. The whole thing was by now surreal. My date was going on 48 hours and Cumita had not presented me a bill. Christ, I was her boyfriend. I decided to go along with the ride.

The Rainbow, a historic watering hole on the Sunset Strip where Jim Morrison once drank and David Lee Roth still hangs out, is also a favorite haunt of strippers and porn stars. The fuck bunnies were out in force that night. Cumita regaled them with graphic descriptions of my staying power, and I found myself the object of the desires of four or five glamour girls. For the guy who could not a girl in high school, this was too good to be true.

In the end, we took Cumita’s friend Lana home with us. Tall, tanned and exotic, Lana had an insatiable appetite for sex. By dawn’s early light, I was having an out-of-body experience, and seriously questioned whether my soul could still be saved. Finally, Lana departed, and despite Cumita’s pleas to stick around, I made haste.

Of course, within a few days, I was desperate to come back and taste the forbidden fruit. I tried to tell my pastor about the experience, but the minute I opened my mouth I knew that was a mistake. Like he was going to understand. I weaseled out of that, but continued to go to church and meditate. I had no chance. The temptation of a sexy porn chick begging me to shoot my load on her was impossible for to overcome.

I am doing the work of Satan, I lamented.

I stayed in touch with Cumita over the next months. She moved out of town and I temporarily moved back to my parent’s house while the home I had bought was in escrow. I was almost back to “normal” when one night she called and said she was flying in to L.A. and wanted to spend the night with me.

Now, in this life we make some stupid decisions. As they say, some are made with the big head, and some are made with the little head. The question of having sex with Cumita was not the decision. The question was where to have sex with Cumita. The answer to that is obvious: IN A MOTEL. Do not ask me why this was not obvious at the time. Looking back, it seems incongruous that the $65 deterred me. Mainly, I just thought I could get away with it.
folks have a big house, and I figured I could spirit her in, do my business, and in the morning she needed to be driven to the airport for an early flight. That was the plan. Let us just say that Ike prepared for the Normandy Invasion better than I thought through my dangerous liaison with Cumita.

I picked her up at the airport, and driving down the Pacific Coast Highway, Cumita had her lips wrapped around Mr. Woodrow. Then we headed up the hill that is the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

“Wow,” she said, “you live in P.V.?”
“Uh, yeah baby,” I murmured.

We got to the house, and Cumita’s eyes popped out of her head. It is a gorgeous ranch-style home with a stunning view that stretches from downtown Los Angeles to the coastal South Bay Strand. Cumita was sizing the place up. I was sure she had a couple of gangbanger friends named Ramos and Raoul who she was planning to call and tell them she had a new place for them to rob.

“I’ll just fuck the guy while you steal his shit,” I pictured her saying to the imaginary criminals. This concern was replaced by my desire to maintain the fiction that the place was mine. I had not told her I lived with my parents. It was midnight and they would be asleep. We entered the house, and Cumita was talking. I whispered, as if my low tones made up for her Valley Girl squeals. The light was on in the front room, which was unusual. We entered, and sitting there was my father.

My dad never sits in the front room. He never had before, and never has since. He did that night. Why? I have to believe it was the work of God. My dad used to call me Stupidkid, a one-word appellation, when I was growing up, and he never really changed his overall impression of me. Ours is a love-hate relationship based on his judging me and my resenting him for it. He sees everything as right or wrong, with little room in between.

“Uh, Dad,” I mumbled.

“Who’s this?” he asked the way a CIA operative might ask, “How long have you worked for Osama?”

“Stan,” said Cumita, “what’s going on here?”
“Uh,” I said, “this is my dad. Dad, this is…”

Jesus, God, no. Cumita?

“I’m Nancy,” she said to my father. She had a real name, only I had never learned it.

“Uh,” I said, “Nancy needs a ride to the airport tomorrow and I said I’d drive her.”

“So what’s she doing here now?” inquired The Dan, who was now Central Casting’s prototype for the demanding prosecutor.

“Well,” I said, “she doesn’t have a place to stay, so, she’s gonna stay here, uh…”

It went on for a couple of excruciating minutes, until finally I managed to drag Nancy/Cumita downstairs. She was not impressed by the fact that I was living at my parent’s house, but my main preoccupation was now sex.

“Staaaaaan,” I heard The Dan shouting, sounding like an injured moose, from the top of the stairs.

That was all I needed to hear. I was done. The game was over. The jig was up.

“I replied, weakly, knowing my fate was sealed.

“Would you come up here, please?” The Dan said.

Like a condemned prisoner, I trudged out of the room and halfway up the stairs.
“Yeah,” I repeated.

The Dan’s face was about 47 feet long. His jowls normally curved downward, making him look like he was frowning even when he was not. Now his mouth was pursed into a dot. His eyes were narrowed, He was not happy.

“You’re not gonna sleep with that girl, are you?” The Dan asked me.

“I was thinkin’ about it,” I barely muttered.

“You can’t do that,” said The Dan. “I’ll make up the guest room for her, but she can’t sleep with you.”

I just looked at him. Then I heard my mom’s high-pitched voice.

“Staaaaan,” she said, “you can’t do it. It’s immoral.”

I had listened to my parents give me a ton of crap a million times. I had long ago learned to decipher their rhetoric, and concluded most of the time that they were full of hot air. They just liked to give me heat because they felt the need to give me heat. I was an easy, available target. I filled their need to complain about somebody.

This time, however, I knew I had nothin’ comin’. I was on the wrong side of the moral equation. There was nothing to say. I just folded my tail between my legs, turned around and went back in the room. Nancy was lying seductively on the bed, looking like a girl who was ready to worship every inch of what I had. I had to explain, as gently as possible, that my parents more or less realized that she was a complete floozy. Therefore she would have to find other lodging tonight, thank you.

Nancy could have started trouble, and that would have been baaaaaad! She could have yelled and screamed. I imagined my father yelling, “Shirley, call the cops. Now!”

Instead, thank God instead, Nancy, sex hound that she was, said, “I understand.” She was terrific about it. I packed her up, spirited her to the car, and drove to a motel in El Segundo. I paid for her motel, which I should have done in the first place, and gave her money for the short cab ride to the airport the next day. I kissed her good bye.

“You’re not going, are you?” she said.

After all that she still wanted me. God bless her. I went to town on her for an hour. She finished me off in the usual manner, and I left. I was prepared for the worst, but to their lasting credit, Dan and Shirley never mentioned the incident again.

Unbelievably, Nancy called me a few days later.

“Hey, wanna go to the porn convention?” she asked me.

Like asking if I wanted to go to the Laker game.

“Sure,” I said.

So it was that I found myself in a car with four hot porn stars driving to Las Vegas. I heard all their “tricks of the trade” for five hours. The porn stars met at Bally’s bar the first night.

On the way to Vegas, I told the girls about “Once He Was An Angel”, a screenplay I wrote about an ex-baseball player named Bo Belinsky.

“There’ll be a lot of roles for cute girls,” I said. “I can use all four of you.”

The girls giggled as if Daryl F. Zanuck had just promised them stardom.

“Really?” they gushed.

*What a bunch of Dumbellionites*, I thought.

Aside from Cumita, there was Crystal Gold, Olivia and Heather Lee. Crystal was a statuesque blonde with a set of volleyballbs for breasts. Olivia was an emaciated blonde with a set
of volleyballs for breasts. Heather was a gorgeous Hispanic firebrand with a set of volleyballs for breasts.

At the Bally’s bar, I was amazed at all the talent. In my entire life I had never seen so many gorgeous women in one place. That night, I had sex with Nancy and Heather.

The next day, flush with another sterling performance, I was lying in bed when the phone rang in the hotel room. The girls were gone, since they had to be on the showroom floor early.

“Hello,” I answered.

“Is Nancy there?” said a female voice.

“No,” I said, “can I take a message?”

“Whose this?” said the girl.

“This is Stan,” I said.

“Steve Drake!” she gushed. “Ohh, I can’t wait to work with you.”

“Uh, I can’t wait to work with you, too,” I said, “but I said Stan, not Steve. Stan Taylor. Whose this?”

“This is Crystal,” she said.

“Ah, Crystal,” I said, “I rode here with you, Nancy, Olivia and Heather yesterday.”

Indeed, she had spent five hours in a car with me, but was so ditzy that it took two minutes for me to refresh her memory.

What a Dumbellionite, I thought.

Of course, she was a Dumbellionite with one of the finest racks in the Western world. Crystal was not quite sure what I was, a producer maybe. That meant she should be nice to me. I invited her up to the room to talk about my script, “Once He Was An Angel”, figuring these porn girls were easily impressed. Crystal was. Half an hour later, she was in the room. I started talking about “Once He Was An Angel”, a legitimate script idea that I planned to get into Charlie Sheen’s hands. Crystal said she did not like Charlie because he treated her like a whore and a slut.


Crystal did not understand that “Once He Was An Angel” was a real script. She must have thought it was a porn flick. What she thought, nobody knows. What this girl did not know could fill a void larger than all space. What is known is that she had my erect manhood in her mouth when Cumita walked in the door.

“Hi, honey,” I said, cheerfully. “I was just talking to Crystal here about my script.”

Having a blowjob performed on me when Cumita entered the room had not seemed unusual to me. Cumita was the same girl who had invited half the porn chicks in the San Fernando Valley to swing with us. She had shared me with Heather the night before. But logic does not figure with these girls. Cumita went ballistic.

“What about me?” she whined. “If Crystal’s gonna be in your movie, what about me? I thought I was gonna be in your movie.”

“You will,” I said, noticing that Crystal’s mouth was no longer wrapped around my woodie.

“Who told you you could fuck Crystal?” asked Cumita. “She won’t fuck you.”

“Well, she certainly has no problem blowing me,” I said.

“But she won’t fuck you,” said Cumita, as if this was some kind of important differential. She turned to Crystal.

“He won’t pay for my breasts,” she said.
“Asshole,” she said. She was now standing up and had shoved one melon-size breast back into her Summer dress.

“Who said anything about paying for your breasts?” I asked. “This is bizarre.”

“He lives at home with his parents,” said Cumita.

“Eeeeeuuuhh,” said Crystal.

“You never fucked Heather,” Cumita said to me accusingly.

“You mean Heather who I screwed in front of you last night?” I asked. “That Heather?”

“He said he was Steve Drake,” said Crystal.

“You don’t love me,” Cumita said to me. “You just wanna fuck my friends.”

“Ain’t talkin’ bout love,” I sang like David Lee Roth.

“I never should have believed you,” said Cumita.

“What’s love got to do with it,” I mangled Tina Turner.

“I can’t believe I didn’t charge you,” said Cumita.

“What in the wide, wide world of sports is goin’ on here?” I said in an excellent Slim Pickens imitation from “Blazing Saddles”.

“You owe me a thousand dollars,” said Crystal.

I stared at my watch.

“Gotta git gotta go,” I said, imitating Robert DeNiro in “Cape Fear”.

“Call Rocco,” Cumita said.

Crystal dialed a number.

“Rocco,” she said, “we’ve got problems with a mook.”

*Who the fuck is Rocco?* I thought. I was not about to find out.

The rest of the conversation contained no more intelligence or common sense than the first part. That was irrelevant to the fact that I got the boot and I did not want to find out who Rocco was. I doubted Rocco’s presence would be of any value to me. I called my former teammate Danny Ferrara, who lived in Vegas, and asked him to pick me up.

Dan came by, and I described the entire thing to him driving to his house. Dan thought it was hilarious. He was utterly titillated that I was such a stud with all these porn stars.

“You’re my hero,” he told me. Dan was married. Such thrills were unavailable to him, so he would have to live vicariously through me. I had never met his wife. Dan told her all the details of what I had told him. She was absolutely disgusted. I stayed there that night, and she looked at me as if I was a convicted rapist.

“Women don’t understand our primal urges,” Dan told me the next day on the way to the airport.

Back from Vegas, I was determined to try and get on the straight and narrow. That lasted about a month. Then I started going to strip clubs that featured touring porn stars. Using my intelligence and a learned sense of timing, I observed the girls of the sex industry. I learned their tricks, their habits, and their vulnerabilities. I came to the conclusion that the most attractive girls are the ones who can be picked up most easily, which goes against the common thinking of most men. I was able to tell, by observing habits, eye contact, and telltale signs, which girls are promiscuous, and which girls are in it just for money. I slyly moved from strip club to strip club, seeing which girls left by themselves, which ones had boyfriends, and which ones swung by bars near the clubs. I was able to talk my way into having sex with a variety of strippers and porn stars. These adventures led me into some dangerous situations, which I managed to scrape out of; sometimes cleanly, sometimes with a cost. I had come full circle, realizing that my view of
women had been stilted. Perhaps because they seemed unattainable to me when I was younger, I had now reached out for a certain kind of fantasy girl, not a real person, but rather an object for my gratification. The conflict between good and evil raged in my mind. A thinking man, I rationalized, blamed and asked questions about why I was the way I was.

Then I watched a porn movie starring a gorgeous, stacked blonde who gets gangbanged by an army of studs. Vaulted into X-rated superstardom, the girl appeared as the "headline feature" at Bob’s Classy Lady. I went to see her, but she did not notice me. I followed her home by car and made my move when she went into a bar. Technically, I guess I stalked her. I found her to be down to Earth and easy to talk to. She talked about growing her great love for her father. She did not tell me she is a porn star, and I did not reveal that I know. Many of the preconceptions of such a girl were dispelled. A connection between us formed, and we fell in love.

Her real name is Michelle, and she lives in Hermosa Beach, California. I moved in with her. She is smart and loving, crazy about animals and children. My parents love her. I met her dad, who thinks his daughter is a swimsuit model. We get along famously.

Now, after a couple of years, we are still living this fiction. Every time I go out in public with Michelle, I am convinced everybody recognizes who she is. We have had a lot of close calls, but I play it dumb. I have kept her away from my friends because they might recognize her. I have been in hotel rooms with friends when her movies come on, and only through quick work have I switched channels and kept my secret.

Well, when you live with a beautiful woman for a few years, there is certain inevitability to it. The inevitability is that her old man has urged me to marry his daughter. My dad told me to "marry that girl." Now Michelle has put the ultimatum to me: Marriage and children. I proposed, she accepted, and a date is set. She still thinks I do not know about her porno career. Can I marry a porn star? Can I have children with such a woman? Can I keep the secret?

Growing up, I always wanted beautiful, sexy fantasy girls. Now that I have one, I fear I have bit off more than I can chew. Be careful what you wish for.

CHAPTER SEVEN

NOIR

FEMME FATALES

"I like dangerous women," says actor Charlie Sheen. Hey guys, admit it. We are all like Charlie Sheen. We love dangerous women.

Charlie is a fatalist when it comes to the ladies in his life, but some chicks are literally fatal.

Take the Ventura County broad who, a few years ago, abducted her lover's wife from a Target parking lot, killed her, and dumped the body in a riverbed. Unlike Charlie's women, she was not a prostitute.
The hookers in L.A. are not like the homely bimbos in "Fargo". Some of them are porn stars, or ex-porn stars. A lot of them just say they are porn stars. While they are sometimes beautiful, your best interests are not what they have in mind. They are often in it for drugs, and some of the diseases they have to offer might not be cured by penicillin.

These *femme fatales*, not to be confused with streetwalkers, lure guys into their web of deception via the Internet, or ads in *LAXpress*, often using photos of gorgeous adult film stars with come-ons that make it sound like getting gangbanged and drenched in jizz is their only motivation.

What bravery (or stupidity) it takes for a dude to pursue these women to the final conclusion! It usually involves showing up at a location in a less-than-desirable part of town, with a lot of money in their pockets, and walking into a situation that can result in robbery, or worse.

Since the beginning of mankind, the male of the species has sought adventure and danger. This is why Man decided to kill the Woolly Mammoth, cook it with fire, then eat it.

Eventually, the hunt came to be sport, and our urges forced us not just to cook with fire, but to play with it.

Why? Because the *femme fatale* is, as Robert Palmer might put it, is simply an irresistibly alluring creature. We love bad girls, and all their evil, scheming ways. Shakespeare touched on this subject in “Taming of the Shrew”. The more taboo, the more reckless the behavior, the more we are fascinated with women fraught with danger and mystery. It is what we do!

L.A. is steeped in the tradition of the *femme fatale*, which means "fatal female" in French, but there have been plenty of famous dangerous women outside LaLa Land.

**The "Long Island Lolita"**
Amy Fisher was a teenage sex vixen who lured an otherwise normal man into an illegal and illicit set of circumstances that almost killed his innocent wife. Now 25, she was only 16 when she fired a bullet into Mary Jo Buttafuoco's head. She had been having sex with Mrs. Buttafuoco's husband, Joey, who later served six months in jail for statutory rape.

"You can’t trust women," says former Los Angeles Angels pitcher and renowned playboy Bo Belinsky. "They’ll cut off your balls and leave you twisting in the wind."

The original "Lolita" was the creation of author Vladimir Nabokov, who triggered a deep conflict within the American psyche about crossing the line between love and the perverse lust for a child.

**The Hollywood version**
Hollywood has always loved the femme fatale. Who could forget Barbara Stanwyck, the cunning brains behind an insurance-fraud scheme that eventually kills her husband and smitten sales schlep Fred MacMurray in
"Double Jeopardy"?

Or the devious Linda Fiorentino in "The Last Seduction"?

Busty former Penthouse Pet Julie Strain has created a B-movie franchise playing ass-kicking man-eaters. You cannot turn on the TV without seeing scantily clad babes knocking the Bruce Lee out of a coterie of whipped men. Chyna and her band of siliconed diva-sluts are portrayed as being far too physical for any of the WWF men to dare handle them. In the cyber world it is Lara Croft and Tank Girl. Got only knows how many times the artists who create these visions of monster cleavage take time out to jack off!

The badass beauty franchise got a boost in the 1970s with "Charlie¹s Angels", and judging from box office receipts, the public still eats it up.

1995s "To Die For" was based on the true story of a newswoman who seduces a couple of high school boys to kill her husband.

"Thelma & Louise" was a highly successful 1992 film that played on the "outlaw woman" theme.

"Male-bashing, once the sport of hairy women in denim jackets and combat boots, has flushed like toxic waste into the culture mainstream with (a) vengeance", wrote the Boston Globe¹s John Robinson of the film.

Female critics had an opposite reaction, arguing that a weasely male figure deserved a violent fate. Audiences showed up in droves to check out these cock-teasing criminals.

Keeping it real
Ava Gardner played angels on screen. Off screen she was a real femme fatale. It is rumored that the raven-haired beauty satiated her sexual appetite with orgies in which she would avail herself to a large roomful of pre-selected young studs every Saturday night. These hedonistic extravagances were described in barely-veiled detail by Mario Puzo in "The Godfather". Many of the young actors "allowed" to have sex with Ava were not invited back for seconds, for whatever fickle reason Ava decided. Apparently, some of them were reduced to stalking and masturbating in desperate quests for Ava, years after their one-night fantasies had become memories.

Her husband, Frank Sinatra, was completely thunderstruck by Ava. Life with her was an agonizing duality in which he was both turned on and repulsed by her pornographic siren song.

Of Frank, Ava had this to say: "That man is all cock!"
What a gal.

Before Ava, Hollywood's "it girl" was another devotee of the swinging lifestyle. Clara Bow used to take on the entire USC football team, including lineman Marion "John Wayne" Morrison, back in the 1920s. No wonder Howard Jones¹ teams were so good. Talk about a good recruiting tool!

**Victim or vixen?**

One femme fatale who was accorded heroic status in some quarters was Lorena Gallo Bobbit, who was set free after slicing off her sleeping husband's member with a kitchen knife.

"I'm just a poor innocent suffering woman," Lorena told a sympathetic jury and cheering supporters.

Her trial contained the same kind of "he-said-she-said" contretemps of the Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill soap opera, and no doubt helped spur a national "empowerment" movement which led to 1992's Year of the Woman, bringing many ladies to the House and Senate.

"We are both angelic and demonic," said neo-feminist author and Al Gore advisor Naomi Wolf, of Lorena's actions.

**Lizzie Borden took an axe**

"Lizzie Borden took an axe
And gave her mother forty whacks.
And when she saw what she had done,
She gave her father forty-one."

This famous poem resulted from heavy press coverage in the Massachusetts papers after a spinster schoolteacher, Lizzie Borden, committed one of the most heinous acts of the nineteenth century.

It was "... one of the most dastardly and diabolical crimes that was ever committed in Massachusetts, worthy of Classical Greek tragedy," according to further news analysis from the puritanical New England press.

That Lizzie avoided capital punishment and even was acquitted led to debate over punishment of women criminals. Should they be subject to the death penalty?

A few years ago, Texas put their first woman to death since the early 1970s. In contrast, in 1999 over 80 men were executed.

Are women the weaker sex? They are certainly subject to some of the most horrific of crimes.
The Black Dahlia
Elizabeth Short's naked body was found posed, lying on her back with her arms raised over her shoulders, her legs spread eagle. She had been cut in half at the waist.

She was dubbed the Black Dahlia because of a film *noir movie* making the rounds at the time (the 1940s). Somehow, the would-be actresses’ story seemed to symbolize a Hollywood Babylon world of failed dreams and dashed lives. Speculation has been that she was killed by a lesbian woman.

_A femme fatale?_ The killer was never discovered.

SLA: No escaping the past
On February 4, 1974, Patricia Hearst was a 19-year-old college student abducted by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

Hearst was held for weeks in a closet, and indoctrinated by radical rhetoric and sex.

Hearst metamorphosed into a _femme fatale_ named Tania, and was photographed carrying a phallic carbine during an SLA bank robbery. Hearst eventually went underground until her arrest on September 18, 1975. She served about two years before President Jimmy Carter commuted her sentence.

In 1999, the SLA story was revived. Kathleen Soliah was a member of the group charged with placing bombs under Los Angeles police cars in 1975.

She escaped and assumed the identity of Sarah Jane Olson. Now 53, she had married and lived with her doctor husband in an upscale Minneapolis neighborhood, and was active in community theater work, where her acting drew notice from local reviewers.

The FBI arrested Olson after receiving tips from viewers of America's Most Wanted, which featured her in a recent broadcast.

"This is all so old," Hearst told WCBS-AM. "I don’t want to be drawn into all of this."

The cautionary tale of the _femme fatale_ can be summarized in the ending of the Michael Douglas/Glenn Close film “Fatal Attraction”. After killing _femme fatale_ Close, Douglas maintains solidarity of the family unit, but only at great cost to all that is dear to him. Men will always pursue their wilder instincts. There is much to be said for living on the edge. However, knowing when to pull back from the cliff is an important lesson that seems to separate the smart
from the stupid. In the meantime, beautiful, scantily-clad women should come with a sign on
their ample chests that reads, “Proceed with caution.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

L.A. SPORTS

"FOR REAL!"

S.C.'s Trepagnier, the Trojans' most athletic player, has come into his own.

"For real!?" was Jeff Trepagnier's reaction when told he would be the cover story in the March
issue of StreetZebra.

Trepagnier's infectious enthusiasm shines through when U.S.C.'s handsome 6-4, 195-pound
guard flashes his million-dollar smile. No seen-it-all, media-weary histrionics from Jeff, who
seems surprised that he is the focus of attention.

He should not be. Trepagnier is the best athlete on a team that is emerging as one of the most
interesting college basketball stories in the nation. Whether the Trojans' make the NCAA
Tournament, and how far they advance, is still very much up in the air. So is Trepagnier, every
time the best shooter on SC's opponent takes a shot. Trepagnier has blocked his share of those
shots because he does not merely jump high, but he is super-quick.

"I wasn't always able to jump high," he says. "It just started to be natural for me after the tenth
grade."

That was at Compton High School, where he played for coach Rod Palmer (who has since
moved to Centennial) and was named to various All-American teams (USA TODAY, Street &
Smith) and made all the regional all-star squads (Long Beach Press-Telegram's Best in the West
and Dream Team, All-CIF Southern Section Division II first team, Cal-Hi's All-California,
Moore League MVP, L.A. Times' All-South Coast League).

Trepagnier's natural leaping ability has been augmented by hard work. Henry Bibby brought in
former N.B.A. center Paul Mokeskie to work with the big men. The results: Front court players'
Brian Scalabrine and David Bluthenthal are stronger, quicker, display better ball-handling skills,
and make fewer mistakes. Trepagnier is not a big man, but the conditioning work, weight
training, and ladder drills have paid off for him as well.

"We do anticipation foot drills <fake pass competitions> every day," explains Coach Bibby of
their 45-minute daily practice ritual, designed to improve foot speed. "The guys' have improved
in those situations, all our players now anticipate where the next pass is gonna be."
Trepagnier set the school season season steal's record by mid-season.

"That's not a goal of the team," says Bibby. "The goals we have pertain to team goals. If that's his goal, fine. Steals come from teammates creating steals, whether he knows that or not."

Trepagnier knows. He also knows that Bibby has been to the mountaintop, and deserves respect.

"He's won NCAA titles, an NBA and a CBA title," says Trepagnier. "He has the experience, so when he tells us something we take account of that. We've invested in the coach, we believe in him 100 percent. Practices are a lot more enjoyable, now that we're winning. He tells us practice is over, but guys' stay and work on other things. When we were 9-19, going to practice was like going to a funeral, everybody dreaded it, but you can't doubt him, even when things go wrong."

Trepagnier is given the task of guarding the best offensive player on the other team.

"My focus is on defense in practice," he says. "We work on sliding drills and full-speed cutbacks. Playing good defense gets our all-around game going. Coach Bibby doesn't stress offense in practice."

Trepagnier believes in Bibby, and vice versa. While Trepagnier is a phenomenal player when it comes to steals and blocked shots, the rap on him is that he takes ill-advised shots.

"The players don't have a green light," says Bibby of his shot-selection policy. "Jeff got off-track in the beginning, but he knows, and the whole team knows, that the shots will come. Trepagnier always takes one or two bad shots per night. He's aggressive. I've never seen a player who doesn't take bad shots, everyone takes their share of bad shots. He has to be patient and let the game come to him, maybe not beat his man off the dribble, but instead get more free throws. He makes up for his bad shots with good plays on the other end. Jeff is better than he was last year, he plays hard every night. I have no complaints."

"I've taken some bad shots," admits Trepagnier. "Coach Bibby tells me don't force it. I play 40 minutes a night, I just let the game come to me now."

Trepagnier has learned not to "force it" on defense, as well as on offense.

"Jeff had some silly fouls," Bibby says of the maturation process. "We worked on cutting back on his mistakes. I want to play hard defense, and not think about fouls. We don't quit playing, we'll play Jeff with four fouls. College players don't really 'grow up' until their junior years. It's a big step from one year to the next."

Trepagnier, a junior, has grown up with his teammates. The leader of the Trojans' is another junior, 6-9 Brian Scalabrine. Scalabrine has the work ethic of Richard Nixon, a willingness to spend long hours working on fundamentals like footwork, or going to his left.
"Brian influences us in lots of ways," says Jeff. "He works hard the whole practice, so we know we should work hard like Brian. He takes constructive criticism, and we have good chemistry."

Scalabrine is also outspoken, willing to talk up the Trojans' program in a town where basketball has always been spelled U-C-L-A. Until now.

"We try not to get involved with the media, we're not about controversy," says Trepagnier, "but when he says we're gonna win, we know we have to do it. We have to work hard all week to back him up."

Scalabrine pointed out that local coverage is centered in Westwood, but after SC's convincing January 12 victory over the Bruins', he told any writer willing to listen that Southern Cal deserved more props. It may be a little early to make this kind of prediction, but the potential for a cataclysmic power shift in college basketball exists.

Bibby is a highly respected coach, a man who started for three straight National Championship teams under John Wooden at UCLA. He has paid his dues and his status is now paying off on the recruiting trail. USC has broken ground on a state of the art, on-campus arena. The current squad has the potential to make a solid mark for themselves once March Madness gets underway. Steve Lavin is under fire, and the UCLA program is a mess right now. All of this means that SC has a chance to become a basketball school, something that they should be considering the talent base in Southern California. This is a window of opportunity that needs to be handled better than the last time SC was on the cusp of real change.

That was in 1986. After capturing a share of the Pac-10 championship in 1985, Stan Morrison recruited "The Four Freshmen," the best incoming class in the country, but when George Raveling replaced him, three of the freshmen transferred. Had they stayed, USC may have been a Sweet 16 team (or better), and Harold Miner might have been able to deliver them to the Promised Land a few seasons later.

"We know we're pioneers for the future of Trojan basketball," says Trepagnier, "and we're buying into Coach Bibby's system. Being tied for first helps with recruiting, we need to get more local players. When we get the arena, we can get blue chip prospects."

Of UCLA's recent troubles, Trepagnier says, "We try to go after them, but we know they're gunning for us <after S.C. beat them the first time>. We have to work hard to stay up there. In the past we looked to them, but we know they have great players."

Trepagnier, like all of the Trojans' key players, returns next season. Regardless of how 2000 shakes out, the future is bright at University Park.

MARCH MADNESS: U.S.C. PREVIEW
"This is a great win," Henry Bibby told the media after Southern Cal ended UCLA's 10-game victory skein over the Trojans'. "The streak is over."

"We're tired of playing second fiddle in the L.A. Times," said Brian Scalabrine. "They <U.C.L.A.> get all the hype."

Bruin assistant Jim Saia tried to put a positive spin on what looked to be the dawning of the Bibby Era.

"Scalabrine was solid inside and out," said Saia. "He exposed us, we didn't stop him, and you've got to give SC credit. Still, it's not mid-season yet, we've got a long way to go."

Some writers are placing Scalabrine on a pedestal, but Bibby is a no-nonsense type,

"We're in charge," said Bibby of on-court decision-making, "not Brian. He's good, but he's not Michael Jordan."

David Bluthenthal (28 rebounds vs. Arizona State) on playing in Israel:

"You could hear bombs going off in the Golan Heights," he recalled. "There were guards with Uzis at the airport, we all had armed guards. The Israelis didn't act surprised, most people there are darker than I am, but the other delegations seemed surprised at me being with Israel. I felt comfortable there. I went to the Wailing Wall and swam in the Dead Sea. Clubs in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are wild, it's like Miami's South Beach."

**Revenge at Pauley**

On February 9 at Pauley, UCLA got their revenge. Scalabrine was a floor leader for Troy, bringing the ball up court along with David Bluthenthal on more than one occasion.

"When you play as much as I have, it just comes naturally," says the big redhead of his skills. "You get tired posting up all the time. I try to lead by example by working hard, 'cause I have to in order to be a good player."

"Jerome Moiso's tough to guard," said Bluthenthal, who dominated the boards early. Moiso, seemingly in answer to Bluthenthal's strong game, responded with great work in the paint that included some spectacular dunks.

"We knew it would be tough stopping them," said Jeff Trepagnier, "Jason Kapono really stepped it up." Trepagnier's shot selection was markedly improved, and he made some nice fall-aways, as well as some well-executed floor driving, followed by a sweet stop, pull and swish.

"I've been working on that part of my game," he explained.

Paul Mokeskie is modest, but the finesse demonstrated by SC's big men is a direct result of his coaching.
"We have talented players," he said. "We work on getting them to do their pivot moves in such a way as not to be called for traveling, which happens to a lot of big men. Brian works hard because he knows he has to."

The UCLA cheering section finished up their school song with "F-ck SC." every time. USC is no better. School officials need to clean up their respective acts. John Wooden must cringe when he hears this garbage.

**HE HAD GAME**

"*In Los Angeles he is a legend. You say Raymond, they say Lewis. You say Lewis, they say Raymond.*"--Bob Hopkins, former New York Knicks assistant coach

Raymond Lewis died this week. He was the greatest basketball player you never heard of. His is a tragic story of Shakespearean dimensions. A story of enormous, wasted talent. The tale of an inner city black kid who was given bad advice by unscrupulous agents. A story of life…and death.

Raymond Lewis was an urban legend, a myth, a conundrum. Raymond Lewis was an enigma wrapped inside a riddle, surrounded by a question mark. He was cursed by greatness…and by great, tragic faults. He was a babe in the woods, a guy trying to swim through shark-infested waters with a nosebleed.

His is not so much a story as it is a syndrome. A symbol, a cautionary tale.

Raymond Lewis was at once a shining example of the promise and possibility that gives hope to young black men in America. He was also a prime example of why black America remains suspicious of this country.

Lewis led Verbum Dei High School in Los Angeles to the CIF-Southern Section championship from 1969-71. Before Verbum Dei, there was Philadelphia Overbrook (Wilt Chamberlain) and New York Power Memorial Academy (Lew Alcindor/Kareem Abdul-Jabbar). Later, there was Hiattsville, Maryland DeMatha (Adrian Dantley), the great powers at Baltimore Dunbar and Cardinal Gibbons, and in Southern California, Crenshaw and Mater Dei. The Verbum Dei dynasty, however, started by Lewis and lasting into the 1980s, may have been the Roman Empire (to borrow a Rick Pitino phrase) of high school basketball. Whether Lewis was Spartacus or Nero is debatable. Like Rome, Lewis fell from grace, seemingly unable to overcome himself.

Lewis once scored 73 points in a game for Cal State Los Angeles, and led the nation's freshmen in scoring (38.9). Lewis was about 6-1, with remarkable agility and quickness, and as smooth a jump shot as anybody has ever had.
"He was so gifted offensively that it was frightening," said Verbum Dei's former coach, George McQuarn.

Despite being drafted in the first pound by Philadelphia in 1973, Lewis never made it in the pros. When he should have been going one-on-one with Pete Maravich and juicking Walt Frazier out of his shoes, instead Lewis spent those years living off of relatives in Compton. The "can't miss" prospect was stopped by the one guy who could stop him: Raymond Lewis.

Lewis was a man of great ego and no desire to play defense. He talked trash on the court before that became a popular, Jordan-esque pastime, and since he was a young black man from the ghetto, his attitude never did him any good with the game's power structure. Lewis was handed everything in his life and never went to class, driving a new Corvette.

"I don't think anybody would really tell you all they gave him because it would make them look very foolish," one agent said.

"They were ripping me off for my talent," Lewis once said, "and I slacked up."

Lewis signed with Philly, then wanted to re-negotiate before playing a regular season game. The 76ers sent him

"If he had gone along with Philadelphia…he (would have been) an All-Pro guard," said McQuarn. "He would have been in the class of Oscar Robertson and Jerry West. He (would have been) the best in the NBA…no question."

The details about how Raymond signed, left and did not return to Philadelphia are just too dismal to recount in these pages. It involved their signing of Doug Collins, the white star of the 1972 Olympics, who received $200,000 of the club's money. That left less for Raymond, who took it as an affront.

"COLLINS TALKS A GOOD GAME, BUT RAYMOND LEWIS PLAYS IT," blared one headline.

"Raymond Lewis is a 20-point favorite over Doug Collins," wrote another journalist.

Money, race and jealousy reared their ugly heads. Still, Philadelphia gave Lewis $40,000 after he left camp, but the issues were never resolved. Lewis played in an industrial league, but his Philly experience left him less than his usual bravado self.

"The bad effect was that I tended to get soft," he recalled.

"When a guy has 12 people representing him and 12 cars, he has a lot of problems," said Beverly Hills agent Al Ross, who sued Lewis for money he said was owed him for legal services and loans.
At Verbum Dei, an oasis in the middle of Watts, next to a street nicknamed "Charcoal Alley" because it was burnt out in the 1965 riots, Raymond Lewis was a contradiction. In school he chafed under the strict Catholic discipline, unsure of himself as a scholar, not knowing what to say. On the court, he was a different person. When Lewis returned from Philadelphia, he came back not to the structured environment of Verbum Dei, but to the streets of the inner city. The "cats" in his neighborhood laughed at him, telling him he had been "played" by The Man. Lewis started hanging out, drinking beer, and gaining weight.

"In 1973 he was a 20-year old with the emotions of a 14-year old," Don DeJardin, Philadelphia's general manager, told Sports Illustrated at that time. "Right now he is a 25-year old with the emotions of a 35-year old."

"If I had been a white player, God knows I'd be playing and deserving the acclaim of the all-time greats of the sport," Lewis said, claiming he was blackballed by the NBA. "I was eating (Collins) alive."

Lewis would go through some soul-searching, during which time he found religion and called himself a sinner. The New York Knickerbockers flirted with him, but Lewis fell out of shape fast, and his reputation soured him with other players. A tryout with the San Diego Clippers ended in his getting cut.

Eventually, Raymond succumbed to alcohol. Recently, an infection in his leg, easily treatable by modern medicine, was left to fester because he was unwilling or unable to care enough to get it taken care of. The result was that the leg had to be amputated. Lewis did not recover from the amputation.

How a player with his ability could find a way not to succeed is still one of the great mysteries of the LA playground scene. He was a legend, and anybody who saw him on the courts of South-Central and Compton would tell you he had game.

**STADIUM 101**

*The ghosts of Los Angeles.*

With all due respect to Yankee Stadium, Notre Dame Stadium or Boston Garden, the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum has seen more momentous sporting events (and other historical moments) than any other venue.

Built in 1923, it has been the home of Southern California football ever since. The 1932 and 1984 Olympic Games were held there. UCLA played there from the school's inception until the move to the Rose Bowl in 1982.

Los Angeles Dodger owner Walter O'Malley toured the city looking for a place to play until Dodger Stadium was built. Wrigley Field on Avalon Boulevard, home of the minor league Los
Angeles Angels, was the perfect location, he was told. The place held 15,000. O'Malley asked about the Coliseum.

"It holds 100,000, but it's built for football, not baseball," he was told.

The Dodgers played there anyway, from 1958-61, winning the World Series in '59, setting World Series and All-Star Game attendance records in the process.

The USC-UCLA track meet and the Shrine High School All-Star Football Game used to draw almost 100,000 people. The Pro Bowl was played there every year, and numerous LA City and CIF-Southern Section championship games have been played on its turf.

106,000 showed up to see a USC-Notre Dame game there in the 1950s. It has been the site of countless Trojan-Irish and Trojan-Bruin wars. Crowds in excess of 100,000 saw numerous Los Angeles Rams games at the Coliseum, which re-configured its seating in the 1970s, reducing the capacity to 92,000. The Coliseum is part of the Ram-49er rivalry. The Raiders played there from 1982-94, winning the 1983 World Championship.

The first Super Bowl was played at the Coliseum (1967), and in 1973 Miami completed pro football's only unbeaten season with a 14-7 Super Bowl win at the Coliseum, over Washington.

Capacity crowds have jammed the Coliseum to see soccer matches. The Who, Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band--these are some of the rock bands to pack the old stadium.

Steve Young of the Los Angeles Express starred at the Coliseum when he played in the USFL, and this fall, LA's XFL franchise will play there. It was not uncommon for a prep game to be played there on a Friday night, a USC or UCLA game on Saturday, and a Ram game on Sunday. Many football stars like former Whittier/USC/Raider wide receiver Bob Chandler played on its turf at the high school, collegiate and professional levels.

In 1945, conquering World War II hero General George S. Patton of San Marino made a memorable speech to a capacity Coliseum crowd in which he said that he "had seen hell" in Europe.

In 1959, Dodger catcher Roy Campanella, paralyzed the previous winter in a car accident, received a stirring candle light vigil from 90,000 Coliseum baseball fans.

The neighboring LA Sports Arena was built in time for the 1960 Democratic National Convention, where John F. Kennedy accepted his parties' nomination.

Today, she is old and dilapidated. In order for pro football to survive in Los Angeles, it is said that she must be replaced by a state-of-the-art facility, but there is no denying the thrill one still experiences when walking through her long, dark tunnel and first seeing the crowd, the band, the green expanse of playing field.
To fans with a nostalgic bent or sense for history, the Coliseum still holds a special place in our hearts. USC fans still love the place, and many Southern Californians recall with fondness attending Rams' games with their fathers on sunny Sunday afternoons.

She is filled with ghostly memories of glory days or yesteryear.

CHAPTER NINE

FOOTBALL

DEFENSE WINS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Defense wins in battle and football. It is a great equalizer. This has proven to be a successful premise for the Viet Cong and the Baltimore Ravens.

The Cal Bears pulled off a few upsets the last few seasons. They did it with defense. The anchor of that defense was 6-4, 265-pound All-American defensive end Andre Carter.

The San Francisco 49ers desperately needed a running back in the draft. They did not get one with their first pick, but this may prove to be an ironic twist of fate – in a good sense.

On Saturday, the San Francisco 49ers did the right thing. Better yet, they made a huge step toward making their team a Super Bowl contender again. In this age of free agency and salary caps, the good news is that teams can make the transition from middle-of-the-road to dominance in the NFL, and the team is on the verge of re-entering this rarified air.

San Francisco has Bill Walsh. A smart cookie, Bill. Bill had his thinking cap on Saturday when the Niners traded up with Seattle. This is his swan song. Walsh is a man with a sense for history, and you had better believe the man wants his last one to be a good one.

“I like Carter,” says three-time Bay Area draft analyst Bob Lee, who has been to three Super Bowls. “The 2000 draft was the 49ers best since the John Taylor/Tim McKyer draft in 1986. They had 12 guys and they all stuck. The trick is to repeat that and upgrade.”

The Carter pick is a very good start. There were some flashy offensive guys still available, including a few quarterbacks. None of them reminded the 49er brain trusts in New York and Santa Clara of Joe Montana or Jerry Rice.

They also could have gone for a couple of celebrated linebackers, Dan Morgan of Miami or Arizona State’s Adam Archuleta.
Carter is a great pick.

He is a local kid from Oak Grove High in San Jose. His father, Rubin “Hurricane” Carter, starred in Denver and is coaching the defensive line at Washington. The Redskins probably wish they had the young Carter instead of the old man.

Rubin was an All-American at the University of Miami and a member of Denver’s 1977 “Orange Crush” Super Bowl team. He was tough and smart.

Andre could have taken the money after his junior season, but he stuck around for one more year of the college experience. He is a great example of why this is usually a good idea. Rated the fifth-best defensive end in the nation prior to the 2000 season, Carter improved tremendously.

Now, he will get more money, a chance to play at home, and the maturity to step in and be an impact guy soon.

The Cal connection has taken shape in San Francisco. Steve Mariucci recruited Carter to attend Cal. There is no doubt that he got the word from former 49er Tom Holmoe: Carter is the real deal!

Carter did have minor surgery on his ankle after Spring practice in 2000, but all indications are that health is no issue whatsoever.

San Francisco has not had a Pro Bowl defensive end since 1980. Not that we want to put too much pressure on Andre.

The big year for Carter was the off-season between his sophomore and junior years in college. He was a USA TODAY First Team Prep All-American who was rated the nation’s number five defensive lineman in 1996 by Parade. It was a weight-training program that put on 15 pounds of lean muscle mass between 1997 and 1998 that put him firmly on the pro radar. He refined his skills last year, and is now as close to a finished product as a rookie can hope to be. He can clean and press 380 pounds and benches 415. He has a 35-inch vertical leap.

The NFL is not a mystery to him, either. He spent one summer training at the Redskins’ facility under his father’s guidance. Sports Illustrated predicted that Carter might not even go in the first round prior to the 2000 season, so the All-American Carter, through hard work and patience, has made himself one of the most improved players in the draft.

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABE LAUFENBERG?

He was one of the greatest high school football players ever to come out of Southern California, and yet his name is somehow associated with unfulfilled promise. From the time he left Crespi High School in 1978, it seemed that Babe Laufenberg’s career has been star-crossed.<p>
Laufenberg was consistently inconsistent during a pro career in which he mostly rode the pine for Washington, San Diego, New Orleans and Dallas, usually watching while some star played ahead of him. The list includes Joe Theisman, Doug Williams, Mark Rypien and Troy Aikman.

In eight NFL seasons, he played 16 games.

He went on to play for the Ohio Glory of the World Football League, but there was no glory in the WFL. Even with the glory he sat behind former USC quarterback Pat O'Hara.

It was not supposed to be that way. The 6-3, 218-pounder came out of Crespi, but found himself sitting behind another Valley product, John Elway, at Stanford. That was the beginning of a long career as a benchwarmer. Laufenberg quickly realized Elway was never going to be replaced, so he transferred to Pierce JC in Woodland Hills. Then he transferred to Indiana, and in two years he set school records for yards passing in a season and completions in a career (361 and 217). He once completed 34 passes in a single game.

After being drafted on the sixth round by the Redskins in 1983, he saw not a single snap in two seasons. He was released in 1985, the Chargers signed him in 1985, but they cut him the same year. Again, the Redskins' inked him, after Theisman's terrible Monday Night Football broken leg.

Laufenberg was vacationing in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, watching on TV, went Theisman went down. The call came quickly, and Babe had to make connecting flights to hook up with his new team.

He never saw a snap.

In the next five years, Laufenberg went to New Orleans, Kansas City, back to Washington, to San Diego and Dallas. He traveled more than then-Secretary of State George Schultz. He actually started six games for San Diego in 1988, but he suffered three broken ribs and never played for them again.

He closed out his NFL career as a Cowboys' backup, but he actually found a pretty good gig as the Cowboys' radio broadcaster for Dallas' KVH, as well as host of a syndicated TV show about the team.

"Football was over," Laufenberg recalled. "I had my chances. Things didn’t work out for me in the NFL, but I never complained. Most guys never get a chance to be on an NFL team for single game. I hung around for eight years. In San Diego, I had my real chance and I did well. And then I broke some ribs, and when I healed I didn’t have a job. The transition to radio and TV made it easy. I missed football. But not much."

When the new Ohio franchise made Laufenberg the number two overall draft pick, he packed his bags and headed for (the) Glory. For $25,000 a season.
"At a quick glance, the paycheck looks the same," said Laufenberg. "But when you look closer you see there's a decimal point where the comma used to be."

Laufenberg did not perform well for the Glory and was benched. O'Hara took over, but when he went down with injury Laufenberg came on and played well. Until O'Hara came back. His coach explained that he did not believer in players' losing jobs due to injury. Laufenberg would have benefited from the same policy in San Diego.

All things considered, Laufenberg's career was one big "what might have been."

Q & A: FRED DRYER

Screenwriter and sportswriter Steven Travers treads easily between the inter-connected worlds of sports and entertainment. He went to Fred Dryer's production company and engaged in a serious "bull session" with the former Ram All-Pro and "Hunter" TV star, who has a new film, "Highway 395", currently in release. Dryer has strong opinions on Georgia Frontiere, blacks in pro football, left-leaning Hollywood, and his favorite author – the controversial David Horowitz.

ST: When did you play at Lawndale High School?
FD: From 1960-64.
ST: What years did "Hunter" run?
ST: Who came up with the concept, and what had you done prior to that?
FD: Steven Cannell at NBC developed the pilot. I'd just done odds and ends before that.
ST: Let's go back to a simpler place and time: The South Bay, early 1960s. The Beach Boys were at Hawthorne High. So was Hall of Famer Ron Mix. You were a "beach boy" yourself, living a life of cars, girls and surfing.
FD: I was 6-5, 195. I developed later, but I never found that size made a big difference to me on the field. In high school then, just being tall was considered being big. I wasn't recruited out of Lawndale, where I was primarily a baseball player. I only played varsity for one season. I worked at Rex Trophies for a year after graduation, hung around the beach, the Hermosa Pier mostly, Twenty-sixth Street in Manhattan Beach, didn't go to school. Then I realized most of my friends were at spring practice while I was at the beach, so I figured I'd better go out for football again. I enrolled at El Camino College, and played for Ken Swearingen, one of the all-time great JC coaches.
ST: Did you need football to give you structure in your life that you didn't have?
FD: No. I just liked the team/family aspect of the game. My father died my senior year at Lawndale, so I gravitated towards sports for family and discipline. Through athletics I saw how discipline and hard work are rewarded with immediate gratification. That's the unique thing about sports.
ST: Okay, tell me about the transformation of Fred Dryer from unrecruited high school player to top prospect.
FD: I played at El Camino from 1966 to '67, and my talent, my technique, my fundamentals and discipline, everything just exploded. Those were interesting times. In the late 1950s, the government had put a lot of money in schools to compete with Sputnik, the aerospace industry was just booming, and as a result South Bay schools were brimming with athletic talent.

ST: Tell me about Ken Swearingen.

FD: Oh, he was just a great coach. Back then freshmen were ineligible to play varsity at four-year schools anyway, so the competition in the Metro Conference was better than anything you'd see playing freshman ball someplace. There were great junior college players playing back then.

ST: Up north, a fellow by the name of O.J. Simpson was running the ball for City College of San Francisco.

FD: Yes, he was. Anyway, after two years at El Camino, Florida State, Utah, Oklahoma was recruiting me, but I chose San Diego State. In those days, San Diego State was one of the best programs in the country and we received fantastic coaching. Don Coryell was the head man, and on his staff he had John Madden, Ernie Zampese, Joe Gibbs and Rod Dowhower. We had a high-powered offense, featuring Dennis Shaw throwing deep to Haven Moses, and we were undefeated in 1968 and '69. Coryell picked up where Sid Gilman left off in terms of developing an innovative passing offense. Coryell had coached at USC and Whittier, we worked out of an I formation, and he was ahead of his time. Anyway, I was now 225 pounds by my senior year.

ST: But you were always considered "small" for a defensive end. What makes some players effective? For instance, Ronnie Lott was an animal on the field. He hit people so hard he jolted their teeth, he just loved to hit. Some players just work themselves into a psychological state where they become animals on the field and play out of their skin. What allowed Fred Dryer to compensate for the 30-odd pounds he did not have?

FD: The secret was that I understood the game. I knew what to do. The interesting thing is that as I understood my ability, I grew within myself, and my skills allowed me to do the things that I thought about. My educational curve allowed me to define myself. I paid attention to the game, to the sounds, to faces', body language. I watched guys', where their eyes were looking, downfield or at a linebacker, and by this I developed an innate sense of where the play would be, a running play or a passing play, for instance.

ST: You had great instincts. So tell me about the transition from San Diego to New York.

FD: The New York Giants made me their first round draft choice, the thirteenth overall pick, and my rookie tear the press was saying, "Oh no, the Giants' did it again," drafting an unknown small school player from California. But Gil Brandt of the Cowboys was quoted saying he'd be more than happy to trade for me.

ST: In New York, you played during an era of change in pro sports and football in particular, and you demonstrated to the New York press that a guy with California ideas could be successful by playing the game intelligently, instead of being a "hateful psycho." I remember a John Vacenta NFL films' clip in which you were quoted as saying, "I'm a bird," and were depicted as this mellow L.A. beachboy guy. Tell me about that.

FD: That was all bullsh-t. The league markets the product, and categorizes its marquee players for top value. Back in those days, we played to sell-outs every Sunday. Baseball was at a low point in its popularity, and pro football was sky high. Part of that was the NFL's--Pete Rozelle's--ability to market individual personalities.

ST: This was a period in which the game was opening up, too. Until 1969, the game was dominated by conservative thinkers, guys like Woody Hayes who ran "three yards and a cloud of
dust" offenses and felt that if you threw the ball, three things could happen, and two of those were bad. Joe Namath legitimized the wide-open AFL game, and coaches began to be more innovative. The old Vince Lombardi style gave way to the more flamboyant offenses at Oakland, Pittsburgh and Dallas in the '70s, and the Bill Walsh era after that.

FD: Part of that were rule changes made because the fans wanted to see 41-38 games, not 17-10. Also, a lack of fundamentals has contributed to poor defense over the years.

ST: The late 1960s and 1970s also saw some expose of the N.F.L., the game within the game, as depicted in books like "Out of My League" by Dave Meggysey, "Semi-Tough" by Dan Jenkins, and "North Dallas Forty" by Pete Gent. Can you comment on the extent to which these books (and films) got it right, or wrong?

FD: What was the reality of the game? There is a sub-culture, and these books were an attempt to exploit it, and to destroy some myths people had about the men who play football. Meggysey was kind of a sour guy, Gent had lots of problems of his own--

ST: Which he was very open about--drug use, alcoholism, bi-sexuality.

FD: It's just difficult to explain the football experience to those that never played, or are on the fringes. You would tell it to a writer, and the writers write what they want to write. Jenkins' books were hilarious, but they never translated into film. They became a cliché. In all my years in the sport, I don't believe I ever saw anybody--I very rarely saw the behavior depicted in these kinds of books. Hollywood got hold of guys like Alzado and Matuszak, and tried to say everybody acted like that. Most pro football players are about just doing their jobs.

ST You played in New York City, then you came to L.A., your hometown, and played for some of the greatest Rams teams ever during a period in which Los Angeles was known as the Sports Capitol of the World. What was the better place to be a pro athlete?

FD: New York. It's not even close, it was the best, it was so much better to be a sports star in the Big Apple than Los Angeles.

ST: Memories of Wellington Mara?

FD: Well was a gracious man, loyal to his beloved Giants. We were his family, we wanted to win for him, but they were a .500 team in 1967, '68, '69, which was tough because it had not been many years before that the Giants' were a dominant club.

ST: Tell me about Fran Tarkenton?

FD: I don't know. He had a massive ego, but it was different from most quarterback egos. The team was riding on him, and he had a huge influence on game plans. There was talk about moving me to linebacker, but Tark said to keep me as a defensive lineman and the team listened to him. He was resourceful and cunning.

ST: Now the question we've all been waiting for. Did you and Namath hang out together at Bachelors III?

FD: Well, I was there a few times, and I saw Joe around. I ran into him in the street on occasion, but generally the Giants' and Jets hung out in different parts of the city. The Jets' were Queens guys--

ST: Jenkins called them the "dog-ass Jets," hanging out in Queens.

FD: It just wasn't considered good form for the Giants and Jets to pal around. I did used to see Mike Battle.

ST: He was insane, as was another USC guy, Tim Rossovich.

FD: All the things you heard about Battle were true. Battle was way more out of control than Rossovich, I think he's institutionalized now.
ST: Okay. Los Angeles, 1972-81. You started out playing for Tommy Prothro, and Don Klosterman was the general manager. Was he one of the best minds in football?
FD: No, but he knew football and had people's respect. After '73 we made a great trade, getting rid of John Hadl just in time, for five draft choices. The 1974 team was the best we ever had. The one thing we should have done was trade for a quarterback. Chuck Knox made the mistake of de-emphasizing the quarterback position. People liked James Harris, and he should have been given a better chance.
ST: Was his race an issue?
FD: No. Pat Haden was just too short, and we went through Hadl, Harris, Haden. Ron Jaworski and Vince Ferragamo. The team was picked to win every year, but the sin of Knox, Klosterman and Carroll Rosenbloom was that they allowed the team to go headless with the quarterback controversy. One year we played Dallas, and they were just begging to be trapped, but we sat on the ball repeatedly.
ST: As I say, this was an era in which wide-open aerial offenses were flourishing, but the Rams were stuck in the '50s. I think the '75 Rams set the record for fewest points allowed per game, and in my opinion were the greatest team not to play in a Super Bowl. So this led to the disastrous Joe Namath trade?
FD: We got Namath, but he just couldn't follow through because he was hurt, which causes the ball to tail off, and he got battered. In '77 Minnesota blocked a kick and we just never caught up. We lost 14-7 in the mud one year. We picked up George Allen, but he was never offense-minded, the man went crazy in training camp so they replaced him with Ray Malavasi.
ST: Carroll Rosenbloom?
FD: He was a real rascal. He would do what was necessary. He was the patrician of the league, he wanted titles and you knew you were with a good organization and a good owner. He became frustrated like all of us, so many years getting close.
ST: You were playing old Ohio State-style football while the rest of the league literally passed you by.
FD: What led to our failures, the seed of our disappointment, were a combination of factors. Knox was so limited and fearful, so stat-oriented that he never gave leadership to the quarterback position.
ST: Are you willing to comment on whether Georgia Frontiere may have hired swimmers to poke Rosenbloom with an underwater cattle prod, causing him to die?
FD: No. I'll just say that I think she'll pay for whatever she did somewhere down the line.
ST: How did "Hunter" do at first?
FD: Not well. Cannell went to bat for it, we were opposite "Dallas" so we moved to another night so people could see it, and the show went through the roof. That show could never happen today, they want "Nash Bridges". Not surprisingly, we were not really "safe" until our third year, but you can't ever count on it. Acting came naturally to me, but the business of how to be natural was the result of the need to organize, be disciplined, prepare and study.
ST: Current TV fare is abominable, don't you agree?
FD: The politics of TV has created a very dull-minded product. Advertisers in New York are not thinking about great content, but selling product to a particular demographic. These are the guys you have to approach today to get a show on the air. "Hunter" is doing well in syndication, though.
ST: You have spent a lot of time at the Playboy Mansion. My take is that Hugh Hefner's actually a lonely guy who surrounds himself with people because he's afraid of being alone. What do you think?
FD: Not at all. He's doing exactly what he wants to do with his life, he lives just the way he wants to. He opens his house up to people because he wants to share what he has. I don't hang out with him so much any more, but I've known him for 28 years and had some good times. He's a true host.
(smiles)
He can throw a party, pal.
ST: Do you know Bo Belinsky?
FD: I met Bo in Las Vegas. He had a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other.
ST: Tell me about your current film in release.
FD: "Highway 395" is set in Eastern California, the road to Bridgeport, and I directed it. Fred Dryer Productions is involved mostly in the foreign marketplace. I look at what's being made these days, and it's all convoluted politics. The liberal bathwater coming out of this town has these people's tainted opinions about what is right and wrong. Look at the sh-t films out there. Whose greenlighting it? Read David Horowitz' "Radical Sun" and "Hating Whitey". Political Correctness is destroying our culture.
ST Have you seen "Any Given Sunday"?
FD: I enjoyed it. What Oliver Stone seems to be saying is that blacks have destroyed the culture of pro football. The league has gone from tradition to thuggery and street rap. Stone is always looking at the culture in the films he makes.
ST Whose the greatest President of the Twentieth Century?
FD: Dewey.

EXODUS

In recent years, USC, UCLA and the Pac-10 have been deluded by a disturbing number of homegrown football players choosing out-of-state programs.

It is no secret that USC's football program is a mere shell of its old self. UCLA had a terrific run in 1997-98, but their 1999 season was a downer. Cal has never been a real winner, but the brief power period (circa 1991) they did enjoy is long gone. Stanford went to the Rose Bowl, but that was a reflection of the weak Pacific-10 Conference.

Look around the West. San Diego State? They have not had great teams since joining the WAC. Fresno State? They seemed headed to Top 20 land, but fizzled. Nevada-Las Vegas? Forget about it.

Know your history
Everything is always about cause and effect. To put it in less scientific and more philosophical terms, I quote Santayana:
"Those who do not remember the past, are condemned to re-live it." William Shirer used this quote at the end of "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich". The question of Nazi atrocities is much deeper than a shift in college football recruiting trends, but the general idea of knowing your history applies.

In this case, one must go back to the South. Not actually the Old South, but not exactly the New South, either. I am talking about the South of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the march on Birmingham, and George Wallace barricading the doors to the University of Alabama. Wallace was not just keeping a student named Meredith from attending his college. He was also preventing students like Bubba Smith, who grew up below the Mason-Dixon Line, from going there. Smith ended up at Michigan State. A lot of terrific black athletes from the South took scholarships to the friendlier confines of places like USC. USC, in turn, put together one of the greatest runs in collegiate history under John McKay in the 1960s. Black athletes were welcome at SC. Big time.

In the mean time, coaches like Bear Bryant were seeing their programs deteriorate in the late '60s. Bryant was no more sympathetic to civil rights than Bull Connor, but the man loved to win football games.

Reggie Jackson, the great baseball slugger who played football at Arizona State, saw the change coming in 1966, when he played for the Birmingham Barons, an Oakland farm club.

"Bear Bryant was friends with Charlie Finley, who lived in Birmingham," recalls Jackson. "One night Charlie brought Bear into the clubhouse after a game. He sized me up and said, 'now that's the kind of n----r I need to get for my football team.' Real matter-of-fact, didn't think twice about calling me a n----r. I took it as a compliment, because I knew that's how he meant it, in his own way."

**A Trojan from Santa Barbara pushes the civil rights movement in his own way**

Four years after his Reggie Jackson encounter, Bryant found himself face-to-face with another great black athlete, only this time he was not a shirtless, smiling baseball player in a post-game clubhouse. Sam "Bam" Cunningham strode into Birmingham prepared for war, his USC football uniform outfitting him like a modern-day Spartacus. The sophomore from Santa Barbara ignored the catcalls of the home crowd and ran rampant over the Crimson Tide, leading Troy to a 42-20 victory that did as much for the civil rights movement as a Martin Luther King speech. In 1955, SC's CR Roberts ran for almost 300 yards in front of a hostile Texas audience in the first half, but by 1970 Cunningham's performance came at just the right time to effect some real change. One year later, Rooseveilt Leaks, a black man, was at Texas. Once Bear started bringing in blacks at 'bama, to quote the guard to the Emerald City gates in "The Wizard of Oz": "Well, that's a horse of a different color."

The advantage that Western and Midwestern schools enjoyed began to slowly deteriorate when great black athletes from Tennessee, Florida and other Southern states began to stay put. By the early1980s, USC's luster was starting to fade, but for the most part Western athletes stayed out West. Notre Dame would snag a few because they are Notre Dame, but the battles were usually
fraternal within the Pac-10. Washington snagged Hamilton's Warren Moon, and later they managed to lure Lompoc's Napoleon Kaufman to Seattle.

In the 1980s and '90s, Southern collegiate football has become a whole new ballgame. First it was Miami, and then the intense rivalry between Florida and Florida State turned that annual contest into a virtual National Championship game. They turned it up a notch in the SEC, elevating Tennessee. Alabama discovered they were no longer the kings in Dixie, and after learning to compete again, they won a National Championship in 1992. California has always taken it as a matter of faith that the Golden State produces the best football players, but Florida high schools are giving us a real run for our money.

The real difference, however, is not the talent of our young athletes, or the coaching they get. California is filled with first-class coaches from one end of the state to the other. What seems to have had an effect is the level of excitement generated at colleges outside the state. California sports fans are blasé. They are front runners who only occasionally fill up stadiums. A kid looks at a half-filled Coliseum, Rose Bowl or Stanford Stadium, then compares that to "The World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party" (Florida-George), and the kind of insanity that prevails at Florida State, LSU, and Tennessee. Even loser programs like South Carolina fill up for every game.

Once upon a time California took it as a badge of honor that we could be laid-back fans, but our teams were still the best. Not any more. Kids want to be on TV, they want publicity and they want excitement. They are full-fledged celebs in these little towns. In LA they fight for attention in the LA Times.

Paul Gulbransen produces John Kentera's highly acclaimed prep show for XTRA 690.

"What I hear a lot," says Paul, "is the `fever pitch' of alumni, students and area residents who devote their lives to football" in these areas. "The coaching staffs have real football mentalities, and kids make more appearances on TV. A kid gets up the day after a Friday night game, Mom makes them breakfast, and ESPN is carrying an SEC or Big 10 game. The kid says, `Hey, if I go to those conferences, my parents, family and friends can see me all the time.' They are aware of a national visibility to the nationwide press, vs. West Coast games that are never in the Sunday papers in the South, Midwest and East Coast."

Brentt Eads writes for Student Sports magazine.

"They like to play before large crowds, get a lot of publicity, and appear on ESPN," says Brentt. "Even in a place like Fresno, where Clovis West is a power, they're the only game in town. Kids are willing to move into more rural areas. TV is an equalizer."

"Kids want to go where they have a chance to get a ring," is the assessment of CIF commissioner Tom Simmons. "The Pac has been suffering some down years in all phases of sports, while the SEC is number one in the power rankings over the past seven years. This applies not just to
football, but baseball, as well. Look at Mississippi State, LSU, Alabama, all have been in the College World Series in recent years. If I notice it, Pac-10 coaches must be noticing it, too.

"It's absolutely right, fans out West are not as excited about sports. When the sun comes out, it was hard to get people to go to the Kingdome. Dodger and Angel fans are not as into it. Again, college baseball is an example. Texas A&M and Florida State routinely draw 8,000 to 9,000 people for games. The biggest crowd at Long Beach State, which is a top program, is 400 fans.

"California still has the best talent, but what seems to be happening is Florida schools are keeping their talent in state. California provides the Pac-10 parity. Guys are now saying, 'The grass is greener someplace else,' and teams are looking at players on both coasts. Also, the SEC is easier to get into academically."

There really are not that many head-to-head battles between USC and UCLA. Most kids seem to have formed an allegiance early, and the result is even competition in which neither team is truly dominant.

UCLA landed J.P. Losman, a star quarterback out of Venice High, but he inextricably transferred to Tulane when he learned he would not be anointed with the starting job. What is odd is that, had Losman stayed, he probably would have been the Bruins' starter four games into their lackluster 1999 season.

"I just wanted to get away from home," J.P. explained. "I love LA, but being away from home helps me get ready for the real world. The same thing with my roommate, James Dunn."

Dunn is a wide receiver who prepped at St. Monica's.

"I want to be in a big-time program and follow in the footsteps of Sean King," explained Losman. "At UCLA I felt like it was an extension of high school. I like the fever pitch of the crowds. In LA it's just another game, but here it's serious. Like, high schools play in stadiums with turf, and the crowds are packed. There's a lot of pride and Southern hospitality down here. It's just a lot different--they live or die with football."

As for the probability that he would have been a starter by mid-season at UCLA, Losman said "I can't really think about that."

Casey Clausen, the Parade All-American signal-caller from Alemany, was not recruited by USC because the Trojans already have Carson Palmer. Of course, Palmer's injury last year shows that anything can happen. Still, UCLA really could use Clausen after losing Losman, but Clausen is headed to Knoxville and the University of Tennessee. The USC sports information office tries to put a positive spin on the exodus of players from this area, but one has to believe that if they were getting the best of the best all the time, like they used to, they would be contending for number one all the time, like they used to.
Other Californians headed out of state include Chris Rix, Santa Margarita's quarterback, and Travis Johnson, Sherman Oaks' Notre Dame's star defensive lineman (both Florida State-bound). Sacramento Christian Brothers' running back Albert Hollis is going to Georgia. Concord De La Salle Parade All-American running back and Player of the Year D.J. Williams will be going to Miami. So is Stockton wide receiver Willie Dixon. Nebraska landed Bernard Thomas, an all-state linebacker, while Penn State nabbed Westlake quarterback Zac Wasserman. Most quarterbacks, for some disturbing reason, are headed out of state.

Brandon Hanc of Taft is going to Purdue. Mater Dei's Junior Palacios will be at Pittsburgh. Dominguez linebacker Kevin Burnett is headed to Tennessee. Tennessee is all over the West, nabbing players from Arizona and Nevada, including defensive back Lee Wheeler. Virginia goes to war next season with two players from Venice. Eddie Williams and Poway running back Jonathan Ward have also flown the coop.

"Reggie Butler was the CIF-Southern Section Division I Player of the Year at Long Beach Poly," says Jake Downey, a reporter for the LA Times Prep Show. "He wanted to go to Stanford, but they're not nibbling, so he's either headed to Penn or Duke. He's a bright kid who wants the education plus football. There are others like him."

Maybe, to paraphrase Thomas Wolfe, "You can't stay home again."

**GENIUS BIDS ADIEU TO CITY**

He is to the game of football what Oppenheimer was to nuclear fission. In a crude jocks world, he is erudite, thoughtful, intellectual.

Within the confines of the gridiron game, Bill Walsh is a chess master, a Bobby Fischer who moves athletes in pads instead of kings, bishops and pawns.

Once, with expert skill, he moved them on the green fields of the pro game. In later years, preparation became his angle. He saw college talent and predicted the future.

Few have ever done it as well.

One suspects that if The Genius had chosen chaos theory rather than 333football, American style, he would be de-coding satellite feeds of anti-U.S. terrorist activity for the National Security Agency.

If literature was his passion he would be writing poetry like Frost or Longfellow.

But this is the twenty-first century, and Walsh, he of the late twentieth, is a man of his time and place. His place, in the beginning was Hayward, California.
Northern California. The Bay Area. A place that, for whatever reason, seems to be the
spawning ground of great football coaches.

John Robinson, John Madden, Bob Toledo and Dick Vermeil come to mind. Within this world of
Xs and Os, Walsh is the Master of the Universe. He is the Temple Mount. Mecca.

Master Bill is a man with an Ego and a Sense of History, too.

What does he mean to San Francisco?

Well, lets put it this way. He is very much a part of The City ridding itself of a long inferiority
complex with Los Angeles. An inferiority complex with Los Angeles, you say?

Get outta here.

It is true. For those of us who remember the past, Bay Area vs. Southern California sports was a
desultory affair. Think of the Irish Catholics vs. the Protestant English. A one-sided battle. A 30-
year UCLA basketball winning streak by UCLA over Cal, Trojans teams that treated the Bears
and Stanford like cannon fodder, the Dodgers drawing 3 million a year and killing the Giants,
who played before friends and family at the stick.

Then came Walsh.

The former Stanford coach saw something in a scrawny kid from Notre Dame and decided to
pick him over Steve Dills. Had he chosen Dills would we call him a Genius today? If Kenny
Easley had been available, would Walsh had chosen him ahead of Ronnie Lott in 1981?

Hey, if World War II had not broken out, would we be calling Winston Churchill The Great
Man?

As for The Genius, there is no doubt in his mind.

"Steve Dills?" he asks incredulously. "Come on!? He played for me. There was never any doubt
that wed pick Montana. How could we not? The idea that I considered Dills has been out there,
but its totally false."

So there. How about Easley over Lott?

"Well, we never thought we'd get Ronnie," recalls Walsh of the 1981 draft. "He was a top three
guy who was still around through seven. But if you have to ask me who we would have chosen
between the two head up, I would have chosen Lott."

Of course he would have. He is The Genius, and he, Lott, and Montana and teamed up to Make
the Myths!
So, getting back to that inferiority complex thing. The Rams were considered one of the best organizations in sports, and no longer saw the Niners as rivals.

When Walsh and Co. led the 49ers to the Super Bowl in 1982, demons were exorcised. Today, with parity between the states' college sports teams, the Rams in St. Louis, the Raiders back in Oakland, and the once-mighty Dodgers being just another team, it is hard for some to remember just what the 49ers meant to The City - and the Bay Area.

That is a major part of Walsh's legacy.

Sunday was Walsh's last draft as a General Manager, but he considers the subject "maudlin." He insists "I'll be around" for a few years, and he will.

"This may be Bill's most creative draft," says Coach Steve Mariucci.

Like Presidential administrations, judgment must be reserved for later years, but from here Walsh's place in football and San Francisco history is secure.

The Man is a Genius.

POLITICAL FOOTBALL: JACK KEMP

There was this guy, he played quarterback at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles in the early 1950s. Not a star. Ronnie Knox at Santa Monica was a much greater prospect. USC and UCLA did not offer scholarships, so he went to Occidental, where he got an education and played some pretty good football. Good enough to get a shot at the pros. He married his beautiful California sweetheart, bumped around the NFL for a few years, then found himself back in LA with the new Chargers franchise in the fledgling American Football League. Sid Gilman ran the show, Lance Alworth was on the receiving end of his passes, and the guy suddenly was a golden boy.

Things did not work for the LA franchise at the Coliseum, so they moved on to San Diego, and in 1961 Jack Kemp led them to the AFL title game. There was no Super Bowl back then. Kemp had an off day in that game at Balboa Stadium before 29,556, and Houston's George Blanda hit Billy Cannon for a touchdown to spur an Oiler victory.

A couple years later, San Diego lead the charge again at Balboa, only this time they succeeded in a big way, 51-10 over the Boston Patriots. Unfortunately, it was not Kemp at the helm. A clerical error had left him exposed to the waiver wire, and the Buffalo Bills claimed him. What must have seemed like the end of the Earth for the quintessential California couple turned out to be the best move of their lives.

In 1964 Kemp and running back Cookie Gilchrist led Buffalo to the championship, and they repeated the trick over San Diego in 1965, 23-0. In the years before the Super Bowl, before the Silver and Black, "Broadway Joe" Namath, Len Dawson, and Daryl Lamonica--the marquee
quarterbacks of the AFL--Kemp was putting the junior league on the map. Kemp almost was the AFL quarterback in Super Bowl I (actually called the AFL-NFL Championship Game), played in January, 1967 at the LA Memorial Coliseum. Dawson and Kansas City, however, had pasted Buffalo a couple weeks earlier, earning the right to be humbled by Vince Lombardi’s Packers.

By 1970, the Bills were an also-ran and Kemp was a has-been. He decided to retire. Now, at this point in his life, he could have gone in any number of directions. With his good looks and erudite manner, broadcasting would have come naturally. He was a charismatic leader who could have been a good coach. He was not a genius intellect, but he was smart enough to have made it through law school if he had chosen to do so. He could have returned to California, or gone into business.

Instead, Kemp decided to enter politics. This is where his "misfortune" in getting picked up by Buffalo, which had become a blessing in disguise, now became an enormous opportunity. Maybe, if he had decided to run for Congress in San Diego, or his home town of Los Angeles, the seat would not have been open, or the voters not in touch with his brand of politics. 1970 was a pivotal year in American history. Mired in the Vietnam War, campuses aflame in protest, rights being demanded by blacks, Chicanos, gays, and women, Republican President Richard Nixon appeared, at first glance, to be in trouble with the electorate.

Kemp was a natural Republican, but not a country club conservative. He understood the innate sense that people should be held accountable for their actions, that free market economics is the best policy, and that through hard work people can empower themselves. Having grown up in what was already a diverse place, the Fairfax section of LA, and after spending years playing alongside black athletes, Kemp was also very much a Lincoln Republican who wanted to espouse the views that had propelled the party in the first place.

"I told the people that if they didn't re-elect me, I'd come back as quarterback of the Bills," he quipped.

Nixon and the GOP still had a following, and they were called the Silent Majority. Sides were being chosen. Vice President Spiro Agnew accosted the "liberal press" as the "Nattering Nabobs of the left." Buffalo, in Western New York state, was an inherently conservative place, as opposed to the wildly leftist politics of New York City (which Hillary Rodham Clinton will discover this fall). It was the perfect place for football hero Jack F. Kemp (JFK).

Four years later, however, being a Republican during the Watergate scandal was no advantage anywhere. It was during this election that Kemp's honest call for racial empowerment through economic opportunity rang true with Buffalo voters.

"In football, the enemy had numbers on and were out in front, where you could see them," he said. "That's not always true in politics. Pro football gave me a good sense of perspective to enter politics. I'd already been booed, cheered, cut, sold, traded and hung in effigy."
Over the next six to eight years, Kemp positioned himself as a *laizzez faire* economic thinker. When the Democrats' fiscal program failed under Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan was looking for somebody to take his case before the people, Kemp became a rising star in the Republican Party. Throughout Reagan's spectacularly successful Presidency in the 1980s, Kemp was his front man, one of his spokesmen, an articulator of the "trickle-down theory," who could explain it in layman's terms.

In 1988 Kemp went for the brass ring, but came up short. He retired from Congress, and still had enough juice to be Bob Dole's running mate in 1996. Dole called him an "American original," but the campaign was dogged by mistakes. The result: Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky.

At this point, Kemp is past his political prime. He makes good money speaking, motivating, teaching, and writing. His quixotic White House run might now be viewed in the same way as William Jennings Bryan's failed Presidential efforts at the end of the last century. Kemp will be with us for a good long time as an elder spokesman, but he will have to live with the fact that he never reached the Super Bowl of football or politics.

**LEIGH STEINBERG HAS A TAKE...ON EVERYTHING**

*1,000 cable stations, 24/7 entertainment, and the future of Western Civilization from one of the guys who shaped it*

Steven Travers has worked with superagent Leigh Steinberg to help develop the Sports Movie Channel. Recently, Steve and one of the most powerful men in America talked about sports, Hollywood, the Internet, and how the 21st century will be connected by all of them.

ST: We have spoken about a cable TV station called the Sports Movie Channel. Is this the kind of thing that you envision as being part of your merger with Assante.

LS: Assante shares my dream and vision of building a high quality sports and entertainment net system that delivers a massive network of 24-hour sports related programming to 150 stations, 24 hours per day. The cable stations will need content, and athletics is a natural source of that content.

ST: Time Warner and A.O.L. are now merged. What is your take on this?

LS: The Internet will need content, too—web sites, video, video games; sports shall provide an endless supply of ancillary revenue. I see sports and entertainment merging, the two fields coming together in a natural progression.

ST: What does Assante bring to the table?
LS: Through Assante we are purchasing Eugene Parker's football agency, and combining agency franchises in hockey, wrestling, tennis and golf—we are creating a real multi-sport agency. Each one shall be autonomous, working as a municipality feeding a massive marketing arm of player endorsements, corporate sponsorships, leagues, teams, new stadia, and each will have special expertise in their field.

ST: You have experience at building stadiums and saving franchises. Have you ever thought about being on the other end of the negotiating table, as an owner?

LS: I've worked with sports teams and municipalities, trying to draw financing and referendums for stadium projects, referendums, p.s.i.'s and naming rights. We were successful in San Francisco, keeping the Giants at Candlestick until the new stadium could be built. We failed in L.A. when the Rams left. For me, there is more freedom working with different athletes, continuing to require that they maintain their civic responsibilities and focus on charitable organizations. I insist that athletes be role models, and that they re-trace their roots to the prep and college levels. An athlete can stand up and say, "Real men don't hit women," or "don't abuse children" and that can have a big impact. I can accomplish more doing what I do now than being tied to any one place as an owner.

ST: Do you see yourself, in your new role after the Assante merger, becoming actively involved with Hollywood from the development side as a producer, and if so, will you specialize in sports content alone?

LS: Yes, eventually I want to be active in all aspects of the film industry, not just as a "sports specialty," that's part of our mission. For now we are concentrating on sports-related themes. Of course, there are a lot of movies," like "Air Bud", in which the sports theme is just a coincidence, so it will all evolve.

ST: Speaking of sports films, was "Jerry Maguire" supposed to be about you from the beginning?

LS: Cameron Crowe, who directed "Singles" and wrote "Fast Times At Ridgemont High", approached me in 1993 and asked if he could explore the world of pro sports. He ended up tagging along to a series of events, including the N.F.L. draft when Drew Bledsoe went number one. To be honest, when I first got married, it was hard on us because of all the traveling and commitments.

We were in Palm Desert, and I took Tim McDonald to show him off to the owners. We were in a room, and the news program "Money Line" was on television when Cameron asked him what he was in it for. McDonald pointed to the t.v. and said, "It's the money." Thus was born the phrase "Show me the money." I've had extensive experience working with actors. Cuba Gooding went to the Super Bowl with us, and his character is based on McDonald. He even pretended to be my client. I worked with Jerry O'Connell, who played the young quarterback in the film.
I also worked with Oliver Stone in "Any Given Sunday". He's very talented but not a very nice man. I worked with Al Pacino on his veteran coach character, and spent part of an afternoon with Cameron Diaz on the role of a woman in a male-dominated world. I worked on "For the Love of the Game"; my partner, Jeff Moorad and I were technical consultants and we went back to Yankee Stadium for that.

The company Jerry first worked for was supposed to be I.M.G. They descended on my office and used my wardrobe, and the view outside is the view from my office in Newport Beach. It's a photo, on a set.

ST: Okay, who was the Jay Mohr character based on?

LS: Off the record, it was --- ------.

ST: What are your memories of a dormitory at the University of California?

LS: I was a dorm counselor and Boalt Hall law student, when Steve Bartkowski was selected number one in the 1975 draft. I was brimming with legal experience not having tried a case. Those were wild days in sports representation, with agents buying players off college campuses. Owners had the option of just not dealing with agents if they didn't want to.

ST: Well, only nine years before that, <Packers center> Jim Ringo approached Vince Lombardi with an agent. Lombardi excused himself, made a phone call, re-emerged and told them, "Mr. Ringo has been traded to the Philadelphia Eagles." Still, there had been a period of bidding wars in which players made huge bonuses. Let's face it, when Pete Rozelle began the draft, isn't that another way of saying he colluded with the owners to hold down prices?

LS: That's exactly what he did, by creating the draft and merging the leagues.

ST: Okay, I'll just say it straight. Rozelle and the owners colluded on the prices.

LS: Right. Joe Namath had made $400,000. O.J. Simpson got $350,000 before the merger. The draft is completely unconstitutional.

ST: If Steve Bartkowski had never come along to change your life, what would Leigh Steinberg be doing today?

LS: I'd either be a political activist, trying to save the environment, maybe a U.S. Senator. Or I might have been involved in some aspect of the entertainment business, working in Hollywood. I had a chance to be a TV newsperson. I definitely wouldn't be a sports agent.

WALSH IS PART OF AMERICAN HISTORY
Former San Francisco 49ers coach Bill Walsh, who resigned as general manager on Wednesday, is a part of American history. The game of football is unique to this country, the players gladiators of the modern era, and Walsh is as much a part of that persona as anybody alive.

He was asked about the game that has been his life, and on this, his last day in charge, he did not emote or give a sense of loss. Rather, the man understood the beauty of the sport he has devoted his life to, and what it means to others.

"The game of football is a unique activity," he explained, "the most violent activity conceived outside of warfare. We are viewed throughout the world through the prism of this game."

Walsh is a giver. He does not withhold knowledge, he passes it on to those who have coached and played under him.

"I was held back a few times in my career," he says. "I never wanted to do that. I look back on the influences of Marv Levy, Paul Brown, Al Davis, Sid Gilman, John Ralston - these people mentored me and taught me.

"Especially Brown, who I was with for eight years in Cincinnati. He was a master of the NFL game. Al Davis was brilliant, a unique person and one of the best coaches I ever spent time with. He was charismatic like Terry Donahue. Sid Gilman may not necessarily be the father of the so-called West Coast Offense, but he was a great influence on me, too.

"I'm most proud of the fact that I was able to transition Steve Young and Jerry Rice into a departure from the club that was worthy of their contributions. I'm not sure anybody else could have done that without rancor."

Walsh said his greatest thrill was winning the 1982 Super Bowl, but he added that his career was always about "best" accomplishments only to be replaced by other events.

"I remember winning the SCVAL championship with Washington High of Fremont," he recalled. "We had 300 kids, then they built the freeway and the next thing I knew we had 3000. We won the title my second year. I remember some exciting bowl games at Stanford."

Walsh's legacy is that he coached some of the all-time greats, the likes of Joe Montana, Ronnie Lott, the aforementioned Young and Rice. It is also about the minority hiring program that he started, giving coaches of color a chance to ply their trade. He is very much a product of the diverse Bay Area community that he grew up in.

In many ways, however, Walsh's greatest legacy is in the many coaches he brought along, who went on to success on their own. This goes back to his being a giver and a helper. He is not a selfish man.
On Wednesday he gave of himself. It was not a highly emotional day, but Walsh is not that kind of man. However, the sense of Walsh's shared experience was something the man was willing to impart to the media.

"We built a dynasty here," he says. "That was part of a process, both on and off the field."

Walsh touched lives. Mike Shanahan, Ray Rhodes, Dennis Green, Jon Gruden, Mike Holmgren and George Seifert are just some of the more prominent names he mentored, just as he had been mentored by Levy at Cal, Davis in Oakland, Gilman in San Diego, Ralston at Stanford and Brown in Cincinnati.

Right now, Terry Donahue, once his rival when he coached at UCLA - a man with an ego who does not always agree with him but always respects him - is the latest in a line of protégés.

Is Walsh a greater influence on football than Vince Lombardi, or even Brown? From here the call is yes, he is. He coached the modern athlete. He is part of football making sociological progress. He is part of the transition to the free agent/salary cap area, and he is, more than anything else, the greatest offensive innovator ever.

The former Washington High coach has an ego. He was sometimes a pain to deal with. He is, most of all, a true general of the organized mayhem that so marks this nation's place in the world.

**THE PAC IS BACK**

*UCLA's win over 'Bama changes complexion of early season*

Ryan McCann will go down in UCLA history as one of their great "replacement quarterbacks," like Norman Dow, who in the 1960s came out of nowhere to engineer an upset over USC. The Bruins' looked very strong in their impressive 35-24 upset of Alabama, but more than anything they demonstrated character when Corey Paus was injured early, and the Crimson Tide put six on the board almost immediately.

Toledo's pasting of Penn State sheds some new light on USC's victory over the Nittany Lions at the Kickoff Classic, but overall the Trojans showed that they have strong defense and will contend. The bottom line is that a cyclical power shift in college football, back to West and the Pac-10, may be in the making. We will know more over the next few weeks, if Washington can upset Miami, and if UCLA can hold off Michigan at home.

USC has a relatively light schedule, but if Notre Dame can knock off Nebraska, and UCLA keeps winning, their power ranking will stay pretty high, while the polls will get shook up in a big way, with the fallout favoring Western teams.

Perhaps California's victories over Texas and Florida in summer all-star games are a foreshadow of things to come (or that are here already). Certainly the Pac-10 has been disrespected of late,
but this region has excellent prep coaches and a bumper crop of talent, so harnessing that for the greater good of the conference is the key. This could be happening.

Florida State looks good, as always, but Florida is re-building. There are always some teams that are ranked high early purely based on reputation, it is just that USC no longer merits that consideration, but they are making a bid along with their cross-town rivals to get back into that echelon in a big way.

2000 promises to be an exciting college football season in Los Angeles, and one suspects that the late-November match-ups of USC vs. UCLA (at the Rose Bowl) and Notre Dame (at the Coliseum) have a chance to mean something, maybe even with national implications for all involved. That would be fun, like old times.

PAC-10 FOOTBALL PREVIEW

Boy, was I wrong about the 2000 college football season.

Schedule favors Trojans, who do not face number two Washington

1. Southern California Trojans

2. Washington Huskies
Washington finished 7-5 (6-2 in the Pac-10) in 1999. The team was young and their performance last year better than expected.

Strong-armed Marques "The Warrior" Tuiasosopo compiled 2,762 yards in total offense last year.

The key will be whether the receiving corps of Chris Juergens (42 receptions last year) and Jerramy Stevens can mesh with Tuiasosopo. Maurice Shaw (440 yards rushing) takes over at tailback behind an experienced offensive line.

The defense is filled with question marks, with the strength found in a secondary led by Anthony Vontoure (six interceptions), Hakim Akbar and Curtis Williams. Washington does not play SC, though, which could work against them.

"Not playing SC's disappointing," Tuiasosopo, "they've got tradition and you always want to knock a team like that off."

"As a coach, I feel no remorse at all," Neuheisel says, tongue in cheek.

3. Arizona State Sun Devils
The Devils return seven offensive and six defensive starters from a 6-6 (5-3 in conference) team that lost to Wake Forest in the Aloha Bowl.
"I'm not prepared to say what Ryan Kealy's future is," says coach Bruce Snyder of the injury-prone quarterback who enters the season suspended because of an off-field incident involving the law. Absent Kealy, redshirt freshman Jeff Krohn must step up. J.R. Redmond is gone, but receiver Richard Williams (37 catches) hopes somebody can get the ball to him, and tight end Todd "Golden Retriever" Heap is best in the Pac.

All-Pac-10 linebacker Adam Archuleta (111 tackles) is a star. Helping to anchor the defense is Mason Unck and Willie Daniels, along with safeties Craig Koontz and Willie Daniel, but the rest of the unit needs work.

4. UCLA Bruins

5. Oregon State Beavers

The Beavers posted a winning (7-5) record, and a lot of key guys from their Oahu Bowl team return, led by All-Pac-10 running back Ken Simonton (1,500 yards rushing), and talented-yet-erratic quarterback Jonathan Smith. He must connect with receivers Robert Prescott, T.J. Houshmandzadeh and Shawn Kintner. Veteran offensive lineman Keith DiDomenico "lost interest in football" and quit, plus "two players were suspended for off-field infractions," according to coach Dennis Erickson. Question-mark guard Jared Cornell is coming off a knee injury.

The secondary is back: Dennis Weathersby, Keith Heyward-Johnson, Ricky Walker, Terrence Carroll and Calvin Carlyle.

6. Arizona Wildcats

Senior quarterback Ortege Jenkins brings talent and experience, but some explosive talent departs. Leo Mills, Leon Callen and Larry Croom will not duplicate Trung Canidate.

Bobby Wade (30 catches) is a multi-purpose wideout, and the line has two strong players, Bruce Wiggins and Steve Grace.

"Desert Swarm" was about as effective in '99 as the Iraqi Army when Norm Schwartzkopf came calling, so losing six starters is no loss.

7. Stanford Cardinal

Coach Tyrone Willingham's Cardinal rallied from 21 down to beat USC at the Coliseum, went 7-1 in the conference, 8-4 overall, and played Wisconsin tough in the Rose Bowl. Stanford had no defense at all, and what they did have is not returning. Four All-Pac-10 offensive stars (Troy Walters, Todd Husak, Jeff Cronshagen, Mike McLaughlin) are gone. Willingham will emphasize rushing, but running back Brian Allen is not enough. Quarterback/baseball star Joe Borchard signed with the White Sox, so sophomore Chris Lewis (the best quarterback in the Southland a couple years ago at Long Beach Poly) may emerge.

8. California Gold Bears
Kyle Boller was supposed to be a star quarterback, but his 38 percent completion rate was woeful. Coach Tom Holmoe (an ex-49er) emphasizes strong defense, and that will be worth a win or two in Berkeley. First-round NFL pick Deltha O'Neal will be hard to replace at defensive back, though, but All-America candidate Andre Carter and Jacob Waasdrop are solid in the defensive line. The Bears' linebacker corp was excellent, and their replacements are unproven.

9. Washington State
Wasn't it only three years ago coach Mike Price's Ryan Leaf-led Cougars were in the Rose Bowl? They followed that up with 3-8 and 3-9 records, and enter 2000 wondering whether their quarterback will be sophomore Jason Gesser (sidelined last year) or 6-5 redshirt freshman Matt Kegel. Their receivers are gone

10. Oregon Ducks
Coach Mike Bellotti's team has speed, but lacks experience from their 9-3 team which beat Minnesota in the Sun Bowl. Quarterbacks Joey Harrington and A.J. Feeley return, but on a team this young a quarterback controversy is the last thing needed. Anybody else? Punter Kurtis Doerr was Second Team All-Conference, and 6-3, 265-pound senior defensive end Saul Patu is a stud and team leader.

_A special feature in this first college football issue of the 21st Century is Steven Travers' TOP TEN PROGRAMS OF THE 20TH CENTURY._
- Notre Dame
- Alabama
- Southern California
- Oklahoma
- Penn State
- Michigan
- Nebraska
- Ohio State
- Florida State
- Texas

**RICH MCKAY**

If the last name sounds familiar, it is because it is. The McKay name evokes tradition and success like few in Southern California. John McKay was the greatest coach in the history of USC's storied football program. His son, John (known as J.K.), was a star receiver for the Trojans' National Championship team in 1974. There was another McKay, however, and his path--Bishop Amat High to USC and success in Los Angeles based on name and talent --was interrupted.

Rich McKay was indeed a top quarterback at Bishop Amat High School in La Puente. He was good enough to compete for the starting job with Paul McDonald, who would go on to an All-American career leading SC's 1978 National Champions, before taking over as the Cleveland
Browns' starter. But when McKay's senior season rolled around, something happened to disrupt what appeared to be his destiny. His father retired from USC to take over the expansion Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1976. Rich followed his dad to Tampa and enrolled at Jesuit High School.

J.K.'s path was already laid out--a stint in the pros followed by law school and a career working for Ed Roski (the real estate mogul trying to bring the NFL back to the Coliseum).

Rich would not attend SC as planned, choosing instead the Ivy League and law school, followed by employment as the Buccaneers' attorney. However, the fact that his father had been Tampa Bay's coach, combined with the knowledge and skills acquired over years of learning from the master, made him the logical choice to take over as the team's general manager. Today, he is considered one of the keenest minds in the National Football League. The Guru caught up with him in between the draft and training camp, and the conversation went from USC to Tampa Bay's recent transactions, the trends in college football, and the glory days of Bishop Amat.

The Buccaneers' recently picked up Keyshawn Johnson, USC's former All-American wide receiver, from the New York Jets. McKay was asked if Keyshawn's Trojan history was a factor in his getting picked by Tampa Bay.

"He was a great player at SC, and of course we scouted him," said McKay. "I like to see Trojans in the professional ranks, and it was easy to evaluate him at SC, where he was very productive, one of their all-time leading receivers. Mainly, though, we need his aggressive personality. Keyshawn brings to us what we thought we were missing. We have an expectation level for him on offense, where we have not been productive because we lack the kind of aggressive mindset that we do have on the defensive side of the ball. When he became available, it became a fit."

McKay was then asked about the current down state of Trojan football.

"I've known coach <Paul> Hackett for a long time," says McKay, "and I've seen his ability wherever he's been. I've seen the program struggle ever since the teams in the Pacific Northwest started taking players who traditionally go to SC. It still gets down to who gets the players, and Don James changed things when he built a powerhouse at Washington. When they got on a roll, they became dominant and it's been hard to get back to where they were before that."

What about the state he lives in now, Florida? California kids are going to Florida and SEC schools, and many say that it is because of the increased enthusiasm for football in that region.

"Florida is unique," is McKay's take. "The key is they keep players within the state. Florida State seems to have won that battle the last few years. It used to be that many good players would go out of state. In assessing the enthusiasm level of Florida football fans vs. California, there's no doubt that football comes number one in Florida. That's not true in California, but in terms of creating atmosphere, I remember the USC atmosphere to be the best around."

This comes from a guy who has seen his share of football at every level.<p>
"If the Pac-10 can get back to the success they've had," he continues, "then the enthusiasm will be just as tremendous as ever."

McKay is then asked to a take trip down Memory Lane. Bishop Amat was a great power in the 1960s and '70s. SC's All-American linebacker Adrian Young came out of the Lancers' program. Gary Marinovich, the brother of Marv and uncle of Todd, was their coach. Pat Haden
was the nation's top high school quarterback in 1970, and his favorite receiver was his best friend, J.K. McKay. Haden's father was transferred by his company to Walnut Creek, but Haden did not want to go to Acalanes, Northgate or De La Salle, the school's of choice in that area. He wanted to stay at Bishop Amat. A solution was found. He would become 11-year old Rich's roommate at the McKay home.

That year, while Haden lit up the prep football world, the recruiters from Stanford, Notre Dame and Nebraska found that in order to get a sit-down with Pat, they had to trek to SC coach McKay's house, sit in his living room, and drink his coffee.

"Pat lived at the house," recalls Rich. "He was my roommate, and he and my brother were inseparable buddies who had experienced tremendous success together. I think they lost the finals to Blair at the Coliseum, and there must have been 40 or 50,000 people in the stands. It was natural that Pat wouldn't move, and natural that he lived with us. The NCAA may have questioned it, I think Stanford made an issue of it, but Pat was a smart guy who made the decision on his own and nobody could dispute that. I think he did visit Notre Dame, and in fact his Mom wanted him to go there, because of the Catholic connection. Ara Parseghian was their coach, and it was an attractive option. Tom Osborne was Nebraska's top recruiter back then, Bob Devaney was still their coach. He came to the house.

"As for J.K., he caught 96 balls one year, then 108 the next at Bishop Amat. He was a fullback, but Gary Marinovich put in a passing scheme and made J.K. a receiver. I remember a game at Mt. SAC, in the first round of the play-offs, where opponents would triple-team J.K. They'd line up two guys at the line to try to stop him, and another in the backfield. He didn't catch any passes in the first half, but made 11 receptions in the second. It was a lot of fun, seeing my brother have that kind of success.

"I saw Adrian Young at SC, but not at Amat, because we lived near South Hills High and were not aware of Amat until the decision came to go there after moving a mile from the school."

The program was so competitive that John Sciarra had to sit and wait his turn to play. John's a nice guy and a good friend," says McKay. "He transferred in his junior year, and played behind Haden. He also played defensive back and returned kicks and punts, he was a great athlete. I also remember him playing for the Eagles against my Dad."

This was after Sciarra finally got to play his senior year at Amat, after Haden's graduation. Naturally, John McKay came a-calling to try and get the kid to play at USC. Sciarra was a terrific baseball shortstop, and McKay tried to lure him with the promise of also playing for a National Championship team under Rod Dedeaux. Sciarra would have none of it, because he had had enough of playing behind Haden. He went to UCLA, where unseating the starter, Mark Harmon, was a lot easier. He capped his All-American career there with a 1976 Rose Bowl victory over Archie Griffin and Ohio State.

"I had a good career at Amat myself," Rich recalls. "McDonald was a year ahead of me, but my sophomore year he hurt his leg against St. Paul, and my junior year I alternated with him. We went to the play-offs. McDonald and Haden were better athletes than they were given credit for. They were both very good basketball players with similar work ethics, who were very intelligent. In the summer, Paul and I would throw three, four, five times a week, and that work ethic carried over to beyond those years."

Rich was asked about growing up around football, and how much of an advantage this was in grooming for his present position.
"It's a natural advantage," he says, "but my Dad was actually discouraging us, he didn’t want us to pursue careers in coaching because you have to move your family a lot. He wanted us to pursue another profession. Both J.K. and I went to law school, and I did in fact become a lawyer, working for the Buccaneers on player contracts. I’ve been around football as long as I can remember, and I just gravitated toward the job I hold now.

"I was aware of my Dad's presence when I was a kid, you were always John McKay's son, and since we almost never lost at SC, it was a good thing. But certainly when you lose 26 straight games in a row at Tampa, that was a big turnaround. The toughest thing of all was how much time my Dad spent on the road, he was always gone."

Rich has managed to establish stability for himself in Tampa Bay, where his father also lives, and considering his success so far, one can imagine that he may be there a long time.

SEX SELLS IN XFL

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 26, 2001 - “By day,” says Tanisha, a brunette, “I shape young minds as a kindergarten school teacher. But on weekends, I’m an XFL cheerleader.”

If I had teacher’s who looked like her, I might have been ruined for life. Or something.

Then there is Traci, who works in the Silicon Valley and appears to have, uh, taken some home with her. “But on weekends,” says this San Francisco Demons’ cheerleader, “I rock.” To make reference to a worn-out metaphor, she will get your hard drive up and running!

Alright, alright, it is time for the obligatory XFL cheerleaders’ story. But why not? The 34,737 at Pac Bell Park on Sunday was mostly male, and there is no hiding that the marketing of this league, and much of the game hype, involves these lovely ladies, who look like porn chick feature dancers at the New Century.

Not that I would know, but guys talk. I am also not complaining. The Demons’ dancers are all gorgeous, and a look throughout the XFL indicates that the quality of their sideline sirens is better than the stodgy old NFL.

Shapely women are not the only things that make an XFL game interesting, though. The football is okay, but not great. As the season wears on, offensive action will catch up to defense. The real story is that Vince McMahon has taken a concept that works in the WWF, transferred it to football, and frankly it is good entertainment.

Baseball, for instance, should have cheerleaders, and it is my guess that they will within two years. You heard it here first. Professional sports of all kinds could take some lessons from the XFL experience, which includes big-screen “in your face” interviews from personalities like “Stone Cold” Steve Austin, and participants in that day’s game, plus some darned good music.

The tunes are not just the too-loud stuff that Generation Xers listen to, but genuine rock classics that include “Running With the Devil” by Van Halen, “Highway to Hell” and “Hells Bells” by
AC/DC. There is more reference to hell than in a Peter Blatty novel, which of course makes sense since the team mascot is presumably a member of Satan’s workforce. The fans loved it, but I do not know what the Vatican’s position is on this issue.

“Sweet Child Of Mine” still kicks butt, although it is disconcerting when the camera picks up the dancers a few feet away from a 10-year old kid. I enjoyed Metallica’s classic “Sandman” and, to really reach into the archives, how about Johnny Cash’s “Ring of Fire” reaching a new generation?

Back to the girls. Tunes by Blondie, “Shake Your Money Maker” and particularly Rick James’ carnal “Kinky Girl” can leave a man thinking some very bad thoughts. Forgive me Father, for I have sinned.

In keeping with the Lucifer theme, the “Hell Hole,” located in the end zone section where baseball right field would be, consists of a group of particularly rowdy fans, including one joker who strips to his waist and gyrates with the music. This guy is amusing enough to merit an occasional glance away from the girl’s. An occasional glance.

Aside from salaries, the league puts up $100,000 to be split by all team members of each winning game. Losers get the donut. When the play-offs roll around, the ante is raised to $250,000.

My only real complaint is the long delays, presumably for television. That is why I still prefer baseball, but I am a traditionalist. Who thinks cheerleaders are a dandy idea.

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Doug McArthur said, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." Bill Walsh is an old football soldier. Sunday was his last draft as General Manager of the 49ers. He may not be fading away, but he is turning over the reigns to Director of Player Personnel/Assistant General Manager Terry Donahue.

This changing of the guard comes with all the baggage and tradition that one can imagine, and the former gutty little Bruin is trying to apply what he has learned.

"The Bill Walsh experience is really wonderful," says Donahue, who turned down top pro coaching positions to stay at UCLA before leaving Westwood after 20 years in 1995. "I've seen him work the last three drafts. There are stark differences between the pro and college game.

"Our philosophy will remain the same. The inherent way you build a team is the same between pro and college football, but Bill has helped me learn the nuances of the job. He's just fascinating, and our relationship is like a married couple.

"We get along, we have mutual respect for each other. We don't agree all the time, but we do offer counter-opinions, different ways of going about things. One nice thing about Bill, he doesn't come back a week later or some other time and say, ‘You did that and it didn't work.'

Half the game Sunday at Santa Clara was clearing up what will be going on at 4949 Centennial Boulevard the next few seasons.
Walsh calls talk of his last draft "maudlin," but the fact is that it is his last one. The Genius will be a consultant. He has been having family problems and needs to devote less time to football, which is of course an all-consuming occupation.

That said, the man said more than once, "I'll be around," and "I'll see you around."

So here comes Terry. You remember his Bruins teams, right? They used to run the veer. That is not exactly the West Coast offense. He did bring Troy Aikman into his own, and he has been learning from the best.

The 49ers are on the verge of greatness again. They had a terrific draft last year and by all accounts another one in 2001. Coach Steve Mariucci is a great offensive guy, but the trend lately (read: the last one season) is on defense, al la the Baltimore Ravens.

"Yeah, you want to concentrate on defense," says Donahue, in reference to number one pick Andre Carter, a terrific defensive end out of California. "The way the NFL is now, you draft for need. Yes, we do draft some great players ahead of need, but we say that 'if you pick 'em play 'em.' The financial end of the game is such that there are quality veterans sitting at home, priced out of opportunities to play, so young guys get a chance to come in. As we go along we're looking ahead and hope to draft to fill future needs."

Donahue now faces dealing with player agents and getting free agents and "walk-ons" signed.

The still-youthful Donahue still uses words like "walk-on" and "recruiting class" to describe draftees and free agents invited to camp for "anywhere from for free and a chance, to $50,000, depending on the salary limitations and need.

I'll be flat disappointed if our draftees don't pan out," he says of Carter, Jamie Winborn (Vanderbilt linebacker) and Kevan Barlow (Pittsburgh running back), "It's a great start to an exciting season."

The torch has been passed on to a new generation of 49ers. Some guys go their whole careers with the "genius" label but no trophy. Donahue never won a National Championship in college. He won Rose Bowls and the admiration of friend and foe alike. He never won the Big One.

Does that make him less qualified to take the reigns of one of the greatest organizations in NFL history? No. Casey Stengel was a baseball "clown" who, for reasons nobody ever really pinned down (Dan Topping and Del Webb probably got him cheap) took over the Yankees late in life and was perhaps their greatest manager.

49er Redux? You are in the saddle Terry Donahue. It is time to ride.

THE PLAY

The Play occurred on November 20, 1982, and in the history of college football it is the most exciting, improbable event that has ever happened in college football. It may be the most amazing thing to ever happen in sports.

"…the descriptions of mortals are rendered useless," was the assessment of San Francisco Examiner (now Oakland Tribune) columnist Art Spander.
How about these descriptions? It was not a football game, it was a magic act, a carnival sideshow. It did not happen with pads, helmets and a football, but through smoke and mirrors. It was not planned, it was conjured. It was not in a playbook, it was in the "Sorcerer's Guide". The player's pre-game meals were mysteriously replaced by a witches brew…Stanford's mascot was not The Tree but a black cat…Rod Sterling should have narrated it, the Air Force should have investigated…it was "Close Encounters of the Third Kind"

(Alright already, enough with the Jim Murrayisms.)

1982 was the successful rookie year of Cal's head coach Joe Kapp, who had quarterbacked the Bears to the 1959 Rose Bowl, played in the Canadian Grey Cup and the Super Bowl, and was one of the tough guy guards in Burt Reynolds' "The Longest Yard". It was also the senior year of Stanford's greatest quarterback, John Elway.

Cal was 6-4-0 coming in to the Big Game. Despite Elway's record-breaking passing statistics, the Cardinal played the kind of defense that they always play down on The Farm, reducing their record to 5-5-0 coming in. Still, a win over Cal would give Elway a chance to play in his first bowl game, as well as give him a few votes in his bid for the Heisman Trophy.

Cal took a 10-0 first quarter lead. Elway's swing pass to Vincent White made it 10-7.

Stanford drove for another touchdown to take a 14-10 lead. Cal responded with a 35-yard Joe Cooper field goal to pull within 14-13.

Gale Gilbert hit Wes Howell for the score that gave Cal the lead again, 19-14.

Mark Harmon of Stanford made a field goal to reduce the lead to 19-17.

Stanford got the ball again at their own 20 with 1:27 to play. Stanford coach Paul Wiggin knew he was in business, though, because even then Elway had a reputation as a late-game hero.

The situation looked hopeless, though, with .53 seconds left, facing a fourth and 17 on their own 13. Elway then moved to the Cal 19, and Mark Harmon's 18-yarder split the uprights with eight seconds showing, triggering Cal's nightmare memories of Mike Langley's 1974 field goal that beat them. History repeated itself.

Wrong. History was about to be made!

Stanford was penalized 15 yards for celebrating too wildly, forcing them to kickoff with four seconds left from their own 25. That may have made the difference. Harmon squibbed the ball to senior rover Kevin Moen, who picked it up at the Cal 43, stopped and threw a perfect spiral laterally to Richard Rogers. Stanford reacted, forcing Rodgers to lateral to freshman Dwight Garner at the Stanford 44, but when he was surrounded and hit, he fell to the ground. Garner was able to lateral back to Rodgers before his knee touched, though.
At this point, the Stanford band thought Garner was down. Standing next to the end zone, they began a premature victory march on to the field from the southwest corner of the end zone. Band members reached the 20-yard line.

Meanwhile, Rodgers took the lateral from Garner, made a nice move, and evaded a tackle by lateraling to Mariet Ford, who made it to the 25, ran out of running room, and blindly tossed the ball over his right shoulder---right into Moen's outstretched hands! By this time, the band and the team's were clustered all over the field, but Moen weaved his way past trumpets, trombones, tubas, drums, past bewildered musicians, right into the end zone, where he knocked some Stanford band clown flat on his ass.

Confusion reigned. Some Cal players celebrated. Moen waited to see. Many fans were out of the stadium, but most of what was left of the 75,662 fans did not know what had happened. The press corps was silent. Amazingly, many had missed it because they were en route to the "winners" locker room. Wiggin heatedly tried to spin the officials to uphold a Stanford win. The officials huddled together. The result: Touchdown.

"The refs ruined my last game of college football and my last chance to play in a bowl game," whined Elway. Nebraska's Mike Rozier would win the Heisman.

The Stanford student newspaper still retained some humor, though. They printed a fake edition of the Daily Californian on Sunday, distributing it all over the Cal campus by early Monday morning. The paper showed a picture of Kapp with his head in his hands, quoted saying, "I can't believe they'd take it away from us," under the headline "NCAA invalidates Cal victory."

THE POET OF VENICE

A common practice among today's high school athletes is to transfer from school to school, looking for the best coach, system or "deal." That syndrome was begun in the early 1950s by a haberdasher named Harvey Knox, who shopped his stepson, Ronnie Knox, from Beverly Hills to Inglewood to Santa Monica. He did not stop there. After following SaMoHi coach Jim Sutherland to the University of California and determining that the Bears'offensive scheme did not fit the kids' talents, it was off to Westwood. Knox starred--for one season--but chafed under tempestuous U.C.L.A. coach Red Sanders, so he went to Canada, M.G.M. Studios, Warner Brothers, the Chicago Bears, Canada again--and after football came stops in McKinleyville, San Francisco, Malibu, Mexico, Texas, Maine, Europe, Canoga Park and Venice Beach. That is where long-time L.A. sportswriter Bob Belyeu found Ronnie.

"I was down at Venice Beach when this far-out old man casually came up to me and said, 'How ya doin', Bob?'" Belyeu told StreetZebra. "I looked at him, then realized it was Ronnie Knox."

I did my best imitation of "Fletch", heading over to Venice for some investigative reporting. Ronnie is quite well known among the homeless denizens, street vendors, and fast-food operators at the beach. The guy at the hot dog stand knew all about him.
"Oh yeah, I know this guy," he said when shown a 10-year old photo of him. "I saw him not two weeks ago over on Abbott Kinney. Played at U.C.L.A., writes poetry. He's got long, grey hair now."

**The Philosopher**

"Like James Fenimore Cooper's noble savage, I've been away," says Ronnie Knox. "Stay free, that's my philosophy. The trick is to stay fluid without turning into H2O." Knox has a mystical quality, and being a native Californian, Knox helped contribute to the perception that the Golden State produces great athletes who are softened by the sun, the sand and the girls.

While Ronnie stills plays the clown, he is quite serious about one subject: Poetry. That is how he is known at Venice Beach. Not for his football accomplishments in the 1950s, but rather as a wandering bard. He does not make money writing, but that does not mean he lacks talent.

"I was deep into literature," Ronnie says of the years when he was growing tired of playing football. "And I finally made a decision on what to do with the rest of my life. I decided to write."

"Be not deceived," became the warning,
"by the phantom's lively dance;
"Earthly doubts are cunning--
"Reflections not of chance."

--from "The Pigeon on the Steeple", by Ronnie Knox

**The Way He Was**

You know how yearbook photos from the '50s make guys look like dorks? Not so Ronnie. He had matinee idol good looks, a cross between a young Troy Donahue and a young Ronald Reagan. His natural father was Dr. Raoul Landry, one of the physicist's who helped split the atom. Ronnie inherited his father's intellectual capacity, but Dad left Ronnie's Mom to fend for herself and his sister, Patricia. Marjorie Landry married Harvey Knox, a Beverly Hills haberdasher, and he adopted the kids. Not just in name, but in every way. He came to live his life vicariously through the children, and in Ronnie's case that meant throwing footballs to him.

"He was a natural," Harvey said of his stepson.

Patricia was a teenage beauty who attracted no attention at her first stage performance at Beverly Hills High. Harvey hired a guard to stand at the door of the second performance with a big sign reading, "No talent scouts admitted." At the third performance, "Three of the bums <talent scouts> were camping on the front row." Harvey negotiated her first movie deal. She never became a star despite (or because of) Harvey's aggressive lobbying on her behalf, but she did become a tennis-playing Florida millionaire.
Harvey's stepson, however, was all the rage. As a sophomore in 1950, he emerged as the best player on a bad Beverly Hills team. Harvey recommended that he transfer to Santa Monica, but Ronnie thought the challenge of leading Inglewood to victory over the Vikings was a better idea. Harvey was unimpressed with Inglewood's offensive system, so in '52 it was off to Santa Monica, where he was the C.I.F.-Southern Section Player of the Year.

Cal's legendary head coach, Pappy Waldorf, basically told Harvey to take a hike when the old man tried to tell the architect of three straight Rose Bowl appearances what kind of offense to run. Back to L.A. and equally legendary Red Sanders, who was at the height of his fame leading the undefeated Bruins to the 1954 National Championship. The 6-1, 195-pound Ronnie was spectacular running and passing U.C.L.A. to a night-game Coliseum win over Bear Bryant and Texas A&M, 21-0. Playing quarterback in the T-formation and halfback in the single wing, Knox was on his way to an All-American 1955 season until injuring himself against Washington. Sanders held him out of the Rose Bowl until it was too late, but still Knox made a spectacular fourth quarter appearance and drove the Bruins to within a few yards of victory before running out of time vs. Michigan State.

"Ronnie Knox was an unbelievable talent," said Hall of Fame coach Sid Gilman. "The way he could run and throw the ball, he was the John Elway of his time."

The now notoriously famous Harvey, writing a first-person account for the old <ital>L.A. Examiner<end ital>, angered Sanders with the headline, "SANDERS BLEW IT--Harvey." Knox then dropped out of school. The father said he hated football, and was grooming him for a career as an actor/writer in Hollywood. Ronnie disputed that he hated the game, but he did sign a contract with M.G.M.'s legendary Dore Schary, and later was in Warner Brothers' stable at a time when the studio system was still in place.

"The klieg lights don't keep jumping at you," was how Ronnie explained his preference for making passes at Dorothy Lamour instead of Ronnie Lamm. As Brian Bozworth discovered 35 years later, Hollywood is no easier to make it in than the N.F.L.

Acting did not pan out, but the N.F.L.was not next on the agenda. The Canadian Football League's Hamilton Tiger Cats were. Harvey negotiated a $14,000 contract, big money at the time. Knox left U.C.L.A. to sort out an eligibility scandal that rocked the Pacific Coast Conference. Harvey and Ronnie were not happy with the Tiger Cats play-calling, so it was off to the Chicago Bears. Harvey decided George Halas was not worthy of Ronnie's talents. Ronnie did not get along with Jim Trimble in Canada or Paddy Driscoll in Chicago. In 1959 he walked out of a Toronto Argonauts practice, $1,250 a week and $12,000 a year.

"I just had enough," Ronnie said. "Money isn't everything, and I'm sick to the teeth of football. It's a game for animals and I like to think I'm above that."

Still in his prime, Ronnie attracted the attention of the Los Angeles Chargers of the fledgling American Football League. General manager Frank Leahy and coach Sid Gilman wanted the 25-year old <ital>wunderkind<end ital> to run Gilman's wide-open offensive system.
"We couldn't even find him at first," said Gilman. "It took us six weeks to track him down. He was living in a dump at the beach."

After stifling under ground-oriented offensive schemes for years, he could have run the table in the AFL, throwing to the great Lance Alworth. Instead, he turned down a "blank check" from Chargers owner Barron Hilton. The 25-year old Renaissance man gave up football for an enlightened life with his new love, Viennese artist Renate Drucks. The Chargers had to settle on Fairfax High's Jack Kemp.

A road less traveled
Harvey had arranged for Ronnie to play for 10 teams in 10 years, four in Canada. After football, he wandered the Earth like Young Cain. Many of his poems (including his best work, "Masquerade") and the only 400-page manuscript of his novel were lost when his luggage was stolen in Galveston, Texas. His marriage to his Viennese muse ended after 24 years. Ronnie quotes Aristotle.

"How come the moon doesn't fall on us?"

He answers his own question. "It is."

Twice a week the winter through
Here stood I to keep the goal.
Football then was fighting sorrow
For the young man's soul.

"To an Athlete Dying Young", by English poet A.E. Housman

Ronnie continued to follow football, and believes Bill Walsh to be the best mind in the modern pro game. He even volunteer coached eight-man football at Canoga's Faith Baptist Church and Schools. Harvey ended up in McKinleyville. He claims to have made, lost, made and lost fortunes in different endeavors throughout his stormy life. The last word on him was that he had just paid his debts off after a big real estate deal in Northern California.

Ronnie's life never seemed to settle on reality or dreams.

"Art can be controlled," he says, concluding with Aristotle that "reality is arbitrary and uncontrollable."

SILVER-AND-BLACK WILL PLUNDER NINERS AGAIN

The clown assistant editor who first read this story told me there was no chance Jerry Rice was going to the Raiders. Of course, I was right and he was wrong. He disagreed with every
prediction I made. Every one, in several sports over a period of time, came true. He also
told me my use of sources was incorrect. I used Greg Papa, the Raiders' announcer, who
after inside meetings not made available to the regular press, gave me the scoop that they
would sign Rice, not Andre Rison. The clown assistant said Papa was not a source, that he
was a member of the media "like you and me." The fact that Papa was a source and he
knew what was up was simply within the province of my knowledge. I suppose if Vin Scully
gave me some inside scoop on the Dodgers this clown would say Scully is "a member of the
media like you and me." Clowns at newspapers.

They’re baaaaaack!! The Raiders are living up to their reputation for plundering the local
citizenry like Mediterranean pirates. The hottest topic in the Bay Area is one that creates drawn
lines and has everyone picking a side. Is Al Davis going to ride into effete San Francisco, kidnap
the icon Jerry Rice from under the nose of the wine drinkers, and haul him like captured booty
back to O-town?

This scribe has it on good authority that it will be Rice. It should be. There are issues to be
worked out, but in the end, Davis gets what Davis wants. The 1980 Raiders made the Super
Bowl on the strength of veterans, and that is the logical push for them to make.

This is like seeing the Barbarians come in and have their way with your women. The Raiders
getting Rice is the A’s getting Willie Mays to switch addresses back in 1970. If you are a 49er
fan, how does this make you feel?

It is opinion time for the "49er Faithful" and "The Black Hole" fans, because the choice is Rice,
Andre Rison, or neither one.

Rison or Rice? Oh man, are you kidding? These are a couple of guys who were so fast in their
prime that they could turn the switch off and be under the sheets before the lights went out.

Davis, Jon Gruden and the Raiders face a public conundrum. Which one do they want? Do they
want either one playing alongside Tim Brown? Rice is not technically available, but Bill Walsh,
in fact, lists one of his greatest final accomplishments as his handling of Rice’s departure from
the 49ers. Free agent Rison can be had.

Oakland is there, brother. One game away from the Big Dance last year. Quarterback Rich
Gannon is no spring chicken. Leases and lawsuits will not prevent a return to L.A. (I refer ye to
the archives of history.) They need to draw sell-outs and light up the Bay Area TV market. Rice
would put butts in the seats. This is about winning this year.

There is no substitute.

Rice is not the deep threat he was, but he can still make important plays and be a fabulous
weapon for Gannon, who is an outstanding scrambler who will give Rice time to juke defenders.
39 or no 39 (his age come October), if you give Rice time to juke defenders, explosive things
will happen.
The Raiders also must decide whether their schematic is to beat Baltimore in the AFC title game, or to best set themselves up for West Division opponents. Walsh set up his offense to beat the 4-3 and San Francisco ran rampant over Denver in the 1990 Super Bowl. Gannon lobbied for Rison in 2000 because of their Kansas City connection, and the move paid off handsomely when Rison took Jett’s place and scored the winning touchdown in the opener against San Diego, despite not knowing the playbook. Most of the Raider players like Rison, who resurrected his career here.

Rice gives them more weapons against Baltimore, and for this reason get Rice. Rice can cover the middle and go deep. Rice has “done a lot of living, if you know what I mean” according to my high-ranking Raiders’ source. For this reason among others, Rice brings more to the table

Brown is a possession receiver, but Rice can cover the middle and still go deep on occasion. James Jett offers enough speed to keep the defense honest, although Gannon cannot consistently get the ball down field. If Jett shows that he can catch the ball, though, the Raiders’ will have more weapons than the Army. The edge goes to Rice. On the best rushing team in the AFC from last year, opponents not only have to defend in reality, but make extra preparations.

Meanwhile, Gannon, Tyrone Wheatley and the rest of the team will find holes widen for them. Brown and Rice could be the best two-some in the league

Rison’s agent is lobbying to get his guy a deal, but Oakland should wait for Rice. Rice and Brown will find Oakland is not too big a town for both to hold one end of the Lombardi Trophy.

CHAPTER TEN

FIGHT ON!

I graduated from USC. I have been a USC fan since I was eight. I love SC. Deal with it.

"BEST OF THE EAST VS. BEST OF THE WEST"

SC revives rivalry with Penn State begun in 1923 Rose Bowl

The University of Southern California may be derided as "Yesterday U." by its many detractors, but one thing the Trojans' have never stopped doing is accept challenges. Lately, they are up to their elbows in alligators with them. First, the opportunity to play a 12-game regular season schedule popped up, only the twelfth game is not a vacation trip to Hawaii, it is a mano a mano match-up against Penn State, giving legendary Nittany Lion coach Joe Paterno virtually the whole month to prepare a game plan for SC. Nice. That game will be played on Sunday,
August 27 at The Meadowlands in New Jersey. On top of everything, Paterno is trying to break Bear Bryant's all-times wins record this season.

"Am I crazy?" Trojan coach Paul Hackett asked rhetorically, when asked about accepting such a game. "Probably."

SC does not play Penn State every year, but they have played them a few times. Like in 1923, for instance, when the Easterners traveled to Pasadena to play the very first Rose Bowl game at the then-brand new facility. USC thumped them, 14-3, picking up where Cal's "Wonder Teams" left off, and establishing West Coast football as a force to be reckoned with.

(Stanford, under the stewardship of Pop Warner and led by the great Ernie Nevers, hosted Notre Dame in the 1925 Rose Bowl, around the time that the SC-Notre Dame rivalry began. We all know what happened after that.)

Tradition might be a dirty word in today's dot.com, give-it-to-me-now world, but for those of us who respect a little bit of history, USC football is still something to stir the memories. Playing Penn State reminds one of legendary former line coach Marv Goux, who used to remark of such contests that they pitted "Big man on big man. The Best of the West vs. the Best of the East."

In honoring the traditional theme of East vs. West, Southern Cal recently picked up where cross-town rival UCLA failed miserably when given half a chance to accept a challenge. Kansas State, an emerging national power, found itself with unexpected open dates on their 2001 and 2002 schedules. They went to UCLA and wanted to know if the Bruins' wanted to set up a home-and-home arrangement.

UCLA begged out, because the Wildcats are too tough.

Kansas State then took their offer to Southern Cal. Southern Cal will play them at the Coliseum in 2001 and in Manhattan (Kansas, that is) in 2002.

Does this really require commentary? Didn't think so. Some things just are what they are!

The Trojans enter the 2000 season ranked number 15 in the AP, number 16 in the USA Today/ESPN poll, but as high as ninth by The Sporting News. Penn State finds itself rebuilding and ranked a little lower, but probably because Paterno is so dangerous when given time to prepare for an opponent, the Lions' have been installed as three and half-point favorites in the early betting line.

Penn State enters under a cloud of controversy. Quarterback Rashard Casey (who is black) is alleged to have been in a bar earlier this year when a when a white policeman entered the bar with a black girl. Casey is said to have taken exception, saying the black girl should not be with a white guy, and in the ensuing argument he is said to have assaulted and seriously injured the policemen (who was not on duty).

Paterno has decided to play him anyway, pending results of the investigation and possible trial. He has taken a lot of heat (notably from national media voice Jim Rome), but the word is that Paterno sat Casey down, talked it out, and is said to believe, or at least understand, Casey's side of the story. In most cases, the coach would not be believed under these circumstances, but Paterno has a long history of honesty and integrity, so in this situation one can give him (and Casey) the benefit of the doubt.

**Palmer will be showcased**

It is time for 6-5, 220-pound sophomore quarterback Carson Palmer to step up and be the star everyone has predicted he would be, from the time of his prep All-American career at Santa
Margarita High School, to his freshman year in 1998, when he showed great promise. Injured almost all of 1999, he will have the chance to show the nation what kind of player he is. After sitting on the sidelines for so long, Palmer has a new view of things.

"I'll tell you what," he said. "Sitting out for as long as I did gave me a new perspective on football. It made me realize you can't take it for granted. You can't just come out here and go through the motions. Sitting on the sidelines all the time made me understand that you have to use every day in practice to get better.

"I used to complain about doing certain drills in practice. I wouldn't always look forward to doing the hard work. When football was taken away from me, I learned something. I learned that football means everything to me. I learned that I missed every practice, every drill. I missed hurting from working my hardest."

Palmer will be looking for 1999 Pac-10 Freshman of the Year Kareem Kelly, his favorite target at wide receiver, and it is said that Penn State's secondary has some weaknesses for him to exploit. Still, defense and ball control will be the key for USC in 2000. If Palmer throws for 350 yards a game, that may mean the team needs to score because they are giving up a lot of points, and/or the running game is bogged down.

First, the defense is reputed to be one of the best in the country, despite the absence of All-American candidate Antuan Simmons at cornerback. He is recovering from the removal of a non-malignant stomach tumor. The running game is still in question. Sultan McCullough and Malaeofu MacKenzie are still competing (with Petros Papadakis) for the starting job, and Hackett is looking for somebody to "take the position and choke it." One thing McCullough in particular has, is speed, a trend that runs throughout the whole squad. Like John McKay's old powerhouses, the Trojans' have been recruited first for speed and athleticism, and any coach will tell you these are great equalizers.

Getting back to Palmer, he and and Hackett will be happier seeing him throw 25-30 times a contest, while McCullough (or somebody) runs for 100-130 yards, the defense plays its part, and the team controls their games from the line of scrimmage, quarter by quarter. If this happens, and the team wins and contends for the Rose or Orange Bowl, then Palmer will be in line for more national honors than he would be throwing a lot of yards for a mediocre team.

The stars are aligned just right for USC this year, and their legions of fans are as hopeful as they have been in years. However, another interesting thing has developed at Troy. While their pigskin hopes are high, this is not just a "football school" anymore. There was a time when a student could get in to USC if they could afford the tuition, leading to the oft-overused moniker "University of Spoiled Children." Not anymore.

Named School of the Year in the latest Princeton Review/Time survey, SC has broken into an elite group of American academic institutions. Equally impressive is the classroom performance of its football team. Once a "factory" that produced few degree-holders, their graduation rate is now 80 percent, and will be 82 percent in 2001. Quarterback Mike Van Raaphorst is pursuing the arduous MBA program playing his senior year, after having worked in the law office of another Trojan scholar/quarterback, Pat Haden (1972-74).

Win or lose, Hackett has accomplished one of the real goals of any truly great football program, and should be commended.

Now, if they can just beat Notre Dame, UCLA, win a bowl game, go undefeated and capture the National Championship, we will all be happy!
HE WAS LEGEND OF THE OLD SCHOOL VARIETY

He was a cocky Irishman who liked to pull a cork.

"We were friends," says his long-time associate of the coaching profession, and fellow USC legend Rod Dedeaux, "because we immediately recognized in each other that we liked to have a good time."

His name was John McKay. He passed away Sunday at 77 because of liver damage complicated by diabetes. He presided over the University of Southern Californias football program in the 1960s and 70s during a time in which the Trojans may have been the most dominant, and certainly were the most exciting, program in the history of this nation.

He was a legend, pure and simple.

As a youngster, I grew up on Trojan football. On a sunny Saturday in 1974, I watched McKays Trojans score 55 points in 17 minutes to deliver the most devastating blow Notre Dame has ever received on the gridiron. I became a Trojan that day.

In the succeeding years, I attended USC, and later covered SC sports in the Los Angeles media. Last year, for no real reason other than a sense of homage, I called McKay in Tampa and talked to him for an hour. I do not know whether it is or not, but it may be his last interview.

If you are of a mind to enjoy all that is splendid about USCs sports history, McKay is a figure of epic proportions. Trojans take regular trips back in time to McKays tenure at University Park (1960-75) like Christians to Lourdes, Muslims to Mecca.

In 1966, the Irish came to L.A. and beat SC, 51-0 at the Coliseum. After the game, McKay said, "Theres a billion Chinamen who couldnt give a damn who won this game."

Or something like that. He also said USC would never lose to Notre Dame again. At least, not like that. From 1967-75, his teams dominated Notre Dame.

At half time of the aforementioned 74 Notre Dame game, with his team trailing 24-6, McKay told his beleagured troops, "<Anthony> Davis is gonna run the second half kick back for a touchdown, and were gonna win this game."

McKay actually said if Davis runs the kick back his team would win, but like everything else that day, his words are not the words of mortals, but rather the timeless chant of historical hyperbole.

McKay was old school. He liked to drink, often with the writers, which is why guys like Bud Furillo and John Hall were counted among his best friends. Imagine Bill Plaschke or Glenn Dickey being best friends with todays college coaches. Doesnt happen anymore.
One of McKays favorite drinking buddies was John "Duke" Wayne, who shared his conservative political views and love of USC football (Wayne, as Marion Morrison, having played at pulling guard for Howard Jones teams in the 20s). In 1966, before the opener between the two top-ranked teams in the nation, Wayne gave a speech to SC before they took on Texas at Austin. It was at the invitation of McKay, who just had a sense for when those kinds of things would play.

It did that day. Southern Cal, 10-6.

McKay was O.J. Simpsons coach from 1967-68, when Juice was an All-American and Heisman Trophy winner.

"The O.J. I knew never would have done the things Ive read that he did," McKay told me, and his voice had a strange combination of resignation and rebellion to it.

Neither of McKays sons got into coaching, instead pursuing the law.

"I didnt want them having to move their families like I always had to do," McKay explained. Younger son Rich used his legal and football acumen to become the successful general manager of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, a team McKay coached in the mid-1970s. His team was woeful at first, and after a dreary loss McKay was asked about the Bucs execution.

"Thats a great idea," he deadpanned.

McKay also presided over the integration of Southern colleges, in a way.

In 1970, SC went to Birmingham to play all-white Alabama. His black sophomore tailback, Sam "Bam" Cunningham, went for well over 200 yards as SC destroyed Bear Bryants Crimson Tide before a packed house of chagrined bama fans.

The next day, Jim Murray wrote in the LA Times, "The Constitution was ratified yesterday. We welcomed Alabama into the Union."

That was because Bryant "borrowed" Cunningham after the game, took him into his teams locker room, and before his defeated charges announced, "This heres a football player."

McKay was accused of being a "n----r lover" for bringing so many black athletes into his program.

"Its funny," he told me, "I used to hear that at Stanford and Cal, so-called liberal bastions."

Yeah, right. John McKay is an important figure in American sports history not just because of his winning record. Jimmy Johnson and Bobby Bowden have similarly outstanding records. Rather, like John Wooden and a handful of others, he negotiated the time warp from the 1950s to
the 70s in a manner that allowed his teams to compete at his standards while bridging the
generation gap.

Mostly, for young USC fans like I was, and alumni like I became, he represented excellence,
something to be proud of, something a little better and more colorful and, yes, maybe even a
little cockier than the varied alternatives.

LEGEND: A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN MCKAY

He was an Irish Catholic from West Virginia, with a gift for wit and humor. For 16 years at the
University of Southern California, John McKay was one of the greatest football coaches of all
time. Steven Travers talks to this legend, now in his twi-light years, about O.J., John Robinson,
Bear Bryant, and whether his teams were the best of all time.

The conversation takes place during March Madness, and the subject of Pepperdine’s
victory over Indiana is brought up.

TRAVERS: What is your opinion of Bobby Knight?
McKAY: I like him personally. I know him through <former USC basketball coach> Bob Boyd,
and we’re friends
TRAVERS: When USC hires a football coach, his record the first two years is favorably
compared to your losing record in 1960-61, yet they never live up to what you accomplished
after that
McKAY: What people forget is that we had a losing record for most of the six seasons before I
got there, plus we were on probation my first two years, so it’s hard to get guys steamed up.
We just didn’t have enough speed.

SC had been penalized by the NCAA in the wake of a conference-wide recruiting scandal
dating back to Jon Arnett’s career in the mid-1950s. Even USC’S 59-6 1959 baseball team
was banned from post-season play.

TRAVERS: You have always said that you recruit great athletes, regardless of position.
McKAY: I respect high school coaches, who know that the best athlete on the team is usually the
quarterback.
TRAVERS: Similar to youth league baseball, where the best athlete is usually the pitcher.
McKAY: Bobby Chandler was a quarterback in high school. Hal Bedsole was a junior college
quarterback. Lynn Swan and Anthony Davis were high school quarterbacks.
TRAVERS: How did your philosophy apply to linemen, who because of their size do not play
skill positions?
McKAY: We looked for guys who could run, cover kicks and had the ambition to do those
things. Linemen were not as big then. Now I see some fat guys playing. Ron Yary would be just
as good today, given training techniques. Weight training was not the thing to do. Billy Fisk was
an All-American lineman who played at 245 pounds, but most linemen were 235.
TRAVERS: Tom Seaver was a baseball Trojan who was one of the first to lift weights, back in the 1960s. You won the National Championship in 1962 alternating quarterbacks. In general, do you favor the practice?

McKay: Well, we had three “teams.” Pete Beathard went both ways. Bill Nelsen ran the gold “team,” and Craig Fertig was on the third “team.” That was a special season, we beat Notre Dame, 25-0.

TRAVERS: You beat Wisconsin in a wild Rose Bowl. Tell me about that.

McKay: We were up 42-13, but Marv Marinovich got kicked out for punching a guy and Kerner wasn’t suited up. We lost all our tackles, had guards playing tackle, so we couldn’t rush the passer, and Ron Van der Kellen just sat back there and passed. Willie Brown saved us with an interception at the end. He never got the publicity he should get.

**MVP Van der Kellen set the Rose Bowl passing yardage record, but never did much past that game. Brown played for the Eagles.**

TRAVERS: Some players and others have said that given almost unlimited scholarships, USC could recruit so many great players that their bench guys were better than most teams they played, and that you would recruit a player for the sole purpose of keeping him off a rival’s roster.

McKay: I’ve said it a million times, that’s baloney. The budget was for 100 scholarship, and I never used more than 72. I allocated the rest for baseball and track. I recruited Mike Holmgren, who sat on the bench for four years, but it was never my intent to do that. No kid will come to school just to ride the bench, the excitement is to play. Jim Fassel, who coached with the New York Giants, sat on the bench before transferring to Long Beach State.

TRAVERS: How good was Bishop Amat High School in the late 1960s, where Adrian Young, J.K. McKay, Pat Haden and John Sciarra played?

McKay: Bishop Amat was great, they had very good teams, and some of the best high school passing teams ever. They were coached by Marv Marinovich’s brother.

TRAVERS: Tell me about your relationship with legendary SC baseball coach Rod Dedeaux.

McKay: Dedeaux was my buddy. We both got along with the kids, and liked to have a good time.

TRAVERS: Like Dedeaux, you had a gregarious personality, you had a sense of humor and got along well with the press. Tell me about your famous “A Billion Chinese don’t care” remark.

McKay: When we lost to Notre Dame, 51-0, I told the team to take their showers, that a billion Chinese don’t care if we win or lose. The next day I got two wires from China asking for the score.

TRAVERS: I guess Chairman Mao was taking a break from the Cultural Revolution, which started that year, 1966.

Pat Haden was the best prep quarterback in America, his father was transferred to San Francisco, but he wanted to keep throwing to your son his senior year at Bishop Amat. He moved in to your home, which made it hard on recruiters from Stanford and Notre Dame.
McKAY: I thought we had a good advantage. We were close with the Haden’s, and later my son Richie was going to stay with the Haden’s instead of transferring when we moved to Florida. Haden was a great player in college, and an accurate passer in the pros. He’s a very intelligent guy.

TRAVERS: At 5-11 he was considered too short to be a successful pro quarterback.

McKAY: That’s a bunch of baloney. Doug Flutie proved that wrong, too. Fran Tarkenton’s not six feet tall. You throw passes through the creases, not over linemen.

TRAVERS: The same is said of wide receivers, yet Lynn Swann never had a problem at 5-11. Tell me about two players who had a reputation for being kind of crazy. Fred Dryer recently told me he heard Mike Battle was institutionalized. Tim Rossovich was once featured in Sports Illustrated eating glass and setting himself on fire.

McKAY: Well, Fred has a sense of humor. I heard Battle was married, but I don’t know. I don’t really know what was up with Rossovich. Once I was called to his dorm because he had “mooned” some girl, but then I found out the girl mooned him first. Neither one was ever arrested, and they were both fine players.

TRAVERS: It must have broken your heart when the O.J. Simpson case hit the news.

McKAY: I still don’t know what happened with O.J. I do know this, the guy I knew and the other players knew, never would have done anything like that. It was just terrible, he was one of the most admired guys in America.

TRAVERS: 1974, the greatest, most exciting sporting event in LA history. 55 points in 17 minutes against Notre Dame. To what extent do you feel that the hand of God just controlled your team’s destiny, and to what extent do you think you controlled the outcome of that game?

McKAY: If I was in control, we’d have scored more than six points in the first half. I told the team at half time that A.D. <Davis> would return the second half kick for a touchdown, and we were going to win that game.

TRAVERS: Ara Parseghian must wake up in a cold sweat thinking about it.

McKAY: Ara never coached again. I hear from Ara every once in a while, but I try to be kind about reminding him.

TRAVERS: You had made a vow after the 1966 Notre Dame debacle.

McKAY: I told the press we’d never lose, 51-0, again, but over time it was changed to “We’ll never lose to Notre Dame again.” We almost never did.

TRAVERS: College football dynasties. Knute Rockne, Notre Dame, 1920s. Howard Jones, USC’s Thundering Herd in the ‘30s. Bud Wilkinson, Oklahoma, 1950s. In recent years, Miami dominated the 1980s, and now we are seeing the Bobby Bowden Era at Florida State. Still, I believe that Trojan Football from 1962 to 1981, which encompasses your tenure and that of John Robinson, and includes four Heisman Trophy winners ending with Marcus Allen, is the greatest era of dominance in history.

McKAY: Well, I guess that’s true or close to being true. At least we never had a player go to jail. We did have very good players.
TRAVERS: Ronald Reagan looked at George Bush as a continuation of his Presidency, and Bill Clinton views Al Gore the same way. Did you look upon John Robinson the same way?

McKAY: No. At one time were close, but now I don’t know what’s going on.

TRAVERS: I want to talk more about Pat Haden, a Rhodes Scholar. Bill Bradley, another Rhodes Scholar, was viewed as a future politician, and I know Pat’s name has been brought up in that context. Did you think he would go in that direction?

McKAY: Pat Haden’s a wonderful young man who I never had to worry about. In all honesty, Bill Nelson, Craig Fertig, Mike Rae, Vince Evans, etc., we never had anybody who was trouble. They were all smart guys. Haden went to law school, but he was never really a political person. Bradley, too, he’s a quiet guy. You have to wave your arms around and pound the table to be heard in politics.

TRAVERS: Your son, J.K., went into law and practiced at the same downtown LA firm as Haden at one time. Tell me about that.

McKAY: J.K. went to Stetson Law School and practiced a few years. Now he’s in Beverly Hills, and he works with with Ed Roski’s company. He was involved trying to get a professional football team in Los Angeles. It’s a tragedy that they don’t have one.

TRAVERS: What is the greatest college football team, for a single season, of all time?

McKAY: The 1972 USC Trojans.

TRAVERS: Who is the greatest writer of all time?

McKAY: Jim Murray.

TRAVERS: You had good relations with journalists, let me ask you about some of the greatest writers in the Los Angeles press corps. Bud Furillo says hello.

McKAY: Bud and I were friends. He was around a long time, with the Herald and all over.

TRAVERS: Furillo may be, now that Murray has passed on, the man who has seen it all longer than anybody else in LA. How about Mal Florence, a Trojan?

McKAY: A good writer and a friend with great knowledge.

TRAVERS: John Hall of the LA Times, another Trojan?

McKAY: A great guy.

TRAVERS: Bob Oates?

McKAY: I never knew him that well ‘cause he covered pro football.

TRAVERS: Jim Perry, USC’s former sports information director?

McKAY: He and I wrote a book together.

TRAVERS: 1976, you have left SC and taken the Tampa Bay job, only before free agency it was harder to build an expansion team quickly in those days. The team starts off with 26 consecutive losses. Regrets?

McKAY: Yes. When I assembled the team and got my first look at them I knew I’d made a mistake.

TRAVERS: Didn’t you say something like, “We stunk and then it got worse”?

McKAY: Yes. However, we were the fastest expansion team to make the Play-Offs in 1979, and we made it three times.

TRAVERS: Do you consider yourself a Trojan for life?

McKAY: Yes. I still follow them on TV. The best part of my life was being a Trojan. We would walk through campus to go to lunch, and you could just feel the great atmosphere, everybody was electric. That’s something I’ll always miss.
TRAVERS: USC was named College of the Year by the Princeton Review, and our school is really involved in a positive way in the surrounding community near campus.

McKAY: What people don’t realize is that, with all those riots that have occurred all around that neighborhood, nobody ever touched the University, because people in that area know what the University means to the area.

TRAVERS: Do you stay in touch with athletic director and former Heisman Trophy winner Mike Garrett?

McKAY: I heard from Garrett recently about a reunion of the 1974 team.

TRAVERS: I know you were close with Bear Bryant. I want to touch on the role that the 1970 USC-Alabama game played in civil rights progress, but first let me tell you that I heard Reggie Jackson tell a story about how he knew the South would integrate. He played for the A’s Birmingham farm club in 1966, and Charlie Finley brought Bryant into the clubhouse. Bryant met Jackson, who had played football at Arizona State, and told him he was the kind of player he could use. Fast-forward four years. Sam “Bam” Cunningham scores four touchdowns in SC’s 42-20 victory at Birmingham. What happened after that?

McKAY: Cunningham was black. Alabama was still all-white

McKAY: Bryant came in to our locker room and asked if he could borrow Cunningham. I said sure. He took him into the Alabama locker room, and had him shake hands with each player, and he introduced him by saying, “Fellas, this is what a football player looks like.” Bryant always said Cunningham did more to integrate the South than any speech.

TRAVERS: USC, and UCLA with Jackie Robinson and Kenny Washington, has a long history of providing opportunity for black athletes.

McKAY: SC’s first All-American in the 1920s, Bryce Taylor, was black. Back then, you never heard of civil rights. Nobody was let in because of their color, they had to qualify like everybody else. Like Simpson, he had to go to a junior college before he could get in.

TRAVERS: Last question. Your other son, Rich, is having success as general manager of the Buccaneers. Tell me about him.

McKAY: Well, he played football in high school and at Princeton. He’s a smart kid, and he’s doing very well in his current job.

I'S TOO EARLY TO HYPE PALMER FOR HEISMAN...OR IS IT?

*If Trojans' wins, quarterback will be a candidate.*

The University of Southern California's storied football program always lived and died by the run. At least, that is the way we remember it. Four Heisman Trophy-winning tailbacks (Mike Garrett '65, O.J. Simpson '68, Charles White '79 and Marcus Allen '81) established the school as Tailback U. However, they had top-notch quarterbacks handing off to all those studs, and putting the ball in the air effectively enough to keep the defense honest.

"We've always had a great quarterback tradition, going back to Pete Beathard and Bill Nelson in 1962; Craig Fertig in 1964, and the best college quarterback for the kind of team we had when O.J. Simpson was here was Steve Sogge," says Garrett, now their athletic director. "Mike Rae
and Pat Haden were good professional quarterbacks, as was Sean Salisbury. Rodney Peete was a Heisman candidate in 1988, and in the 1990s Rob Johnson starred.

"The emphasis on the pass shows more creativity" than the old "three-yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust" mentality. "The concept has changed, as 300-pounders on defense are now quicker and more agile."

The school has transitioned from a power-running offense to a more sophisticated passing system since John Robinson first left in 1982.

Carson Palmer was one of the most highly recruited prep football stars in the nation at Santa Margarita High School in 1997. He started several games with success as a true freshman in 1998, but the road to glory was interrupted by an injury last year.

Asked about Palmer, USC sports information director Tim Tessalone practices "low expectations" Heisman politics.

"He has a legitimate chance to be a candidate in 2001, but that remains to be seen," says Tessalone. "If he performs well, everything will fall into place. If he gets off to a big start, maybe he'll be a candidate by mid-season, but that's just a question right now. If it does happen, we're prepared to do what is necessary to expose him to the nation and promote his candidacy."

Coach Paul Hackett is like Hamlet's mother, who "doth protests too much," when the talk turns to the Heisman.

"I'm not trying to play it down, but he needs to have a year of playing time. He's not arrived yet," he says, then adds, "He does have a great supporting cast. I'm excited, maybe he'll merit it."

The favorites are Brees of Purdue and Michael Vick of Virginia Tech. Palmer beat Brees in 1998. Sophomore Vick, not likely to play in a New Year's National Championship game again, toils in the backwaters of Blacksburg, Virginia.

Southern Cal is in a position to have their best team since the 1996 Rose Bowl champs. They have the speed, experience and schedule to contend for the National Championship. If they beat Penn State in the Kickoff Classic, get off to a 5-0 start, and Palmer is putting up numbers, he will start getting Heisman mention. He is also helped by the fact that SC has transitioned from its traditional emphasis on the run into the West Coast offense.

"We've shifted from being a hardcore running team," admits Hackett, adding "we aspire to get back to that. We need an assertive offensive line to do this, and a tailback that can handle the chore, but Carson sets the tone. He'll only be a success as long as he has a runner he can hand off to a lot."

If Sultan McCullough runs for 1,200 yards, and Palmer throws for 200 yards a game, USC will win with a balanced attack.
"If we win," says Palmer, "everything will fall into place. I won't win the Heisman unless we're in the Top Five, competing in the Orange Bowl or Rose Bowl at the end of the year."

Coming off his injury last year, Palmer says "I'm a bundle of nervous energy getting ready for the season. Right now, I'm working on my timing and rhythm with the receivers, and I watched a lot of film. I don't have any restraints placed on me, except that I'm under orders to duck out of bounds instead of lowering my shoulder. In high school, the DBs were 160 pounds, but here they're my size."

Palmer grew up near SC's pre-season Irvine training camp, playing for Santa Margarita coach Bob Johnson, a man who is largely responsible for South Orange County's reputation as "quarterback Heaven."

Palmer is the latest of this group (Todd Marinovich, Rob Johnson, among others) to lead the Trojans', and probably play in the NFL. He could be the first of them to bring home that little guy with the high-stepping gait.

**IT'S A BLUFF**

CBS' TV football analyst John Madden likes to talk about the best way of finding good places to eat while traveling the country in his Maddencrusier.

“Never go to the places by the highway,” says Madden. “They usually look good, nice and shiny, but it’s a bluff. Go in to town, usually on the wrong side of the tracks. Find a greasy spoon, and that’s usually the best food.”

Another thing that is a bluff is USC football, 2000 edition.

The Trojans’ had everybody, including me, hyped to the gills when they beat Joe Paterno and Penn State, 29-5 in the Kickoff Classic at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Like restaurants by the highway, SC looked nice and shiny, led by running back Sultan McCullough against the Nittany Lions’. McCullough’s pounding running had everybody thinking that “Tailback U.” was back.

Oh, how wrong were. Southern California had their hands full against winless Colorado, but escaped with a 17-14 win. Their lackluster performance against the Buffalos’ was attributed to a two-week layoff.

Next came San Jose State, and again SC had to dig deep to escape with a win. This second-rate effort was also attributed to another two-week layoff, but the spin was also that the Spartans’, who beat Stanford (who beat Texas) were an emerging power.
San Jose State is still just San Jose State. SC, it turns out, is the team that is emerging. In fact, they emerged—as an also-ran—years ago, but every season the faithful believe This Is The Year.

It is not this year.

USC went to Oregon State, and it was a replay of last season, when penalties and on-field mental errors plagued their 6-6 campaign. That record had been blamed on quarterback Carson Palmer’s injury, but now Palmer is healthy and, well, he is just not all that good.

Palmer is a solid quarterback, but not the Heisman hopeful this scribe thought he could be. My bad.

“We have stumbled,” was head coach Paul Hackett’s assessment. “We have a lot of work to do. Right now, we have to avoid overreacting. It’s pretty obvious what the glaring issues are, so we have to keep working, to keep making progress, and if we do things like bowls will be our reward at the end.”

Another factor is that the Pacific-10 Conference has become, overnight it seems, the most rugged in the nation. Surviving the Pac is like reaching a top slot in the Soviet Politburo during Stalin’s time.

“We must demand perfection on every play,” says Hackett. “Every single play is important. So far, we’ve wasted some good efforts.

“When you don’t run the ball, it’s the nature of the quarterback to feel he has to make the play. The pressure is now on the offensive line.”

Certainly, anybody who still thinks of Oregon State the way we all used to think about Oregon State is ripe for a rude awakening. Dennis Erickson has the Beavers’ playing at a fever pitch, and they can beat anybody on a given Saturday.

Nevertheless, USC had them beaten at Corvallis, but penalties, fumbles and missed field goals did them in.

That loss was particularly galling in light of the national picture. Ranked eighth coming in, USC could have benefited from a slew of undefeated teams taking it on the chin the last few weeks, if only they could have stayed unbeaten themselves.

On October 7 at the Coliseum, however, it all fell apart. USC looked like a team that had all the air taken out of them, a team that felt like there was nothing left to play for, now that the National Championship was no longer realistic.
Arizona led 21-0 before the potato salad was gone in the Coliseum press box. It was like a morgue up there, the LA writers’ realizing that they had little more than mediocrity to cover from here on out.

In an odd way, losing so badly to the Wildcats’ was cathartic. Losing by way of penalties and terrible mental miscues had a brutal, galling effect on SC’s supporters. Just getting whipped by a superior team is, in a strange way, easier to swallow. That said, USC must confront the fact that players’ appear almost to have given up mid-way through the season.

As Hal Holbrooke said in “Wall Street” (1987), “When a man stares into the abyss, that’s when he finds himself, and that’s what keeps him out of the abyss.”

The problem is, some Trojans’ may find it easier to fall into the abyss than to apply the mental discipline and physical pain associated with preparing to beat quality football teams the rest of this season. They will be up for traditional rivals UCLA and Notre Dame just because the hype for those games pumps anybody up, but they could be so low by then that nothing can get the ship back on course.

This whole thing has just become “wait until next year,” but next year never happens anymore.

So, who is to blame? Well, Hackett is getting his share of fingers pointed at him, but he is not the culprit. He may not be the best coach in the country, but the man is hard-working, a good recruiter and salesman, honest and forthright with the press, experienced—in essence, he is everything one could ask of a Division I head coach.

The whole concept of firing coaches before their contracts have expired is not a good policy. The Dodgers’, for instance, jumped the gun by axing Davey Johnson with a year left. Whoever replaces him will be under a lot of pressure, during a time when he is still implementing a new system that may or may not be a fit with this team.

The same thing applies to the Trojans’ situation. If Hackett gets the boot, somebody will have to be brought in, amid much promise and pressure, a new man with a whole new style. Nobody can say whether that style will be any better than Hackett’s, John Robinson’s or Larry Smith’s.

Even Ted Tollner is starting to look kind of good at this point, God forbid.

One thing that still is obvious, however, is that USC is not losing for lack of good athletes. Their roster is loaded with blue chip recruits with size and speed.

The Trojan mystique is long gone. The players put on the Cardinal and Gold, however, and somehow think that the spirit of O.J. Simpson (okay, bad example)—the spirit of Charles White or Marcus White or Pat Haden somehow takes over. Perhaps the program is a victim of their own past success. In one way or another, programs like Texas, Alabama and Oklahoma have gone through similar experiences, but they have all rebounded better than Southern Cal.
ONES TO WATCH

To be Petros Papadakis, that is the question

It looked like Petros was going to be a big story this year, but luck, as usual, has not gone his way. Papadakis suffered a debilitating injury that kept him out all of last year, and still makes him vulnerable. However, early on he looked like the guy who could be counted on not to fumble the football.

That is, until his fumble deep in Oregon State’s territory proved to be the final nail in USC’s coffin.

Petros has been slowed by more nagging injuries, but remains a colorful character on the team.

“I wasn’t even recruited out of high school,” he says.

Papadakis played at Peninsula High School, where he starred but apparently did not impress enough people to warrant big-time offers.

He went to the University of California, but left Berkeley just before school started his freshman year. He took the semester off, and entered USC in the spring, following in the footsteps of his father, John, who played for John McKay back in 1970-71, and older brother Taso.

“I just wasn’t ready for college,” remarks Petros.

Petros is unusually erudite for a jock. He comes from a colorful Greek family, which operates the wonderful Papadakis Taverna restaurant in San Pedro, and his life has been about sports, singing, dancing, Greek Mythology, and Shakespeare.

“I don’t know all of Shakespeare’s plays,” says Petros, whose brother is an actor, “but I can quote ‘MacBeth’ backwards and forwards.”

It would be nice if the witch who directs MacBeth’s destiny could be located and made to direct USC to a winning season, but it now seems they are headed towards the same star-crossed fate as MacBeth.

Backs against the Wall

He is a freshman, and he might be USC’s last resort. David Newbury has been so ineffective that Wall was brought in and kicked a field goal for USC vs. Arizona.

“We will go with John Wall for the rest of the season,” says Hackett. “He and I talked about being mentally prepared to start, and he’s back in the groove.”
IT WASN'T A FOOTBALL GAME. IT WAS A SIGHTING!

One of my favorite articles, this describes the greatest sporting event I have ever witnessed.

It was not a sporting event, it was a Roman orgy. USC was not a football team, they were Patton's Army moving through the Low Countries, Grant taking Richmond, the Wehrmacht during the Blitzkrieg.

For SC coach John McKay, it was not about coaching, it was about destiny.

"If I was in control," he says, "we would have scored more than six points in the first half."

For Trojan fans, it was not a game, it was a sighting. It was Fatima, Lourdes and the Burning Bush combined.

For Notre Dame coach Ara Parseghian, it was the Seventh Circle of Hell, "The Twi-Light Zone", the decapitation scene from "Apocalypse Now".

For the Irish, it was their worst disaster since the potato famine.

It was a 17-minute Southern California earthquake, epicentered at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on a fall Saturday in 1974. It was felt as far away as South Bend, Indiana, and the after-shocks reverberate to this day.

The Notre Dame Fighting Irish were the defending National Champions. En route to an undefeated 1973 season, they had smoked Southern Cal at South Bend. Notre Dame gave up 2.2 yards per rush and eight touchdowns in their previous 1974 games, and victory over SC would put them in a position to finish number one again. SC was playing for the top slot, too. A national television audience tuned in to the biggest game of the year, and 83,552 filled the Coliseum. A typical SC-Notre Dame game.

In the first half, Notre Dame outclassed USC in every way, breaking out to a 24-0 lead, and their fans were in Full Gloat.

SC managed a touchdown on a swing pass from quarterback Pat Haden to tailback Anthony Davis with 10 seconds left in the first half, but the extra point failed. 24-6.

"I told them that if Davis runs the second half kickoff back for a touchdown we would win the game," said McKay. Over the years, McKay's remarks were changed to "Davis <ital>will<end italic> run the second half kickoff back for a touchdown," but like everything else that day, his words are now legend and myth.

The first 17 minutes of the second half were the most exciting in college football and Los Angeles sports history.
Kickoff to Davis, who runs it 102 yards for a touchdown, two-point conversion fails. 12-24.

Haden to JK McKay for 31 yards, followed by Davis for a six-yard touchdown scamper, kick good. 19-24.

Kevin Bruce recovers a Notre Dame fumble, two long Haden pass completions, Davis four yards, touchdown, then Davis dives in to complete the two-point conversion. 27-24, SC. 6:23 gone in the quarter. Madhouse.

Marvin Cobb returns a punt 56 yards for Troy, Haden to McKay. 34-24, 9:23 gone in the third.

Charles Phillips intercepts Irish quarterback Tom Clements' pass, Haden hits McKay from 44 yards out, period ends, 41-24.

Bruce recovers another fumble, Haden to Shelton Diggs, 16 yards. 48-24.

Phillips’ third interception is returned 58 yards for a touchdown. 17 minutes after it started, 55-24.

McKay normally stood calmly amid the bedlam, arms crossed liked a commuter waiting for the 5:30 to Larchmont. This time, he lost control, hugging Haden (who lived in his house his senior year at Bishop Amat High), his son, JK (Haden's best friend), and Davis, all at the same time. None of the players weighed more than 183 pounds.

"There have never been three smaller kids who have done so much so often," he said, managing to sound like Winston Churchill.

Up in the broadcast booth, Ohio State coach Woody Hayes must have felt like a Prussian military commander with a binocular-view of Napoleon's Italian Campaign, knowing he would have to face them down the road. The USC rooting section started chanting, "Woody, you're next!" in reference to the upcoming Rose Bowl.

With 13 minutes left, the Trojans had conquered Ireland, but before they could roll over Austria, Poland and Denmark, McKay pulled his starters in favor of Vince Evans and Rob Adolph.

Davis proved himself the best college football player in America that day, but because it was played on a late date, ballots for the Heisman Trophy were mailed prior to his performance. Ohio State's Archie Griffin won it instead.

The game left Notre Dame at 9-2-0. Southern California was not as phenomenal in their New Year's Day game with the Buckeyes. In keeping with the comeback theme, though, Haden combined with McKay and Diggs to bring his team down the field for a touchdown and a two-point conversion, good for the 18-17 victory, a 10-1-1 record, and the National Championship. In those days, not only was USC unbelievably good, but they were as exciting as any team ever.
Parseghian never coached after that season. Rumors have it he sees a therapist to combat visions of a white horse constantly running around a field. McKay left for Tampa Bay and pro doldrums. USC won the National Championship again in 1978, but in recent years they have had to live on memories.

But man, what memories they are!

**PALMER IS ON MONEY WHEN HE HAS TO BE**

The USC Trojans came home from an impressive 29-5 victory over Penn State in the Kickoff Classic at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, and ran smack dab into a hornet’s nest of a football team called the Colorado Buffalos.

“We saw very little of what we saw on film” of Colorado’s loss to Colorado State in their opener, said SC coach Paul Hackett. Gary Barnett, an excellent coach who took Northwestern to the 1996 Rose Bowl, and his staff, kept adjusting to quarterback Carson Palmer and the Trojan offense. Palmer moved the team consistently, but Colorado displayed a “bend-but-don’t break” scheme that was increasingly frustrating to USC. Furthermore, they had a lot of serious muscle at the line, making tailback Sultan McCullough earn every one of his 91 yards.

With the score tied at 14-14, SC’s defense held Colorado on a crucial third down play at SC’s 27-yard line. The ensuing 40-yard field goal missed, and Palmer then directed a fabulous drive all the way down the field, resulting in David Newbury’s field goal to win it, 17-14, with six seconds left.

“I was so comfortable,” said Palmer, “I knew we could beat their quick heats. Their defense was awesome, my hats go off to them, but I felt great in the huddle that last drive. I was confident that David would make the field goal.”

“They were mad as a hornet,” Hackett said of Colorado, referring to their having lost to arch rival Colorado State the previous week.

For Southern Cal, they had two weeks leading up to this game, which was both good and bad. Against Penn State, Palmer was 10-of–20 for a mere 87 yards, one of the worst performances of his career.

McCullough, however, was spectacular with 128 yards rushing, including some punishing runs towards the end when the game was decided in SC’s favor. Overall, USC played great defense against the Nittany Lions, and the game went a long way toward restoring their national image.

The next week, the team got settled in to their residences, getting through class registrations, and overall losing focus on football. Meanwhile, Penn State lost to Toledo, taking some luster off SC’s win. UCLA upset Alabama, furthering reducing the spotlight on USC.
The Trojans’ played Colorado a little overconfidently, although they certainly demonstrated they had the better team. Colorado hung on with the help of some lucky breaks, but you had to hand it to them.

The same week that Troy beat Colorado before 65,153 at the Coliseum, Notre Dame almost beat number one Nebraska after having defeated Texas A&M the previous week. UCLA faces Michigan next, and Washington beat Miami, 34-29. Oregon gave Wisconsin all they could handle at Camp Randall Stadium.

The power seems to be shifting back to the Pac-10, and the chances are that the USC-UCLA game at the Rose Bowl (November 18) and the USC-Notre Dame game at the Coliseum (November 25) may be important games. Maybe games with national implications.

Southern Cal has to shore up the kicking game, which despite Newbury’s winner has been erratic. Their special teams make a big positive difference (although freshman sensation Matt Grootegoed is out a few weeks with mononucleosis), they play defense the old-fashioned way, Palmer is rounding into, if not a Heisman candidate, pretty close to one, and he has a lot of weapons at his disposal.

It will be exciting at the Coliseum and throughout the Pac-10 Conference this year.

ONES TO WATCH:

**Markus Steele, linebacker**

Steele came up huge against Colorado, stopping the Buffs with some big plays after they drove all the way to the 26-yard line before getting repelled.

“There was a lot of yelling and screaming in the huddle,” said Steele. It was Steele’s turn to shine, just as it had been fellow linebacker Zeke Moreno’s moment in the spotlight vs. Penn State.

Steele is a 6-3, 220-pound senior who was a 1998 junior college All-American at Long Beach City College.

Last year, he was a *Football News* All-American honorable mention selection, and All-Pac-10 honorable mention.

“He wears the coveted number 55, like Junior Seau and the other great linebackers that make up Troy’s great tradition at that position.

“I had to take a couple of days to think about if I wanted to wear that number and decide if I wanted that much pressure,” he says.
He decided to accept the responsibility, and so far is a big reason the team is 2-0 and ranked tenth.

Zeke Moreno
Watch for this guy to win the Butkus Award, he is that good. Up close, Moreno does not seem that impressive. He is 6-3, 245 pounds, but compared with Seau looks like…a college kid. Then the game starts, and he plays with the controlled fury of a Ronnie Lott. USC has a couple guys like that on their defense, people who flat-out like to hit.

“It’s so much easier than on the outside, where you’re up on the line,” says Moreno of playing the inside ‘backer position.

YESTERDAY U? MAYBE, BUT WHAT GLORIOUS YESTERDAYS THEY WERE

Ranking college football schools of the 20th Century, Troy is in an elite class.

They were the stuff of myth, legend and hyperbole.

USC "wasn't a football team," Jim Murray wrote, in one form or another, many times over many years, "they were the Wehrmacht marching on Poland…Patton's Army in the Rhine…Napoleon's Italian Campaign…Sherman plundering Georgia…"

Furthermore, USC did it with style and flair, and not just a little bit of Hollywood.

After all, this was the school that produced John Wayne. Trojan football players were extras in movies for years, until the NCAA banned the practice. Aaron Rosenberg went from All-American to TV mogul.

The Cardinal and Gold loved to keep you on the edge of your seat, just like any good movie. There was Jim Baker's field goal to beat Notre Dame in 1931, and Doyle Knave's last-minute pass to Al Kreuger which beat undefeated, unscored-upon Duke in the 1939 Rose Bowl. Who could forget the 42-37 Rose Bowl thriller over Wisconsin's Ron VanderKelen in the 1963 Rose Bowl?

Ever heard of the Cardiac Kids? They went undefeated in 1969, and almost every win was filled with last-minute heroics. Or Anthony Davis' (pick one) six touchdowns in 1972, or four touchdowns in 1974 vs. Notre Dame, the latter coming in a 55-point, 17-minute earthquake that took SC from 24-0 down to a 55-24 win.

Joe Montana came out guns firing in 1978, but Southern Cal put him on a plane back to South Bend stinging from a tough loss, en route to their last National Championship.

Ah, as Shakespeare said, there's the rub.
Their *last* National Championship! A lot has happened since 1978. Presidents have come and gone. We have cable television and the Internet now. Film footage from 1978 looks…old. You know why? It is!

USC alumni once roamed the streets of LA like arrogant dinosaurs.

Today they just wish people would forget about O.J. Simpson.

Trojan football is pedestrian these days, and their proud tradition is, if not a thing of the past, tattered, like an aging Tennessee Williams maiden yearning for antebellum times.

Unlike Blanche Dubois, however, youth springs eternal, in the form of incoming freshman every year, and one of these seasons they will field a class that takes them back to the Promised Land.

Until that time, however, Trojans' pass legend and myth down to their young. In so doing, and in keeping with the fact that they are now embarking on their first football season of the Twenty-first Century, it seems as good a time as any to rank their tradition against other great college football programs of the past 100 years.

Up until the 1980s, the Trojans' had a firm grip on the number two position, with plenty of reserve to take the lead by 2000, but we all know that never happened. Marcus Allen (1981) had followed in the Heisman tailback footsteps of Mike Garrett (1965), Simpson (1968) and Charles White (1979).

They have eight National Championships. More Trojans have played in the NFL, and more have been All-Pro, than any other school. Legendary Trojans are part of the history of most NFL teams.

In the 1986 Hula Bowl, however, Alabama beat Southern Cal to take over as the winningest bowl team ever.

**Separating the wheat from the chaff**

First, let us eliminate a few teams. UCLA, SC's cross-town rival, is a great program, but they only have one National Championship (1954), and frankly, the Bruins' (who should have been better) are in the second tier.

Harvard has not played good football since Kaisers' Germany.

California's "Wonder Teams" (1920-22) were some of the best ever, but they do not have much to show for themselves since Gertrude Stein's Lost Generation.

Bernie Bierman's Minnesota teams in the 1930s were a short-lived Depression dynasty.

Red Blaike's Army squads lost all their greatness when World War II's guns stopped firing.
Florida and Miami have been powers in the last 20 years, but do not have a lot of history before that.

**The cream rises to the top**

If one is to try and rank the century in an AP-style Top 10 poll, the list of eligible schools must include:

10. **Texas** was all-white until 1970, although they did win two National Championships (1963 with Tommy Nobis, and 1969) under coach Darrell Royal. Despite the eyes of this football-mad state being on them, the Longhorns' have fallen of late, however.

9. **Florida State** was a backwater team in Burt Reynolds' day, Steve Spurrier put 'em on the map in 1966, but Bobby Bowden's last 10 seasons elevated them up there...just not all the way up there.

8. **Nebraska** did not emerge as a major power until the Bob Devaney era, winning National Championships in 1970-71, but Tom Osborne lost too many bowl games.

7. **Ohio State** became a Football School under Woody Hayes in the 1950s, but after Jack Tatum's Buckeyes won the National Championship in '68, they took that "three yards and a cloud of dust" thing way too far.

6. **Michigan** has as much history as anybody, the "Point-A-Minute" Wolverines' winning the first Rose Bowl, in the '40s Tommy Harmon won a Heisman, and they dominated Pacific Coast teams in post-war Rose Bowls. But like Ohio State, the modern game passed Bo Schembechler by for too long.

5. **Penn State** played in the first game at the Rose Bowl (losing to SC), but it was not until Joe Paterno that they emerged, and even then they were a team that went years without winning "the big one."

4. Bud Wilkinson put **Oklahoma** on the map when he lead the Sooners' to a 57-game mid-'50s winning streak, broken up by (you guessed it) Notre Dame. Chuck Fairbanks had it goin' on at Norman in the early '70s, and Barry Switzer carried on the wishbone tradition, winning it all in 1974 (tied with SC), 1975 and 1985.

3. **Southern California** was securely number two and close to the top spot until their stumbles in the last two decades. Troy is as high as they are based on two factors. In establishing the Notre Dame rivalry during the Knute Rockne/Howard Jones Era (1920s and '30s), they helped propel college football into national popularity. Then, with the suburban growth of California when John McKay ran the show, they may have had the most dominating run (1962-78) of any team over a 16-year period!

2. **Alabama.** Ranking the Crimson Tide so high is hard to do, since they were another all-white team until the '70s, but they have history (Don Hutson in the '30s) and Paul "Bear" Bryant willed
them to prominence over a very long period. Besides, Joe Willie and the Snake both played in Birmingham.

1. Notre Dame. You must start with SC's greatest rival. They have known down times and disappointment, but come back every time, like Lazarus or, more in keeping with their Catholicism, the Risen Christ. Notre Dame has seven Heisman Trophy recipients (USC has four), more National Championships than anybody, and a winning record over Troy. When SC got close after 1982, the Irish got serious, putting a 12-game winning streak on the wounded Trojans'. Notre Dame is the college football School of the Century!

THE FALL OF THE TROJAN EMPIRE

Soapbox: Trojan football is mediocre at best.

Last month, given an early deadline, I made the prediction that USC's football team might have a shot at national respectability. For years, I have deluded myself into hoping/praying that the Cardinal and Gold has a chance to regain past glories. I must face the fact that my team is a pedestrian college football program--Yesterday U.--what Jim Murray used to call "an opponent." Paul Hackett is dedicated, but SC's failures simply must be attributed to him. Is he a smart assistant who does not have the right stuff for the head job? He is responsible for the discipline, planning and practice repetition that is necessary to iron out the penalties, mental errors and missed assignments that plague this team. They always have good players, and are consistently well represented in the pros. The greatest collection of high school talent in America surrounds the school for 50 miles east, west, north and south. Schools in smaller communities like Lincoln, Nebraska; Tallahassee, Florida; and Knoxville, Tennessee must recruit players over vast territories, yet they have developed powerhouses that are so far and above where Troy is that it boggles the mind. The entire Pacific 10 Conference is a joke. Once the mightiest collection of programs, the Pac possesses the advantages of population and weather, but when it comes to alumni support, student spirit, attendance and fan participation, the schools on the Left Coast are mired in apathy and Political Correctness. Our laid-back attitude was a badge of honor when our teams dominated. Now it is left to dinosaurs like me to reminisce about the good ol' days. What a shame.

Ugly losses to Oregon, Arizona followed by debacle in South Bend

Carson Palmer is injured, but the Oregon, Arizona and Notre Dames losses were not Mike Van Raaphorst's fault. Zeke Moreno has upheld the U.S.C. linebacker tradition, and R. Jay Soward has had moments of brilliance. The Trojan running game went from Student Body Right to -20 Negative Yardage vs. the last-in-the-conference Arizona defense. S.C. showed that they have great athletes vs. Notre Dame.

"We're just a first-half team," said linebacker Marcus Steele. Hackett is consistently outcoached at the intermission. The program was mediocre when he got there, but under his stewardship the snatch-defeat-from-the-jaws-of-victory Trojans are a joke. Their performance in South Bend was inexcusable. Bad play calling and a failure to have his team
disciplined and mentally prepared to play 60 minutes led to the most excruciating
disappointment any Trojan can suffer.

"To have the three losses we've had this year, it's just criminal," Hackett said. The real
crime is to see one of the greatest traditions in the country reduced to also-ran status. The
damage was done long before Hackett showed up, but he has done zero to restore any luster. Am
I calling for Hackett's job? No, there is a cancer at University Park that I have not detected, and
right now I do not who could turn things around.

"I've got to look at the tape and figure it out because if you try to figure out from the
sideline you're not going to have much luck," said the shell-shocked Hackett.<p>

Gillespie bags number one recruiting class
The Trojan football program may be a dismal skeleton of its old self, but coach Mike Gillespie
has led Troy's baseball team to a National Championship in 1998, and Collegiate Baseball
recently announced that SC captured the best recruiting class of 1999. Gillespie attracted right-
handed pitcher Mark Prior, a transfer from Vanderbilt, who turned down $1.7 of George
Steinbrenner's money. Other top recruits include Aaron Fauscett (.356 at Vanderbilt last year); El
Segundo's stud catcher, Alberto Concepcion (second round, San Diego); pitcher Chad Clark of
Glendora (twenty-second round, Milwaukee); and Riverside Arlington infielder Anthony Lunetta
(drafted by the Indians).

"It is certainly a quality incoming class, equal to any we've ever had and perhaps even the
best," remarked Coach Gillespie. A good example of how healthy Gillespie's program is can be
found by looking at the large contingent of Trojans in the Majors (Milwaukee has so many
Trojans it almost seems S.C. is their farm club).

THEY'RE BAAAAA-CK!

USC's victory over Penn State vaults them to next level, but they must avoid stumbles of past.

Southern California's 29-5 victory over Penn State in the Kickoff Classic in East
Rutherford, New Jersey was impressive, and on its face shows that the Trojans play great
defense, have an improved ground game, are off to a promising start, and allows coach Paul
Hackett to breathe a sigh of relief.

However, it was much more momentous than that. The win may be the most important
victory this program has enjoyed since a September, 1988 victory over Oklahoma at the
Coliseum.

Ted Tollner had coached at USC from 1983-86, winning a Rose Bowl in 1985, but he did
not beat UCLA or Notre Dame. Alumni perceived his performance as under-achieving at a time
when Troy was still regularly considered a contender for the National Championship.

Larry Smith was brought in, and in 1987 he led USC to a win over UCLA, but the season
ended with a disappointing loss to Michigan State in the Rose Bowl. In 1988, he had some of his
recruits in place, and senior quarterback Rodney Peete was a Heisman Trophy candidate.
Linebacker junior Seau and safety Mark Carrier anchored a defense that reminded people of the
Ronnie Lott years. A fair running attack complemented Peete's aerial skills.
After handling Boston College and getting by Stanford, USC hosted the Sooners in a game that promised to answer some questions about how good the team really was. OU was still a major power (just like Penn State still is), having won the National Championship under Barry Switzer in 1985. The Trojans controlled both lines of scrimmage in an impressive 23-7 win before 86,124 fans. This game spurred them almost all the way back. They came close to running the field, beating Troy Aikman and UCLA at the Rose Bowl. In the Notre Dame game, however, Peete suffered an injury and USC swallowed a galling defeat that reversed many of the gains of the Oklahoma win. In some ways the program has never truly recovered.

The Irish came to Los Angeles ranked number one, SC was number two, and in a "national championship" game played before 93,829, Notre Dame broke open a close halftime contest to win, 27-10. That game seemed to break SC's back. In a lackluster Rose Bowl performance, USC let Michigan beat them, 22-14. Over the next 10 years, they would get close, but always fall a day late and a dollar short.

In 1989, with Todd Marinovich at quarterback, the season started on the wrong foot with a loss to Illinois. One of the most talented teams SC has ever fielded did go 9-2-1 with a Rose Bowl win over Michigan, but they blew a 10-point lead, losing to Notre Dame at South Bend, and managed to tie a poor UCLA team.

In 1990, Marinovich engineered an impressive Kickoff Classic win over Syracuse, 34-16, but his personal problems affected the team's up-and-down year. They beat UCLA in a thriller, 45-42, but the next week had nothing left for Notre Dame in an 18-7 loss. By the second half of their pathetic 17-16 defeat at the hands of Michigan State in the John Hancock Bowl, it was obvious that Marinovich was a cancer that had spread to the whole team.

The gains of that September 24, 1988 victory over Oklahoma had been lost, first when the injured Peete was ineffective vs. Notre Dame, and finally when Marinovich's career, which had started with such promise for him and the program, ended in ignominy and scandal.

The wilderness years ensued. Larry Smith was fired. Rob Johnson starred at quarterback, but the running attack and defense could not support him. Under John Robinson in 1995, USC started 6-0, and on October 21 traveled to South Bend to play Notre Dame in their most important game since the aforementioned Oklahoma contest. If they had beaten the Irish that day, Troy would have had a chance to win the National Championship. Instead, they got smoked, 38-10, in a game that left them limp for the rest of the regular season. After tying Washington and losing to an undermanned UCLA team, the Trojans snuck in to the Rose Bowl, beating Northwestern in a nice win that barely made up for a "what might have been" season.<p>

Since then, this program has had to look for bright spots wherever they could find them. In 1996 the Notre Dame winless streak mercifully ended at 13. Robinson's teams squeaked to three less-than-impressive victories over underwhelming Notre Dame squads, but SC would not end a brutal eight-game losing skein at the hands of UCLA until 1999. Hackett and quarterback Carson Palmer were brought in in 1998, but their teams were unprepared in a Sun Bowl loss to Texas Christian, and in mistake-filled penalty-fests, including three blown 21-point leads (including the Notre Dame loss) in '99.

Which brings us to the events of Sunday, August 27, 2000 at Giants Stadium. Penn State is a team with real problems, and the controversy surrounding quarterback Rashard Casey did not help. However, in the 35 years that Joe Paterno has coached the Nittany Lions, they are always good. This team may not go 10-2, but they will get the seven wins that JoePa needs to tie Bear Bryant's all-time record.
The most impressive aspect of SC's win was tailback Sultan McCullough, a world-class speedster with moves, and the willingness to mix it up for the tough yards. Based on his 128-yard performance, the 6-foot, 185-pound sophomore looks to be the best SC player at this position since Marcus Allen. If he can return the team to the hardcore running attack that made them "Tailback U.", that will make Palmer much more effective.

Palmer was tentative, telegraphing a first quarter interception, failing to sense a couple of blindside tackles, and never establishing rhythm with wide receiver Kareem Kelly. However, his talent is undeniable, and there is ample confidence that with practice and more game experience, he will be one of the most exciting quarterbacks in the nation.

Speed and athleticism, combined with punishing size and strength, marked the Trojans' performance on both sides of the line of scrimmage, especially from linebacker Zeke Moreno, who may be the best at his position in college football. Speed also made up for inexperience in the defensive backfield, where Darrell Riddeaux and Kris Richard were there to break up Casey's passes. The loss to injury of Penn State receiver Eddie Drummond hurt Penn State in a big way.

SC's special teams came up huge, blocking a punt for a touchdown, while kicker David Newbury knocked in three field goals, including impressive 47- and 44-yarders. Sultan Abdul-Malik and Lonnie Ford dominated the defensive line for SC, whose defense inflicted punishing "lay 'em out" tackles on the outmanned Lions.

Now SC must take the next step. They have two weeks to prepare for Colorado at home, and play a favorable schedule that does not include Washington, their toughest competition in the Pacific-10 Conference. They must play UCLA at the Rose Bowl, but if the Bruins beat SC this year it will be a big upset. Notre Dame comes to town, and the Irish are way down with coach Bob Davie on the hot seat.

For Hackett, the challenge will be to keep his talented squad from stumbling, all the while meeting the high expectations of the LA media, which will be writing articles like this as long as he keeps winning. The UCLA or Notre Dame games look to be the next important games in the context of how this team fares in the historical context of things.

This writer has already predicted that Palmer will challenge for a Heisman, and I still hold to that assessment. However, if McCullough keeps putting up great rushing performances like he did Sunday, Heisman hype may not be directed only at Palmer. As far as honors are concerned, Moreno looks to be as good as any of the contenders for the Butkus Award, and Ford's performance vs. Penn State was of Outland Trophy calibre. These are high expectations, but the talent is there.

When the time comes to play the Bruins and Irish, if SC is undefeated they must maintain the discipline and preparedness of the Penn State game in order to avoid getting upset by their emotional rivals. If they can get into a National Championship bowl game, then anything can happen and it is too far away for even me to get into at this point, but the bottom line is this: USC is baaa-ck.

"I DIDN'T COME TO SC TO SIT ON MY BUTT IN MANHATTAN BEACH AND WATCH THE SUNSET"

The Trojans' rock'n'roll coach is one excited Baby Boomer.
"I've got my 'Jerry Garcia hat' on." Nobody at Pac-10 media day knew what Paul Hackett meant by that, but he is a child of the 1960s, who installed a vintage jukebox in his Manhattan Beach home.

The third-year Trojan coach cannot help making historical analogies with his 49er mentor, and USC legend John McKay.

"Bill Walsh's first two years were losing years," he says, "but they knew it's not about them, but about the process. The third year's the one at SC," he said of McKay's losing records in 1960 and 1961, followed by the Trojans' undefeated National Championship in 1962. Hackett's first two years were sub-par, too.

SC has great defense, led by senior linebacker Zeke Moreno, a 2000 Butkus Award contender.

"We've put a great group together, and as far as were concerned we want to win a National Championship," he says. "Our strength is in our experience with each other."

"Moreno's had two great seasons, and he has the experience to take it to the next level," says Hackett.

SC brings in a superb freshman class, led by Mater Dei's Glenn Davis Award-winning Matt Grootegoed.

"He has an opportunity to play strong safety immediately, he's one of the most advanced young freshmen we've ever recruited," says Hackett.

6-4, 300-pound senior defensive tackle Ennis Davis is completely recovered from nagging injuries, and promises to be a dominant All-American on an SC defense that is expected to be one of the best in the nation.

6-4, 220-pound senior linebacker Markus Steele is another Butkus nominee. Between Davis slowing runners up at the line, combined with Steele and Moreno in the middle, teams should find it tough running on SC.

All-American cornerback Antuan Simmons is out, but SC has terrific speed--the great equalizer--to replace him.

1999 Freshman All-American Darrell Riddeaux is a track star, and one of the best athletes on the team.

"Kris Richard is our most consistent cornerback," says Hackett of the 6-0, 180-pound senior who will play when they go to the nickel defense. Ifeanyi Ohalete will play a lot, too.

USC has speed everywhere. Sophomore tailback Sultan McCullough, another track star, will operate behind a dominant, experienced offensive line, led by senior Brentt McCaffrey.
"The offensive line believes in itself, they've taken the steps towards dominating," is Hackett's assessment.

Petros Papadakis is back from an injury.

"I'd a like to see a guy take the tailback position and `choke' it," says Hackett. "Petros Papadakis is amazing. He's focused on the season, zeroed in, a leader with real passion to lead the team."

Quarterback Carson Palmer (see related article) will have plenty of targets to throw to.

6-1, 185-pound sophomore Kareem Kelly was the state's 100-meter champion at Long Beach Poly, and last year was Pac-10 Freshman of the Year and a Freshman All-American.

Marcell Allmond is another track star who was all-everything at St. Paul High School, and promises great things at the other receiver spot.

6-4, 250-pound fourth-year starter Antoine Harris is an All-America candidate at tight end.

"Early in the season, we'll rely on our defense to win," says Hackett.

That includes the Kickoff Classic opener at The Meadowlands vs. Penn State.

"We’re honored as a university and as a football program to open the season in New York," says Hackett. "The defense is made up of a core of fourth and fifth-year seniors who sense the opportunity to make a difference. Last year was painful, but we finished the season with three wins, so the momentum carries over to this year."

Hackett was asked about the pressure of opening the season against the powerful Nittany Lions.

"Pressure?" repeats Hackett. "I didn't come here to sit on my butt in Manhattan Beach and look at the sunset. In New York, we'll be carrying the mantel of our conference into the first game. We've got fifth-year guys who were there when we lost to Penn State in 1996. Penn State will have 68,000 fans and we'll have 5,000, but it's a 'neutral' site," he adds, tongue in cheek. "If we're behind by 21 points in the second quarter we're in deep #@%*! It will be a serious measuring stick. Scrutiny? I'm well prepared from the 1970s for the level of it. I'm a Trojan, and a Trojan fan. Am I nuts? Probably."

Hackett is working the team hard in preparation for the Eastern heat and humidity at the Kickoff Classic, like he did in 1998 when he had the team prepared to outlast Drew Brees and Purdue in the Pigskin Classic opener, on one of the hottest days in Coliseum history.

"The great news is we don't play Washington," Hackett deadpanned when told that Huskie coach Rick Neuheisel said he "felt no remorse at all" about not facing SC.
"We're happy to get Washington State in LA this year," he added.

6-5, 280-pound Servite Super Prep All-American offensive tackle Joe McGuire "will be the most obvious first year player to make an impact" says Hackett, although Grootgeod and Banning High's 1999 All-American running back Chris Howard will make their bids.

"We have lots of new energy in our coaching staff," says Hackett of some changes made over the off-season. "Some guys were out of place before, but they're all workaholics. It's important to change after going 6-6.

"We were not disciplined enough last year. We had 16 penalties against Oregon, and made errors in judgement. People are counted on to be solid. We addressed the issues, and it won't be tolerated. How quickly will we improve? We expect to improve, the nature of SC is that we expect to win National Championships, we expect to win.

"We should have won the Stanford, Oregon and Notre Dame games <all lost after leading by 21>. We had missed assignments, lack of discipline, missed tackles."

Still, Hackett denies that was a consideration in the change of coaches.

All the stars are aligned in SC's favor this year. They have the talent and the schedule to have a great season, but if they fail again, Hackett will be feeling all the pressure and scrutiny he can handle!

**HEY, WILL THE REAL USC PLEASE STAND UP?**

When I was going through Army basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, I spent a lot of time reading the local newspaper. They kept talking about USC this and USC that. The USC in question was the University of South Carolina, located in nearby Columbia. You know those guys. Their mascot is a Gamecock. As in "How 'bout those 'cocks," or "Go cocks, go." If an incoming freshman football class included a group of young men who were considerably bigger than previous squads, editors down there are forced to write headlines like, "'Cocks are Bigger This Season" or "'Cocks Have Grown This Season".

I digress. What got under my skin was the constant referral to USC. As a US/C graduate (as in the University of Southern California), I was continually stuck between confusion and anger. How dare these guys call themselves USC? In Northern California, those close to the school refer to the University of Santa Clara as USC also, but their following is not what South Carolina's is. South Carolina annually is at or near the top of football attendance. Why is beyond me. This is one of the worst college football programs in the nation.

Lou Holtz, who is damn well familiar with who the hell USC really is, must be having a cow wearing all that USC garb. It is not just the name that gets me. They have copied the style and font so their hats and whatnot look just like Southern Cal hats. Is it any wonder that former Trojan athletic director Mike McGee is now in the big 'cock on campus in Columbia.
Not that the real USC has much to brag about about. They do not. Their once-vaunted football program is MEDIOCRE. They looked so bad against Oregon that one wonders whether they could even beat the other USC, and those guys are as dreadful as ever. Almost makes a guy wish he were a UCLA. Better yet, a UN. Naw, not the United Nations. University of Nebraska.

MAKING THE CASE FOR USC'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP BID

Steven Travers is the author of eight books. His latest, "The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Los Angeles Lakers" was released this week by Triumph Books, a division of New York publishing giant Random House. In September, "One Night, Two Teams, and the Game That Changed a Nation," the true story of how the 1970 USC-Alabama game helped end segregation in the South, was published. It is in development to be made into a major motion picture. In 2008, Travers's book on college football history, which ranks the top 25 all-time greatest programs in order, will be published. Travers can be contacted at USCSTEVE1@aol.com. His books can be purchased at:

http://www.amazon.ca/exec/obidos/search-handle-url?%5Fencoding=UTF8&search-type=ss&index=books-ca&field-author=Steven%20Travers

The 2007 college football season has seen every surprise that can be imagined, but there are more in store, folks. One of those is that the Southern California Trojans, considered down and out just a few weeks ago, can still win the National Championship. There are several scenarios in which this can occur.

With one week left in the regular season, USC is eighth in the BCS rankings. If Missouri beats Oklahoma in the Big 12 championship game, and West Virginia defeats Pittsburgh in their last Big East game, then those teams will play in New Orleans. If only one of them loses, then Ohio State will take their place. Both the Tigers and Mountaineers must lose for USC to sneak in. Improbable? Considering the crazy nature of this season, it seems less improbable and more likely. More insane things have happened week in and week out already. At this point it is almost expected.

So, if the top two teams lose, here is how USC gets in. First, the Trojans must beat UCLA at the L.A. Coliseum by a large margin. Two years ago USC beat the Bruins at this location, 66-19. Last year, UCLA ruined USC's chance for the BCS title game at the Rose Bowl. The "revenge factor" alone says Southern Cal would like to beat the Bruins, 50-10. This is not an impossibility. Add the "style points" factor and a blowout could occur.

USC would then finish the season 10-2 with a four-game winning streak. This already includes a 44-24 annihilation of 8-1 Arizona State in front of a fired-up road crowd and a national TV audience on Thanksgiving night. What America saw that night was the best team in college football. Mark May of ESPN said that. Does anybody want to play USC right now? If all the BCS contenders were polled on the single team they DO NOT want to play, USC would win that poll. If there were a play-off, USC would be favored to win it, just as they would have been
favored in 2002 when they finished 11-2 with an Orange Bowl blowout of Iowa while Ohio State and Miami acted like they did not want to win in the title game.

In 2007, USC has been ranked number one for five weeks, the most of any team. They opened the season number one, and some people even said they had the best team of all time. It certainly looked to be hype, and maybe it was to some extent, but right now it looks more like form is playing itself out; the cream rising to the top. Was everybody so wrong about USC? Apparently not.

Quarterback John David Booty was the Heisman Trophy favorite. Against Arizona State, Booty looked to be every bit of that. It now appears only an injury sustained against Stanford has prevented him from competing for the trophy. Maybe Tim Tebow is better. Maybe.

USC is INCHES away from being unbeaten and untied. With one loss right now, they would be ranked number one. They suffered an absolute deluge of injuries in September and October, leading people to believe the fiction that they were over-rated. Now they are healthy and rolling like Patton through the Low Countries. Their ability to withstand the injuries and still rise is indicative of their greatness and also what separates them from the pack.

Football mirrors society. A number of pretenders made their bid for the National Championship. They were "good time Charlies." As soon as injuries or setbacks appeared before them, they folded. This is the mark of the unimpressives, the losers and whiners, the second rate. When the going got tough, they decided to cut 'n' run. They lost heart. They did not have the courage to see the battle through, to do the hard work necessary to bring victory home because they failed to realize, as so many unimpressives do, that victory is the only option and it is worth fighting for. USC fought for it. Now their victory is rapidly becoming, not a contemplated possibility, but an accomplished past act! Only the real winners of society and sports reap such benefits.

Furthermore, USC may well be the "last man standing" because they have the depth other schools sorely lack. This is a program that recruits prep blue chippers to compete with each other; to wait their turn; to back up All-Americans. Heisman-quality stars arrive on coach Pete Carroll's doorstep without prompting just to be part of it. Down the stretch, when depth counts most, USC is at their best every year.

So, if after next Saturday Ohio State is in with one loss, and both Mizzou and West Virginia lose, how does USC get in? The answer is provided herein. Number four Georgia will not get in. First, they do not play a game that can impress voters and computers. Why? Because they did not make the SEC title game. Not only are the Bulldogs not the SEC champions, they are not even the SEC EAST winners. Bye, bye Bulldogs.

Kansas will say they should get in with one loss. Sorry, Jayhawks. When the lights were turned on and the opportunity presented itself, KU failed against Missouri. They will not be the Big 12 champs and, like Georgia, not even the Big 12 West champions. They played a weak schedule and have zero tradition. They have no further opportunity to redeem themselves. They are pretenders. Nice try.
Virginia Tech is sixth. First, they might lose to Boston College in the ACC championship game, but even if they do not, the Hokies - while sentimental favorites after an off-season shooting - will not have the imprimatur to ward off the juggernauts breathing down their necks. Their conference is not strong enough, their tradition lacks enough weight to withstand final scrutiny.

If Louisiana State beats Tennessee, which they well may not do, the Tigers and lame duck coach Les Miles will certainly jawbone that they are worthy. They probably need to beat the Volunteers by a big margin, which is not likely. They are disappointed and will have to dig deep to pick themselves up against a fired-up rival. The chances that they will do on a neutral field what Southern Cal accomplished at Sun Devil Stadium are not good at all. The comparison between USC and LSU, based on that with which has already been shown before thine eyes, does not favor Louisiana State.

Even if LSU does win big and captures the Southeastern Conference championship, it probably would not be enough. This is a team that had "half a hun' " hung on 'em, to quote Barry Switzer, by an Arkansas team beaten 70-17 and 50-14 (with most of the same players) by USC in the past two seasons. They have given up a lot of points in games when they needed to step up defensively but failed. Whereby Southern Cal is inches away from an unbeaten, untied year, LSU is inches away from a four- or five-loss 2007 season. In the same Thanksgiving showdown weekend in which USC responded with a 44-point blowout of a one-loss ASU squad on the road, LSU lost at home to an unranked opponent. They will not get to back in.

Oklahoma is already ranked behind Southern Cal anyway, but if they beat Missouri they will argue that they are worthy. They have not finished strong, however, losing in unimpressive fashion late in the season to Texas Tech when the chips were down. The Sooners have a strange habit of occasionally getting blown out; looking totally helpless. It has happened on several key occasions over the years. When they faced USC in the 2005 Orange Bowl, they were beaten so badly as to cause quarterback Jason White to say, "I'm embarrassed."

So, there you have the BCS championship game scenario, but wait. If Missouri and West Virginia meet at the Superdome, one of them will undoubtedly win the Bowl Championship Series title. They will not, however, automatically win the historically-more-legitimate Associated Press National Championship. Not by a long shot. Frankly, the winner would need to be darn impressive to overcome the winner of the Rose Bowl.

With USC beating UCLA, they would be the outright Pacific 10 Conference champion, their sixth straight Pac 10 title under Carroll. The Pac 10 has produced the most National Championships in football of any conference. They have also produced the most NCAA championships in all sports; men's and women's . . . basketball, baseball, track, you name. They have the most NFL players, the most Hall of Famers, the most MVPs in all sports, the most Olympians. They are the champions of history, and Southern Cal is the best of the best.

So, USC would play Ohio State in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day. It would immediately be accorded the status of the "best game of the bowl season." USC vs. Ohio State? Are you kidding?
How can Missouri and West Virginia compare with that? The Trojans and Buckeyes in Pasadena are dripping with more glory, more history, more greatness than any bowl game conceivable. This is Woody Hayes vs. John McKay, the "granddaddy of 'em all."

So, if Ohio State beats USC in unimpressive fashion, they very well could win the AP National Championship if the Mizzou-West Virginia winner plays like . . . West Virginia did in a number of their we-don't-really-seem-to-want-to-win games down the stretch this season. West Virginia 16, Mizzouri 13 vs. Ohio State 35, USC 10? Advantage: Buckeyes.

There is only problem with this, which is that the chances of Ohio State beating USC 35-10 are about as good as a one-legged man in a butt-kickin' contest. The Trojans own the Rose Bowl. The Bruins rent the place from September to December, but it is USC's winter residence, their house. They have dominated the Big 10 for decades. Check out footage of Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler walking in disgusted, dejected manner after a tough loss. Chances are 90 percent it is footage taken after losing to USC in Pasadena. Against USC and Carroll, the Big 10 has not fared any better in the Arroyo Seco. An 11-1 Michigan squad rolled in last year and got their clocks handed to them by Booty and a Trojan team that was not nearly as good as the current, healthy men of Troy.

A USC-Ohio State Rose Bowl (which would be Jim Tressel's first trip to Pasadena) would be the great showdown for supremacy of the 1990s. Right now, USC is the team of the decade. Their only competition so far is Ohio State. So, if USC beats the Buckeyes by a wide margin on January 1, and the Tigers-Mountaineers winner is unimpressive, could 11-2 USC, the pre-season number one, win their 12th National Championship courtesy of the AP poll? It is unquestionably a longshot; more so than Ohio State's excellent chances, but beating Ohio State big would sure turn a lot of heads. A 12th title, by the way, would break the current 11-all historical tie with rival Notre Dame, a team that has ceded the title "greatest college football program of all time" to USC over the past years!

One other scenario is possible. If between Missouri and West Virginia one wins and on loses, Ohio State would play the team that wins. This is the one scenario in which USC cannot win the title. They would need to play a great, storied power like Ohio State in order to generate the value of a National Championship. If they played LSU, Oklahoma or some other lesser light, it will not be enough.

Now get ready to hear something you have never heard before . . . because nobody has ever done it. Pete Carroll is 74-14 at USC (2001-07). Fair enough. Other coaches have similar records; Bobby Bowden, Bud Wilkinson, Barry Switzer, Howard Jones, John McKay, Knute Rockne, Jimmy Jones, Frank Leahy, Bear Bryant. But consider this: Carroll's teams have not lost by more than a touchdown since the October 2001 Notre Dame game. His team has been ahead, or threatening to tie or win with seconds left, or were tied in overtime, in 13 of those losses. In other words, with luck and a few good bounces, he could be 87-1 and closing in on a John Wooden-like seventh straight National Championships. Here is the list of coaches who, throughout the travails of Mankind, have a similar record: ZERO.
USC has not lost by more than two touchdowns since Paul Hackett was their coach in 2000. USC has been credited with sixteen national championships in its history. Unlike most other programs, they do not count all of them; they only count the legitimate eleven that they have earned. They do not try to say that the 1929, 1933, 1976, 1979, or 2002 Trojans were that year’s best, even though some organization or service did see fit to declare them just that. They do not use the perverse logic that a “national championship” can be awarded prior to a bowl loss, which if they did would theoretically let them print T-shirts proclaiming that in 1968 or 2005, for instance, well by gum the Trojans were “national champs.” Their eleven national titles tie them with Notre Dame, who also do not claim some of the national titles they could because they are not, as is the case with USC’s extra five, historically recognized as legitimate.

All-time bowl record: 29-16 (through 2006)
First round NFL draftees: 67 (through 2007)

Other programs count “national championships” from every Podunk “service” imaginable. They count those won when bowls were lost after the polls were closed; those won when they were on probation, and – perhaps the most rich of all – a consensus Associated Press and United Press International national title in a single season as two titles! Check the media guides and see for yourself.

None of USC’s titles were won in years in which they failed to win a bowl game. Each bowl victory was a major confrontation with a powerhouse from the Big 10, or in the early days with a powerhouse from the East or the South; always the very best that America had to offer. The challenge was met each time. In the years when bowl defeat against a worthy foe came the Trojans way, national championship glory did not. There is one exception to the Rose Bowl gauntlet; the 2005 55-24 BCS Orange Bowl victory over Oklahoma which, by the way, was referred to by longtime college football observer Lee Corso as “the greatest game I ever saw any team play.”

National champions – legitimate and historically revised
Modern era/post-World War I (1919-2006)

1. Southern California (7 Heismans) 11 legitimate
1. Notre Dame (7 Heismans) 11 legitimate
3. Alabama 9 legitimate
4. Oklahoma (4 Heismans) 6 legitimate
5. Ohio State (7 Heismans) 5 legitimate
6. Nebraska (3 Heismans)  
   5 legitimate

7. Miami (2 Heismans)  
   5 legitimate

8. Minnesota (1 Heisman)  
   1934, 1935, 1936, 1940, 1941  
   5 legitimate

9. Michigan (3 Heismans)  
   1923, 1933, 1948, 1997  
   4 legitimate

10. California  
    1920, 1921, 1922, 1937  
    4 legitimate

11. Texas (2 Heismans)  
    1963, 1969, 2005  
    3 legitimate

12. Army (3 Heismans)  
    1944, 1945  
    2 legitimate

13. Florida (2 Heismans)  
    1996, 2006  
    2 legitimate

13. Florida State (2 Heismans)  
    1993, 1999  
    2 legitimate

15. Louisiana State (1 Heisman)  
    1958, 2003  
    2 legitimate

15. Penn State (1 Heisman)  
    1982, 1986  
    2 legitimate

15. Pittsburgh (1 Heisman)  
    1937, 1976  
    2 legitimate

15. Stanford (1 Heisman)  
    1926, 1940  
    2 legitimate

20. Georgia (2 Heismans)  
    1980  
    1 legitimate

20. Auburn (2 Heismans)  
    1957  
    1 legitimate

22. Brigham Young (1 Heisman)  
    1984  
    1 legitimate

22. Syracuse (1 Heisman)  
    1959  
    1 legitimate

22. UCLA (1 Heisman)  
    1954  
    1 legitimate

22. Texas A&M (1 Heisman)  
    1939  
    1 legitimate

22. Texas Christian (1 Heisman)  
    1938  
    1 legitimate

22. Princeton (1 Heisman)  
    1919  
    1 legitimate

22. Colorado (1 Heisman)  
    1990  
    1 legitimate

29. Tennessee  
   1 legitimate
If there is a single piece of evidence that nudges Southern California over Notre Dame for ultimate historical supremacy, it is the fact that their national championships came with the price tag of bowl victory while seven of the Irish titles did not. From 1925 to 1968, Notre Dame was the champions of 1929, 1930, 1943, 1946, 1947, 1949 and 1966. Their “bowl game” was always against USC. USC, champions in 1928, 1931, 1932, 1939, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1974, 2003 and 2004, always had to beat not just Notre Dame in Los Angeles and South Bend, but UCLA, too. No bowl defeats mar there national title record.

The second factor favoring Southern California is the commonsensical notion that greater credence be placed on modern events as opposed to “ancient history.” There is no question that Notre Dame is the Rock <ED: CAPITALIZE Rock FOR KNUTE ROCKNE> that college football is built on, but much of that foundation is the sturdy rivalry with the Trojans that, along with the Rose Bowl, nationalized the game.

USC has the edge in that they were a power in the early years after World War I (the best record in the nation, 1920s; three national titles, 1930s); a steady power in the 1940s and 1950s; the greatest dynasty ever in the 1960s and 1970s; usually a top twenty-five, bowl-bound team in the 1980s and 1990s; and now the champions of the twenty-first century (2000s). They are not a nineteenth century Ivy League relic, nor do they do build their record on the backs of championships won in the rugby era (1900s, 1910s). They earned four national championships to Notre Dame’s three prior to World War II. In the decade in which Knute Rockne reigned supreme, it was the Trojans who actually had a better record than the Irish.

Number one overall pro football draft choices

1. Southern California 5
1. Notre Dame 5
1. Alabama 5
4. Miami 3
4. Ohio State  3  
4. Oklahoma  3  
4. Nebraska  3  
8. Michigan  1  

Bowl win-loss records  
1. Southern California  29-16  
2. Alabama  30-21-3  
3. Penn State  25-12-2  
4. Oklahoma  24-15-1  
5. Miami  19-14  
6. Texas  23-21-2  
7. Nebraska  22-22  
8. Michigan  18-20  
9. Ohio State  18-20  
10. Notre Dame  *13-15  

*Holds NCAA record, most consecutive bowl losses (9), 1994-2006  

Southern California: 29-16 (Rose: 22-9, Orange: 2-0, Cotton: 1-0, Fiesta: 0-1)  
Alabama: 30-21-3 (Sugar: 8-4, Orange: 4-4, Rose: 4-1-1, Cotton: 3-4)  
Miami: 19-14 (Orange: 6-3, Sugar: 2-2, Rose: 1-1, Fiesta: 0-1)  
Michigan: 18-20 (Rose: 8-12, Fiesta: 1-0, Orange: 1-1, Sugar: 0-1)  
Nebraska: 22-22 (Orange: 8-9, Sugar: 3-1, Fiesta: 2-4, Cotton: 1-2, Rose: 0-2)  
Penn State: 25-12-2  
Texas: 23-21-2  

Super Bowl appearances (through 2005)  
1. Southern California  92  
2. Miami  80  
3. Michigan  62  
4. Nebraska  58  
5. Alabama  55  

Pro Football Hall of Fame  
Southern California  14 (11 players, 3 coaches through 2007)  
Notre Dame  9
Michigan  7  
Alabama   6  
Ohio State  6  
Penn State  5  
Miami     3  
Texas     3  
Nebraska  3  

Super Bowl - winning team (through 2005)

1. Southern California  45  
2. Notre Dame          38  
3. Penn State          35  

USC’s “teammate Heismans”

1979 Charles White  
1981 Marcus Allen  

2002 Carson Palmer  
2004 Matt Leinart  
2004 Matt Leinart  
2005 Reggie Bush  

Pro football draft choices (through 2006)

1. Southern California  458 (430 (NFL, 28 AFL)  
2. Notre Dame          453  
3. Oklahoma           327  
4. Alabama            301  
5. Ohio State         316  
6. Miami              283  

National championships (1970-2006)

1. Southern California  5  
1. Nebraska            5  
1. Miami               5  
4. Alabama            4  
4. Oklahoma           4  
6. Notre Dame          3  

Bowl Championship Series national championships (1998-2006)
1. Southern California: 1, 2004 (1-1 in BCS championship games)
1. Ohio State: 1, 2002 (1-1 in BCS championship games)
1. Miami: 1, 2001 (1-1 in BCS championship games)
1. Oklahoma: 1, 2000 (1-1 in BCS championship games)
1. Texas: 1, 2005 (1-0 in BCS championship games)
6. Nebraska: 0 (0-1 in BCS championship game)
10. Alabama: 0
10. Michigan: 0
10. Notre Dame: 0
10. Penn State: 0

Streaking Trojans in the Pete Carroll Era

15-3 (2001-02)
27-4 (2001-03)
20-1 (2001-03)
23-3 (2002-03)
40-4 (2001-04)
33-1 (2002-04)
29-1 (2002-04) 30 games
36-3 (2002-03)
29-1 (2002-03) 30 games
22-0 (2003-04)
54-9 (2001-05)
50-10 (2001-05) 60 games
52-5 (2001-05)
52-4 (2001-05)
46-4 (2001-05) 50 games
35-2 (2002-05)
29-1 (2002-05) 30 games
45-1 (2002-05)
45-2 (2002-05)
48-2 (2002-05) 50 games
48-3 (2002-05)
47-3 (2002-05) 50 games
34-0 (2003-06)
34-1 (2003-06)
65-12 (2001-06)
60-10 (2001-06) 70 games
64-11 (2001-05)
63-7 (2001-06) 70 games
58-5 (2001-06)
55-5 (2001-06) 60 games
62-6 (2001-06)
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>25-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>6-5-1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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**Heisman Trophy winners**

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<tbody>
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**Rose Bowl records**

**By conference**

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<td>Southern-Southeastern</td>
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<td>Independents</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military service-academies</td>
<td>2-1-2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent-&quot;Ivy League&quot;</td>
<td>2-2-1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Big East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
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**By school**

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>8-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>7-6-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stanford 5-6-1
UCLA 5-6
Ohio State 4-7
Alabama 4-1-1
Wisconsin 3-3
Michigan State 3-1
Illinois 3-1
California 2-5-1
Iowa 2-3
Texas 2-0
Washington State 1-3
Oregon 1-3
Pittsburgh 1-3
Oregon State 1-2
Arizona State 1-1
Purdue 1-1
Northwestern 1-1
Penn State 1-1
Minnesota 1-1
Mare Island Marines 1-1
Oklahoma 1-0
Miami 1-0
Georgia 1-0
Columbia 1-0
Georgia Tech 1-0
Notre Dame 1-0
Harvard 1-0
Great Lakes 1-0
Nebraska 0-2
Navy 0-0-1
Washington & Jefferson 0-0-1
Camp Lewis 0-1
Pennsylvania 0-1
Tennessee 0-2
Duke 0-2
Indiana 0-1
Southern Methodist 0-1
Tulane 0-1
Brown 0-1

The "granddaddy of 'em all" represents the single greatest barometer of college football excellence there is. The Rose Bowl is the most prestigious of all the bowl games; the oldest, the most established, the one generating the most attention. It has more consistently than any other game pitted the two best teams in the country. It has produced more national champions and decided more titles than any other bowl by a long shot. Michigan dominated in the first Rose
Bowl; the Big 10 in the first decade of the post-World War II arrangement. The overall record of this game demonstrates Pacific Coast superiority.


The Rose Bowl was usually, for all practical purposes, a "national championship game" until World War II. The winner in Pasadena was assured of national championship status in one way or another in 1921 (Cal over Ohio State), 1925 (Notre Dame over Stanford), 1926 (Alabama over Washington), 1927 (Stanford tied Alabama), 1932 (USC over Tulane), and 1940 (USC over Tennessee). After the war, both teams knew ahead of time that if they won, some form of the "brass ring" would come their way in 1963 (USC over Wisconsin), 1969 (Ohio State over USC), 2002 (Miami over Nebraska), and 2006 (Texas over USC). Twice, tie games still produced national champions. In 1922, Cal tied Washington & Jefferson and won the title. As mentioned, the 1927 Stanford-Alabama tie resulted in splitting the title.

Georgia Tech’s 1929 win over Cal vaulted them to national championship status in some of the systems. Georgia argued that they should have been the national champions after beating UCLA in 1943. The Rose Bowl also had the effect of knocking teams out of the national title picture (in some cases the systems as polls were closed) when they lost to non-national championship contenders. These included Pitt (to Stanford, 1928), SMU (to Stanford, 1936), Duke (to USC, 1939 and to Oregon State, 1942), UCLA (to Illinois, 1947), Cal (to Northwestern, 1949; to Ohio State, 1950; and to Michigan, 1951), Ohio State (to Stanford, 1971), Michigan (to Stanford, 1972), Ohio State (to UCLA, 1976), Ohio State (to USC, 1980), and Arizona State (to Ohio State, 1997). In 1961 Minnesota lost to Washington. They retained the AP and UPI "titles" from before the game, but history illegitimatizes them. Michigan State’s 1966 loss to UCLA relegates their "UPI title" to the broom closet, as well.

On January 1, 1980, USC’s win over Ohio State (number one had they prevailed) would have given the Trojans the national championship if Alabama had lost that night to Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl. In 1995 Penn State’s win over Oregon would have given the Nittany Lions the final number one ranking had Nebraska lost the Orange Bowl to Miami.

In college football there never has been a play-off. The Rose Bowl traditionally represents the greatest historical arbiter of national success. It is the closest thing the game has to a Super Bowl or a Final Four. The polls and the systems are fraught with obvious miscalculations and oversights. The Rose Bowl therefore is the best place to determine a century’s worth of superiority on the field of play.
It is not a perfect system, of course. The game tends to favor the Pac-10 team, especially USC and UCLA. It is played right next to their town. In UCLA's case, it is played in their stadium. While the ticket distribution is as even as possible, naturally the L.A. and West Coast schools play in front of *de facto* "home crowds."

Call it a "historical accident," or perhaps a "self-fulfilling prophesy," but the Rose Bowl game has had the effect of elevating USC and the Pac-10 above other teams and conferences. The legend of USC is made in large part by the Rose Bowl. The legend of the Rose Bowl is made in large part by USC. It is not unlike the USC-Notre Dame rivalry. What came first? Who helps whom the most?

2005 USC Trojans: Greatest college football dynasty ever?
By Steven Travers

The 2005 college football season is right around the corner. Pete Carroll's University of Southern California Trojans completed the most perfect season in collegiate football history in 2004 and enter the new campaign bidding for three titles: (1) Greatest single-season college football team of all time; (2) Greatest college football dynasty of all time; and (3) Greatest historical college football program of all time. Lofty titles, to be sure. Controversial and worthy of argument? You bet. Justifiable hype? You got that right, too.

There have been many "perfect" teams; that is, teams that went undefeated and untied en route to a consensus National Championship. USC itself has enjoyed their fair share of these kinds of wire-to-wire perfect seasons. But the stars were never aligned for any team quite like the 2004 Trojans (with the exception of the 2005 Trojans). First of all, they were the sixth team to be ranked number one in the nation from the pre-season polls through the bowl games. USC is the only team to do it twice. The 1972 Trojans, considered by many to be the greatest team of all time, accomplished the feat. But SC was also ranked number one from the end of the 2003 regular season through the bowls, carried that right through 2004 without interruption, and every pre-season collegiate football publication in America has them ranked a consensus number one going into the upcoming season.

The 2005 Trojans boast the Heisman Trophy winner, two-time senior All-American quarterback Matt Leinart. His teammate, All-American junior running back Reggie Bush, was a New York finalist for the award. USC won a repeat National Championship, a feat rarely done. They have a nations-longest 22-game winning streak. They beat Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, a game that was previewed as the greatest game in college football history. No less an expert than Lee Corso said the Trojans' performance vs. the Sooners was the best he has ever seen. Period.

Possibly, Nebraska's thrashing of Florida in the National Championship game of January 1996 was as impressive. Possibly.

The 1944-45 Army Cadets featured a similar winning streak and two Heisman winners, Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis. There are other teams that compare, but nobody has done it quite the way Carroll's team is doing it. A few came close. The 1983 Nebraska Cornhuskers featured
an undefeated regular season that included winners of the Heisman and Outland Trophies. They lost to Miami in the Orange Bowl. The 2003 Oklahoma Sooners looked to be on a similar path, but their Heisman winner, Jason White, faltered in the Big 12 championship game as well as the Orange Bowl.

In light of USC's recent dominance, it is worth considering their place in history. Not just the current Trojans, but USC's football program going back to the beginning of the 20th Century. It is time to take the mantle of "greatest program in the history of college football" away from the struggling Notre Dame Fighting Irish, and lay it squarely with the deserving new champions from USC. Furthermore, USC continues to lay claim to the greatest historical athletic program in college history, as well.

The two-time defending National Champions are a dynasty. Leinart returns for his senior year, having turned down a for-sure number one draft selection in 2005. The team will be better than they were last season. Leinart may or may not be the Heisman favorite (as he was all of last year), but he will become a three-time All-American. He could walk away from his career with more honors than any player ever; three National Championships (?), two Heismans (?), the Johnny Unitas Award, the Walter Camp Award, the Maxwell Trophy, the Davey O'Brien Award, et al. He could be the number one pick in the NFL 2006 draft.

Leinart's top competition for the Heisman, the '06 number one draft pick (and team MVP) will be last year's team MVP, Bush. Leinart and Bush are the favorites (along with Oklahoma's Adrian Petersen) for the coveted Heisman come December. It could very likely be another re-match of the Trojans vs. the Sooners; Leinart and Bush vs. Petersen; on Pasadena's Rose Bowl turf come January in the BCS National Championship game. No matter how impressive Oklahoma may be in the regular season, they would enter such a matchup with heavy psychology working against them.

As for Bush, he will have to make similar decisions next January like the one Leinart made earlier this year. Bush may be looking at being the NFL's top pick, or close to it. He is being favorably compared to the Raiders' Hall of Fame-to-be wide receiver Tim Brown, an all-purpose superstar in the Bush mode when he starred at Notre Dame in the 1980s. Bush also may be compelled to stay in school for the same reasons Leinart did, only more so. Bush may want to go after a fourth straight National Championship, Oklahoma's 47-game winning streak (which can be equaled in USC's last regular season game of 2006), a third straight All-American season, a second straight Heisman, and all the other bells and whistles that go with such greatness. All followed by a pro number one draft selection in 2007, which would make him USC's third number one pick in five years (Carson Palmer, 2003; Leinart, 2006; Bush, 2007).

The 2003-04 Trojans are very possibly the greatest two-year dynasty ever. If they win a third title in 2005, that will be a first. They lost a couple of linebackers, but aside from Leinart and Bush, running backs LenDale White and Herschel Dennis return, the whole offensive line returns, the tight ends and receivers are back, and the defense will be, for the most part, experienced. The 2005 Trojans have the potential to be the greatest single-season team ever assembled, better even than the 1972 Trojans. Soph-to-be Jeff Byers was the nation's best
lineman coming out of high school and could win the Outland Trophy before graduating. Soph-to-be linebacker Keith Rivers was the top prep at his position and may garner a Butkus trophy some day.

After Leinart leaves for the NFL, USC will re-tool at quarterback with one of two blue chip recruits. In 2005, John David Booty will be a red-shirt sophomore. He was the top prep quarterback in America at Louisiana's Evangel Christian High School. His competition? Mark Sanchez, the top prep quarterback in the U.S. at Mission Viejo High (the nation's number two team) in Orange County, California in 2004. USC has had the number one recruiting class in the country for four years in a row. The 2004 class was considered the greatest of all time. The 2005 class is almost as good. The pipeline is endless. In light of the fact that they enter this season ranked number one, favored to win their third National Championship in a row, they are worthy of continued hype. Consider that if Troy runs the table in '05, their winning streak will probably be 35. With either Booty or Sanchez living up to the challenge, maybe with senior running back Bush winning the Heisman and starring with a cast headlined by juniors Rivers and Byers, the 2006 Trojans could challenge Oklahoma's 47-game winning streak of the 1950s. Now we are looking at four National Championships in a row, but wait, there is more. Booty could quarterback the team in 2006 and 2007. Sanchez would be a red-shirt junior and senior in 2008-09. Considering that the last two SC quarterbacks (Carson Palmer in 2002 and Leinart in '04) won the Heisman, USC could conceivably come away with four more of the trophies before the end of this decade. The scenario could be:

2005: Senior quarterback Matt Leinart, USC.
2006: Senior running back Reggie Bush, USC.
2007: Senior USC quarterback John David Booty, USC (Oklahoma running back Adrian Petersen will be a pro by then).
2009: Senior quarterback Mark Sanchez, USC.

Number one NFL draft picks? Aside from Leinart and Bush, consider Rivers, Byers, Booty, Sanchez…these are just the obvious possibilities. Let's go back to Carson Palmer and the 2002 Trojans. Palmer won the Heisman and was the NFL's number one draft choice. He is currently starting for the Cincinnati Bengals after signing a $14 million bonus. The 2002 Trojans finished 11-2, were co-Pacific 10 champs, and won the Orange Bowl. They finished fourth in the nation, but the pundits were in agreement that by that season's end, they were the best team in the country, even though Ohio State defeated a lackluster Miami squad in the BCS title game. Had their been a play-off, SC would have won.

In 2003, USC won the National Championship when the AP voted them number one following a victory over Michigan in the Rose Bowl. Considering that they had a spectacular wide receiver, Mike Williams, a comparison of the 2003 and 2004 teams may very well favor the '03 squad. The '05 team, however, will be better than anybody - ever!

How good is SC? Consider that the All-American Williams had his NCAA eligibility taken away prior to 2004. Had he played, he would have been in New York instead of Bush, and he may well have won the Heisman. Bush just took his place and the beat went on. Speaking of first round
picks, Williams was the top selection of the Minnesota Vikings despite being out of the limelight for one year. Future drafts promise to be SC highlight films. Every year. But wait, there's still more.

Coach of the Year? In 2003 year it was Carroll. The only reason he does not win it every year is because they like to spread those kinds of things around. Give it to him every second year. This guy has gone through Troy's old nemeses, UCLA and Notre Dame, like Patton's Army charging through the Low Countries. In four years, he has presided over (through January 4, 2005) back-to-back National titles, two Heisman winners, one NFL number one draft pick, two Orange Bowl titles, one Rose Bowl title, four bowl appearances, three Pac 10 championships, four national-best recruiting classes, a wire-to-wire number one perfect season, a 22-game winning streak, a number one poll ranking for 15 weeks running (and still counting), three straight undefeated Novembers and (take your pick) records of 25-1 (2003-04), 36-3 (2002-04) or 33-1 (since October, 2002). Those are the facts. After that comes the speculation, the predictions, the hype. Has any coach ever done more in his first four years? Probably not.

By the end of 2006, the line on Carroll could be, in six seasons, a re-Pete turned into a three-Pete turned into a fourth consecutive National Championships, four Heisman winners, three NFL number one draft choices, two Rose Bowl titles, six bowl appearances, five Pac-10 titles, six national-best recruiting classes, three wire-to-wire number one poll rankings (45 weeks and counting), five straight undefeated Novembers, and records of 51-1 (2003-06), 62-3 (2002-06), 59-1 since October of 2002, 48-0 since October 2003, and 68-9 in his career.

That does not even count the full promise of his last couple national-best recruiting classes reaching the fruition of their senior years, led by the likes of Booty and Sanchez adding to the list of Heismans, national titles and NFL number one picks. Nobody has ever been this good.

When a team is this incredible, however, watch not just for undefeated seasons and National Championships, but watch out for college kids reading their press clippings and being shot at from all sides by a nation of teams out to beat them. It happened to the aforementioned Cornhuskers and the Sooners. Carroll's team had their share of off-field problems this last winter. Offensive coordinator Norm Chow split. A few players ran into problems with grades and the law.

Legendary Alabama coach Paul "Bear" Bryant won three National Championships in the 1960s, including back-to-back titles from 1964-65. In 1966, Ken Stabler led the Crimson Tide to an undefeated season, but the "Catholic vote" gave the title to Notre Dame. In the next couple of seasons, amid social change in the South and throughout the nation, Bear's program faltered. What happened?

"We won National Championships with underdogs," recalls former Bryant assistant coach Clem Gryska. "The talent was not the best, but we played as a team. When we started winning on a national level, everybody wanted to come here; kids from Florida, California, the Midwest. They were stars but brought prima donna attitudes, and we lost because of that. We only started
winning again when we went back to the basics." That meant integrating the program and winning three national titles in the 1970s.

In 1979, USC entered the season as the consensus number one. Experts were saying that team, like this season's, could contend for the title "greatest college football team ever." They were the defending co-National Champions and heralded that season's Heisman Trophy winner, Charles White, along with other stalwarts like Anthony Munoz. Not quite mid-way into the season, they took on Stanford at the Coliseum. At halftime the Trojans led 21-0 en route to another stomping. In the second half, freshman quarterback John Elway directed the Cardinal to three touchdowns, SC's offense stalled, and that 21-21 tie (before the advent of overtime) was just enough to deny them the national title along with the "greatest ever" label.

In 1980, the best prep quarterback available was Escondido, California's Sean Salisbury. SC legend Sam Cunningham told his alma mater about his brother, Randall, in Santa Barbara, and asked if he would start. He was told Randall would be offered a ride but the job was Salisbury's. Randall went to UNLV and then made millions with the NFL's Eagles. Salisbury was a bust. SC lost coach John Robinson to the Rams, went on probation, and took 20 years to recover fully.

Troy thought they were back when, in 1987-88 under Larry Smith, they went to back-to-back Rose Bowls, were 10-0 going into the '88 Notre Dame game, featured Junior Seau, and recruited the all-time prep passing leader, Todd Marinovich. By 1990, Marinovich was a problem child and in '91 they lost to Memphis State!

Notre Dame under Lou Holtz won it all in 1988, and seemed on the verge of a real dynasty. Then came Ron Paulus, who never won any of the "two or three Heismans" Beano Cook predicted of him.

In January, 2003, defending National Champion Miami rode a 34-game winning streak into the BCS Fiesta Bowl. Had they won, they would have achieved the rare back-to-back championship and been a team for the ages. So close, yet so far. Ohio State beat them, and in the last two seasons the Hurricanes have been human.

These are just two of many examples that USC should look to and consider cautionary tales. It does not take much to derail a team when they are riding in the clouds. Bad recruiting (will Booty and Sanchez be another Salisbury and Paulus?), drugs (Marinovich), coaches leaving for the NFL (Robinson did and some say Carroll considers his pro work undone), NCAA violations (their first-half ’80s teams), or just a slip against great competition (’79 SC, ’83 Nebraska, ’02 Miami, ’03-’04 Oklahoma) can be enough to derail a team and separate the great from the legendary.

Unlike the NFL, a single loss (or tie) can upset the apple cart. USC is the hottest ticket in America's hottest town, the toast of Hollywood, the biggest thing in a media hothouse that does not have a pro football franchise and whose NBA team is yesterday. They set the all-time USC attendance record in 2003 and broke that in 2004. For 20-year old student-athletes, this is a major
challenge, but they overcame it in 2004 and, under Carroll, appear capable of continuing their focus.

It is fun to talk about, and at SC, a school that went through a long (13 years or 20 years, depending on your standards) down period, it is especially fun. Their fans are about as giddy as the Republicans when Dwight Eisenhower saved that party after 20 years of the New Deal in 1952.

In light of USC's new status, below is the All-Time College Football Top 25 rankings, followed by the Top 25 Greatest Single-Season teams in college football history. The greatest college football teams are listed chronologically; the best team for each decade; the best single-season team each decade, followed by great programs in back-to-back, three-year, five-year, 10/15-year and 20/25-year periods; the most prominent dynasties and the coaches behind them; and for good measure the Top 25 Collegiate Athletic Programs of All-Time, the Top College Basketball Programs, and the Top 20 College Baseball Programs ever. A few prep dynasties are mentioned for good measure.

It is subjective and opinionated. It is meant to stir debate, controversy and argument. It is not written in stone. Extra credit goes to the more modern powers. Miami's success in the 1980s is more impressive than Cal's "Wonder Teams" after World War I. Oklahoma's current run is as almost as impressive as the one they accomplished in the 1950s. The game has changed. Competition, money, television, scholarship limits, NCAA rules, recruiting violations and parity all play a part in this evaluation. To the extent that the so-called "modern era" began, trace it to 1960, which is subjective, yes, but as good an embarkation point as any. It was in the 1960s when the players starting getting bigger, the equipment up to speed, the coaching techniques improved, and the color of the player's skin became increasingly something other than white.

Based upon history, one is increasingly impressed with USC. Overall, Notre Dame's ranking as the greatest college football program of all time has to take a back seat to their biggest rivals from the West Coast. The Irish still have the most National Championships (SC now has 11), the most Heisman Trophy winners (seven to SC's and Ohio State's six), holds a 42-29-5 lead over the Trojans in their inter-sectional rivalry, and trace their glory days back to when Knute Rockne invented the forward pass in time to beat favored Army in 1913. However, Notre Dame has struggled too much in the modern decades.

Notre Dame was the best college team under Rockne in the decade of the 1920s and under Frank Leahy in the 1940s. They had another major "era of Ara" (Parseghian) in the 1960s and '70s, and are listed among the top two-year dynasties (1946-47), 5-year dynasties (1943-47, 1973-77) and have three dynasties that are included among the 10/15-year period. Furthermore, they are Notre Dame, and all that that stands for: "Win one for the Gipper," the Catholic Church, "Touchdown Jesus," Ronald Reagan, "Rudy," "subway alumni," the Four Horsemen outlined against a blue-gray October sky, "wake up the echoes..."

Notre Dame's fans are the most intense and loyal. They are the team that played in Yankee Stadium, in Soldier Field, at the Coliseum. Many of their historic games were against SC. The tradition of these two teams are the best and the oldest.
For decades, the number two team was Southern California. This was not a coincidence. No rivalry in sports (or politics or war, probably) has done so much to elevate both sides as the USC-Notre Dame tradition. It put both schools on the national map. It pits, as SC assistant coach Marv Goux put it, "the best of the East vs. the best of the West." It matches the Catholic school with their Midwestern values against the flash 'n' dazzle of Hollywood, and it has never failed to live up to expectations.

Beginning in the 1980s, however, SC dropped while Notre Dame stayed at or near the top throughout the Lou Holtz era. Other contenders emerged. Miami and Florida State ascended to the top. Nebraska left opponents in the dust. Programs like Alabama and Oklahoma had, like SC, faltered, but regained their footing. Tennessee, Georgia, LSU and other teams, many in the South, rose in prominence. This was a direct result of integration and its impact has been very positive, but a school like Southern California could no longer lay claim to black athletes that were spurned by the SEC or the Southwestern Conference.

SC began to win awards and recognition for its academic excellence, and it became an article of faith that this was the trade-off; great football teams and great students are not mutually compatible. All of it was B.S. Pete Carroll proved that.

Five years ago, a Top 25 listing of the Greatest College Football Programs of All-Time would have shown USC to have slipped. However, in light of their National Championships and continuing favored status, Troy is now ahead of Notre Dame and in the top spot.

Long dynasties are hard to come by in college football, but as the following lists show, SC has a long history of doing just that. It is for this reason, combined with the glow of being Notre Dame's biggest rival, its great inter-city tradition with UCLA, and a history that goes back farther than almost any program (Michigan and Notre Dame are the only schools that go back as far and are still powers) that Southern California is not just first all-time in football but first among all athletic programs (and first by a wide margin in baseball).

The Greatest College Football Team in history is generally considered to be John McKay's 1972 Trojans. Just ask Keith Jackson, who ought to know. In addition, SC claims the best single-season team in the 1920s (1928), '30s (1931) and 2000s (2004). They are considered the best team of the decade of the 1930s, 1960s, 1970s, and now the 2000s.

Further proof of SC's ability to maintain a tradition is their consistency. The top dynasty period in history was the John McKay/John Robinson era lasting from the early 1960s until the 1980s. The Howard Jones "Thundering Herd" teams of the 1920s and '30s also ranks highly.

Among the best three-year periods ever, none is better than SC's run from 1972-74 (how about SC from 2002-04, or after next year from 2003-05?). Oklahoma deserves mention from 1971-73, or 1973-75. Among 5/6-year periods, consider three of Troy's eras (1967-72, the best of anybody, followed by 1974-79 and 1928-32).

The best 10/15-year period? USC from 1967 to 1979, but that is not all. Also ranked is the period 1962-72 and 1928-39. Among great long-term dynasties (20/25 years), nobody beats Southern California from 1962-81, when they won five National Championships and four Heisman Trophies. The Trojans easily have the most professionals, the most first round draft picks, the most Hall of Famers, the most Pro Bowlers and the most All-Americans. They are, undisputedly, a football factory. The empirical evidence cannot be argued against.

On top of all this, USC counts the most Major League baseball players, the most baseball Hall of Famers, the most All-Stars and various dominant players. Despite not being known for basketball, a disproportionate number of Trojans from the 1940s and '50s are considered hoops pioneers. The "triangle offense" was invented at SC, and such stalwarts as Bill Sharman, Alex Hannum and Tex Winter played together before induction in Springfield. USC also boasts (along with UCLA) the most Olympians, the most Olympic champions, and if they had been a country in 1976, they would have placed third in total medals at the Montreal Games.

Alabama fans certainly would argue against Trojan football hegemony, and they have plenty of ammunition. They were a national power as far back as the 1930s when Don Hutson starred there. However, they slipped (as did USC during the same years) until the Bear Bryant era. Bryant's dominant period, lasting from 1961 to 1979, parallels McKay's (and Robinson's) and is as impressive as any ever. However, the Tide was all white until SC's Sam "Bam" Cunningham showed them, in Bear's own (alleged) words, "what a football player looks like" in 1970. After SC's 42-21 victory at Birmingham, L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray welcomed 'Bama "back into the Union."

The Crimson Tide experienced a down period after Bear departed, regained its place with the 1992 national title, but inexplicably fell from grace for another decade after that. Their recent embarrassment in hiring Mike Price only to fire him for cavorting with strippers is indicative of their malaise.

Oklahoma's teams in the 1950s dominated as thoroughly as any in history, but that is a long time ago. They were not a major power prior to that decade. The Chuck Fairbanks/Barry Switzer teams of the 1970s and '80s were as impressive as any that have ever taken the field (and pockmarked by scandal and probation), but they became downright mediocre after Brian Bozworth's departure. Bob Stoops, however, has them right back where they were before, and then some.

Miami is rated highly based purely on unreal dominance in the 1980s and for maintaining an 18-year run from 1983-2001 ('02) that approaches SC's 1962-81 dynasty. However, until Howard Schnellenberger (by whatever means he did it) made them a power in '83, they were a college football lightweight, plus their championship rosters too often resembled police reports.
Ohio State is sixth and could be higher. However, until Woody Hayes came along, Michigan, not Ohio State, was the dominant Big 10 team. Woody's long tenure is very impressive, lasting from his 1954 National Championship (split with UCLA) until Archie Griffin's second Heisman campaign (1975). The 1968 Buckeyes are one of the most storied teams in history, good enough to dominate O.J. Simpson and defending National Champion USC in the Rose Bowl. But Woody's teams always fell short after that. They would go undefeated, average 40-plus points a game, and make Sports Illustrated covers, but in Pasadena every New Year's Day, it seemed, their "three yards and a cloud of dust" offense was no match for Pat Haden, John Sciarra, or whoever SC or UCLA threw at them.

Penn State (7) has been a consistent national power under Joe Paterno since 1968, when they were in the middle of a 30-game winning streak. Their "weak" East Coast schedule cost them a couple of national titles, but the 1980s were Joe Pa's time. They have fallen precipitously in later years, and while they have played football in Happy Valley a long time (the Lions lost to USC, 24-3, in the first game at the modern Rose Bowl stadium in 1923), they do not have a tradition that goes back like SC or Notre Dame, either.

Nebraska is a relative Johnny-come-lately. Nobody knew much about the Cornhuskers until Bob Devaney's mythical 1970-71 National Championship squads (Omaha's Gale Sayers spurned the program because they "weren't that good"). The Devaney/Tom Osborne era is unbelievable, starting with a long winning streak in the early '70s, but not devoid of criticism. Osborne may be just below Jesus Christ in Nebraska today, but Big Red fans took the Lord's name in vain aplenty when he consistently lost big games in the 1970s and '80s. Still, the 1971 and '95 squads rank as two of the top three teams in history, and Cornhusker dominance from 1993-97 was extraordinary (60-3, three National Championships).

Michigan has a hallowed tradition. They were college football's first powerhouse, beating Stanford in the first Rose Bowl, 49-0 in 1902. When the Big 10 started playing the Pacific Coast Conference after World War II, Michigan laid waste to the "soft" West Coast teams, which included pastings of some very good Pappy Waldorf teams from Cal in the Rose Bowl games of the late '40s. However, the Wolverines lost their place to Woody until Bo Schembechler came along. The Michigan teams of the 1970s mirrored Woody's - often unbeaten with gaudy stats until a pick-your-choice Pac 8 team (Stanford, USC, Washington) would dismantle them in Pasadena. In 1997 they finally won a National Championship and are a program of the first rate, but not number one.

Texas is a bit of a mystery. Darrell Royal's Longhorns won two National Championships (1963 and 1969, the last all-white titlist), and had a big winning streak that ended against Notre Dame in the 1971 Cotton Bowl, but Earl Campbell's team lost to Joe Montana when the Irish "stole" the 1977 National Championship (going from fifth to first on January 2, 1978). Texas has never repeated despite occasionally being favored, but they usually are slightly disappointing.

Florida State was a girl's school until Burt Reynolds broke the gender barrier in 1952. Tennessee has a great tradition. The Heisman Trophy is named after their coach in the 1930s, and they won
the title in 1998. LSU has two titles. Florida made a bid for supremacy under Steve Spurrier but seem to lose the big game more often than not.

Michigan State under Duffy Daugherty from 1965-66 broke color barriers and challenged for greatness, but Gary Beban and UCLA beat them in the 1966 Rose Bowl, and they tied Notre Dame in the 1966 "game of the century." Georgia's fans are nuts, and the team is darn good most of the time. Auburn and UCLA are two of a kind. They each have won one National Championship, and have all the advantages - weather, facilities, recruiting, talent - only to labor in the shadow of historical behemoths (USC over UCLA, Alabama over Auburn).

The Arkansas Razorbacks are always fun. The 1991 Washington Huskies were the 22nd best single-season team ever, the Don James era was terrific, but they usually only go so far. Cal is so yesterday. Brick Muller's memory died an ugly death when the school became the de facto staging grounds of American Communism circa 1964-70. The Pitt Panthers were great in the 1930s and in Tony Dorsett's 1976 Heisman season. Minnesota is forgotten except for a five-year stretch prior to World War II. The Army Cadets once dominated whenever there was a world war being fought (?), and Stanford has Pop Warner, Ernie Nevers, Jim Plunkett, John Elway, Bill Walsh and the "Vow Boys." BYU won the 1984 National Championship and sports a long tradition of "bombs away" quarterbacks, led by Jim McMahon and Steve Young.

ALL-TIME GREATEST COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAMS
Compiled by Steven Travers

All-Time Top 25
Southern California Trojans
2. Notre Dame Fighting Irish
Oklahoma Sooners
4. Alabama Crimson Tide
5. Miami Hurricanes
Ohio State Buckeyes
7. Penn State Nittany Lions
8. Nebraska Cornhuskers
9. Michigan Wolverines
10. Texas Longhorns
11. Florida State Seminoles
12. Tennessee Volunteers
13. Auburn Tigers
14. Louisiana State Tigers
15. Florida Gators
16. Michigan State Spartans
17. Georgia Bulldogs
18. UCLA Bruins
19. Arkansas Razorbacks
20. Washington Huskies
21. California Golden Bears
22. Pittsburgh Panthers
23. Minnesota Golden Gophers
24. Stanford Indians/Cardinal
25. Brigham Young Cougars

Greatest single-season teams
1. 1972 Southern California Trojans
2. 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
3. 1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
4. 2004 Southern California Trojans
5. 1989 Miami Hurricanes
6. 1999 Florida State Seminoles
7. 1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
8. 1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
9. 1956 Oklahoma Sooners
10. 2001 Miami Hurricanes
11. 1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
12. 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
13. 1969 Texas Longhorns
14. 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
15. 1945 Army Cadets
16. 1931 Southern California Trojans
17. 1975 Oklahoma Sooners
18. 1919 California Golden Bears
19. 1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
20. 1948 Michigan Wolverines
21. 1928 Southern California Trojans
22. 1991 Washington Huskies
23. 1985 Oklahoma Sooners
24. 1976 Pittsburgh Panthers
25. 1962 Southern California Trojans

Chronological
1901 Michigan Wolverines
1919 California Golden Bears
1924 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1928 Southern California Trojans
1931 Southern California Trojans
1945 Army Cadets
1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1948 Michigan Wolverines
1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1962 Southern California Trojans
1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1969 Texas Longhorns
1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1972 Southern California Trojans
1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1975 Oklahoma Sooners
1976 Pittsburgh Panthers
1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
1985 Oklahoma Sooners
1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1989 Miami Hurricanes
1991 Washington Huskies
1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1999 Florida State Seminoles
2001 Miami Hurricanes
2004 Southern California Trojans

By Decades (single year)
1900s: 1901 Michigan Wolverines
1910s: 1919 California Golden Bears
1920s: 1928 Southern California Trojans
1930s: 1931 Southern California Trojans
1940s: 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: 1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1970s: 1972 Southern California Trojans
1980s: 1989 Miami Hurricanes
1990s: 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
2000s: 2004 Southern California Trojans

By Decades
1900s: Michigan Wolverines
1910s: California Golden Bears
1920s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1930s: Southern California Trojans
1940s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: Alabama Crimson Tide
1970s: Southern California Trojans
1980s: Miami Hurricanes
1990s: Florida State Seminoles
2000s: Southern California Trojans

Dynasties
1. Southern California under John McKay & John Robinson (1960s-80s)
3. Alabama under Bear Bryant (1960s-80s)
4. Ohio State under Woody Hayes (1950s-70s)
5. Oklahoma under Bud Wilkinson (1950s)
6. Nebraska under Bob Devaney & Tom Osborne (1970s-'90s)
7. Penn State under Joe Paterno (1960s-90s)
8. Oklahoma under Chuck Fairbanks & Barry Switzer (1970s-'80s)
9. Notre Dame under Knute Rockne (1920s)
10. Notre Dame under Frank Leahy (1940s)
11. Southern California's "Thundering Herd" under Howard Jones (1920s-30s)
12. Notre Dame under Ara Parseghian (1960s-70s)
13. Florida State under Bobby Bowden (1990s)
14. Texas under Darrell Royal (1960s-70s)
15. Michigan under Bo Schembechler (1960s-80s)
16. California's "Wonder Teams" under Andy Smith (1918-22)
17. Army under Red Blaire (mid-1940s)
18. Minnesota under Bernie Biernbaum (1930s, early '40s)
19. Stanford under Pop Warner (1920s)
20. Michigan's "point-a-minute" teams under Fritz Carlisle (1900s)
21. Southern California under Pete Carroll (2000s)

**Best two-year period**
1. Oklahoma (1955-56)
   Nebraska (1994-95)
   Southern California Trojans (2003-04)
4. Notre Dame (1946-47)
5. Army (1944-45)
7. Oklahoma (1974-75)

**Best three-year periods**
1. Southern California (1972-74)
3. California (1919-22)
Southern California (1930-32)
Oklahoma Sooners (1954-56)
Army (1944-46)
Alabama (1964-66)

**Best 5/6-year periods**
Southern California (1967-72)
2. Miami (1987-91)
3. Notre Dame (1973-77)
4. Notre Dame (1943-47)
5. Southern California (1974-79)
6. Alabama (1961-66)
7. Penn State (1982-86)  
8. Southern California (1928-32)  
9. Minnesota (1936-41)  
10. Oklahoma (1971-75)  
Southern California (1962-67)  
Nebraska (1993-97)  

**Best 10/15-year periods**  
1. Southern California Trojans (1967-81)  
3. Southern California Trojans (1962-72)  
4. Oklahoma Sooners (1950s)  
5. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1920s)  
6. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1940s)  
7. Florida State Seminoles (1990s)  
8. Penn State Nittany Lions (1982-91)  
9. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1966-77)  
10. Oklahoma Sooners (1974-85)  
11. Nebraska Cornhuskers (1990s)  
12. Southern California Trojans (1928-39)  

**Best 20/25-year periods**  
1. Southern California Trojans (1962-81)  
3. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1964-88)  
5. Ohio State Buckeyes (1954-75)  

"Close but no cigar"(honorable mention)  

**All-time Greatest College Athletics Programs**  
1. Southern California Trojans  
2. UCLA Bruins  
3. Texas Longhorns  
4. Miami Hurricanes  
5. Michigan Wolverines  
6. Alabama Crimson Tide  
7. Ohio State Buckeyes  
8. Florida State Seminoles
9. Stanford Indians/Cardinal  
10. Oklahoma Sooners  
11. Louisiana State Tigers  
12. Tennessee Volunteers  
13. Notre Dame Fighting Irish  
14. Penn State Nittany Lions  
15. Arkansas Razorbacks  
16. Florida Gators  
17. Indiana Hoosiers  
18. Georgia Bulldogs  
19. Texas A&M Aggies  
20. Oklahoma State Cowboys  
21. Arizona State Sun Devils  
22. Auburn Tigers  
23. Duke Blue Devils  
24. North Carolina Tar Heels  
25. Syracuse Orangemen  
26. California Golden Bears  
27. Brigham Young Cougars

All-Time College Basketball Programs  
UCLA Bruins  
Indiana Hoosiers  
North Carolina Tar Heels  
Duke Blue Devils  
Kentucky Wildcats  
Kansas Jayhawks  
Michigan Wolverines  
Ohio State Buckeyes  
Virginia Cavaliers  
Michigan State Spartans  
Nevada-Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels  
Louisville Cardinals  
Arizona Wildcats  
Stanford Cardinal  
West Virginia Squires  
San Francisco Dons  
Syracuse Orangemen

All-Time College Baseball programs  
Southern California Trojans  
Texas Longhorns  
Cal State Fullerton Titans  
Arizona State Sun Devils  
Miami Hurricanes
Stanford Indians/Cardinal
Louisiana State Tigers
Florida State Seminoles
Oklahoma State Cowboys
Florida Gators
Mississippi State Bulldogs
Texas A&M Aggies
Arkansas Razorbacks
Arizona Wildcats
Georgia Bulldogs
Oklahoma Sooners
California Golden Bears
Fresno State Bulldogs
Michigan Wolverines
Clemson Tigers

Prep football
De La Salle H.S. (Concord, Calif.)
Mater Dei H.S. (Santa Ana, Calif.)
Poly High School (Long Beach, Calif.)
Moeller H.S. (Cincinnati, O)

Prep basketball
Verbum Dei H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Crenshaw H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Mater Dei H.S. (Santa Ana, Calif.)
Cardinal Gibbons H.S. (Baltimore, MD.)
De Matha H.S. (Hiattsville, MD.)
Power Memorial Academy (New York, N.Y.)
McClymonds H.S. (Oakland, Calif.)

Prep baseball
Lakewood H.S. (Calif.)
Redwood H.S. (Larkspur, Calif.)
Sharpstown H.S. (Houston, Tex.)
Rancho Bernardo H.S. (San Diego, Calif.)
Fremont H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Serra H.S. (San Mateo, Calif.)

EXCERPT FROM

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TROJAN

The
THIRTIES
I graduated from San Diego High School in February of 1935. I played with Ted Williams in junior baseball. He went to Hoover High. I played for the Ryan Juniors, which was in a youth league in the city. That team was made up of high school kids who were going to the playgrounds. I played on the same fields with him. He pitched and I caught at different times together. My favorite player was Cotton Warburton, and I understood that he was Ted's favorite, too. Cotton had come out of San Diego High before me. He was my inspiration. He was so great, the best day of my life was after watching Cotton play in a high school game, finding out he was coming back for another year of high school football. He was there four years, a little guy but he could sure run and so you were inspired my him. Harold Hobbs Adams was our high school coach. He coached both Warburton and I. Howard Jones hired him as an assistant coach at USC and he brought me with him.

This was a fairly common practice in those days. It was started by Nibs Price, a high school coach from San Diego. College football teams had always consisted of players trying out from amongst the student body, but after World War I the country became more mobile and the concept of recruiting came into being. Suddenly teams did not consist generally of boys from the general region, but rather a young man might be enticed to come to school even if he did not live near the campus.

The University of California at Berkeley had a large number of students come there for military training so they were attuned to this situation, and coach Andy Smith decided to turn his program into a national powerhouse. He hired Price because he had many contacts among the coaching fraternity in Southern California, which was a growing populace that Smith recognized was the place where most of the great athletes were coming from. One of those player was Brick Muller out of San Diego. Smith brought Price to Berkeley because he could bring Muller into school with him, but this practice was fraught with a new set of problems.

These recruits were prima donnas unlike average students, and Smith was a hard driver who conducted exhausting practice sessions. Muller and the Southern California contingent got fed up and decided to leave school. A meeting was held in the summer half-way in between, in Fresno, between Price and the players from Southern California in which it was agreed that the practice sessions would not be as strenuous. They all came back to school. Muller was the greatest player in the nation and those teams were known as the Wonder Teams, up until then the best dynasty the country had ever seen.

Well, Howard Jones had decided to one-up Andy Smith and Cal. "Gloomy Gus" Henderson had built USC from a regional program to a national power by bringing in high school players from the Seattle area, which had been the best hotbed of prep talent for years. He ushered USC into the Pacific Coast Conference and won our first Rose Bowl over Penn State in 1923. Jones started the rivalry with Notre Dame, which gave us an edge over Cal and Stanford, making us a national power and the top program on the West Coast. Coach Jones also had an advantage in recruiting, which was the movie industry. John "Duke" Wayne had played for him before going into the movies, and Duke arranged for Trojan players to be extras in movies, attend Hollywood parties, and be around all those pretty actresses.
By the time I got to USC this was the standard practice and the program attracted the
greatest players in America. I entered USC in February of 1935, right out of high school. It was
mid-year, and as I say I went with my high school coach, who got his job as an assistant under
Jones. It was never really spelled out for me, but I understand that he got the job by bringing me
into school with him.

Cotton Warburton was at USC for three years before me. I attended at night at first. I had
been on the track team in high school. A track meet was held at Southern Cal and I participated
and visited the campus in a slight drizzle. The Tommy Trojan statue was getting wet a little bit
but it was an awesome sight, as the campus was turning from dusk to dark, so I could not have
been there at a better time to be impressed. It was kind of plain otherwise, it was not much of a
campus at the time. Coach Hobbs had all the connections. I never really claimed Hobbs got the
job because of me, but Hobbs had coached Cotton, he had a good track record coaching in
baseball, football and track. So Hobbs had gotten to USC and we were all together and were
Sigma Alpha Epsilons. It was a great time, a great time in my life. I can't imagine anything being
any better.

Even though USC was the school you wanted to play for, the football program had been
down just a little bit before I got there. Cal and Stanford had gotten really jealous and accused us
of cheating and academic impropriety, but it was all just a response to our surpassing them as a
West Coast football power. We had won three national championships and the 1931-32 teams
were probably the best teams ever, the famed Thundering Herd, but those freshmen up at
Stanford had promised never to lose to Southern Cal again and they never did, so they became
known as the Vow Boys. UCLA was getting better and better every year, so Coach Jones was
determined to have his team get back to where they had been.

For me, it was a struggle. There was a lot talent, playing time was always hard to come by,
and I broke my foot in a freshman game against Santa Ana High School, so that set me back for
a year and a half. All of my freshman year was gone, but it did not affect my varsity eligibility.
Freshman could not play varsity ball in those days. I became a starter in my sophomore year and
started all the time I was at USC as long as I was healthy, but there was always competition t my
position.

I was a tailback in a single wing offense. We lined up out of the huddle in a box formation
single wing called the Warner B. It was a designated single wing offense and I always ran out of
that formation. My varsity years were 1936, 1937, I laid out in '38, broke an ankle, then in 1939 I
played my senior year. All in all, I was at USC for five and a half years including everything.

I played against California in 1937. They were the most powerfully organized team I'd
played against and when I played against them they were seniors. Stub Allison was their coach
and they had great players, they were great athletes like Vic Bottari and Sam Chapman, who
went on to play outfield for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics. Cal and Stanford made
comebacks, they were determined to be national powers again, as Southern Cal had become. In
1937 Cal won the national championship, beating Alabama in the Rose Bowl, and in 1940
Stanford won the national title when they beat Nebraska in the Rose Bowl. Those were the last
national championships each of those two schools won.

I got hit in the head against Cal. I was fuzzy, I was down and a guy just swung his foot
through my helmet and I was goofy after that. We had a fierce competition with Cal and
Stanford. Cal and Stanford never played an honest game in their lives, but there were a lot of
shenanigans at that time. Cal would arrive in Los Angeles and it would be 90 degrees, it hadn't
rained in months, but the field would be a quagmire. The maintenance guy would come out all apologetic, "Oh I must've forgot to turn off the sprinklers," but it would slow down Bottari and Chapman, you see.

It was always like that, rivalries between Northern and Southern California teams. Later the Candlestick ground's crew did the same thing to slow down Maury Wills of the Dodgers. Gamesmanship, all part of the sport of it, you see. But it was also an evolving time in the relationship between USC, Cal, Stanford, and now UCLA became our biggest rival. They were just a little commuter school, first in downtown then in Westwood, where at first people said nobody would travel that far just to go to school, but they played in our stadium, the Coliseum, and they were integrated and quickly built themselves into a competitive team by doing that.

We had been integrated way ahead of almost everybody, what with Brice Taylor making All-American back in the 1920s, so these games between the integrated Bruins and Trojans in front of huge crowds at the Coliseum were just visual statements that were more powerful than any speeches.

Jackie Robinson and the Bruins tied us, 0-0 in 1939. In 1936 they'd tied us 7-7. These games were just intense struggles with everything on the line. That game started to even things between the two teams, and over the next couple of decades UCLA was at least as strong as USC. Robinson was a great player, and his wife, Rachel Robinson was a student at UCLA then, why she still talks about the rivalry, which she compares to the Dodgers-Giants rivalry. But Jackie met his match in terms of opposing coaches when they went up against Jones. As a matter of fact we were getting ready to play them and Jones was at the blackboard drawing up UCLA's offense and defense. He drew their offense vs. our defense and he shifted where he saw weakness in our defense and we asked, "What about that, coach?" and Jones saw weaknesses but Jones covered up the hole and we outclassed them by overshifting them on our defense to offset their power. Robinson was on that '39 team but when they were driving towards the end for some reason they did not go to him and it cost them a chance at winning the game.

Kenny Washington, who also was a great sprinter in track, played for UCLA. Woody Strode was a big wide receiver and we didn't have anybody who was tall enough to cover him, but they weren't able to get the ball into his hands as much as they'd like. Jones just out-coached 'em, but they put the ball in the air and that scared the livin' daylight out of Jones. Afterward he just hid in his office like he was hiding from their passing.

I had some injuries, I think maybe I'd been hurt in '37 too, but anyway we were the Coliseum "visitors" and I didn't play, and so I was sitting outside with the lockers right behind us at tunnel six. I was on crutches and I decided to walk up the tunnel to avoid both teams from rushing up past me. So I walked across the track and entered the tunnel and started up and then somebody said to stick around, and all hell broke loose. Kenny Washington broke through with the ball twice and scored two touchdowns in 45 seconds. Oh man!

But we won in the Rose Bowl two years in a row. You know, we beat those Southern teams, we beat Notre Dame, our most difficult competition was in the conference, and so the big argument going on at that time was, where's the best football being played? Before World War II it was determined that the best players were out west and there were all kinds of theories, ranging from the sunshine, the vitamins in our fresh fruit, the gene pool of pioneers, more athletic men and women coming out to Hollywood. The world was taking notice of American football. Adolf Hitler was alarmed that America had the most rugged athletes playing football and that would make us formidable in war, and he sure would've been smart to have played that hunch.
I was hurt in 1938 and when we played Duke in the Rose Bowl we were heavy underdogs. Those guys had not only not lost a game, but nobody had even scored a point on them. They would punt on third down just to pin opponents down, they would get turnovers and score off their defense and just overwhelm you. Nobody really gave us a chance. I didn't play in that game. I'd played two or three games early in the season but I was injured with a broken foot so I just decided to sit out and save my eligibility for 1939.

Well we all know what happened. Duke led 3-0 and we couldn't move the ball against them at all, certainly not on the ground. That was how Howard Jones liked it on offense, he never liked putting the ball in the air. He never felt it was safe, but we went through several quarterbacks and all were ineffective and so Jones was desperate, we had to put the ball in the air if we were going to have a chance.

Quarterback Doyle Nave was fourth string, end "Antelope Al" Kreuger was third string I think. In another offense either guy would have started, they were great athletes, fast, Nave could throw, but neither was entirely compatible with Jones's offense. But Duke was unprepared for Doyle's passing effectiveness, and we drove with a few minutes to go and Doyle hit Al on several clutch passes until we were down near their goal line and then he hit Al for a touchdown to win the game, 7-3.

The place just went bonkers and the press made the biggest possible deal out of it. For years, decades, this was said to be the biggest sports moment of the century, the biggest Rose Bowl game ever, and Doyle Nave was instantaneously elevated to national hero. Women wrote him letters, magazines featured him, and even though Southern Cal was a huge football power before that, it put us on the map. It was on the radio across the country and Norman Topping heard it supposedly on his deathbed and it "miraculously" cured him, so the story goes. Braven Dyer just made his name writing about that game.

Kreuger was a demonstrative character. He and Doyle had great personalities and this helped because they talked to reporters and expounded on what happened, it was all very colorful. They were both fun-loving guys and the girls fell in love with 'em after that and they just had a great time at USC, we all did.

In a video Tom Kelly did some years ago Kreuger made these great descriptions of those catches. Doyle was sitting a little in front of him and he would say, "Oh, every pass was right on the numbers," and in the back Al was gesturing and gesticulating like every catch he had to dive and stretch out, and it was all great fun, typical of their personalities.

But as great as they were, neither really got better. Doyle never got better as a tailback, not in the kind of offense Howard Jones liked to run. Grenny Lansdell and I were ahead of him at tailback. The newspapers said Grenny and I were about equal. Doyle could not make three yards running in the single wing. He could throw and kick, but Jones liked us to run and both Grenny and I were better runners. He would have been excellent in a better system for passing but we were ahead of him.

Doyle as a person was sure of himself, he was athletic, confident in what he could do. Sometimes he felt he could do more than what he really could do. He was not as good a runner as Grenny and me, a good passer but not a field general. Grenny and I were given a better rating.

Kreuger was a happy-go-lucky fellow, a great player but not to the point where we would build an offense around him. He could execute his plays excellently but the coaches did not develop an offensive around him. He could get open against anybody who tried to cover him, though.
In 1939 Jones would not have made Doyle the number one tailback. Grenny and I held up the position. This was the single wing, it was different then, a quarterback was not what he is today. Doyle was more oriented towards what we now think of as a "drop back" quarterback, whereby Grenny and I usually ran out of the formation but could on occasion throw short passes.

In 1939, I recognized that I had a helluva job to play vs. the competition between myself, Grenny and Doyle. Now Doyle was at first one up because of his Rose Bowl performance against Duke. Jones was influenced by the newspapers, because they all backed Doyle. Braven Dyer of the *Los Angeles Times* particularly advocated the "modernization" of football. The ball had been reduced in size, making it easier to throw, and it was not a uniform-size ball, whereas at one time balls might be one size in the West, another size in the South, you know. Sammy Baugh was a throwing sensation, and Don Hutson an end who could catch any thrown ball at Alabama, and we had Doyle Nave. His performance against Duke had been considered a breakthrough.

It went against Howard Jones's natural instincts to throw the ball, but how could you argue against what Doyle had done? But we tied Oregon in the opening game and boy we all just thought that was the end of world. How to overcome that? I don't recall much about that game. I'd say we were inexperienced, Doyle had hardly played in '38 aside from the last couple minutes of the Rose Bowl, so I was getting up and running and Doyle did not make it. After that I got more playing time, Grenny and I. Doyle certainly played a fair amount, but he did not emerge as the great star his Rose Bowl performance led so many to believe he was destined to become.

Well, we found our rhythm and just went on a streak, and by season's end there was not a better team in America. That was the year we went back to South Bend and walloped Notre Dame. In those days we played the Irish at the end of the year back there as well as at home, and it could get cold and that was an advantage for them, but we beat them 20-12. We'd beat them 13-0 in Los Angeles the previous season and the rivalry was very even, but USC never beat the Irish at Notre Dame again until O.J. Simpson in 1967.

The USC-Notre Dame rivalry is and always was exemplary of what college football is all about. To go back there and play against them, to be a part of that is an honor, it really is. As I say, it was the end of the season, it was colder, and put it this way, I was a disappointment to Jones because I was a senior but I was not playing as much as I thought I should. Doyle got a lot of time on the field and Grenny was an All-American. I probably could have made a big success at any other school but at USC that year there was more competition for playing time than the opposition provided in games. Vs. Notre Dame we won 20-12. I went in, played well and we won. I ran an end run in front of coach Elmer Layden and made about eight yards and decided to run it again and I broke loose 44 yards for a touchdown. The whole weight of the game, I could feel it, I knew it, and nobody was gonna catch me so I thought of thumbing my nose at Layden. Some guy from 'Bama had thumbed his nose on about the 12, so I thought of doing the same thing, then I thought it would be disrespectful so I stuck my tongue out at him and nobody saw it but me. I said to myself, SC doesn't do that.

The West Coast had the best football teams at that time. We barely beat Washington, 9-7, then tied UCLA, 0-0, so when another unbeaten, untied, unscored-on Southern team, this time Tennessee, came out to the Rose Bowl we were not intimidated at all. We did not think of the national title before the game, it was not recognized, no group was authorized to do that. I was not playing to win that, just to win the game. The Associated Press had started up a poll in 1936, and there were a number of systems, the most recognized and respected being one devised by a Professor Dickinson based on strength of schedule, performance, it took into consideration the
bowl games and it was the most legit, but as I say there was not the hype for this then as today so our main concern was to win the game for the prestige of the University, the conference, the Pacific Coast.

Coach Bob Neyland's Tennessee Volunteers were a fine team but frankly we had a superior team, both in terms of our ability and our coaching. I felt I was best quarterback on that team for field generalship so I don't think we would have done as well without me, and I had earned the playing time I got in that game.

I threw a touchdown pass to Kreuger, and as I say in those days passing was not number one in SC's method of advancing the ball, especially when I was in the game, but Doyle was the inspiration for the idea of passing the football. Maybe not so much because of what Braven Dyer wrote, but he liked Doyle. Rather, Jones saw the way the game was changing and started opening things up.

The offense we designed meant that every pass was from the threat of a run, so you faked to run, drop one or two steps, then threw a pass something under 10 yards. I was primarily a runner and only threw about two passes in that game. What I'm trying to say is we depended on running mopre and had to make it all look like I was running to help the passes.

I remember we had the ball on their two. I went back to the huddle and I said to myself, "Here we are in the Rose Bowl," and I said, "Give 'em something to think about," and I faked two or three steps and arched a perfect, beautiful pass, and Al was not looking, and he just turned around and it was there. We only needed two yards and it was perfect.

Jones possessed tremendous ingenuity, but it was his application of the defense that made him great. He understood the game of football and understood defense, and his players were always strong on defense. He recruited good players who were strong on defense.

I felt we were better physically than our opponents. We had a first team and a second team. In the days of both-sides-of-the-ball football, you used to go with two teams, and out second team was as strong as our first. The second team with Joe Shell as our captain, they did most of the scoring and Shell was really proud of that, made a big point of it.

Jones had adjusted to what he had because he had great players on that '39 team and they produced for him and they knew that. He never got beat badly. We never lost 40-0. Heck, that's just SC football over the years. Even in the rare times they're down the Trojans never lose 40-0. They lost like that to Notre Dame one year and it was such a rarity they talk about to this day like it's a freak thing, which it was.

What does it mean to be a Trojan? I was happy I was able to go to USC and be successful in football. I had been well coached and could do what was required of me and was so happy that other players were equally as well skilled in football, on offense and on defense. I was very fortunate and we could play with anybody. I figured we were as good as anybody we played and we loved competition. We weren't afraid of Notre Dame or any teams.

We skipped over before this question, what USC meant, and behind my mentality on that would be that we were a big university that wanted me to play football, to represent them. We had wonderful scholars there and I had great teammates. We were recognized as a champion and I was thrilled to death to play because of that, it was the best place I could possibly go to further my desire to educated and get great coaching.

There is a sense of tradition there, it was strong then and it's been maintained, and that's a big part of What It Means to Be a Trojan, because a young fella like yourself can come talk to me about it and we have this common understanding of the place, of what it does mean.
Historically USC never lost sight of fact they are USC, and they represent the great collegiate world of education and football, and are a vital part of the collegiate experience for undergraduates, as it should be. It was a perfect place to do the collegiate education and we had great coaches to help us out.

USC was a place where all kinds of people come together. Patricia Nixon, the First Lady, was at USC when I was there. She was not yet married to Richard Nixon, they both lived in Whittier and Richard Nixon had a car, which was a little unusual in those days, but he had one because his father owned a grocery store and he needed it to drive to the Farmer's Market in L.A. to buy groceries for that store. He would drive Pat Nixon on dates with other guys, like a limo service, and they'd go to the Coliseum to watch football games together.

USC drew good athletes. It was great to be part of that machine. The Olympic team in those days was like our track and swim team wearing red, white and blue instead of cardinal and gold. In our leisure time, if you had money you could do what you liked and really enjoy being a USC person, but it took money to be able to socially enjoy the social scene, to join a frat. It took money to maintain a wardrobe. You had to be a guy people wanted to associate with in order to be invited as a pledge.

But as an athlete we were considered part of that in crowd. John Wayne had played there and even though he didn't come from money he was invited to pledge a fraternity because he had a persona others wanted to have around, but he injured himself body surfing down in Newport Beach and when he fell out of the first string he lost his scholarship. His fraternity brothers loaned him money but the debts got too big after a while so he left school and went over to Fox Studios and got into the movies, but he always maintained loyalty to USC. That's What It Means to Be a Trojan.

Ambrose Schindler was the star of USC's 14-0 victory over unbeaten, untied, unscored-on Tennessee in the 1940 Rose Bowl. His pass to "Antelope Al" Kreuger secured victory and gave coach Howard Jones his fourth national championship.

USC, NOTRE DAME DOMINATE COLLEGE FOOTBALL, SPORTS HISTORY

The 2004 college football season starts this month, and all indications are that Pete Carroll and his University of Southern California Trojans are poised to become the greatest collegiate team of all time.

The defending co-National Champions have a dynasty on their hands. They could very possibly win two or three National Championships in a row, possibly even challenge Oklahoma's 57-game winning streak of the 1950s. USC quarterback Carson Palmer won the Heisman Trophy in 2002 before becoming the NFL's number one draft choice. This season, Matt Leinart is the favorite to win the Heisman, and very likely go number one to the pros in 2005. His top competition for the Heisman and number one selection? All-American wide receiver and teammate Mike Williams, who will soon have his NCAA eligibility reinstated. This is a condition unseen since Army's "Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside" - Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis - won back-to-back statues in 1944-45.
In case that is not enough, USC's Matt Grootegooed is competing for the Butkus Award, Shaun Cody and Mike Patterson are both up for the Lombardi Award, kicker Ryan Killeen is a Lou Groza Award candidate, while punter Tom Malone will be a Ray Guy finalist.

Coach of the Year? Last year it was Carroll, and he just may repeat the trick. The 2004 All-American teams are going to look like the Trojans' roster. Next year's draft will be an SC highlight film. But wait, there's more.

SC is Tailback U. again with not one but three of the best running backs in America - LenDale White, Reggie Bush and Hershel Dennis. Out of these horses will emerge All-Americans, more Heisman contenders and first round draft picks. None of them is even a senior yet. Two of them are still underclassmen.

Have I left out the fact that USC's last two recruiting classes were ranked number one in America, and the 2004 crop is thought to be the best in history? Not since the 1983 Nebraska Cornhuskers has a team entered the season with so many highlights. Therein lies the problem.

When a team is this good, watch not just for an undefeated season and a National Championship, but watch out for college kids reading their press clippings and being shot at from all sides by a nation of teams out to beat them. It happened to the Cornhuskers when their dream season was upended by Miami in the 1984 Orange Bowl. Last year, Oklahoma entered the fray with credentials almost as gaudy as this year's Trojans. They lived up to the hype, too, until the Big 12 title game and the Sugar Bowl showed them to be all-too-human.

Unlike the NFL, a single loss can upset the apple cart. USC is the hottest ticket in America's hottest town, the toast of Hollywood, the biggest thing in a media hothouse. For 20-year old student-athletes, this is a major challenge.

Nevertheless, it is fun to talk about, and at SC, a school that went through a long (13 years or 20 years, depending on your standards) down period, it is especially fun. Their fans are about as giddy as the Republicans when Dwight Eisenhower saved that party after 20 years of the New Deal in 1952.

Since Southern California has made such a triumphant return astride the collegiate football stage, and in light of the fact that we are still in the early stages of the 20th Century, it is worth taking another look at their historical place in the New Millennium.

Below is the All-Time College Football Top 25 rankings, followed by the Top 20 Greatest Single-Season teams in college football history. I listed the greatest college football teams chronologically; the best team for each decade; the best single-season team each decade, followed by great programs in back-to-back, three-year, five-year, 10/15-year and 20/25-year periods. I list the most prominent dynasties and the coaches behind them, and for good measure list the Top 25 Collegiate Athletic Programs of All-Time, the Top 11 College Basketball Programs, and the Top 20 College Baseball Programs ever.
It is subjective and opinionated. It is meant to stir debate, controversy and argument. It is not
written in stone. However, it is not the ramblings of somebody who knows not what he talks
about. I am a college sports historian and as eligible to compile these lists as anybody else.

Let me say that I have given extra credit to the more modern powers. I believe that Miami's
success in the 1980s is more impressive than Cal's "Wonder Teams" after World War I.
Oklahoma's current run, in my personal view, is more impressive than the one they accomplished
in the 1950s. The game has changed. Competition, money, television, scholarship limits, NCAA
rules, recruiting violations and parity all play a part in this evaluation. To the extent that I believe
the so-called "modern era" began, I trace it to 1960, which is subjective, yes, but as good an
embarkation point as any. It was in the 1960s when the players starting getting bigger, the
equipment up to speed, the coaching techniques improved, and the color of the player's skin
became increasingly something other than white.

Based upon history, one is increasingly impressed with USC. Overall, Notre Dame ranks as the
greatest college football program of all time. They have the most National Championships, the
most Heisman Trophy winners, hold a solid 42-28-5 lead over the Trojans in their inter-sectional
rivalry, and trace their glory days back to when Knute Rockne invented the forward pass in time
to beat favored Army in 1913.

Notre Dame was the best college team under Rockne in the decade of the 1920s and under Frank
Leahy in the 1940s. They had another major "era of Ara" (Parseghian) in the 1960s and '70s, and
are listed among the top two-year dynasties (1946-47), 5-year dynasties (1943-47, 1973-77) and
have three dynasties that are included among the 10/15-year period. Furthermore, they are Notre
Dame, and all that that stands for: "Win one for the Gipper," the Catholic Church, "Touchdown
Jesus," Ronald Reagan, "Rudy," "subway alumni," the Four Horsemen outlined against a blue-
gray October sky, "wake up the echoes..."

Notre Dame's fans are the most intense and loyal. They are the team that played in Yankee
Stadium, in Soldier Field, at the Coliseum against SC. Their tradition is the best and the oldest.
They are number one.

For decades, the number two team was Southern California. This was not a coincidence. No
rivalry in sports (or politics or war, probably) has done so much to elevate both sides as the
USC-Notre Dame tradition. It put both schools on the national map. It pits, as SC assistant coach
Marv Goux put it, "the best of the East vs. the best of the West." It matches the Catholic school
with their Midwestern values against the flash 'n' dazzle of Hollywood, and it has never failed to
live up to expectations.

Beginning in 1983, however, USC started to go on a downslide. They lost to the Irish every year
from 1983-95. They started losing to cross-town rival UCLA in the 1980s and seven more times
in a row from 1991-98. The Trojans' historical record began to slip. They lost their spot as the
winningest bowl team to Alabama. Their all-time winning percentage slipped. Miami and Florida
State ascended to the top. Nebraska left them in the dust. Notre Dame stayed at or near the top
throughout the Lou Holtz era. Programs like Alabama and Oklahoma had, like SC, dropped, but
regained their footing. Tennessee, Georgia, LSU and other teams, many in the South, rose in prominence. This was a direct result of integration and its impact has been very positive, but a school like Southern California could no longer lay claim to black athletes that were spurned by the SEC or the Southwestern Conference.

SC also lost major recruits to Pac-10 rivals like UCLA and Washington, not to mention Notre Dame and, in the 1990s, the Florida schools. Their "Tailback U." tradition was a joke, derided by enemies as "Yesterday U." Despite the fact that the greatest high school athletes in the world matriculate in massive numbers within 75 miles of the campus, they no longer had a hold on them.

The school began to win awards and recognition for its academic excellence, and it became an article of faith that this was the trade-off; great football teams and great students are not mutually compatible. All of it was B.S. Pete Carroll proved that.

Five years ago, a Top 25 listing of the Greatest College Football Programs of All-Time would have shown USC to have slipped. However, in light of their National Championship last year and favored status to repeat this year, Troy is now back to its second place status, poised to assault Notre Dame for the top spot in the next 10 to 15 years.

Long dynasties are hard to come by in college football, but as the following lists show, SC has a long history of doing just that. It is for this reason, combined with the glow of being Notre Dame's biggest rival, its great inter-city tradition with UCLA, and a history that goes back farther than almost any program (Michigan and Notre Dame are the only schools that go back as far and are still powers) that Southern California is not just second all-time in football but first among all athletic programs (and first by a wide margin in baseball).

The Greatest College Football Team in history is generally considered to be John McKay's 1972 Trojans. In addition, SC claims the best single-season team in the 1920s (1928) and '30s (1931). They are considered the best team of the decade of the 1930s, 1960s, 1970s, and now the 2000s.

Further proof of SC's ability to maintain a tradition is their consistency. The top dynasty period in history was the John McKay/John Robinson era lasting from the early 1960s until the 1980s. The Howard Jones "Thundering Herd" teams of the 1920s and '30s also ranks highly. Among the best three-year periods ever, none is better than SC's run from 1972-74. Among 5/6-year periods, consider three of Troy's eras (1967-72, the best of anybody, followed by 1974-79 and 1928-32).

The best 10/15-year period? USC from 1967 to 1979, but that is not all. Also ranked is the period 1962-72 and 1928-39. Among great long-term dynasties (20/25 years), nobody beats Southern California from 1962-81, when they won five National Championships and four Heisman Trophies. The Trojans easily have the most professionals, the most first round draft picks, the most Hall of Famers, the most Pro Bowlers and the most All-Americans. They are, undisputably, a football factory. The empirical evidence cannot be argued against.
Alabama fans certainly would argue that point, and they have plenty of ammunition. They were a national power as far back as the 1930s when Don Hutson starred there. However, they slipped until the Bear Bryant era. Bryant's dominant period, lasting from 1961 to 1979, parallels McKay's and is as impressive as any ever. However, the Tide was all-white until SC's Sam "Bam" Cunningham showed them, in Bear's own words, "what a football player looks like" in 1970. After SC's 42-21 victory, L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray welcomed 'Bama "back into the Union."

The Crimson Tide experienced a down period after Bear departed, regained its place with the 1992 national title, but inexplicably fell from grace for another decade after that. Their recent embarrassment in hiring Mike Price only to fire him for cavorting with strippers is indicative of their malaise.

Oklahoma's teams in the 1950s dominated as thoroughly as any in history, but that is a long time ago. They were not a major power prior to that decade. The Chuck Fairbanks/Barry Switzer teams of the 1970s and '80s were as impressive as any that have ever taken the field, but they became downright mediocre after Brian Bozworth's departure. Bob Stoops, however, has them right back where they were before, and then some.

Miami is number five based purely on unreal dominance in the 1980s and for maintaining an 18-year run from 1983-2001 that approaches SC's 1962-81 dynasty. However, until Howard Schnellenberger, by whatever means he did it, made them a power in '83, they were a college football lightweight.

Ohio State is sixth and could be higher. However, until Woody Hayes came along, Michigan, not Ohio State, was the dominant Big 10 team. Woody's long tenure is very impressive, lasting from his 1954 National Championship (split with UCLA) until Archie Griffin's second Heisman campaign (1975). The 1968 Buckeyes are one of the most storied teams in history, good enough to dominate O.J. Simpson and defending National Champion USC in the Rose Bowl. But Woody's teams always fell short after that. They would go undefeated, average 40-plus points a game, and make Sports Illustrated covers, but in Pasadena every New Year's Day, it seemed, their "three yards and a could of dust" offense was no match for Pat Haden, John Sciarra, or whoever SC or UCLA threw at them.

Penn State (7) has been a consistent national power under Joe Paterno since 1968. Their "weak" East Coast schedule cost them a couple of national titles, but the 1980s were Joe Pa's time. They have fallen precipitously in later years, and while they have played football in Happy Valley a long time (the Lions lost to USC, 24-3, in the first Rose Bowl in 1923), they do not have a tradition that goes back like SC or Notre Dame, either.

Nebraska is a relative Johnny-come-lately. Nobody knew much about the Cornhuskers until Bob Devaney's mythical 1971 National Championship squad. The Devaney/Tom Osborne era is unbelievable, but not devoid of criticism. Osborne may be just below Jesus Christ in Nebraska today, but Big Red fans took the Lord's name in vain aplenty when he consistently lost big
games in the 1970s and '80s. Still, the 1971 and '95 squads rank as two of the top three teams in history.

Michigan has a hallowed tradition. They were college football's first powerhouse, beating Stanford in the first Rose Bowl, 49-0 in 1902. When the Big 10 started playing the Pacific Coast Conference after World War II, Michigan laid waste to the "soft" West Coast teams, which included pastings of some very good Pappy Waldorf teams from Cal in the Rose Bowl games of the late '40s. However, the Wolverines lost their place to Woody until Bo Schembechler came along. The Michigan teams of the 1970s mirrored Woody's - often unbeaten with gaudy stats until a pick-your-choice Pac 8 team (Stanford, USC, Washington) would dismantle them in Pasadena. In 1997 they finally won a National Championship and are a program of the first rate, but not number one.

Texas is a bit of a mystery. Darrell Royal's Longhorns won two National Championships (1963 and 1969, the last all-white titlist), but Earl Campbell's team lost to Joe Montana when the Irish stole the 1977 National Championship (going from fifth to first on January 1, 1978). Texas has never repeated despite occasionally being favored, but they usually are slightly disappointing.

Florida State was a girl's school until Burt Reynolds broke the gender barrier in 1952. Tennessee has a great tradition. The Heisman Trophy is named after their coach in the 1930s, and they won the title in 1998. LSU has two titles. Florida made a bid for supremacy under Steve Spurrier but seem to lose the big game more often than not.

Michigan State under Duffy Daugherty from 1965-66 broke color barriers and challenged for greatness, but Gary Beban and UCLA beat them in the 1966 Rose Bowl, and they tied Notre Dame in the 1966 "game of the century." Georgia's fans are nuts, and the team is darn good most of the time. Auburn and UCA are two of a kind. They each have won one National Championship, and have all the advantages - weather, facilities, recruiting, talent - only to labor in the shadow of behomeths (USC over UCLA, Alabama over Auburn).

The Arkansas Razorbacks are always fun. The 1991 Washington Huskies were the 20th best single-season team ever, the Don James era was terrific, but they usually only go so far. Cal is so yesterday. The Brick Muller era died an ugly death when the school became the de facto staging grounds of American Communism circa 1964-70. The Pitt Panthers were great in the 1930s and in Tony Dorsett's 1976 Heisman season. Minnesota is forgotten except for a five-year stretch prior to World War II. The Army Cadets once dominated whenever there was a world war being fought (?), and Stanford has Pop Warner, Jim Plunkett, John Elway and Bill Walsh.

ALL-TIME GREATEST COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAMS
Compiled by Steven Travers

All-Time Top 20
Notre Dame Fighting Irish
Southern California Trojans
Alabama Crimson Tide
Oklahoma Sooners
5. Miami Hurricanes
Ohio State Buckeyes
7. Penn State Nittany Lions
8. Nebraska Cornhuskers
9. Michigan Wolverines
10. Texas Longhorns
11. Florida State Seminoles
12. Tennessee Volunteers
13. Louisiana State Tigers
14. Florida Gators
15. Michigan State Spartans
16. Georgia Bulldogs
17. Auburn Tigers
18. UCLA Bruins
19. Arkansas Razorbacks
20. Washington Huskies
21. California Golden Bears
22. Pittsburgh Panthers
23. Minnesota Golden Gophers
24. Army Cadets
25. Stanford Indians/Cardinal

Greatest single-season teams
1. 1972 Southern California Trojans
2. 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
3. 1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
4. 1989 Miami Hurricanes
1999 Florida State Seminoles
6. 1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
7. 1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
8. 1956 Oklahoma Sooners
9. 1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
10. 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
11. 1969 Texas Longhorns
12. 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
13. 1945 Army Cadets
14. 1931 Southern California Trojans
15. 1975 Oklahoma Sooners
16. 1919 California Golden Bears
17. 1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
18. 1948 Michigan Wolverines
19. 1928 Southern California Trojans
20. 1991 Washington Huskies

Chronological
1901 Michigan Wolverines
1919 California Golden Bears
1924 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1928 Southern California Trojans
1931 Southern California Trojans
1945 Army Cadets
1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1948 Michigan Wolverines
1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1969 Texas Longhorns
1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1972 Southern California Trojans
1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1975 Oklahoma Sooners
1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1989 Miami Hurricanes
1991 Washington Huskies
1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1999 Florida State Seminoles

By Decades (single year)
1900s: 1901 Michigan Wolverines
1910s: 1919 California Golden Bears
1920s: 1928 Southern California Trojans
1930s: 1931 Southern California Trojans
1940s: 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: 1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1970s: 1972 Southern California Trojans
1980s: 1989 Miami Hurricanes
1990s: 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
2000s: 2000 Oklahoma Sooners

By Decades
1900s: Michigan Wolverines
1910s: California Golden Bears
1920s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1930s: Southern California Trojans
1940s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: Southern California Trojans
1970s: Southern California Trojans
1980s: Miami Hurricanes
1990s: Florida State Seminoles
2000s: Southern California Trojans

Dynasties
1. Southern California under John McKay & John Robinson (1960s-80s)
3. Alabama under Bear Bryant (1960s-80s)
4. Ohio State under Woody Hayes (1950s-70s)
5. Oklahoma under Bud Wilkinson (1950s)
6. Nebraska under Bob Devaney & Tom Osborne (1970s-'90s)
7. Penn State under Joe Paterno (1960s-90s)
8. Oklahoma under Chuck Fairbanks & Barry Switzer (1970s-'80s)
9. Notre Dame under Knute Rockne (1920s)
10. Notre Dame under Frank Leahy (1940s)
11. Southern California's "Thundering Herd" under Howard Jones (1920s-30s)
12. Notre Dame under Ara Parseghian (1960s-70s)
13. Florida State under Bobby Bowden (1990s)
14. Texas under Darrell Royal (1960s-70s)
15. Michigan under Bo Schembechler (1960s-80s)
16. California's "Wonder Teams" under Andy Smith (1918-22)
17. Army under Red Blaike (mid-1940s)
18. Minnesota under Bernie Bierbaum (1930s, early '40s)
19. Stanford under Pop Warner (1920s)
20. Michigan's "point-a-minute" teams under Fritz Carlisle (1900s)

Best two-year period
1. Oklahoma (1955-56)
2. Nebraska (1994-95)
3. Notre Dame (1946-47)
4. Army (1944-45)
5. Alabama (1978-79)

Best three-year periods
1. Southern California (1972-74)
3. California (1918-20)
4. Southern California (1930-32)

Best 5/6-year periods
Southern California (1967-72)
2. Miami (1987-91)
3. Notre Dame (1973-77)
4. Notre Dame (1943-47)
5. Southern California (1974-78)
6. Alabama (1961-65)
7. Penn State (1982-86)
8. Southern California (1928-32)
9. Minnesota (1936-41)

**Best 10/15-year periods**
1. Southern California Trojans (1967-81)
3. Southern California Trojans (1962-72)
4. Oklahoma Sooners (1950s)
5. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1920s)
6. Notre Dame Irish (1940s)
7. Florida State Seminoles (1990s)
8. Oklahoma Sooners (1970s)
9. Penn State Nittany Lions (1982-91)
10. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1966-77)
11. Oklahoma Sooners (1974-85)
12. Nebraska Cornhuskers (1990s)
13. Southern California Trojans (1928-39)

**Best 20/25-year periods**
1. Southern California Trojans (1962-81)
3. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1964-88)
5. Ohio State Buckeyes (1954-75)

"Close but no cigar" (honorable mention)

**All-time Greatest College Athletics Programs**
1. Southern California Trojans
2. UCLA Bruins
3. Texas Longhorns
4. Miami Hurricanes
5. Michigan Wolverines
   Alabama Crimson Tide
7. Ohio State Buckeyes
8. Florida State Seminoles
9. Stanford Indians/Cardinal
10. Oklahoma Sooners
11. Louisiana State Tigers
12. Tennessee Volunteers
13. Penn State Nittany Lions
14. Arkansas Razorbacks
15. Florida Gators
16. Indiana Hoosiers
17. Georgia Bulldogs
18. Texas A&M Aggies
19. Oklahoma State Cowboys
20. Arizona State Sun Devils
21. Auburn Tigers
22. Duke Blue Devils
23. North Carolina Tar Heels
24. Syracuse Orangemen
25. California Golden Bears

All-Time College Basketball Programs
UCLA Bruins
Indiana Hoosiers
North Carolina Tar Heels
Duke Blue Devils
Kentucky Wildcats
Kansas Jayhawks
Michigan Wolverines
Ohio State Buckeyes
Virginia Cavaliers
Michigan State Spartans
Nevada-Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels

All-Time College Baseball programs
Southern California Trojans
Texas Longhorns
Cal State Fullerton Titans
Miami Hurricanes
Stanford Indians/Cardinal
Arizona State Sun Devils
Louisiana State Tigers
Florida State Seminoles
Oklahoma State Cowboys
Florida Gators
Mississippi State Bulldogs
Texas A&M Aggies
Arkansas Razorbacks
Arizona Wildcats
Georgia Bulldogs
Oklahoma Sooners
The 2004 college football season has come to an end with Pete Carroll's University of Southern California Trojans having completed the most perfect season in collegiate football history. There have been many "perfect" teams; that is, teams that went undefeated and untied en route to a consensus National Championship. USC itself has enjoyed their fair share of these kinds of wire-to-wire perfect seasons. But the stars have never been aligned for any team quite like the 2004 Trojans. First of all, they are the sixth team to be ranked number one in the nation from the pre-season polls through the bowl games. USC is the only team to do it twice. The 1972 Trojans, considered by many to be the greatest team of all time, accomplished the feat. But SC was also ranked number one from the end of the 2003 regular season through the bowls, and carried that right through 2004 without interruption.

The 2004 Trojans also boast the Heisman Trophy winner, two-time junior All-American quarterback Matt Leinart. His teammate, All-American sophomore running back Reggie Bush, was a New York finalist for the award. USC won a repeat National Championship, a feat rarely done. They are in the middle of a 22-game winning streak. They beat Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, a game that was previewed as the greatest game in college football history. The 1944-45 Army Cadets featured a similar winning streak and two Heisman winners, Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis. There are other teams that compare, but nobody has done it quite the way Carroll's team is doing it.

A few came close. The 1983 Nebraska Cornhuskers featured an undefeated regular season that included winners of the Heisman and Outland Trophies. They lost to Miami in the Orange Bowl. The 2003 Oklahoma Sooners looked to be on a similar path, but their Heisman winner, Jason White, faltered in the Big 12 championship game as well as the Orange Bowl.

In light of USC's recent dominance, it is worth considering their place in history. Not just the current Trojans, but USC's football program going back to the beginning of the 20th Century. It is time to take the mantel of "greatest program in the history of college football" away from the struggling Notre Dame Fighting Irish, and lay it squarely with the deserving new champions from USC. Furthermore, USC continues to lay claim to the greatest historical athletic program in college history, as well.

The two-time defending National Champions are a dynasty. If Leinart returns for his senior year in 2005, they will be better than they were this season. Leinart will be a senior, the Heisman favorite (as he was all of this year), and a three-time All-American. He will walk away from his
career with more honors than any player ever; three National Championships (?), two Heismans (?), the Johnny Unitas Award, the Walter Camp Award, the Maxwell Trophy, the Davey O'Brien Award, et al. He will probably be the number one pick in the NFL draft.

The 2003-04 Trojans are very possibly the greatest two-year dynasty ever. If they win a third title in 2005, that will be a first. They lose a couple of linebackers, but aside from Leinart, Bush will be a junior, running backs LenDale White and Herschel Dennis return, the whole offensive line returns, the tight ends and receivers are back, and the defense will be, for the most part, experienced. The 2005 Trojans have the potential to be the greatest single-season team ever assembled, better even than the 1972 Trojans. Soph-to-be Jeff Byers was the nation's best lineman coming out of high school and could win the Outland Trophy before graduating. Soph-to-be linebacker Keith Rivers was the top prep at his position and may garner a Butkus trophy some day. If Leinart leaves for the NFL, USC will re-tool at quarterback with one of two blue chip recruits.

In 2005, John David Booty will be a red-shirt sophomore. He was the top prep quarterback in America at Louisiana's Evangel Christian High School. His competition? Mark Sanchez, the top prep quarterback in the U.S. at Mission Viejo High (the nation's number two team) in Orange County, California in 2004. USC has had the number one recruiting class in the country for three years in a row. Last year's was considered the greatest of all time. The 2005 class, which will be finalized in February, promises to be just as good. The pipeline is endless. In light of the fact that they will enter next season ranked number one, favored to win their third National Championship in a row, they are worthy of continued hype. Consider that if Troy runs the table in '05, their winning streak will probably be 35. With either Booty or Sanchez living up to the challenge, maybe with senior running back Bush winning the Heisman and starring with a cast headlined by juniors Rivers and Byers, the 2006 Trojans could challenge Oklahoma's 57-game winning streak of the 1950s. Now we are looking at four National Championships in a row, but wait, there is more. Booty could quarterback the team in 2006 and 2007. Sanchez would be a red-shirt junior and senior in 2008-09. Considering that the last two SC quarterbacks (Carson Palmer in 2002 and Leinart in '04) won the Heisman, USC could conceivably come away with four more of the trophies before the end of this decade. The scenario could be:

2005: Senior quarterback Matt Leinart, USC.
2006: Senior running back Reggie Bush, USC.
2007: Senior USC quarterback John David Booty, USC (Oklahoma running back Adrian Petersen will be a pro by then).
2009: Senior quarterback Mark Sanchez, USC.

Number one NFL draft picks? Leinart, Bush, Rivers, Byers, Booty, Sanchez…these are just the obvious possibilities.

Let's go back to Carson Palmer and the 2002 Trojans. Palmer won the Heisman and was the NFL's number one draft choice. He is currently starting for the Cincinnati Bengals after signing a $14 million bonus. The 2002 Trojans finished 11-2, were co-Pacific 10 champs, and won the Orange Bowl. They finished fourth in the nation, but the pundits were in agreement that by that
season's end, they were the best team in the country, even though Ohio State defeated a lacklustre Miami squad in the BCS title game. Had their been a play-off, SC would have won.

In 2003, USC won the National Championship when the AP voted them number one following a victory over Michigan in the Rose Bowl. Considering that they had a spectacular wide receiver, Mike Williams, a comparison of the 2003 and 2004 teams may very well favor the '03 squad. The '05 team, however, will be better than anybody - ever!

How good is SC? Consider that the All-American Williams had his NCAA eligibility taken away prior to 2004. Had he played, he would have been in New York instead of Bush, and he may well have won the Heisman. Bush just took his place and the beat went on. Speaking of number one picks, if Williams shows enough at the combines, he could be the first player taken in the Spring of 2005. The draft promises to be an SC highlight film. Every year. But wait, there's still more.

Coach of the Year? In 2003 year it was Carroll. The only reason he does not win it every year is because they like to spread those kinds of things around. Give it to him every second year. This guy has gone through Troy's old nemeses, UCLA and Notre Dame, like Patton's Army charging through the Low Countries. In four years, he has presided over (through January 4, 2005) back-to-back National titles, two Heisman winners, one NFL number one draft pick, two Orange Bowl titles, one Rose Bowl title, four bowl appearances, three Pac 10 championships, three national-best recruiting classes, a wire-to-wire number one perfect season, a 22-game winning streak, a number one poll ranking for 15 weeks running (and still counting), three straight undefeated Novembers and (take your pick) records of 25-1 (2003-04), 36-3 (2002-04) or 33-1 (since October, 2002). Those are the facts. After that comes the speculation, the predictions, the hype. Has any coach ever done more in his first four years? Probably not.

When a team is this good watch not just for undefeated seasons and National Championships, but watch out for college kids reading their press clippings and being shot at from all sides by a nation of teams out to beat them. It happened to the aforementioned Cornhuskers and the Sooners. In 1979, USC entered the season as the consensus number one. Experts were saying that team, like next season's, could contend for the title "greatest college football team ever." They were the defending co-National Champions and heralded that season's Heisman Trophy winner, Charles White, along with other stalwarts like Anthony Munoz. Not quite mid-way into the season, they took on Stanford at the Coliseum. At halftime the Trojans led 21-0 en route to another stomping. In the second half, freshman quarterback John Elway directed the Cardinal to three touchdowns, SC's offense stalled, and that 21-21 tie (before the advent of overtime) was just enough to deny them the national title along with the "greatest ever" label.

In 1980, the best prep quarterback available was Escondido, California's Sean Salisbury. SC legend Sam Cunningham told his alma mater about his brother, Randall, in Santa Barbara, and asked if he would start. He was told Randall would be offered a ride but the job was Salisbury's. Randall went to UNLV and then made millions with the NFL's Eagles. Salisbury was a bust. SC lost coach John Robinson to the Rams, went on probation, and took 20 years to recover fully.
Troy thought they were back when, in 1987-88 under Larry Smith, they went to back-to-back Rose Bowls, were 10-0 going into the '88 Notre Dame game, featured Junior Seau, and recruited the all-time prep passing leader, Todd Marinovich. By 1990, Marinovich was a problem child and in '91 they lost to Memphis State!

Notre Dame under Lou Holtz won it all in 1988, and seemed on the verge of a real dynasty. Then came Ron Paulus, who never won any of the "two or three Heismans" Beano Cook predicted of him.

In January, 2003, defending National Champion Miami rode a 34-game winning streak into the BCS Fiesta Bowl. Had they won, they would have achieved the rare back-to-back championship and been a team for the ages. So close, yet so far. Ohio State beat them, and in the last two seasons the Hurricanes have been human.

These are just two of many examples that USC should look to and consider cautionary tales. It does not take much to derail a team when they are riding in the clouds. Bad recruiting (will Booty and Sanchez be another Salisbury and Paulus?), drugs (Marinovich), coaches leaving for the NFL (Robinson did and some say Carroll considers his pro work undone), NCAA violations (their first-half ‘80s teams), or just a slip against great competition (’79 SC, ’83 Nebraska, ‘02 Miami, ’03-04 Oklahoma) can be enough to derail a team and separate the great from the legendary.

Unlike the NFL, a single loss (or tie) can upset the apple cart. USC is the hottest ticket in America's hottest town, the toast of Hollywood, the biggest thing in a media hothouse that does not have a pro football franchise and whose NBA team is yesterday. They set the all-time USC attendance record in 2003 and broke that in 2004. For 20-year old student-athletes, this is a major challenge, but they overcame it in 2004 and, under Carroll, appear capable of continuing their focus.

It is fun to talk about, and at SC, a school that went through a long (13 years or 20 years, depending on your standards) down period, it is especially fun. Their fans are about as giddy as the Republicans when Dwight Eisenhower saved that party after 20 years of the New Deal in 1952.

In light of USC's new status, below is the All-Time College Football Top 25 rankings, followed by the Top 25 Greatest Single-Season teams in college football history. The greatest college football teams are listed chronologically; the best team for each decade; the best single-season team each decade, followed by great programs in back-to-back, three-year, five-year, 10/15-year and 20/25-year periods; the most prominent dynasties and the coaches behind them; and for good measure the Top 25 Collegiate Athletic Programs of All-Time, the Top College Basketball Programs, and the Top 20 College Baseball Programs ever. A few prep dynasties are mentioned for good measure.

It is subjective and opinionated. It is meant to stir debate, controversy and argument. It is not written in stone. Extra credit goes to the more modern powers. Miami's success in the 1980s is
more impressive than Cal's "Wonder Teams" after World War I. Oklahoma's current run is as impressive as the one they accomplished in the 1950s. The game has changed. Competition, money, television, scholarship limits, NCAA rules, recruiting violations and parity all play a part in this evaluation. To the extent that the so-called "modern era" began, trace it to 1960, which is subjective, yes, but as good an embarkation point as any. It was in the 1960s when the players starting getting bigger, the equipment up to speed, the coaching techniques improved, and the color of the player's skin became increasingly something other than white.

Based upon history, one is increasingly impressed with USC. Overall, Notre Dame's ranking as the greatest college football program of all time has to take a back seat to their biggest rivals from the West Coast. The Irish still have the most National Championships (SC now has 11), the most Heisman Trophy winners (seven to SC's and Ohio State's six), holds a 42-29-5 lead over the Trojans in their inter-sectional rivalry, and trace their glory days back to when Knute Rockne invented the forward pass in time to beat favored Army in 1913. However, Notre Dame has struggled too much in the modern decades.

Notre Dame was the best college team under Rockne in the decade of the 1920s and under Frank Leahy in the 1940s. They had another major "era of Ara" (Parseghian) in the 1960s and '70s, and are listed among the top two-year dynasties (1946-47), 5-year dynasties (1943-47, 1973-77) and have three dynasties that are included among the 10/15-year period. Furthermore, they are Notre Dame, and all that that stands for: "Win one for the Gipper," the Catholic Church, "Touchdown Jesus," Ronald Reagan, "Rudy," "subway alumni," the Four Horsemen outlined against a blue-gray October sky, "wake up the echoes..."

Notre Dame's fans are the most intense and loyal. They are the team that played in Yankee Stadium, in Soldier Field, at the Coliseum. Many of their historic games were against SC. The tradition of these two teams are the best and the oldest.

For decades, the number two team was Southern California. This was not a coincidence. No rivalry in sports (or politics or war, probably) has done so much to elevate both sides as the USC-Notre Dame tradition. It put both schools on the national map. It pits, as SC assistant coach Marv Goux put it, "the best of the East vs. the best of the West." It matches the Catholic school with their Midwestern values against the flash 'n' dazzle of Hollywood, and it has never failed to live up to expectations.

Beginning in the 1980s, however, SC dropped while Notre Dame stayed at or near the top throughout the Lou Holtz era. Other contenders emerged. Miami and Florida State ascended to the top. Nebraska left opponents in the dust. Programs like Alabama and Oklahoma had, like SC, faltered, but regained their footing. Tennessee, Georgia, LSU and other teams, many in the South, rose in prominence. This was a direct result of integration and its impact has been very positive, but a school like Southern California could no longer lay claim to black athletes that were spurned by the SEC or the Southwestern Conference.
SC began to win awards and recognition for its academic excellence, and it became an article of faith that this was the trade-off; great football teams and great students are not mutually compatible. All of it was B.S. Pete Carroll proved that.

Five years ago, a Top 25 listing of the Greatest College Football Programs of All-Time would have shown USC to have slipped. However, in light of their National Championships and continuing favored status, Troy is now ahead of Notre Dame and in the top spot.

Long dynasties are hard to come by in college football, but as the following lists show, SC has a long history of doing just that. It is for this reason, combined with the glow of being Notre Dame's biggest rival, its great inter-city tradition with UCLA, and a history that goes back farther than almost any program (Michigan and Notre Dame are the only schools that go back as far and are still powers) that Southern California is not just first all-time in football but first among all athletic programs (and first by a wide margin in baseball).

The Greatest College Football Team in history is generally considered to be John McKay's 1972 Trojans. Just ask Keith Jackson, who ought to know. In addition, SC claims the best single-season team in the 1920s (1928), '30s (1931) and 2000s (2004). They are considered the best team of the decade of the 1930s, 1960s, 1970s, and now the 2000s.

Further proof of SC's ability to maintain a tradition is their consistency. The top dynasty period in history was the John McKay/John Robinson era lasting from the early 1960s until the 1980s. The Howard Jones "Thundering Herd" teams of the 1920s and '30s also ranks highly.


Among the best three-year periods ever, none is better than SC's run from 1972-74 (how about SC from 2002-04, or after next year from 2003-05?). Oklahoma deserves mention from 1971-73, or 1973-75. Among 5/6-year periods, consider three of Troy's eras (1967-72, the best of anybody, followed by 1974-79 and 1928-32).

The best 10/15-year period? USC from 1967 to 1979, but that is not all. Also ranked is the period 1962-72 and 1928-39. Among great long-term dynasties (20/25 years), nobody beats Southern California from 1962-81, when they won five National Championships and four Heisman Trophies. The Trojans easily have the most professionals, the most first round draft picks, the most Hall of Famers, the most Pro Bowlers and the most All-Americans. They are, undisputably, a football factory. The empirical evidence cannot be argued against.

On top of all this, USC counts the most Major League baseball players, the most baseball Hall of Famers, the most All-Stars and various dominant players. Despite not being known for basketball, a disproportionate number of Trojans from the 1940s and '50s are considered hoops pioneers. The "triangle offense" was invented at SC, and such stalwarts as Bill Sharman, Alex Hannum and Tex Winter played together before induction in Springfield. USC also boasts (along
with UCLA) the most Olympians, the most Olympic champions, and if they had been a
country in 1976, they would have placed third in total medals at the Montreal Games.

Alabama fans certainly would argue against Trojan football hegemony, and they have plenty of
ammunition. They were a national power as far back as the 1930s when Don Hutson starred
there. However, they slipped until the Bear Bryant era. Bryant's dominant period, lasting from
1961 to 1979, parallels McKay's (and Robinson's) and is as impressive as any ever. However, the
Tide was all-white until SC's Sam "Bam" Cunningham showed them, in Bear's own words,
sports columnist Jim Murray welcomed 'Bama "back into the Union."

The Crimson Tide experienced a down period after Bear departed, regained its place with the
1992 national title, but inexplicably fell from grace for another decade after that. Their recent
embarrassment in hiring Mike Price only to fire him for cavorting with strippers is indicative of
their malaise.

Oklahoma's teams in the 1950s dominated as thoroughly as any in history, but that is a long time
ago. They were not a major power prior to that decade. The Chuck Fairbanks/Barry Switzer
teams of the 1970s and '80s were as impressive as any that have ever taken the field (and
pockmarked by scandal and probation), but they became downright mediocre after Brian
Bozworth's departure. Bob Stoops, however, has them right back where they were before, and
then some.

Miami is rated highly based purely on unreal dominance in the 1980s and for maintaining an 18-
year run from 1983-2001 ('02) that approaches SC's 1962-81 dynasty. However, until Howard
Schnellenberger (by whatever means he did it) made them a power in '83, they were a college
football lightweight, plus their championship rosters too often resembled police reports.

Ohio State is sixth and could be higher. However, until Woody Hayes came along, Michigan, not
Ohio State, was the dominant Big 10 team. Woody's long tenure is very impressive, lasting from
his 1954 National Championship (split with UCLA) until Archie Griffin's second Heisman
campaign (1975). The 1968 Buckeyes are one of the most storied teams in history, good enough
to dominate O.J. Simpson and defending National Champion USC in the Rose Bowl. But
Woody's teams always fell short after that. They would go undefeated, average 40-plus points a
game, and make *Sports Illustrated* covers, but in Pasadena every New Year's Day, it seemed,
their "three yards and a cloud of dust" offense was no match for Pat Haden, John Sciarra, or
whoever SC or UCLA threw at them.

Penn State (7) has been a consistent national power under Joe Paterno since 1968, when they
were in the middle of a 30-game winning streak. Their "weak" East Coast schedule cost them a
couple of national titles, but the 1980s were Joe Pa's time. They have fallen precipitously in later
years, and while they have played football in Happy Valley a long time (the Lions lost to USC,
24-3, in the first game at the modern Rose Bowl stadium in 1923), they do not have a tradition
that goes back like SC or Notre Dame, either.
Nebraska is a relative Johnny-come-lately. Nobody knew much about the Cornhuskers until Bob Devaney's mythical 1970-71 National Championship squads. The Devaney/Tom Osborne era is unbelievable, starting with a long winning streak in the early '70s, but not devoid of criticism. Osborne may be just below Jesus Christ in Nebraska today, but Big Red fans took the Lord's name in vain aplenty when he consistently lost big games in the 1970s and '80s. Still, the 1971 and '95 squads rank as two of the top three teams in history, and Cornhusker dominance from 1993-97 was extraordinary (60-3, three National Championships).

Michigan has a hallowed tradition. They were college football's first powerhouse, beating Stanford in the first Rose Bowl, 49-0 in 1902. When the Big 10 started playing the Pacific Coast Conference after World War II, Michigan laid waste to the "soft" West Coast teams, which included pastings of some very good Pappy Waldorf teams from Cal in the Rose Bowl games of the late '40s. However, the Wolverines lost their place to Woody until Bo Schembechler came along. The Michigan teams of the 1970s mirrored Woody's - often unbeaten with gaudy stats until a pick-your-choice Pac 8 team (Stanford, USC, Washington) would dismantle them in Pasadena. In 1997 they finally won a National Championship and are a program of the first rate, but not number one.

Texas is a bit of a mystery. Darrell Royal's Longhorns won two National Championships (1963 and 1969, the last all-white titlist), and had a big winning streak that ended against Notre Dame in the 1971 Cotton Bowl, but Earl Campbell's team lost to Joe Montana when the Irish "stole" the 1977 National Championship (going from fifth to first on January 2, 1978). Texas has never repeated despite occasionally being favored, but they usually are slightly disappointing.

Florida State was a girl's school until Burt Reynolds broke the gender barrier in 1952. Tennessee has a great tradition. The Heisman Trophy is named after their coach in the 1930s, and they won the title in 1998. LSU has two titles. Florida made a bid for supremacy under Steve Spurrier but seem to lose the big game more often than not. Michigan State under Duffy Daugherty from 1965-66 broke color barriers and challenged for greatness, but Gary Beban and UCLA beat them in the 1966 Rose Bowl, and they tied Notre Dame in the 1966 "game of the century." Georgia's fans are nuts, and the team is darn good most of the time. Auburn and UCA are two of a kind. They each have won one National Championship, and have all the advantages - weather, facilities, recruiting, talent - only to labor in the shadow of historical behomeths (USC over UCLA, Alabama over Auburn).

The Arkansas Razorbacks are always fun. The 1991 Washington Huskies were the 22nd best single-season team ever, the Don James era was terrific, but they usually only go so far. Cal is so yesterday. Brick Muller's memory died an ugly death when the school became the de facto staging grounds of American Communism circa 1964-70. The Pitt Panthers were great in the 1930s and in Tony Dorsett's 1976 Heisman season. Minnesota is forgotten except for a five-year stretch prior to World War II. The Army Cadets once dominated whenever there was a world war being fought (?), and Stanford has Pop Warner, Ernie Nevers, Jim Plunkett, John Elway, Bill Walsh and the "Vow Boys." BYU won the 1984 National Championship and sports a long tradition of "bombs away" quarterbacks, led by Jim McMahon and Steve Young.
ALL-TIME GREATEST COLLEGE FOOTBALL TEAMS
Compiled by Steven Travers

All-Time Top 25
Southern California Trojans
2. Notre Dame Fighting Irish
Oklahoma Sooners
4. Alabama Crimson Tide
5. Miami Hurricanes
Ohio State Buckeyes
7. Penn State Nittany Lions
8. Nebraska Cornhuskers
9. Michigan Wolverines
10. Texas Longhorns
11. Florida State Seminoles
12. Tennessee Volunteers
13. Auburn Tigers
14. Louisiana State Tigers
15. Florida Gators
16. Michigan State Spartans
17. Georgia Bulldogs
18. UCLA Bruins
19. Arkansas Razorbacks
20. Washington Huskies
21. California Golden Bears
22. Pittsburgh Panthers
23. Minnesota Golden Gophers
24. Stanford Indians/Cardinal
25. Brigham Young Cougars

Greatest single-season teams
1. 1972 Southern California Trojans
2. 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
3. 1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
2004 Southern California Trojans
1989 Miami Hurricanes
1999 Florida State Seminoles
7. 1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
8. 1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
1956 Oklahoma Sooners
2001 Miami Hurricanes
11. 1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
12. 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
13. 1969 Texas Longhorns
14. 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
15. 1945 Army Cadets
16. 1931 Southern California Trojans
17. 1975 Oklahoma Sooners
18. 1919 California Golden Bears
19. 1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
20. 1948 Michigan Wolverines
21. 1928 Southern California Trojans
22. 1991 Washington Huskies
23. 1985 Oklahoma Sooners
24. 1976 Pittsburgh Panthers
25. 1962 Southern California Trojans

Chronological
1901 Michigan Wolverines
1919 California Golden Bears
1924 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1928 Southern California Trojans
1931 Southern California Trojans
1945 Army Cadets
1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1948 Michigan Wolverines
1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1962 Southern California Trojans
1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1969 Texas Longhorns
1971 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1972 Southern California Trojans
1973 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1975 Oklahoma Sooners
1976 Pittsburgh Panthers
1979 Alabama Crimson Tide
1985 Oklahoma Sooners
1986 Penn State Nittany Lions
1988 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1989 Miami Hurricanes
1991 Washington Huskies
1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
1999 Florida State Seminoles
2001 Miami Hurricanes
2004 Southern California Trojans

By Decades (single year)
1900s: 1901 Michigan Wolverines
1910s: 1919 California Golden Bears
1920s: 1928 Southern California Trojans
1930s: 1931 Southern California Trojans
1940s: 1947 Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: 1956 Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: 1968 Ohio State Buckeyes
1970s: 1972 Southern California Trojans
1980s: 1989 Miami Hurricanes
1990s: 1995 Nebraska Cornhuskers
2000s: 2004 Southern California Trojans

By Decades
1900s: Michigan Wolverines
1910s: California Golden Bears
1920s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1930s: Southern California Trojans
1940s: Notre Dame Fighting Irish
1950s: Oklahoma Sooners
1960s: Southern California Trojans
1970s: Southern California Trojans
1980s: Miami Hurricanes
1990s: Florida State Seminoles
2000s: Southern California Trojans

Dynasties
1. Southern California under John McKay & John Robinson (1960s-80s)
3. Alabama under Bear Bryant (1960s-80s)
4. Ohio State under Woody Hayes (1950s-70s)
5. Oklahoma under Bud Wilkinson (1950s)
6. Nebraska under Bob Devaney & Tom Osborne (1970s-90s)
7. Penn State under Joe Paterno (1960s-90s)
8. Oklahoma under Chuck Fairbanks & Barry Switzer (1970s-80s)
9. Notre Dame under Knute Rockne (1920s)
10. Notre Dame under Frank Leahy (1940s)
11. Southern California's "Thundering Herd" under Howard Jones (1920s-30s)
12. Notre Dame under Ara Parseghian (1960s-70s)
13. Florida State under Bobby Bowden (1990s)
14. Texas under Darrell Royal (1960s-70s)
15. Michigan under Bo Schembechler (1960s-80s)
16. California's "Wonder Teams" under Andy Smith (1918-22)
17. Army under Red Blaik (mid-1940s)
18. Minnesota under Bernie Bierbaum (1930s, early '40s)
19. Stanford under Pop Warner (1920s)
20. Michigan's "point-a-minute" teams under Fritz Carlisle (1900s)
21. Southern California under Pete Carroll (2000s)
Best two-year period
1. Oklahoma (1955-56)
   Nebraska (1974-75)
   Southern California Trojans (2003-04)
4. Notre Dame (1946-47)
5. Army (1944-45)
7. Oklahoma (1974-75)

Best three-year periods
1. Southern California (1972-74)
3. California (1919-22)
4. Southern California (1930-32)

Best 5/6-year periods
Southern California (1967-72)
2. Miami (1987-91)
3. Notre Dame (1973-77)
4. Notre Dame (1943-47)
5. Southern California (1974-79)
6. Alabama (1961-65)
7. Penn State (1982-86)
8. Southern California (1928-32)
9. Minnesota (1936-41)
10. Oklahoma (1971-75)
Southern California (1962-67)
Nebraska (1993-97)

Best 10/15-year periods
1. Southern California Trojans (1967-81)
3. Southern California Trojans (1962-72)
4. Oklahoma Sooners (1950s)
5. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1920s)
6. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1940s)
7. Florida State Seminoles (1990s)
8. Penn State Nittany Lions (1982-91)
9. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1966-77)
10. Oklahoma Sooners (1974-85)
11. Nebraska Cornhuskers (1990s)
12. Southern California Trojans (1928-39)

Best 20/25-year periods
1. Southern California Trojans (1962-81)
3. Notre Dame Fighting Irish (1964-88)
5. Ohio State Buckeyes (1954-75)

"Close but no cigar" (honorable mention)

All-time Greatest College Athletics Programs
1. Southern California Trojans
2. UCLA Bruins
3. Texas Longhorns
4. Miami Hurricanes
5. Michigan Wolverines
6. Alabama Crimson Tide
7. Ohio State Buckeyes
8. Florida State Seminoles
9. Stanford Indians/Cardinal
10. Oklahoma Sooners
11. Louisiana State Tigers
12. Tennessee Volunteers
13. Notre Dame Fighting Irish
14. Penn State Nittany Lions
15. Arkansas Razorbacks
16. Florida Gators
17. Indiana Hoosiers
18. Georgia Bulldogs
19. Texas A&M Aggies
20. Oklahoma State Cowboys
21. Arizona State Sun Devils
22. Auburn Tigers
23. Duke Blue Devils
24. North Carolina Tar Heels
25. Syracuse Orangemen
26. California Golden Bears
27. Brigham Young Cougars

All-Time College Basketball Programs
UCLA Bruins
Indiana Hoosiers
North Carolina Tar Heels
Duke Blue Devils
Kentucky Wildcats
Kansas Jayhawks
Michigan Wolverines
Ohio State Buckeyes
Virginia Cavaliers
Michigan State Spartans
Nevada-Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels
Louisville Cardinals
Arizona Wildcats
Stanford Cardinal
West Virginia Squires
San Francisco Dons
Syracuse Orangemen

All-Time College Baseball programs
Southern California Trojans
Texas Longhorns
Cal State Fullerton Titans
Arizona State Sun Devils
Miami Hurricanes
Stanford Indians/Cardinal
Louisiana State Tigers
Florida State Seminoles
Oklahoma State Cowboys
Florida Gators
Mississippi State Bulldogs
Texas A&M Aggies
Arkansas Razorbacks
Arizona Wildcats
Georgia Bulldogs
Oklahoma Sooners
California Golden Bears
Fresno State Bulldogs
Michigan Wolverines
Clemson Tigers

Prep football
De La Salle H.S. (Concord, Calif.)
Mater Dei H.S. (Santa Ana, Calif.)
Poly High School (Long Beach, Calif.)

Prep basketball
Verbum Dei H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Crenshaw H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Mater Dei H.S. (Santa Ana, Calif.)
Cardinal Gibbons H.S. (Baltimore, MD.)
De Matha H.S. (Hiattsville, MD.)
Power Memorial Academy (New York, N.Y.)
McClymonds H.S. (Oakland, Calif.)

Prep baseball
Lakewood H.S. (Calif.)
Redwood H.S. (Larkspur, Calif.)
Sharpstown H.S. (Houston, Tex.)
Rancho Bernardo H.S. (San Diego, Calif.)
Fremont H.S. (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Serra H.S. (San Mateo. Calif.)

THE HALLOWED SHRINE
Camelot in L.A.

Whether or not the 1978 USC-Notre Dame game was better, or more exciting, than the "1974 A.D." game can be argued. It was certainly a high for Coach Robinson, and a low for Dan Devine, who replaced Ara in 1975. The Irish may have Rudy, but the Trojans are happy to settle for Frank Jordan. Just as he had done against UCLA a year earlier, Jordan kicked a game-winner with two seconds left.

Jordan was a Catholic kid who grew up in San Francisco's Irish Sunset District. He went to Riordan High School. His younger brother, Steve, would kick field goals for Troy, as well. Jordan would eventually go to work for New York Life in San Francisco, but he fancied himself a historian. He wrote screenplays about World War I. This author once met with him in proposed collaboration of a movie script. The partnership did not blossom, but eventually, through the circuitous route known in Hollywood as "development hell," a movie about this subject - America's Argonne Offensive - was produced on A&E, starring Rick Schroder.

If one visits the clubhouse at San Francisco's Harding Park Gold Course, they cannot miss the signed color photo of Jordan being mobbed by his teammates after the momentous win over Notre Dame.

"We came out the first part of that game and just took it to 'em," said Paul McDonald. "We had a huge lead in that game, I can't remember what the score was but Joe Montana was maybe two for 18 in the first half and couldn't hit the broad side of a barn. I was thinking, Whose this guy, he's supposed to be a good player? Comes out in the second half and throws for 300 yards, brings 'em all the way back, they go for two, they're ahead 25-24, they go for two at the end - don't get it!"

"I had hurt me ankle the first series of the game. Bob Golic, their linebacker, rolled up on my ankle. They taped it up so I said, 'Put me back in, see if I can play.' The next series I threw a touchdown so I said, 'I'm fine,' but by the end of the game my ankle was killing me.

"And I got the offense together on the sidelines and I said, 'Hey guys, we're not gonna lose this game.' All we have to do is go down about 50 yards, kick the field to win the game and get out of here. We only had one timeout, so we tried to save that timeout. I rolled into the short side of the
field, and nobody was open, so I backpedaled, guy was coming right at me, so I threw it, and I threw it - I knew I had to throw it to stop the clock - and it hit one of their linemen's thigh pads, and of course they thought it was a fumble, and they were ecstatic, their bench emptied, they're jumping up and down thinking they won the game, but the official called 'incomplete pass.' Because the ball, my arm was going forward. Next pass we completed a 40-yard pass to Calvin Sweeney, next play Charles White goes off tackle for another eight, we go on the field with two seconds left and kick a field goal to win the game."

Montana's performance was bravura. He was as good in a noble defeat as any college quarterback ever has been, exceeded perhaps only by his incredible comeback effort against Houston in the Cotton Bowl a little over a month later.

"I came there in '72, and through '80, the winner of that game either won the national championship or came in second," recalled J.R., "so both teams were nationally ranked, so the winner was probably gonna win the national championship or come very close to it."

The noise of the crowd when Jordan kicked that field goal was absolutely deafening. Men and women kissed in the aisles, nearly making love to each other. Complete strangers hugged like lifelong lost pals. Fathers and sons found meaning. The emotion, all the incredible pent-up pressure of the national championship, the eternal struggle of the Notre Dame game; with everything riding on it, this was a true "winner take all" scenario.

Montana, after doggedly wearing down his adversaries all game, glumly boarded a plane back to Indiana with his beaten, dejected team. On that plane, he met a stewardess. A relationship blossomed and she became his wife, although it ended in divorce.

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The Trojans had a "vacation game" in Hawaii. They actually trailed for a while against the Rainbows before overcoming their sunburns and hangovers in a 21-5 win.

Unlike 1974, when the Notre Dame game pre-cursed an equally dramatic Rose Bowl, this time around the game against Michigan was workmanlike. McDonald threw a touchdown pass to Hoby Brenner. With 7:29 to play in the second quarter, the Trojans had the ball on the Michigan three. Line judge Gilbert Marchman ruled that White's dive into the end zone was a touchdown.

It was USC's fifth straight Rose Bowl victory, 17-10. White finished with 99 yards. Wolverine quarterback Rick Leach was spectacular in the second half when the Trojans tried to go conservative, almost to their chagrin. White and Leach shared Player of the Game honors. Very possibly, USC lost the AP version of the national championship by not putting fifth-ranked Michigan away. Alabama beat unbeaten, number one-ranked Penn State in a strong showing. Despite having beaten the Tide with an impressive win on their home field, USC had to split the title. It was a reverse of the 1966 vote, when 'Bama - unbeaten, untied and a bowl winner - had been denied the title, which went to once-tied Notre Dame via the "Catholic vote" and the "anti-segregation vote." Segregated Texas's 1969 win, with President Nixon's endorsement, takes something away from the argument that the pollsters voted entirely with social pathos in that era, however.

USC could also look to its 17-10 win over UCLA with a tinge of regret. Leading 17-0, they had barely hung on to win, 17-10. Impressive blowouts over the Bruins and Wolverines, both within their range of capability, had not happened when they went a little bit too conservative, which was one of the few complaints anybody could think to attach to Robinson's record, at least up until that point. Their second half complacency had nearly cost the Notre Dame game, as well.
With Alabama now completely integrated and rolling like a juggernaut - these were Bear's best teams - the jowly man in the hound's tooth fedora was suddenly a sentimental favorite. Alabama's share of the 1978 national championship can be attributed in very large measure to the personal charisma of Bear Bryant. In doing the right thing, whether he was late or early to the dance, Bryant had become a national figure and an adored one, at that.

Oddly, USC found itself again victims of their own good works. They had of course helped open the door to integration in 1970, only to be surprised by a 'Bama team with black players in 1971. Their role in social progress was again "rewarded" in '78 when the voters went for the man they had helped make progressive.

"That's what you get," John McKay had wryly told Craig Fertig when he had seen John Mitchell sprinting downfield on the opening kick of the 1971 SC-'Bama game in L.A.

It was the end of the regular season four-game arrangement with Alabama. Oddly, the visitors won all four games between the two storied programs in the 1970s.

"Many people said, 'Hey, you can't make it through that kind of schedule,' " said Robinson of the 1978 season, which included wins over Alabama, UCLA, Notre Dame, and Michigan. "They said our schedule was a mankiller. Well, we had some men that it couldn't kill."

Shared national championship or not, for many 1978 represented the highest point in USC football history. The aura and mystique of Trojan football reached epic proportions. The question of who was the better traditional, historical team, USC or Notre Dame - or Alabama - was very much up in the air, with USC supporters holding plenty of ammunition in support of their argument.

"It was an amazing time, we had great assistant coaches there, we had well known people who were eager," recalled J.R. "It was like a Camelot to a lot of people."

Indeed, "Tailback U." was now "Quarterback College." McDonald was brilliant on the field as well as off. He was the latest in a string of quarterbacks, from Jimmy Jones to Pat Haden to Vince Evans and now himself, who had created a new paradigm at the position for Troy. Hackett introduced complexity to the offense that heretofore had not existed.

Hackett later became USC's head coach. He did not succeed, but he is due his share of credit. He was one of the minds who created the concept of the West Coast offense; concepts built on the coaching of Sid Gilman, Marv Levy and Paul Brown. He would go to San Francisco to help perfect it (and Joe Montana) under coach Bill Walsh in the 1980s.

"One of Paul's greatest strengths was his ability to throw to a variety of receivers, to find the open man," Hackett said of McDonald. "He never made up his mind on the man he was going to throw to until the last possible moment. He didn't get excited."

White finished the 1978 season with 1,859 yard rushing in 1978, but Oklahoma's Billy Sims captured the Heisman Trophy. White would not win "two or three Heismans," but he did have a chance to win one, plus a national championship, come within a whisker of a second, as well as three Rose Bowl victories. White made All-American in 1978.

"AT USC THEY MADE PLANS!"

Terry Marks's story is the story of America. It is the story of how the twin pillars of sports and education combined to make for opportunity; and how the lessons learned along the journey became templates for ultimate success. Marks's success is extraordinary, but the very
ordinariness of his experience is the message. It is not necessary to be a captain of industry and a multi-millionaire in order to be a success. The fact that Marks is just these things is merely a neon sign advertising his work ethic learned through athletics, but the lessons imparted by this man have equal measures of impact on anybody willing to pick up on them.

It would be inaccurate to say that Marks grew up impoverished, although the kind of upward mobility America affords people of his background is unique. It is true that in England, France and other countries folks from the lower middle classes rise to the highest echelons of society. However, it is much rarer outside the United States that it is here. Terry's was a family of 11 in Rochester, New York. His father worked in the Kodak film processing plant. When he was growing up, the Kodak plant was the main employer in Rochester.

"If you were going anywhere at five o'clock, my mother would say, 'Oh, there'll be Kodak traffic' on the roads," Marks recalled. "My father never made more than $40,000 a year. He rose to be a supervisor and was home every day for dinner at 5:30."

Life for the Marks family revolved around the Kodak plant, sports and the Catholic Church. On the East Coast, neighborhoods were ethnic enclaves. Marks attended St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

"The priests had us play an annual 'football game' between the Irish and the Italians," he said. "It was a knock-down, drag-out affair meant to test your manhood." One year a girl from California transferred to the school.

"She was utterly exotic and new," Terry said. "To us she was like a movie star because she was from California."

Being Irish Catholic, naturally Terry and his family were die-hard Notre Dame football fanatics. Football was religion. Faith in God, the infallible Truths of Christ, were interchangeable with Irish gridiron fortunes. There was just one faultline in his faith-based football fandom: the University of Southern California.

"I grew up in the 1970s," Marks recalled. "Those were my formative years, and they were great years for Notre Dame football, the 'era of Ara' <Parseghian>, of Joe Montana." Notre Dame won two national championships in the decade, but was overshadowed by their great rivals from USC. The Trojans beat the Irish eight of 10 times, captured three of their 11 national championships and the third of their seven Heisman Trophies. In 1974, USC rallied from a 24-0 deficit to crush Notre Dame, 55-24 in a game for the ages. It was like apostasy for Terry Marks.

"USC was Hollywood," he said. "The easy life. California morals. In a battle of good vs. evil, if Notre Dame was 'the good,' then USC had to be . . . something else."

In even years, Notre Dame ventured out west to play Southern California over Thanksgiving weekend. In Rochester, the snows were often falling. Being three hours later, darkness had descended. A sense of desolation permeated the cold outside the Marks family home, where the family gathered together to root for Notre Dame. The televised images consistently disappointed them, however. On the field, the Trojans more often than not pummeled the Irish, but the screen revealed something more than that.

"I saw a cavalcade of color like I'd never seen before," said Marks. "The green grass, the Trojan horse, and the stands filled with shirt-sleeved, sun-splashed fans. The camera panned in on pretty girls and celebrities, beautiful USC cheerleaders. I did not just see a football game; I saw optimism."

As much as Marks loved football, baseball was where his talents lay. At 6-3, 230 pounds, he was a strapping, hard-throwing right-handed pitcher. But youth baseball in Rochester was
sketchy at best. The weather did not permit real on-field baseball until well into April or even May. The programs, from little league to high school, were second-rate. Marks remembered practicing in jeans and using hand-me-down equipment. He yearned for an atmosphere in which baseball would be taken seriously; one in which he could be the best he could be.

Just as in warfare the smart warrior learns all he can about his enemy, so too did Terry Marks endeavor to find out all he could about the hated USC Trojans. He discovered that not only were they a football dynasty, but an athletic powerhouse in everything from track to tennis to volleyball to swimming; and that numerous Trojans had won gold medals in every Olympic Games since 1904.

"Aside from Notre Dame football, I lived and breathed Boston Red Sox baseball," said Marks. "I was a member of the Red Sox Nation long before there was such a thing. I could not help but notice that two of my favorite Red Sox players, pitcher Bill 'Spaceman' Lee and outfielder Fred Lynn, were USC Trojans. At first this bothered me; not more Trojan dominance!"

But Marks investigated and found that among the sports USC dominated the most was his first love: baseball. In Rochester, he pined every winter away until he could get out on the field. He dreamed of playing baseball in warm weather on well-kept, manicured fields. Then he made a momentous decision: to attend the University of Southern California and play baseball. He was a good high school pitcher but did not catch the eye of USC coach Rod Dedeaux. But he was an excellent student from a family of modest means. He was able to get a partial academic scholarship along with financial aid. This attracted Dedeaux, who relied on a percentage of walk-ons to come to his high-priced private school to play for his team. Dedeaux offered a small amount of aid and Marks was a Trojan. Then came the shock of Terry Marks's life.

"I had seen a program promoting USC," he recalled. "They showed all these images of USC academic life; the Coliseum, the blonde cheerleaders, Anthony Davis running for touchdowns, and happy students lying on the grass in 85-degree sunshine. One image showed the campus as if it was right on the Pacific Ocean. The strand was right where Vermont Avenue parallels the school and the Coliseum. I thought it was real."

Malibu had actually offered USC a parcel of land with the enticement of re-locating the campus to its pricey beachfront in 1974. USC had turned down the offer, which was accepted by Pepperdine, up until then located not far from USC in downtown Los Angeles. Marks did not know any of this when he arrived at the Los Angeles International Airport in 1979 with two suitcases and $75 in his pocket. He hailed a cab and told the driver to take him to USC. He kept looking out the window, waiting to get a glimpse of the beach, but was immediately struck by the fact that the vehicle seemed to be driving east, which he knew was away from the water. The neighborhoods kept getting worse and worse and worse. The trip dragged on for an hour and the meter went up and up and up. Marks was convinced he had been taken for a "ride" by an unscrupulous cabbie when the lights of the Coliseum appeared in the distance, but the neighborhood was dangerous; definitely not beachfront property.

Finally he was dropped in front of a shabby apartment, the address assigned to him by student housing. It was August and few students were around yet. The heat was stifling and the smog seemed to stick to his skin. The fare was $40, which shocked him and left him with $20 to love on for a month. Marks found his apartment and unpacked, then took off for the supermarket to get needed supplies. The market was dirty and filled with illegal aliens. The prevailing language was Spanish.
Marks paid for some essential foodstuffs and departed with bags in both hands. He began walking back to the apartment, but 10 minutes later realized he was lost. He kept walking and became more lost. 20 minutes. 45 minutes. An hour passed. Marks began to panic. The jet lag, the searing August heat, the stifling smog that made it hard to see across the street, and a lack of food, began to play tricks on his mind. The neighborhood was dangerous. Gangbangers drove by. Graffiti and gang colors marked the fences. Nobody smoked English. He was eyed suspiciously and sensed that he was the target of predators.

He seemed to have wandered into an episode of *The Twi-Light Zone*. There was no sign that a college campus was close by. Marks had visions of Bill Lee, Tom Seaver and Fred Lynn walking the streets; of Anthony Davis driving by in a convertible with two blondes; of wealthy students making merry. These visions were now replaced by a horrible nightmare.

A strange dread overtook him, and Terry Marks began to give serious consideration to the possibility that he had died and was now in hell. His mind played tricks on him. As a loyal Catholic had he committed a sin against God by choosing not the school of his Catholic upbringing, Notre Dame, but instead their "enemies"? Had he been tempted by the sunshine, by Hollywood, by the lure of beautiful women and a life of ease instead of Christian piety, and was he now being judged and sentenced to eternal damnation for the "immoral" choice he had made?

Marks put his bags down, spat out the Copenhagen snuff he had been chewing, and tried to compose himself. Right then and there, on West Adams Boulevard on the mean streets of L.A., he did the sign of the cross, recited the Lord's Prayer, and asked God to guide him. He picked up his bags and began walking in the direction he had come from, trusting that he would be delivered to the Promised Land. 10 minutes later he was at his apartment.

Terry Marks attended USC from 1979 to 1984. He played baseball for Rod Dedeaux's Trojans. He was not a star, but he was good enough to sign a contract with the San Francisco Giants and play one year in the minor leagues. Marks graduated from USC with a bachelor's degree in communications. He was extremely popular with the coeds, but eventually met his future wife, a lovely fellow Catholic girl named Cecile Poppen, who had been raised a self-proclaimed "valley girl" in the nearby suburban enclave of Thousand Oaks. Cecile had her eye on Terry for some time and schemed to meet him by bribing this author to take his place at a campus job for the evening so she could enchant him. It worked.

For the Irish Catholic kid from the blue-collar "Kodak family" of 11 in Rochester, New York, USC was a revelation. It was not, as he initially feared, "hell". . . on earth or elsewhere. Instead, it was a place of hope and promise, a place where people thought differently than he had ever known before.

"At USC people made plans!" he exclaimed. "It was a place where anything was possible, optimism prevailed, and one felt that he or she could achieve your dreams." Since childhood, Marks had dreamt of going to Notre Dame and playing baseball for the Red Sox. The reason he did not go to Notre Dame was because he dreamt of playing baseball. While today Notre Dame has a creditable program, in those days it was not a place to pursue diamond dreams, whereby USC was. Baseball had directed Marks to USC, and now directed him on the path towards his real destiny.

After graduation, Marks married Cecile and began a family. He went to work for Minolta, a Japanese company his older brother was well placed in. He succeeded in sales and began the process of promotion. For several years he rose at Minolta, but it occurred to him that
he faced a "glass ceiling," being an American in a Japanese company. His patriotism plagued at his conscience, too. He began to explore a change in direction.

Marks set his sights on that most iconic of all American corporations, the Coca-Cola Company. He composed a letter and mailed it to a high-ranking Coke executive along with his resume, half-expecting that he would hear nothing, or get a form letter in return. But his recent experiences at USC; his young-but-successful marriage; and the sense that all things are possible lent him an optimistic air. A few weeks later the executive called him. He told Marks that there was something in his approach that stood out. Not anything really definable. Obviously, Coca-Cola received thousands of resumes and had to pass on the great majority of them, but destiny was in Terry Marks's corner.

The executive told Marks that his communications degree from the University of Southern California, normally a door opener and, if combined with the right "old boy" networking, a ticket puncher, was not an advantage at Coca-Cola. This was an old school company that promoted from within. They did not rely on "headhunters" and "executive searches" for their talent. The Coke hierarchy was homegrown and consisted for the most part of people who began at the bottom: truck drivers, deliverymen, and factory workers. A man was expected to learn every aspect of the Coca-Cola business from the ground floor, slowly but surely making an inexorable, painstaking climb up the ranks that, eventually, might lead to the corporate offices in Atlanta. 30 or 40 years of service to the grand old company was expected before a man could reach the top. There was none of the glamour or high profile that a Donald Trump, a Rupert Murdoch or a Sir Richard Branson attained, but for a newcomer in his mid-20s, such status was seemingly incomprehensible. Except that USC had once seemed incomprehensible, but then it had become possible, and people there "made plans!" Terry Marks had plans.

Marks made the right impressions during the interview process. He was told that the company was making an exception in hiring a college boy. All his life, Marks thought his blue-collar roots were a hindrance, that he was like the Notre Dame icon Rudy Ruettiger, whose own father tried to stifle his dreams by telling him that people "like us" should not dare dream of going to Notre Dame or aiming for the stars. In graduating from USC, Marks thought he had scaled a wall that would open up vistas of opportunity previously unavailable to him, but now he found his life had taken an ironic twist in that his very blue-collar background was precisely what had made him attractive to his new employers, instead of the other way around.

Furthermore, his sports background, or more precisely the story that revolved around his pursuit of a baseball career, had been viewed by the people at Coca-Cola as a template for success within their organization. Marks had grown up in an egalitarian neighborhood and pursued the most egalitarian of occupations, sports. He had not ultimately succeeded, but it was the journey that had led him down this new, bright path in this most egalitarian of American companies.

For the better part of a year, Terry's mettle was tested. While his wealthy classmates pursued work on Wall Street and Madison Avenue, took cushy jobs in family businesses, and in the case of many of USC's international students, entered politics in their home countries in Asia, Africa and the South Pacific, Terry was given a shirt that read "Coca-Cola" on once side and "Terry" on the other. He rose every day at four in the morning and learned the Coke way from gruff truck drivers assigned to show him the ropes. He sweated over boxes of Coke bottles that had to be carried into supermarkets, 7-11s and neighborhood mom 'n' pop stores.
He went from each incremental assignment to the next; a few months on a truck, a few months in a warehouse; a few months in a bottling plant, and so forth. Each step was difficult and lacked *panache*. He was given every chance to fail, to call it quits, and pursue easier work, but his hardscrabble upbringing and lessons learned on the baseball diamond had taught him to overcome obstacles, which is what he did.

Finally, the day came when Terry Marks had "graduated" from Coca-Cola's "school of hard knocks." He was given an office and a secretary. For the first time he donned a coat and tie to work. But if he had any dreams of Atlanta and corporate stardom, the company's history was meant to quickly dissuade a man in his 20s from thinking of something that could not be expected until he reached his late 50s. However, Terry Marks always reverted back to his own experiences: baseball and USC. A rookie Fred Lynn *could* through sheer excellence become the Most Valuable Player in the American League. A blue-collar, Irish Catholic Terry Marks *could* graduate from USC, and he could "make plans!"

That was what he did. He made plans. He decided to demonstrate sheer excellence, to "assume dominance" the way he had been taught to do on the pitcher's mound. When things got tight at work, he would pitch his way out of the jam. If he failed, he would come back the next day and try and again. Rivals, jealousies and company in fighting would be dealt with just as he had learned how to work with teammates of every color, from every part of the country. Discipline, goal-setting and other traits from his sports career would be, and were, applied to his career.

Terry Marks rose in meteor-like fashion through the ranks of Coca-Cola. He was promoted consistently and, with each promotion, moved his growing family as he worked in downtown Los Angeles; Orange County, California; Maryland; Boston; and eventually Atlanta. In the mid-1990s, the rumors began: Terry Marks was on the fast track to become the youngest president in Coca-Cola history. The signs were all there. In Boston, whenever the company sponsored an event or an award, it was Terry who was selected as the spokesman, to present Larry Bird or Kevin McHale with a trophy of some kind on the parquet floor of Boston Garden. A corporate partnership with the Oakland A's gave Terry a chance to meet A's general manager Billy Beane, he of the famed *Moneyball* style of baseball economics. The two found much common ground, and Beane admired the young executive's style.

Year by year, Marks moved up the ladder, until in the 2000s he was the number two man. In 2004, he became number one, heading Coca-Cola's North American operations. At 47 he is still young with an unlimited future, as a captain of industry or some other endeavor, should he choose.

"There are just two jobs I would take that could make me leave what I'm doing," he says. "General manager of the Boston Red Sox or athletic director at USC." Do not count Terry Marks out of either. What he sets his mind to achieve, he will achieve.

**EXCERPT FROM TROJANS ESSENTIAL**

**THE DUKE**
Before he was an acting legend, John “Duke” Wayne was a USC student named Marion Morrison. He played football for Howard Jones. Wayne's teammate at USC was Ward Bond, who would go on to a long film career.

Morrison met famed director John Ford, who made him a prop man and liked his rugged film presence enough to cast him in 1928's *Hangman's House*. Ford later made a football movie about the Naval Academy, *Salute*, and wanted USC players for it. Aside from *Salute*, extravagant Hollywood productions of the era often featured Trojan players in the roles of Roman Legionnaires, Napoleon's *Grand Arme*, or Biblical flocks. This was prior to the NCAA, and while there was grousing about "professionalism," there never were repercussions. "It girl" Clara Bow invited USC football players to her parties. This was the kind of extracurricular activity that schools such as Iowa or Duke, where Jones had toiled previously, could not offer.

Duke spoke to the Trojans before the 1966 USC-Texas game, "The kids are all assembled in the locker room at 10 in the morning, and in walks Wayne," recalled Nick Pappas. "Damn, he was fantastic. He walks in with this white 20,000-gallon cowboy hat and black suit - he looked just beautiful."

USC won, 10-6.

Mike Walden was the USC play-by-play announcer, and recalls that 1966 Texas game, and Wayne's unique role in the events of that weekend. "My first game in 1966 was on the road vs. Texas," said Walden. "There'd be a press gathering in Austin, what they called 'smokers' down there, where everybody got together. Well, Wayne was down there making *War Wagon* in nearby Mexico, and he shows up with Bruce Cabot. "I'm gonna have some whisky,' Wayne says to the bartender, who pours it, and Wayne just looks at it, shoved it back, and said, 'I said WHISKY!'

"Texas had a quarterback they called 'Super Bill' Bradley who was supposed to be outstanding, but SC just controlled the ball and won, 10-6. Afterwards, <assistant coach Marv> Goux came in and said wasn't it great, we 'didn't get anybody 'chipped off.' Well, Wayne and Cabot were somewhere, and someone got in an argument the next morning and their make-up artist was dead of a heart attack. It was confusing, I don't know for sure what all happened. Wayne and all of 'em were out drinking all night and came in at seven in the morning, maybe it was too much for this guy, but this make-up artist died.

"'Well,' Cabot said, 'We got somebody 'chipped off,' after Goux said 'we didn't get anybody 'chipped off.' "

Wayne was an absolute Republican and a superpatriot who made *The Green Berets*. Wayne's conservatism earned him plenty of critics, but even in 1969, when he won the Oscar for *True Grit*, Hollywood opened its hearts to him without reservation. Others found him to be a celluloid hero who had not served in wars while real war heroes like Ted Williams were thought to be "the real John Wayne."

Jeff Prugh, the *L.A. Times* beat writer for USC football in the 1960s and '70s, recalls a story from that 1966 weekend in Austin.

"Well, there was this one L.A. sportswriter writer whose name shall remain anonymous," said Prugh. "Everyone is gathered at the bar, and John Wayne's holding court. This old writer is off in the corner getting drunker and drunker. He's liberal and Wayne's an outspoken conservative Republican. Finally, this old writer has had enough, and he approaches Wayne, interrupts him in mid-sentence with all Wayne's pals staring at him."
"So… …" the old drunk writer says, "they tell me, uh… … they call ya… The Duke!"
"Yeah, what of it?" says Wayne.
"This writer just gathers himself," continued Prugh.
"Waaaal… Duke… … You ain' s--t!"
"Well, it was almost a full brawl right then and there but his pals held Wayne back," said Prugh. Craig Fertig was a star quarterback at USC and a graduate assistant in 1966.
"One time, the players wanted to go see Easy Rider," Fertig recalled, referring to a "hippie" movie of the 1960s. "Duke Wayne says, 'Don't let the kids see that crap!' So he arranged for 'em to see War Wagon instead.
"I'm low man on the totem pole in '66, so I gotta chaperone the team and do bed checks. Now McKay's hosting a party for Wayne."
(This contrasts with Nick Pappas' assertion that Wayne and McKay had not met prior to the morning of the next day's game, but considering that alcohol, old alums and memories were involved, the discrepancy is a minor one.)
"I finally put the kids to bed, so I make it up to this party, see," continued Fertig. "I see John Wayne and introduce myself to him, and he's like, 'Oh, I saw you beat Notre Dame,' and he's just like my best friend.
"Well, he has Bruce Cabot with him, and this make-up artist, too. This make-up artist's mixing drinks - vodka one time, Bourbon, scotch, right? He's gettin' hammered.
"The next day, I'm assigned to Duke Wayne, 'cause he's gonna speak to the team. Wayne's mad as hell, 'cause his make-up guys' not there.
"'Son of a bitch's never around when you need 'im,' he says. It turns out the man's died during the night, maybe 'cause he mixed drinks and it was too much for his heart. Anyway, I gotta get Duke ready, the job this dead make-up guy usually does."
Apparently, Wayne had not yet learned of the make-up artist's demise.
"'Whadda I wear?' asks Duke. I tell him, 'Everybody knows you as a cowboy, so dress like that.' 10-gallon hat, cowboy boots, brass belt buckle; I got him lookin' good.
"We're scared sh----e, Texas is number one in the country. So at the stadium he fires up our team. Then he's introduced to the crowd. He comes out and he's in this cart with my dad."
Fertig's father, "Chief" Henry Fertig, was the longtime head of the Huntington Park, California police department in L.A. County, and a tremendous USC booster.
"He's being driven around the stadium in this cart, and the whole time my dad's pouring whisky into a cup and Duke's drinkin' out of it," continued Fertig. "Now, the Texas fans, they see The Duke, and he's wearin' this cowboy hat, and most of 'em don't know he's a USC football player. Duke's givin' 'em the hook 'em horns sign with his fingers, and the Longhorn fans are cheering."
"'Duke's a Texas fan,' their sayin'.
"All the time, Duke's sayin' to my old man, 'F--k the 'horns.' "

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN
I wrote Barry Bonds' biography. Barry originally authorized me to write his autobiography, but money ruined the deal. Here is all the evidence of my Year with Barry.

LETTER TO BARRY BONDS

David Halberstam, a Pulitzer Prize winner, wrote a scathing piece about Barry, so I thought we should take the PR offensive. This is the letter, and proposed first-person article I ghostwrote for Barry. Bonds could not understand why his image needed any damage control. I guess when you are almost impossible to get out, you can think that way.

July 26, 2001

Mr. Barry Bonds
San Francisco Giants
c/o Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Fax No.: (602) 468-0793

Dear Barry:

Here is a first-person article I ghostwrote for you for the next issue of San Francisco Magazine and ESPN.com. The deadline for submitting this piece is Friday, July 27. It is strictly up to you if you wish to have your name on this, but you can look it over and if you want any changes made, say the word. If you wish not to have me submit it, I will not. I will not do anything until I hear from you.

I have attached excerpts culled from ESPN.com's web site, the recent piece by David Halberstam on you. I think it is good idea for you to answer this article, which is what I have endeavored to do here. I need to hear back from you by tomorrow (Friday), which is the deadline for submitting it.

Also, I have switched agents on our authorized book deal. I have replaced Basil Kane with Mel Berger, a high-powered agent at The William Morris Agency in New York. I believe he has a better chance of getting a good deal for us than Basil.

Very truly yours,

STEVEN R. TRAVERS

I'M NOT WHO YOU THINK I AM...AND IF I AM, I'M SORRY

This has been a pretty special season for me. For reasons I can’t really explain, I’m hitting home runs like I’ve never hit them before. I’m on a pace to challenge Mark McGwire’s season record of 70, and because of that it seems like every writer, radio and television reporter in America wants a part of me.
The Giants have been great about it, setting up press conferences so I can take care of the media in groups instead of taking on individual writers in piecemeal fashion at my locker. Hitting homers is fun, I’m enjoying myself, and it shows.

I’ve never been very accessible to the media. Now I am, and it seems like the cliché that best applies is “No good deed goes unpunished.”

Fox broadcaster Tim McCarver was on me like a cheap suit, saying that it was a phony act that all of a sudden I’m nice with the media after years of being a bogeyman. Then I got it from David Halberstam on ESPN.com’s Page 2 web site. Halberstam compared me to a Yankee player in the 1920s, notoriously unfriendly with writers, who when his career started to go downhill started to cheer up with the press. He needed them to write nice things about him so he could hold his job a few years longer. Halberstam said my cooperativeness was just public relations spin, that none of it was me, just my handlers.

Getting a full frontal assault from David Halberstam is pretty tough. He’s a Pulitzer Prize winner, the author of some of the most important books of the past 20 years, and a respected reporter who is credited with changing America’s attitude about Vietnam. What do you say to somebody like that?

Well, for one, I might say that he never came to me. He doesn’t know me, he just knows what he’s heard. I also might point out that I’m having my best season, so I don’t exactly need to beg people to like me to keep my job.

Okay, fine. I’m sorry. I once did tell a writer speaking to my father to “get the hell out of here.” I’ve snubbed writers, brushed ‘em off, and been rude. I’ve not run out every ground ball, either. I should, but I haven’t. For all of this, I apologize. I was wrong.

I grew up feeling like the sun rose and set on me. I had talent for baseball, and since I was a little kid I got to hang out with big leaguers. My dad, Bobby Bonds, starred for the Giants. Willie Mays is my Godfather. Reggie Jackson is my cousin. Dusty Baker changed my diapers. I was always a star. How many people growing up like that wouldn’t have some attitude? That’s not an excuse, it’s just the way it is.

I was immature, but I was in the spotlight early. I made a lot of money and had fame at a time when others my age could make their mistakes away from the glare of publicity. I talked to the writers in Pittsburgh, but Jim Leyland told me to do less of that and concentrate on my job more. I was criticized, and did all I knew. I stopped talking to writers.

Some guys are better at it than I am, for whatever reason. I wish I had Tony Gwynn’s knack for it. I wish I had the kind of personality that Willie has, where people thought of him as the happy-go-lucky “Say Hey Kid”. I just don’t.
But I’m older now. I’ve been through a divorce, and I have kids of my own. I’m getting a dose of what I gave my folks. My wife tells me to be nicer, and I suppose I’m becoming an elder statesman of the game. I’m thinking about my legacy, I care what people think, and I want to be loved like any other human.

I did things I shouldn’t have done, but I can’t change that, but I’ve learned from my mistakes. I also don’t mind pointing out that nobody ever hears about my being arrested, having children out of wedlock, hitting women (or men), or getting into scandal.

I’ve had a great life, and I have no right to complain, but I would like to say to David Halberstam, or Tim McCarver, that I’m embracing what’s happened to me, and I think I deserve a second chance as much as the next guy. That’s what makes America great, isn’t it?

**Bonds 500th puts him in pantheon of best**

Here is the column I wrote for the *San Francisco Examiner* that got me on Barry's good side, and helped him decide to go with me on the autobiography deal. For a while, at least.

Outlined against a grey night sky, one of the Bay Area's own made history last night.

Barry Bonds is the son of Barry, the Godson of the "Say Hey Kid", and according to a few, a son of maybe something else. He of Serra High, Arizona State, Pittsburgh and Pac Bell is, above all, a son of San Francisco. If ever baseball royalty graced the Elysian Fields of the Golden West, it is Bonds.

500 home runs! Some people say it does not mean what it used to mean, what with smaller yards, steroids, weights, and a lack of good pitching.

Gimme a break!

Barry Bonds already is considered by many to be the greatest player in baseball.

"Barry stays motivated to be the best in the game," says Giants' Manager Dusty Baker, who makes no bones about the fact that he thinks Bonds, with all due respect to Ken Griffey, Alex Rodriguez and the Usual Suspects, is just that.

Bonds entered the most elite home run club in baseball with insouciance and arrogance. Do not get me wrong, Bonds' arrogance on the field is the good kind.

We need more of it.

Hey, if a player says it his goal to win the MVP award, or lead the league home runs, he should be encouraged in this regard. After all, if he is that good, it will help his team win.
"I'm not arrogant," says Barry, "I'm good."

That is no lie. This guy has T-A-L-E-N-T. The ability not only to play like he does, but to do it year after year, is monumental. It is, quite simply, why a few fellows get the big bucks.

"Barry's got 500 homors," says Baker, "but a lot of guys have hit a lot of homors. He gets a lot of hits, too. He steals bases. He plays hurt."

For years, Bonds has played through injuries, road trips, winning and losing seasons, and personal discord. Between the lines, he is one of the greatest athletes this great nation has ever produced.

When it comes to playing baseball, there are few superlatives that do not apply. What eludes him is The Ring. If he can get it, and particularly if he can lead his team to the Promised Land in the manner of a DiMaggio, a Ruth, even a Reggie Jackson, his status will be elevated to the loftiest perch of the Hall of Fame.

Is it a shame that post-season success is the final barrier that separates the Great from the Truly Great? No, because they play to win.

Bonds plays to win. He is a regular season wonder. His Play-Off disappointments are as hard to take for him as for fans, writers or baseball people. Are these blips in his career indicative of a fault, a flaw, a chink in the armor?

Not at all. Baseball is a funny game. It is also a hard, hard game. There is no other sport than invites failure like baseball. You have to have a little bit of self-masochism in you to endure its indignities, like an actor who keeps coming back but never gets the big role, or the screenwriter with 500 rejection letters.

Bonds has had a few bad days in October. This is happenstance. Timing. Some day he will hit three home runs and bat .400 to lead his team into the Big Dance, and he will not be any less courageous than he is now. Was Sparky Anderson less smart in the years his teams did not win than the seasons they did? Of course not.

Bonds, like Ted Williams, is misunderstood, mostly because he is not as likeable as the guy who sells you insurance or serves up cold ones at the corner bar. He has it all, and some envy him for that.

Here is a guy raised around Major League ballparks, chillin' with Willie Mays and Stretch. His ability made him special from the get-go, and when you are Big Man On Campus sometimes it goes to your head.

Okay, it went to his head, but Bonds' name has never appeared in a police blotter, and you do not hear about him pulling the kind of stunts that Gary Sheffield did in Spring Training, when he threatened not to play as hard unless the Dodgers re-negotiated his contract.
You want to know something? After he retires, when the pressure is off and the reporters are not after him every second, Bonds will be a great interview, and he will be able to reflect on a career that places him among the very best the diamond game has ever known.

**BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL’S SUPERMAN**

This is an excerpt from my Best Selling book, currently in re-print and nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of 2002.

**CHAPTER ONE**

"HE HITS IT HIGH. HE HITS IT DEEP. HE HITS IT OUTTA HERE."

Pacific Bell Park is the jewel by the bay in San Francisco. It has meant a great deal to The City, a place of duality that is both arrogant and beset by an inferiority complex at the same time. Pac Bell is something that San Francisco did right, finally. At the same time, it is something San Francisco did right, of course.

Pac Bell Park has been a source of pride and excitement for the Bay Area over the past two seasons. In a town where many would not watch a baseball game at dilapidated Candlestick Park even if they were paid to do so, Pac Bell became a Mecca of baseball and in “in” place to be. A place for the cool cats, the hipsters, those who feel the need to see and be seen. The trendy restaurants and waterfront bars that surround the stadium have become hot spots in a part of town, China Basin that was once a blue-collar wasteland.

Pac Bell Park was built after decades of angst in and around a city known for its angst. Mainly, it was built to accommodate the heroics and histrionics of a single man named Barry Bonds.

Friday night, October 5, 2001, was the night everything would be worth it. The politics and money that went into building the world’s best baseball stadium. The enormous contract that lured Bonds home from Pittsburgh to play for the San Francisco Giants. The locker room dissing of the media by the misunderstood superstar. All of it would be overshadowed and made right by events of this fateful night.

It was chilly at Pac Bell on this evening, certainly not a surprise in a town where Mark Twain once said he had spent the coldest winter of his life in the summer. Of course, October is different, the best time of the year, a freaky weather occurrence in a place where freakiness is the norm.

Warm autumn days do not mean warm autumn nights, however, and San Franciscans know this well. They were wrapped and bundled appropriately for a night game, and they were getting precisely what they came to see.

Now, the time was 8:15 P.M. Half a continent away, a big huckleberry of a man named Mark McGwire went down on strikes, and at that very moment an African-American slugger who is a walking contradiction took a mighty cut and made McGwire the former home run champion.
Barry Bonds sent a 1-0 pitch from the Los Angeles Dodgers’ hard throwing right-hander, Chan Ho Park, deep into the arcade in right-center, 442 feet away for his seventy-first home run of the 2001 season.

The greatest record in all of sports had fallen, and it had fallen as the result of a personal crusade of excellence by a man who had taken the art of long ball hitting to a new level. Bonds in this magical season had elevated his game to a place in the stratosphere, above and beyond what anybody had ever seen. His efforts had a superhuman quality to them, as if he had the will of the gods and the lightning touch of Zeus at his disposal.

Sports, perhaps more than any endeavor, allows people to observe on occasion man at his absolute primal best. One can admire the genius of Albert Einstein weighing the practical applications of the theory of relativity, but understanding it is beyond the ken of most. A great speech of Winston Churchill or Abraham Lincoln is worthy of praise yet still abstract as a political act rather than a thing of pure weight and substance in and of itself. Those who see it as almost a dream sequence view a Medal of Honor-worthy charge up a wartime hill that results in taking out a vital enemy pillbox to be the essence of courage and manly purpose, but its retelling only trivializes it to a John Wayne movie.

No, the arena of sports is the truest place for a display of human excellence. Those who pursues these arts are, of course, flawed people like the rest of us, which only adds to the duality and mysterious conundrum that makes it so beautiful and human.

Pele controls a soccer ball as if attached by magic string to his feet, the stirring of over 100,000 Brazilians acting in concert and as impetus with the perfect grace of his inevitable winning goal.

Joe DiMaggio races down a fly ball in the farthest reaches of Yankee Stadium to save a game while the town accords the greatest tribute of all celebrity status – the cheers directed to a true New York sports star; cheers of adulation that the Marilyn Monroe’s of the world could never quite contemplate no matter how hard they try.

Michael Jordan defying gravity while dunking a basketball is more exclamation point than two points. Joe Montana is the Master of the Universe with a minute left to drive the field for a winning touchdown. Jackie Robinson carries the burden of societies’ desperate battle between right and wrong while hustling out a daring steal of home plate.

Oh, many see sports as a vainglorious parade, chafed by money and corruption, but the true believer only feels pity for the timid soul who never grasped its meaning. Surely, on October 5, 2001, the meaning of sports was as apparent as it ever is, and flashpoints of irony and incident served to permeate the consciousness of the thinking sports aficionado.

Less than one month prior, the United States had suffered a blow so devastating in nature that it seemed a bad dream. A nation was so repulsed as to put the event someplace else, like the repressed memories of an abused child, yet it was real and the reminders of its reality were constant.

Baseball meant nothing, but some ongoing history lesson in the back of the national mind told us that there is heritage at stake. So, the games, after a week’s delay, went on, and slowly yet surely their meaning served to tell us we are Americans and we persevere.

A crowded athletic stadium is an ancient reminder of man’s love of spectacle. Its roots go to the Roman Empire, and it has become a place of worship not only for athletic events, but in America it is evidence of our greatness.
In the second half of the twentieth century, sports venues in Europe and Latin America have too often become places of riot as drunken soccer hooligans failed to separate sport from religion, politics, and national pride.

In the U.S., crowds have learned their place in the greater scheme of things. Nobody can deny the rowdiness of the Georgia-Florida college football game, and in the 1970s Yankee Stadium had a criminal element to it that reflected the difficult times that battered city experienced before its eventual Renaissance.

By 2001, however, the post-championship game tearing-up of the field had become passé, replaced by a civilized perspective of events. This was the perspective held by 41,730 baseball citizens representing a city known for its cultivation and refinement.

The reality of the crowded arena now held a new meaning in a world in which terrorists seek ways to kill as many people as possible at the same time. Part of this reality was a growing sense of defiance in denying satisfaction to an enemy thirsting for evidence that they had changed a nation through fear.

No, Americans would fill their stadiums as if to announce to the world that they were better than those enemies, and on this night Bonds and San Francisco would embrace the meaning of baseball.

All in all, the events of October 5 would capture all the emotions of sports. A record, of course, fell. The breaking of a record like the single-season home run mark is something that has a life of its own, and Bonds had built this one in an inexorable way. In April he had hit his five hundredth career home run, an event that seemed to change him and the way San Francisco felt about him.

In quick succession after that Bonds would pass Giants’ legends Mel Ott (511) and Willie McCovey (521). In May Bonds would put on the greatest home run display of his career in Atlanta. Bonds kept hitting homers, all the while passing a laundry list of Hall of Famers on the all-time career chart. At the All-Star break, despite a slump that had lasted several weeks and dampened enthusiasm for his chances, he still remained ahead of McGwire’s record pace.

Experts, acting on some kind of natural instinct of negativism, consistently rejected the notion that Bonds could break the record even after he regained his form. His homers, however, came regularly, almost as if scheduled. He carried his team like few players in the game’s history, and not just with his power. With his is expert eye, he drew walks at a record pace. He reached base over half the time. His swing had an efficiency to it that was downright ruthless, and his slugging percentage would be the greatest ever. Bonds would probably have a greater positive impact on his teammate, a journeyman shortstop named Rich Aurilia, than any player other than Mickey Mantle on Roger Maris.

The Giants, a decent team with decent pitching and a great manager, Dusty Baker, would stay afloat in the National League West by virtue of Bonds’ heroics all season. As Bonds approached the record, the Giants thus stayed alive. However, for weeks the Arizona Diamondbacks, an average team with little firepower and a shaky bull pen, had stayed a couple of steps ahead of San Francisco on the strength of a righty/lefty pitching combination that was the most devastating since Sandy Koufax and Don Drysdale’s glory days in Los Angeles.

Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson matched Bonds in an epic stretch run, and now, on the final weekend, it all came down to an orgy of record-setting baseball and scoreboard watching that included the Houston Astros, St. Louis Cardinals, and the D’Backs.
Bonds had arrived at Pac Bell Park tired and emotionally spent after arriving home at 3 in the morning from Houston, where he had tied Big Mac’s record on Thursday evening.

That day, he laid to rest his friend, Franklin Bradley, who had died young the previous week from complications during minor surgery. At a press conference before the game, however, he revealed that he feels more relaxed at the plate when he is sleepy.

The rival Dodgers, a team that had contended for the play-offs until recent elimination, had no intention of simply fading into that good night, and pounded away at pitcher Shawn Estes early and often for a 5-0 first inning lead.

The question in everybody’s mind was whether Park would pitch to Bonds. In Houston, Astros’ manager Larry Dierker had made a virtual mockery of the game, ordering his men to avoid pitching to Bonds at all costs. Consistently, Dierker’s moves backfired because San Francisco second baseman Jeff Kent, hitting clean-up behind Bonds, lived up to his 2000 MVP status while powering his club to a three-game sweep that not only kept the Giants alive, but reduced Houston from their confident perch atop the Central Division into a death struggle with St. Louis that would not be decided until the final day.

Bonds finally got a pitch to hit in the series finale, taking advantage of it to tie the record. In their last series at Dodger Stadium, Jim Tracy’s pitchers had not given Bonds much, and while Bonds had hit one, Los Angeles’ strategy had helped them to stay alive in the race.

Some controversy had ensued during that series when the Dodgers, once baseball’s classiest outfit, announced that they would not halt the game to allow any on-field celebrations if Bonds broke the record on their turf. The organization had somehow morphed from the team of Jackie Robinson, Vin Scully and Peter O’Malley into a petty corporate tax write-off for Rupert Murdoch, peeved because revelations had recently shown that the 1951 Brooklyn Dodger-New York Giant play-off had been manipulated by a scoreboard-sitting spy relaying what pitchers the Bums were throwing to Giant hitters.

One could not tell what was odder, the “revelation” which had been common knowledge and the source of barroom braggadocio by Leo Durocher for years, or the fact that these Korean War-era events had occurred 50 years earlier and 3,000 miles away! As if this ancient history was not enough, the club dredged up memories of the Giants’ watering down the Candlestick base paths to slow down Maury Wills in 1962.

Aw, but therein lies the beauty of this, the greatest rivalry in sports. The Dodgers and Giants go farther back and involve more hard feelings than any in sports. Sure, the Yankees and the Red Sox have it in for each other, but in reality the Bambino’s Curse has rendered this a completely one-sided affair, with the Red Sox playing the part of the IRA against the manifestly imperialist Bombers.

Southern Cal and Notre Dame? Those who delve deep into the meaning of college football’s greatest inter-sectional rivalry will find, in reality, a mutual admiration society.

There are many other fine rivalries, most of them regional in variety. The Dodger-Giant rivalry has successfully traversed this great nation and succeeded over time, political and social change. In New York’s early days, the Giants ruled baseball under manager John McGraw while the Dodgers were considered daffy incompetents. The Yankees floundered under the name Highlanders and were the Giants’ Polo Grounds tenants until the 1920s.

In the 1930s, Giant manager Bill Terry was asked about playing the last-place Brooklyns in the season finale while battling for the pennant.
“Are they still in the league?” joked Terry. Terry was not laughing after the Dodgers knocked New York out of the race.

In 1941, Leo Durocher, an utterly amoral man who was not joking when he said he would lie, cheat, steal or knock over his grandmother to win, took over as Brooklyn’s manager and started a 15-year run of success at Ebbetts Field. Over time Durocher would be eased out after stepping on too many toes and playing fast and loose with gamblers, and the team would transform itself, first under Branch Rickey (who broke the color barrier by bringing Robinson to the team), and later under the O’Malley Family, into an organization of class and dignity.

Durocher took over the hated Giants, whose ace pitcher, Sal Maglie, was a headhunter who infuriated the Bums with his inside work. The ’51 pennant race, of course, was the epitome of the rivalry. Durocher made the Giants listen through the paper thin clubhouse walls to the Dodgers celebrating a victory next door, and New York came from 14 games back in August to tie it up, winning a three-game play-off on October 3 when Bobby Thomson hit the “shot heard ‘round the world.”

When the teams came to California in 1958, the New York subway system was replaced by Highway 101 winding 400 miles from San Francisco through San Jose and Monterrey, past Big Sur and winding through Santa Barbara, along the coast and through the hills, into the sprawling San Fernando Valley and on into the smoggy, tantalizing land of dreams that is L.A.

Drysdale and Koufax matched up against Juan Marichal and Gaylord Perry. The Dodgers won with pitching and defense, frustrating McCovey and Willie Mays while enforcing the age-old truism that good pitching stops good hitting. The Giants’ frustrations came to a head, literally, in 1965 when Marichal took a bat to the noggin of Dodger catcher John Roseboro in an event that Los Angeles still used when they wanted to play the victim game.

Big crowds packed a gleaming Dodger Stadium, while San Francisco’s attendance shrunk at the horrid Candlestick Park. A sense of inferiority pervaded the Giant side of the rivalry, with their fans resorting to mean-spirited epithets thrown at Los Angeles manager Tommy Lasorda.

In the 1970s and ’80s, the Dodgers won consistently while San Francisco usually wallowed in mediocrity, and the “rivalry” had become a one-sided match-up in which the Dodgers shifted their attention to meaningful opponents like Cincinnati and Philadelphia. The Giants’ supporters resembled The Cities’ left-wing politics, resorting to have-not “beat L.A.” chants and drunken acts of class-ennuiusness.

San Francisco managed to get back into contention under manager Roger “Hum Baby” Craig, winning the West in 1987 and advancing to an earthquake-divided World Series in 1989. Safeway magnate Peter Magowan purchased the club a few years later, and in 1993 signed Bonds for $42 million, the largest contract in baseball history at the time. The dynamics of the L.A.-San Francisco divide changed in the 1990s. Los Angeles suffered a fire in the Malibu Hills, riots in Watts, and an earthquake in Northridge. San Francisco and the Silicon Valley became the fast lane of the Information Superhighway, with dot-com startups giving splash and panache to the region.

No longer did Los Angeles dominate the sporting scene. The 49ers’ pro football team had long dominated in the NFL, and by the mid-’90s both the Rams and Raiders had deserted Southern California, leaving the area with no pro teams while the Bay Area has two.

USC and UCLA had long dominated Stanford and California in football and basketball, but parity found its way into the Pacific 10 Conference in the 1990s and early 2000s.
The Dodgers and Angels have become poorly-run corporate sideshows, while the Oakland A’s and Giants combined to give Bay Area fans some of the best thrills of the new baseball century.

California politics, once dominated by Southern California with a conservative tilt that gave the country Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, shifted in 1992’s “Year of the Woman” elections to the north, when two Jewish San Francisco Democrat women, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, were elected to U.S. Senate seats that they still hold today.

Bonds was the motivating force behind the building of Pac Bell Park, which opened in 2000 and sold out every single game of its initial season. Suddenly, San Francisco boasted the finest facility in the game, while Dodger Stadium’s age had become noticeable. An entirely new aura has manifested itself in this era. Gone are the drunken louts throwing garbage and beer bottles at Lasorda and anything wearing Dodger blue. That class of “fan” has been replaced by well-heeled preppies and corporate executives, many of them season-ticket holders, since almost every seat has sold out for every game in two years. Fans drink imported beers in exclusive seating areas and eat delightful and diverse international deli items in a family-friendly environment.

Located walking distance from The City’s thriving downtown financial district, and not far from the site of the old Seals Stadium, the minor league shrine where Joe DiMaggio fashioned a 63-game hitting streak in 1935, Pac Bell is built right up against the bay. Beyond its right field fence, past the bleacher seats and a concrete walkway, lies McCovey Cove, where many of Bonds’ homeruns (including number 500) have landed. Several parking lots dot the area, and a magnificent view of the Bay Bridge, Treasure Island and the East Bay beyond, dominates the view. Ferries and yachts drift around the water and dock in the nearby harbor, creating an atmosphere of sun’n’fun.

Old warehouses have been replaced by ritzy condominiums and fun eateries where the young and the attractive meet and greet. One walks into Pete Osborne’s Moma’s or Johnny Love’s new drinking establishment around the corner and is reminded of a college frat party. The park has also helped maintained the economic value of an area hard hit by the 2000-01 dot-com disaster. Many startups and the young entrepreneurs behind them also lived in the bay-view residences that went up in the late 1990s, and today high-end properties lie vacant while real estate value plummets.

On this first Friday in October, however, real estate prices and Internet failures were not on the minds of Bay Area baseball fans. Two factors gave hope to the capacity crowd that Bonds would break history. First, the Dodgers had been eliminated from the race, therefore they would be less disposed to pitching around Bonds under all circumstances (despite the fact that Aurilia and Kent had consistently made teams pay for this strategy). Secondly, L.A.’s five runs in the first provided Park some level of comfort.

Despite Park, one of the league’s toughest hurlers, this game would not be a pitcher’s game in any way, shape or form. It would be a bittersweet fireworks display of history, and in the end a sense of melancholia would pervade the Giants and their fans.

San Francisco, being on the West Coast, was playing a late game. This, among other reasons, affects national notoriety and is the leading reason behind the so-called “New York bias” that works against West Coast athletes when it comes to awards, endorsement deals, and publishing contracts.
On this evening it would also be the reason San Francisco was playing under added pressure, as if they could possibly have any more to deal with. Arizona had already beaten Milwaukee, and shortly after Bonds’ record-breaking big fly at 8:15, Houston had rallied for runs in the eighth and ninth at Busch Stadium to win an unlikely victory over the surging Cardinals at 8:44. This meant that the Giants had to win in order to stay alive for a post-season berth, no ifs, ands or buts about it.

Bonds came up in the first after the Dodgers had exploded for five runs. With nobody on base, he took a pitch, as is his custom, low and away. The next was to his liking. Bonds ripped away, and the record was his.

There were more than a few mixed feelings. The fans, of course, went bonkers, and Bonds exulted at home plate with his son, Nikolai, dressed up and acting as the teams bat boy. The bomb gave his team hope that they could rebound from the four-run deficit, but being down 5-1 against Park in a game you have to win is unsettling, to say the least.

442 feet from home plate, 49-year old Jerry Rose, a season ticket holder from Knights Landing, California, came up with the ball after a mad scramble that was far from a shining moment.

Perhaps because the man was operating on just a few hours sleep and one of his best friends had been buried that day, Bonds’ body language was less exuberant than it had been when he tied the record at Enron Field. He did not raise his arms in jubilation, even though it was obviously gone from the get-go. He watched it fly out and trotted the bases amid a mad roar.

Nikolai led the Giants out of the dugout and pointed to the sky, a custom he had adapted as his personal paen to God, and lately to Franklin’s memory. When he got to the dugout, Bonds took a cell phone call from his father, ex-Giants’ slugger Bobby Bonds, who had opted to travel to his own golf tournament which he had long-ago committed to, rather than be there for his son’s big moment.

Bonds did not make much comment on this matter, but the look on his face while talking to his absent father belied, perhaps, some irritation.

The fact that it was the Dodgers who served up Bonds’ big homer was apropos, and a repeat of his five hundredth hit off L.A.’s Terry Adams on April 17 at Pac Bell. The Dodgers by this time must have been tired of standing around watching a repeat performance of the Barry Bonds Show.

One Dodger who no doubt felt some joy at that moment was left fielder Gary Sheffield, a great slugger in his own right. Sheffield is one of Bonds’ best friends in baseball, and it was no secret that he was using his close relationship to lobby Bonds to sign with Los Angeles as an off-season free agent. Despite having grown up in the Bay Area as part of the Giants’ “family,” Bonds has never shown any antipathy for Los Angeles or the Dodger team.

Another Dodger who was an interesting sidenote was catcher Chad Kreuter, dubbed the “Forrest Gump of Baseball” because he seemed to be a witness to history wherever it happened to be. Kreuter is a Bay Area product who had starred in baseball and football at Marin County’s Redwood High School, on the other side of the Golden Gate Bridge. He eschewed football at Cal-Berkeley to concentrate on baseball at Pepperdine, and while playing in the Alaskan Collegiate Summer League had met and married the daughter of USC baseball coach Mike Gillespie. A journeyman at best, Kreuter nevertheless had displayed a flair for the dramatic and a talent for being near it.
In 1988 he announced himself to the league by homering off Oakland ace Dave Stewart. In 1989 he was the catcher when Texas’ Nolan Ryan struck out Rickey Henderson to record his five thousandth strikeout. He was there through Ryan’s remarkable late-career run that included a no-hit game, and it was Kreuter who stirred controversy with the Dodgers in 1999 when he went into the stands, Ty Cobb-style, to attack a fan at Wrigley Field who had stolen his glove in the bull pen. Now he was again the “man behind the mask” in the photographs of history!

Bonds made his curtain call and jogged to the area behind the backstop where his wife, Liz and mother, Pat, were sitting with assorted friends. When asked prior to the game what attributes he drew from Pat, Bonds had smiled and said, “I’m not as ugly as my dad. I’m better looking. That’s what I’ve drawn from my mom.” After five minutes, Kent stepped to the plate and flew out.

Two massive banners were unfurled. One read “Bonds,” the other “71.” Mark Gardner entered the game for the home nine and gave up a run to add to San Francisco’s pressure.

Eric Davis, a veteran and one-time star with a Hall of Fame future, who had seen his career stymied by injuries and cancer, batted for Gardner and hit a three-run double to make it 6-4. Pac Bell Park went bonkers.

Lord Almighty, can we do it?

Marquis Grissom sunk San Francisco hearts with a home run in the third to make the score 8-4. Bonds now came up in the bottom of the inning.

Could he do it again? Bonds seemingly can do everything. He was in full superman mode, riding high in that zone of athletic excellence that marks the most special moments in sports, the moments of the Chamberlain’s, the Unitas’s, the Ruth’s.

Park pitched him to 1-1, and then it was Bonds II. Number 72 flew just over the fence in center field, glancing off a fan’s hand. The fan must have felt like the Laurence Olivier character in “Marathon Man” who watches aghast while Dustin Hoffman lets his rare diamonds drop into the New York sewer system.

Grissom picked up the sphere and decided to have a little fun with it, first pretending to throw it back into the hungry stands, then feigning shoving it into his back pocket, before throwing it towards the dugout.

Again, Nicolai was waiting with love for dad at the plate, but by this time Bonds was unable to even believe his own feat. What could happen next? The score was 8-5 and some serious work was still necessary if his team wanted to wake up tomorrow still alive in the pennant race. After all, winning was still and always his first priority. To set the record yet lose? This was still an intolerable prospect.

How much more could the man take, on no sleep, burdened by a young friend’s sad demise, desperate for the elusive ring that he had never earned, a ring he needed in order to cap a career in the way that true greatness must be made complete. On top of all this, if anything was left to clutter the weary Bonds psyche, Barry might be playing his last series as a Giant.

The average person cannot comprehend the kind of emotions that Bonds must have been experiencing. Are his problems the problems we all should have? Of course they are, but handling them requires poise and focus that few of us possess. Bonds’ ability to perform with all of this swirling around him is the very essence of his greatness. To say that it compares to the grace under pressure of a military hero performing valorous work under fire may seem a stretch
to some, but it says here that such a comparison is not a stretch. Not with this guy, not under these circumstances.

Greatness has a way of showing itself in unmistakable terms. Here was not just the greatest baseball player, but the greatest athlete on the world, on the top of his game. Here was the greatest player of his era having the best season in history and bidding hard for the title World’s Greatest Baseball Player of All Time.

Hyperbole? Read on.

By the fourth inning, Park was probably as weary as Bonds, but he had to face the man again. This time he walked him intentionally. All season fans at home and away had booed when Bonds would get the free pass, but now it almost was a relief. Certainly, nobody was blaming Park.

Bonds’ intentional walks were the lesser of two evils all season for teams stuck between a rock and a hard place, and Kent made this premise stand up in a big way, again. With the score 9-5, Bonds’ walk loaded the bases, and Kent’s double to the right-center field gap cleared them to make it 9-8.

As if there was not enough joy, disbelief and mixed emotion coursing like lightning bolts through Pac Bell Park at this moment, Kent was thrown out at third on a controversial call, trying to stretch it into a three-bagger.

In the sixth inning, after Los Angeles had added another run, Aurilia stepped up with a two-run homer, his thirty-seventh of the season, to tie it up at 10-10. That allowed him and Bonds to pass Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig and become the second greatest home run duo in baseball history, trailing only the 115 by Maris and Mantle in 1961. Tim Worrell took over for San Francisco and allowed the go-ahead run to score. 11-10, Dodgers.

By this time, the game was off the charts. It was shaping up to be a marathon, and the emotional roller-coaster that the players and fans were experiencing was becoming something surreal, not of this world. One expected the ghost of Rod Serling to appear on the scoreboard:

“Mr. Barry Bonds, a man who thinks and thereby gets things done. A man and a team, the San Francisco Giants, who otherwise might be known as ‘prime movers’ in that cold, gray, shadowy area known only as…the twi-light zone.”

Despite the run off Worrell, there was one thing the San Franciscos did not think would happen, and that was that the scoring for the evening was done, although one could not account for the gay crowd “hooking up” in the Castro District.

Surely, Bonds would hit another homer. Runs on this night were cheap. The last team standing, or in this case the last team to bat, the home Giants, would walk away with the victory. That was the script. In this, Barry’s Year, San Francisco would ascend to the post-season, and once there anything could happen. The National League was weak this year and they would have as good a chance as anybody to run the three-play-off gauntlet into the World Series.

That would be a different story. The Yankees, Mariners or A’s, juggernauts all, would stand in their way, but on this evening anything seemed possible. That is why what happened next seemed so incongruous.

The Giants shut down. So did Los Angeles, but they had scored last and had the lead. It seemed impossible that the Giants would not score again, but they did not. Jeff Shaw, the Dodger closer who had been selected for the All-Star Game ahead of the Giants’ Robb Nen, did his job and the game ended four hours and 27 minutes after it started.
Long games between the Giants and Dodgers are the norm. The final game of the 1962 season, a play-off between L.A. and San Francisco at Dodger Stadium won by the Giants when Walt Alston’s bull pen imploded, was a marathon, too.

This was not the first time one team knocked the other out of the race, either. The Dodgers had done it to Terry’s Giants in 1934. They got some West Coast revenge against the Giants again when they sent the NoCals packing in 1959 on the way to their first World Championship in Los Angeles.

A late-season run by the Koufax-Drysdale Dodgers included key victories that eliminated San Francisco right to the last day before bowing out of the 1971 West Division chase. In 1982, the Giants’ Joe Morgan homered in the final inning on the final day at Candlestick Park to give Atlanta the division crown over Los Angeles.

The game also held an eerie similarity to the 1993 season finale, when the Dodgers again proved to be the Braves’ best friend. On that day, Salomon Torres had started for rookie manager Dusty Baker in L.A., but the Mike Piazza-led Dodgers rocked him hard on the way to an 11-1 win that ended the Giants’ season at 103-59, one game back in the West in the final season before introduction of the wild card berth.

In the 2001 version, it was Estes who carried on Torres’ dubious tradition, and he faces an uncertain future because of it. Torres, a hot prospect until his ’93 failure, never recovered. Others have seen their careers falter after they lost with all the chips on the line: The Angels’ Donnie Moore eventually committed suicide a few years after giving up a game-tying home run to Boston’s Dave Henderson in 1986. That same year, the Red Sox’ Calvin Schiraldi folded under the heat of a Met rally in the World Series, and now he is a trivia question. Mitch “Wild Thing” Williams of Philadelphia in 1993 wanted nothing to do with the baseball in the World Series, and it showed when he served up Joe Carter’s winning homer.

Dusty Baker’s Giants had set Los Angeles’ title hopes aside in the late 1990s, and now it was payback time. The huge crowd was unsure what to do. Of course, they cheered the team for their valiant effort. There was something Quixote-like in their windmill-jousting final, dramatic loss to their fiercest rivals. Los Angeles had proven to be worthy adversaries, living up to their proud history instead of giving way to the mediocrity that had swallowed them since their 1988 World Championship, and especially since their abysmal purchase by Fox.

San Francisco Chronicle sports columnist Bruce Jenkins’ headline the next day said “Dodgers do the right thing – pitch to Barry” and gave kudos to Park for having the guts to challenge the great Bonds, despite his team harboring resentment over the Giants’ request (which was turned down) to have them wear replicas of the 1951 Brooklyn club.

Recalling the on-field, game-interrupting celebration the Giants gave Bonds after number 500, Jenkins quoted Dodger pitching coach Jim Colborn as calling it “really unprofessional.” Orange County Register sports columnist Mark Whicker had written that “the Giants basically played ‘This Is Your Life’ with Bonds” on that occasion.

Tracy had given an indication of what to expect prior to the contest. “If our game has ramifications around the league, we have an obligation to honor them,” he had told the Los Angeles Times. “It’s about the purity of the game. Somebody who has done what he’s done, well, you’ve got to challenge him.”

Despite the Astros’ refusal to do that in the preceding series, National League pitchers had not proven an entirely cowardly lot. Yes, Bonds would set the Major League record for
walks, and of course many of those were intentional or of the “unintentional intentional” variety. That said, Bonds was responsible for many of those bases on balls. The man is perhaps the most disciplined hitter of all time, certainly along with Tony Gwynn the most disciplined since Boston’s Ted Williams. Mark McGwire could be taken out with pitches out of the strike zone, and even Bonds’ Godfather, the great Willie Mays, occasionally took his free swinging stickball mentality to the plate.

If Bonds ever had an undisciplined streak, age and experience had made him, at 37 and in his fifteenth season, the George Patton of big league hitters. He had reduced hitting to the margins, eliminating shades of failure. He was still a human being and therefore not immune to failure, but there was as an automatic sense to his approach in which his failures never seemed to be the result of any letdown in his approach, ever.

It may be this very essence of his game that frustrates those trying to favorably compare Bonds to other great players. Mays had played the game with pure cap-flying joy de vivre abandon.

Roberto Clemente’s athleticism reminded one of a linebacker laterally pursuing a ball carrier.

Bonds approach more closely resembled a briefcase-carrying businessman boarding the 8:00 A.M. from Larchmont. The camera did not detect the twinkle in his eye like Mays, or the defiance that was Clemente’s driving force. Seemingly emotionless, expressionless, a picture of confident concentration, Bonds more closely resembles a shark pursuing its prey.

Pitchers are an interesting lot. Most of them, if they are good enough to pitch in the big leagues, might think of themselves as shark hunters who can knock the eyelash off a fly at 60 feet six inches. They are big and strong, or to use a nouveau porn term making the rounds of late, they are “young, dumb and full of cum.” They know how dangerous Bonds is, but most of them were high school superstars, or collegiate All-Americans, and Big Men on Campus in one way or another.

“Bonds will not beat me,” they say to themselves, and they mean he will not beat their best stuff. Pitchers do not talk like this to the press, but they say it to each other. They are duel-challengers and every one of them has a mentality in which he thinks he has what it takes to take a shot at the title. So, yes, they do pitch to Barry. In July, when Bonds went on his only so-called slump of the 2001 season, he got a lot of pitches to hit, but his timing was off just a little bit.

The best of the best amongst them, the Schilling’s, the Johnson’s, the Park’s and the Kevin Brown’s of the league, approach their jobs like Navy SEALS. Give in to Bonds? Afraid of Bonds? They respect him, but they are there to beat him and they have the stuff to do it.

Good pitching beats good hitting, that is what they have been saying forever, and the 2001 World Series proved it. After a season of offensive fireworks, two teams, the D’Backs and Yankees, dominated with pitching because they both had it in spades.

Throughout much of the season, Bonds seemed locked in a race for the Most Valuable Player award with Arizona’s Luis Gonzalez and Chicago’s Sammy Sosa, but just as he had done in his three previous MVP seasons, he had locked the award up for himself with September heroics.

“I don’t see how you can deny him,” said Tracy.

Bonds two homers off of Park made him 12-for-39 lifetime against the Korean flamethrower. Park had wrongfully been accused of grooving a fastball to the retiring Cal
Ripken, Jr. in the All-Star Game, the way it was said Al Downing, another Dodger, had done so to Hank Aaron when the Hammer hit his seven hundred fifteenth home run in 1974.

In 1998, McGwire had hit five home runs in his final three games against Montreal to supposedly put the record away at 70. With both teams now out of the race, talk turned to what Bonds could do against James Baldwin on Saturday and Terry Mulholland on Sunday. Baldwin had surrendered Bonds’ sixty-seventh on September 24 in Los Angeles, and Mulholland ranks third on Bonds’ all-time homer list at seven. The Braves’ Greg Maddux and John Smoltz, two of the premier hurlers of this era, are tied at the top with eight.

“I can’t stand here and say how I’ll pitch against Barry Bonds,” Mulholland told the press. “Has anyone asked Barry Bonds what he’s looking at from me? Has anyone asked Barry Bonds if he’s going to swing or take pitches off me?”

“If you get totally preoccupied with just focusing your attention all night long with worrying about Barry,” Tracy remarked in summing up the dilemma of all opposing managers, particularly Houston’s Dierker, “more times than not, you’re going to walk out of here with three losses handed to you.”

Bonds’ two Friday night homers took away some of Tracy’s courage. Houston, showing no concern for Kent, walked Bonds three times on Wednesday and he scored each time. On Thursday, Kent followed a walk to Bonds with a homer, and in the sixth inning, Houston was still so paranoid that they intentionally walked Bonds despite trailing 8-1.

“Because of other guys in front of Barry or behind him, you subject yourself to big innings,” Tracy said. “I think it happened a couple of times in Houston.”

Tracy let history repeat itself with his fourth inning intentional walk to Bonds that loaded the bases, and Kent had followed with his three-run double.

The day after the record-breaking home run, the Chronicle’s Glenn Dickey addressed the question of who was better, Mays or Bonds. Dickey theorized that at one time such a question was unthinkable, that Mays represents baseball excellence above and beyond any other contenders, but that Bonds’ latest feats had elevated his career status to the point where it was now a fair question. Dickey rated Mays the best outfielder he had ever seen, able to play a shallow center field and still make catches at the wall. Bonds plays a less important position, left field, although Dickey rated him the best at that position he had ever witnessed, a high compliment coming from a man who had seen a lot of baseball over the previous 30-plus years.

Dickey noted that Bonds’ throwing arm is not strong, although he makes up for it through smart positioning, but Mays had a truly great arm, as evidenced by his quick, accurate throw after making “The Catch” of Vic Wertz drive in the 1954 World Series at the Polo Grounds.

However, as Dickey pointed out, Bonds is a great base stealer and the charter member of the 400/400 Club, with the 500/500 Club soon to come. Mays had stolen 40 bases in a season early in his career, but Durocher had instructed him to “cool it” in order to avoid injuring his legs, and never approached Bonds’ numbers.

On the other hand, as Dickey noted, Mays was a better base runner.

“The only time he <Mays> remembers being thrown out at third trying for an extra base came on a bang-bang play in a 1962 pennant play-off with the Dodgers,” wrote Dickey. “Willie insists the umpire blew the call, and he’s probably right.”

Dickey concludes by saying that Mays should still be rated the better player, but Bonds is very close in every area of the game. He also gives credence to the age factor, which in the end
may be where Bonds surpasses Mays by the end of his career. Mays’ skills diminished rapidly in his mid-30s, while Bonds is getting better.

Of the intentional and unintentional walk issue, Dickey wrote “when Tuffy Rhodes faced the same treatment in Japan as he went after Sadaharu Oh’s home run record, the Japanese baseball commissioner issued a statement saying the walks were ‘completely divorced from the essence of baseball, which values the supremacy of fair play.’”

Dickey felt that the American Commissioner, Bud Selig, should have made a similar public statement, particularly after the Astros series.

“Incredibly,” wrote Dickey, “Bonds was able to maintain his focus and zero in when he finally got his pitch. Smart baseball people like Joe Morgan had said earlier in the year that Bonds would get so impatient because he was pitched around that he would chase pitches out of the strike zone and disrupt his swing. But he hasn’t, in part because he was advised by Mays, his Godfather, not to.”

Bonds, said Dickey, is like Willie a student of the game, and he compares the way Mays altered his swing to adjust to the Candlestick Park winds with the way Bonds sits in on meetings of his own pitchers to know how to position himself. Dickey concluded in the piece that Mays was still better, but he worded it in such way as to consider that some day this view would no longer prevail.

For Jeremy Rose, October 5 was a night of big excitement. It takes a couple of hours to drive from his Yolo County home, cross the Bay Bridge, find a place to park, and work his way to his seat, which was barely warm when Mr. Bonds launched a rocket into his waiting glove.

He and his wife went bonkers like everybody else around them, until police officer Matt Rodgers moved them through a gauntlet of beer-spilling fans to a place where they could be safe, and Major League officials could verify that the ball in his hand was, indeed, the historic one. As they had three years before when McGwire went after Maris, MLB had marked each ball used in Bonds’ at-bats leading up to, including, and beyond the record-breaker.

“It was kind of like moving the President,” said Officer Rogers. One man actually grabbed Rogers, who pushed him off.

“I just wanted to touch him,” said the man.

The cheap seats where Rose sat were the most sought-after on this night, going for $150 for standing room only that normally sell for $9.

A couple of die-hard Bonds fans, Todd Thiede, 25 and Mitch Weitz, 24 had flown in from New Jersey for to witness history.

“This is really worth everything we did to get here,” Weitz told a Chronicle reporter. “You never get another chance like this.”

Another fan, Ben Abrams, did what many San Franciscans did, going to the cell phone.

“I was right there,” he told his girlfriend.

She was no doubt thrilled that he had left her at home.

Charles Seames of Vacaville actually traded his prestigious club-level seats behind the plate so he could stand in the cold with his brother, who paid $75 to a scalper for an SRO, and a chance to catch the dinger.

“The two gals I traded the tickets with were bombshells,” Seames was quoted in the Chronicle. “One took my hand and said, ‘You know where we’re at.’ But I chose Bonds over babes.”
The numerous surfboarders, boaters, kayakers, swimmers and rafters floating in a waiting McCovey Cove were left, literally, in the cold. Fireworks lit up the water while hundreds of fans on the port walk shouted and celebrated. Most went home after the homer was hit. “Back to Burlingame,” said one fan. “Don’t drown yourself, man, it isn’t worth it,” Bonds had said in reference to the cove dwellers. “That water is so cold I didn’t think anyone could even go swimming out there.” Not everybody was a Bonds supporter. Danny and Bennet Gill are cousins and Dodger fans who were booed as they made their way to their bleacher seats. “He’s my second-most-hated player,” said Danny while being pelted with sunflower seeds.

Up in the broadcast booth, legendary Giants’ broadcaster Lon Simmons did a very classy thing. Even though it was his turn at the mic, he gave it over to partner Ted Robinson. All season, Giants fans had been lucky to hear excellent broadcasting of their games on radio and TV. Jon Miller is well known nationally for his accounts of games with Joe Morgan on ESPN’s Sunday night telecasts. Miller, a former Baltimore Orioles announcer who had witnessed much of Cal Ripken’s career, had landed a dream job in his home town. Ex-Giant infielder Duane Kuiper had also developed a familiar refrain for home run calls. “He hits it high,” Kuiper would dramatically say. “He hits it deep. He hits it…outta here!” Earlier in the season he changed it up on occasion with the interesting moniker, “Adios, mother.”

Simmons, the voice of the team for many years during the heyday of Mays and McCovey, had developed the Giants “style” with his well known “You can tell it good-bye.” Simmons had come up under the wing of Russ Hodges, famous for his call of the Shot Heard ‘Round the World, “There’s a long drive…I do believe…the Giants win the pennant…the Giants win the pennant…the Giants win the pennant…the Giants win the pennant.” Hodges would also proclaim, when Mays and his free swinging teammates hit one out, that “you can tell it good-bye.”

In St. Louis, McGwire was facing pressure and emotions, too. The Cardinals had put up a phenomenal second-half run to come from nowhere not only to challenge for the wild card, but with Houston’s sudden demise the Central crown was now for the taking.

The Astros continued to be taken at the plate on Friday until a late rally took the air out of St. Louis and their fans. McGwire had been asked about Bonds. “I’m very realistic about things,” McGwire, who had played at USC with Johnson when Bonds was at rival Arizona State, told the Associated Press. “I’ve said since Day One, records are made to be broken. It was just inevitable.”

When Big Mac broke Maris 37-year old record of 61, he had tacked on nine more to reach 70, and seemingly put it out of reach. “After I hit 70, I pretty much was sure it wouldn’t happen again,” he continued. “But when I came back to hit 65 the next year, that was pretty much a re-evaluation, saying 70’s going to be broken.”

McGwire admitted that he was rooting for Bonds and predicted he would hit 73. “He’s doing it routinely,” said McGwire. “His pace is unbelievable. He’s totally blown away what I did.”
The Cubs’ Sammy Sosa, who earlier in the week became the first player to reach the
60-homer mark three times, said he planned to send a congratulatory note to Bonds.
“If you sit back and relax in your house and you say to yourself, ‘Ah, 70 home runs,’
before you go up there and you chase that, that’s a big number,” Sosa was quoted saying by R.B. Fallstrom.
“But when you have a chance to hit 60 early in the season and you keep swinging the bat
really well like the way he was this year, you’re going to have some hard times, but he’s in a
zone. When he’s in his zone, there’s nothing you can do about it.”
Cardinal manager Tony LaRussa, a hero to some in the Bay Area after having led
Oakland to a World Championship in 1989, is not a big Bonds fan and sounded a sour note,
because the media had not attached themselves to Bonds the way they had to McGwire.
“I watched every day what Mark went through from the first day of Spring Training to
the last day of the season, and that was a real special burden he had to carry,” LaRussa told the
AP. “Sammy didn’t have it the same way because Sammy caught it about midseason.
“And Barry hasn’t had it the same way, maybe because Mark’s shown the way,
whatever.”
McGwire had said the same thing earlier, but was criticized for it and shifted his tone as
Barry got closer. While the media circus around McGwire was definitely more intense in 1998,
the Cardinals had dropped off the pace early and he had not had to deal with the extra burden of
a pennant race, which Bonds obviously had. For that matter, so had Sosa, who led Chicago to the
wild card in 1998, as well as Maris, whose Yankees won a tough race over Detroit in 1961. Babe
Ruth’s 1927 Yankees won by so many games that the race was likely not much of a factor.
Over in the Dodger clubhouse, Friend of Barry Gary Sheffield was unable to contain his
feelings over Bonds’ record-breaking effort.
“I don’t want to tip my hand on how I really feel,” he said before tipping his hand. “I
was the first one jumping at the TV <watching Bonds in Houston>. It was ridiculous. They
didn’t even try to throw strikes. A couple of times they called strikes that were off the plate. I
was thinking they’re going to make it a long day for Barry.”
Bonds’ two-homer game was his tenth of the season and fifty-sixth of his career,
passing Hall of Famer Jimmy Foxx for sixth on the all-time list.
Dusty Baker spoke about something that still hung over Bonds’ head, despite his
individual accomplishments.
“When you’ve had everything in your career, if you don’t win it all, what else can you
yearn or desire for,” said Baker before the game, referring to his star’s great desire to win a
World Championship. “He’s had MVP awards. He’s going to have a home run title. After a
while it’s like a very rich man. What does he want when he has all the riches he wants.”
Unfortunately, the loss to the Dodgers meant that the coveted ring would elude Bonds at
least for another season. With the loss hanging heavily over their heads, an on-field celebration
was set up for Bonds at 112:27 A.M. that had all the tragic elements of irony of a Shakespearean
drama.
“It felt like celebrating Christmas on December 26,” wrote Marin Independent Journal
sports columnist Dave Albee.
“We’ve come a long ways,” Bonds told the fans who chose to stick around. “We’ve had
our ups and downs.”
Then he started to cry. Superman’s cape had been removed.
“Salvador Dali could not have painted a more surreal scene,” wrote the Chronicle’s Giants’ beat writer, Henry Schulman, who along with the rest of the Bay Area press corps must have realized that he had just experienced something that sports reporters usually just dream about. Schulman had painted a colorful picture of Bonds’ momentous season all year.

“To my teammates,” said Bonds, his voice cracking, “we worked real hard, and we’re going to work real hard again.”

A cheer went up from the crowd. Was this tidbit an indication that their hero was planning to re-sign with the home team? In succeeding days commentary would indicate that Bonds said this because he, well, could not think of anything else to say about it, but on this evening hope sprung eternal in the human breast.

“It’s an honor to play with a bunch of guys like this behind me,” he continued, and then he added another ray of hope. “I’ll play for you any time, any day of the week, any hour, any year.”

Magowan was then serenaded with chants of “Sign him!” and “Four more years!” If this was a movie, Magowan would have handed Bonds a contract and the player would have signed it right there.

This is a book, not a movie, and the tears rolling down Barry’s face reflected uncertainty as much as joy.

“I have two more games and I know what my future is,” he continued, switching to reality mode. “I’ve seen a lot of changes out there this year, you guys <the media> and the fans of San Francisco enjoyed me. It’s very hard. Things start turning around for the good and you don’t know where you’re going to be. It’s tough. Everybody worked hard here to mend some fences together.”

Willie Mays then told the crowd that he wanted to see his Godson put the record out of reach and get to 75. Also at the podium were Bonds’ teammates, family and Hall of Famer Orlando Cepeda. Baker, however, left because he could not bear the emotional toll of it all any longer.

“I was in here,” Baker told the writers in his office later. “I should have been there, but it was too hard emotionally to be there. IO was kind of down. I don’t get down too much, but I was real down.”

Baker is a real man’s man but a real honest man, and if said he was too emotional, you can believe he was and it had to have been a very heavy moment for him.

There was, however, a “cathartic” quality to the post-game celebrity, which seemed like a bad idea to have been held during the game considering the team was losing at the time after Houston and Arizona had won, according to Schulman’s account.

“When Barry was a kid I remember saying to him, ‘Boy, get out of my locker,’” recalled a smiling Mays.

“I just want to thank everybody for coming out and supporting the Giants,” said Shawon Dunston. “Barry really loves you, and he really does want to come back, Peter.

“What do you think? I’m coming back, why not Barry?”

Dunston’s good humor was explained in part by the fact that he had just won a $100,000 Mercedes from Bonds, who revealed that he had made a “stupid bet” with Dunston in May.

“Rich Aurilia was there, and the whole team was stretching, and he just looked at me like I’m crazy, like he always does,” Dunston said. “I said, ‘If you do break the record you can buy me a new Mercedez-Benz.’ He did break it, and he will buy me a new Mercedez-Benz.”
“I’m happy I lost,” admitted Bonds.

Paul Beeston, substituting for Commissioner Bud Selig, announced that Bonds would throw out the first ball at the World Series and receive the same lifetime achievement award given to Tony Gwynn at the All-Star Game.

“You couldn’t dream of it,” Bonds later told the media. “You couldn’t dream of putting up a kind of year like this. When I look at all the numbers eventually and see what I really did this year, I just hope 30 home runs or 40 home runs won’t be a bad year for you guys” in the future.

Bonds, unfortunately, must not have been aware of the reception given Maris, who put up those kinds of good but not spectacular numbers in New York in the years after breaking Ruth’s record, only to be drummed out of town.

Then again, Bonds, a fan of the game, no doubt knows the story but in his tired state was engaging in wishful thinking.

On Saturday morning, the Chronicle’s front page completely ignored the War on Terrorism with a full-page spread of Bonds, in his black Friday night home jersey, shot from center field, slamming the record-breaker with a headline – “BARRY BONDS 71 AND 72” – in letters the same size as, say, “OSAMA DEAD.”

Because of the late hour, the final results of the game had not made deadline, so most of the Chronicle coverage had to wait for Sunday. Sports columnist Ray Ratto addressed the business of Bonds, and questioned whether the team should pay for him when they could use that money to get four other players. The big question on Ratto’s mind was whether Bonds was calling the shots, or his agent, the notorious Scott Boras.

Magowan had said that the Giants’ decision on Bonds would hinge on how far the team made it in the post-season. Of course, Magawon had said that before Bonds broke the greatest record in sports and had the greatest season in baseball history.

Columnist Scott Ostler, a funny writer and ex-protégé of the legendary Los Angeles Times wordmeister Jim Murray, made note of Bonds’ McCovey Cove flotilla and surmised that Bonds was the only athlete he could remember with his own navy. He also made note of a strange statistic: Babe Ruth, eight on the all-time single-season home run list!

One letter writer from Marin wrote in that if the team got rid of Bonds, he would never watch or listen to another Giants game…ever.

Another Chronicle sports columnist, John Shea (the Chronicle is burdened with too many columnists and not enough for them all to write something interesting) addressed Dierker’s defense of his constant pitching around Bonds. Dierker broke it down to an equation of pure math, and Giants’ color man Mike Krukow, a former pitcher, had laughingly admitted on the air that “Dierker’s right” because, no matter how many times the man was walked, and despite the success of those hitting around him, when he got his pitch he was so deadly that the “lesser of two evils” choice of walking him actually was the smart move.

Bonds’ momentous final weekend had overshadowed the work of another superstar, Rickey Henderson of the Padres, who would finish the year having broken the career records for walks and runs scored, while nailing his three thousandth lifetime hit. Another Padre great, Tony Gwynn, retired in near anonymity compared to Bonds.

Bonds’ best friend in baseball, Bobby Bonilla, who had come up with his in their early days at Pittsburgh, was thrilled for his man.
“The best player ever,” Bonilla told Shea. “And I’ll argue with anybody on every stat you might want to bring up – when it’s all said and done.”

Just as McGwire had donated the jerseys worn by him and his son, a batboy when he set the record, Bonds donated the jerseys that he and Nicolai had worn, to the Baseball of Fame, where a new Bonds exhibit would be going up in Cooperstown, New York.

McGwire himself was at a cross-roads and clearly no longer at the apex of baseball glory. After striking out four times on Friday night, he told the AP that he was “tired and embarrassed,” and was considering retirement.

Bonds claims that former A’s and Yankees slugger Reggie Jackson is his distant cousin, and after some confusion over the issue, Jackson had said it “came out wrong. Yes I am. I’ll take it and I’m proud of it. And I’m happy and thrilled for the man.”

As for Bonds’ season, Jackson told Shea, “It renders me speechless. I’ve called Barry about 25 times this year on his cell phone, and all I can really say is, ‘Wow, I’m really impressed.’ He’s been oh-my-God good. To think he’s been hitting a home run every other day, all I can say is, ‘Enjoy it, my friend.’

“When I called him after his thirtieth, I told him to remember my name when he passes me.”

Jackson was the last Hall of Famer Bonds passed when he hit number 70 at Houston. After Friday he was at 566. In 2002 he will go after Harmon Killebrew (573), McGwire (at 583 and wondering why he deserves this spectre), Frank Robinson (586), Willie Mays (660), Babe Ruth (714) and Hank Aaron (755).

10 all-time greats had fallen like Eastern Europe under Stalin in 2001: Eddie Murray, Mel Ott, Eddie Mathews, Ernie Banks, Ted Williams, McCovey, Foxx, Mantle, Mike Schmidt and Reggie.

“He’s one of the greatest players of all time, and he could finish with more than 650 before he retires,” gushed Mr. October, but like Dickey did not go so far as to say Bonds was better than Mays.

A professed baseball fan, Jackson said Bonds was, along with Alex Rodriguez of Texas and Ken Griffey, Jr. of Cincinnati, the cream of the current crop. While these two players are great, Bonds left them both in the dust with a performance in 2001 that neither one will ever approach.

“I’m almost disappointed with the one-year turnarounds,” Jackson told Shea, somehow forgetting about his 47-homer season in 1969, followed by an atrocious 23-homer campaign in 1970 in which he got so frustrated that he flipped owner Charles O. Finley the bird during a game in Chicago. “Players hit 10 one year and 40 the next. Only three years after McGwire’s 70, we’ve got a record again. It’s such a special record, I’d like to see it stand for 30 or 40 years.”

In that 47-homer season of 1969, Jackson set the record for most home runs at the All-Star break with 37, and the media went crazy speculating over his chances of breaking Maris’ then-eight-year old mark. McGwire had 38 at the 1998 break, and in 2001 Bonds had 39. In the second half of 1969, however, Reggie completely slumped under the strain of press attention, and he played in Oakland, far from a major media center. Over the years, many were called, and few were chosen. Sluggers like Willie Stargell, Schmidt, Griffey and even McGwire would start hot. Newspapers would run the obligatory “Maris Watch,” followed by the equally obligatory fade-out. Memory of great hitters who completely missed the mark after a promising hitch had added to the legend of the record, giving it a mystique of unassailability.
On Saturday afternoon, the exhausted Dodgers defeated the exhausted Giants, 6-2. Bonds, like everybody else, had not gotten to bed until the wee hours. Normally the home team arrives at the park around 10 A.M. for a 1 o’clock game, but Baker gave everybody a break but batting practice and the usual pre-game work. Throughout the season, he had often rested Bonds in day games after night games, a practice that had been utilized with Mays when he got well into his 30s.

Some had criticized Baker for doing this. For one thing, Saturday afternoons are assured sell-outs and many fans can only attend games on weekends, so if Bonds does not play on Saturdays, they miss their chance to see greatness. Baseball is a fun game, and being a big league ball player is a wonderful way to make a living. However, it is not easy. The schedule, the travel, the demands – the life a Major Leaguer is one that requires tremendous discipline and work ethic, and the mental strain is greater than the physical aspect.

Baker, a former star with the Braves and Dodgers, understands this well. Throughout the season, he patiently explained to the press that Bonds would be better off to rest and revitalize, and like clockwork Bonds would always come back better and stronger.

41,636 fans packed Pac Bell on Saturday. Many had bought tickets in advance hoping this would be the day, and they were further disappointed when Bonds sat out, although it was understandable. In the ninth inning, Bonds pinch-hit and, after a standing ovation, singled.

The “will he stay?” question hung as heavily over the stadium as the “will he do it?” question that had dominated the previous months. Fans and writers were looking for a parsing of Bonds words like Ken Starr going after Bill Clinton.

“I’m proud to wear this uniform,” Bonds had said at his ceremony. Would he be just as proud to wear pinstripes in ’02?

“He talks a lot,” said Mays, a man who is probably the greatest influence on Bonds’ life, “but he backs it up. He belongs here in San Francisco.”

Bonds’ teammates, hardened professionals who had just gone through a grueling, pressure-packed campaign, are still fans at heart and recent events had left them talking like little kids.

“What’s there to say?” said Aurilia, a decent-but-not-great player from New York City who had been elevated to All-Star status by virtue of the pitches he saw hitting ahead of the man. “To witness this first-hand as a fan of the game and a teammate of Barry’s in unbelievable.”

Long-time Bay Area sports columnist Art Spander had grown up in the Los Angeles area and understood the Giant-Dodger rivalry as well as anybody, and he wrote that Bonds’ two Friday shots were even bigger than Thompson’s drive off Ralph Branca in 1951. He also noted that Kent, reputed to be a redneck with a surly streak who “supposedly wants nothing to do with Barry, could be seen pounding on the mass of humanity, enjoying the home run as much as anybody, and as much as Bonds, belying all the contentions the Giants are individuals and not a team.”

Kent can go from unapproachable to a teddy bear when he is with his kids, or kids in general, and after Friday’s game held Bonds’ little daughter, Aisha, battling to stay awake past her bed time, bless her, and the look on his face told it all: There was love in his heart.

“A lot of can’t fathom 500 and weren’t part of 500,” Kent said when asked to explain why the number 71 celebration was livelier than the number 500 ceremony had been. “All of us were part of 70.”

There was a wistfulness to Bonds, a combination of everything that had come down.
“Every time I have a chance to enjoy something,” he remarked in reference to Franklin’s funeral, “something else comes up.” Spander pointed out, however, that rather than being seen as selfish, his teammates were viewing Barry as having grown as a man. Bonds had kept insisting that his primary goal is to win a World Series, and his attitude after breaking the record re-enforced that view.

“I told them,” Bonds told a press conference, “if it’s meant to be, it’s meant to be. Let’s just win.” The Giants had given it all they had, winning five of six prior to the Dodger series, including the awesome three-game road sweep of a very tough Astro team.

Spander also re-enforced the view that Bonds’ home run chase had been a welcome relief after the events of September 11.

Baker was queried about Bonds’ future.

“I don’t negotiate contracts,” he said. “The same guy who signs my checks, signs his. Whether you like it or not, sometimes in life things change. Some things can remain the same. It’s going to be a pretty touchy situation. What to do? How much it’s going to cost. How many years. Can you not replace? Can you replace him? There’s a lot of things there. Now is not the time to address that.”

“It’s amazing what he’s doing given the limited number of pitches he’s given to hit,” Gary Hughes, director of scouting at Cincinnati, told Dave Albee. Hughes was unwilling to address Albee’s questions about Bonds’ free agent status because the season was not over yet, and to do so would technically be tampering. His job was to evaluate 19 potential free agents, and whether he admitted it or, Bonds must have had him salivating.

Baker also told the media that early in the season he had spoken to Tony LaRussa about how to handle the media crush he foresaw. Baker understood the media well, having been a teammate of Aaron when he went after Ruth’s career home run mark in 1973-74. In recent weeks, the Giants had arranged for Bonds to handle a press conference on the first day of each series, reducing the crown in the clubhouse. Baker had also been known to entertain 35-minute dugout media sessions that helped lessen the pressure on his star and his teammates.

“You don’t even understand what you did,” Bobby Bonilla told Bonds.

“You know hat, Bobby?” replied Bonds. “I’ll understand it later. Right now, I just want to not lose three games to the Dodgers. We can talk about it in the off-season.”

“You’re not ready to go home yet,” said Baker. “You’re not ready to pack up your office. It’s the same every year. The season’s not over until the World Series. That probably will be the hardest part – explaining to my son why there’s no more baseball here, they’re still on TV. Why am I watching baseball at home with him?”

“I’m on a hot seat – we all are – and you can’t avoid that,” Magowan said. “I fully support the fans’ interest in tryin to gedt that guy back.”

Magowan had saved the San Francisco franchise in the early 1990s when they were virtually re-located to St. Petersburg, Florida. In a series of almost miraculous moves, he coalesced the group that kept the team in San Francisco, brought Dusty Baker on board, and signed Bonds. These moves generated excitement and success on the field, but now he was facing the age-old sports question, What have you done for me lately?

“Barry really does want to be here,” said Magowan. “Everything being equal, we’d love to have him back. So we start off with that. I think that gives us an advantage.”

Despite the Boras factor, which is about greed and getting the highest bid from the highest bidder, other things would influence Bonds’ decision. First, he wants to win, and that
means going to the team with the best chance to win. The Yankees, who lost the seventh
game of the 2001 World Series after winning four of the first five, obviously were the team with
the money, the talent, and the capability of getting back to the Series.

Arizona, the team that beat New York, had not entered into the free agent equation.
Atlanta was mentioned as a team with the money, good available talent, and the likelihood of
being a consistent contender. St. Louis, too, was frequently brought up as a club with the money,
a great fan base, a player-friendly environment, and the tools to stay on as a contender. LaRussa,
however, was not considered a “Bonds guy.”

The Giants were giving lip service to the notion that they were a “small market” team
lacking the financial resources to handle Bonds’ salary demands. However, after two years of
sell-outs playing in one of America’s glamour cities, that concept lacks the full ring of truth. The
big question that Bonds would have regarding his team was whether they would improve enough
to get over the hump in the next couple years.

The other factors involved location and family. Bonds is from the Bay Area, and his
friends and family live here. He lives in a gorgeous mansion in Atherton, the preferred residence
of San Francisco sports superstars like Jerry Rice, as well as Silicon Valley tycoons.

One team not mentioned was the Oakland A’s, winners of 102 regular season games and,
very possibly the favorite to go to the Series in 2002. Oakland was looking at losing MVP first
baseman Jason Giambi, but if Bonds would be willing to sign for less than market value, he
could play on a surefire winner in the area he grew up in, and go home to his house and family
every night, too.

In 1997, McGwire had been traded by Oakland to St. Louis because the A’s felt they
would not be able to sign him, and they wanted something in return. That off-season, McGwire
signed on to stay with the Cardinals. Money was not the biggest factor in his decision, either,
although there was some question as to what it really was. A product of Claremont in Los
Angeles County, McGwire had been an All-American and The Sporting News’ College Player of
the Year at Southern Cal. At USC, he met his wife, Kathy, an Orange County girl who was a
batgirl for the Trojan baseball team. His son, Matthew, was born on the last day of the 1987
season, causing the rookie to miss a chance at hitting home run number 50 because he left to be
with his wife.

The storybook romance did not take, however, and a few years later the two were
divorced. McGwire entered a relationship with another girl he had known at USC, but they broke
up, too. It was that broken relationship that had been reported to be the reason for a significant
dip in his career, which hit its low in 1991 when he hit a mere .201. McGwire would re-group,
inspired by his own efforts when he returned to weight training with renewed vigor throughout
the 1990s.

Matthew stayed with his mother, who would re-marry, in Orange County. McGwire
would reside in nearby Huntington Harbor in the off-season, and while it is only an hour and a
half flight from L.A. to Oakland, anybody who knows about the demands of Major League
baseball realizes that separation from a child 400 miles away means just that, separation.

Now McGwire had a chance to sign with the hometown Anaheim Angels, who had just
been purchased by Disney. The Angels were penurious and did not meet McGwire’s value in the
marketplace. At that point, he had firmly established himself as baseball’s top slugger, and
Maris’ record was constantly mentioned in connection to him.
Still, had McGwire been willing to play for less than his value, he could have been an Angel. At some point, a man has enough millions, and the difference between, say $19 million and $42 million is less than the difference between $100,000 and $500,000.

McGwire opted to sign with St. Louis, spurred by the enthusiasm of Cardinal fans, probably the best all-around baseball people in the world. He would be with LaRussa, a manager he had always been associated with, and while St. Louis was a contender, they were by no means a big favorite to win the 1998 World Series. He could have signed with Anaheim, continued to be a millionaire, and for the first time worked in a place near where he lived and could see his son any time he pleased.

Summer time is well and good, but it passes quickly, and it is not as easy as it sounds for a kid to visit his dad all summer, since road trips constantly break up the calendar. So Big Mac, a man of some enigmatic qualities, had chosen to sign based on neither money nor geographical proximity to his only son. What would motivate Bonds’ decision on who to sign with?

Boras had negotiated Alex Rodriguez’ 10-year, $252 million contract with Texas the previous year.

“We were all just blown away by that,” Magowan said. Rodriguez relative youth was a deciding factor in his getting so much money, and despite his heroics, nobody was actively predicting that Bonds could command that kind of money.

Still, with Boras, an ex-minor leaguer who operates out of Orange County, California, one never knows. He was well known for hard-balling teams, and also for gobbling up top amateurs prior to the annual draft. One of his clients, outfielder J.D. Drew of St. Louis, had been selected second in the 1997 draft by Philadelphia following an All-American career at Florida State. However, following Boras’ advice, Drew continued to hold out against the Phillies’ offers, all the while echoing his agent’s “greedy” tactics with inflammatory comments of his own that helped inflame passions not only against him but against Boras.

After playing for an independent pro team, Drew re-entered the draft and was selected by St. Louis, who had pre-negotiated with Boras, in 1998. To his credit, he had learned to keep his mouth shut after engendering bad feelings from other players.

On the other hand, Bonds had said earlier in the season that “Boras works for me, I don’t work for him,” giving rise to speculation that pure dollar signs were not his driving motivation. Of course, Bonds had said All of this prior to completing the greatest season in history and breaking the game’s most hallowed record. What many fans fail to understand about contracts is that while players may never live long enough to spend all the money they make, they do view their salaries as a source of pride in the pecking order of greatness, a way of comparing themselves to their peers in a highly-competitive environment.

In the Rodriguez negotiations, Boras had squeezed the highest offer from his last employer, Seattle, then used that as the starting point for all bidders. The word around the campfire was that he was looking for a contract in the $20 million per year range.

“I don’t want to get into what his strategy is going to be or what our strategy is going to be and we’re going to do our damnedest not to talk about it frankly in the press,” Magowan said. “I do feel that hurt everybody concerned last year on the Alex Rodriguez thing.”

In Dave Albee’s October 7 column, he added the Orioles and Red Sox to the mix of contenders in the Bonds Sweepstakes, and predicted a Yankee-Met bidding war in the Big Apple.
Magowan also had to be considering the value of the publicity splash that re-signing Bonds would do for his organization. After all, it was that very kind of “splash” that had kept the team above water in 1993.

Albee also predicted that the offers for Bonds would not be as high as some were predicting, and that a “wait and see” approach by San Francisco was there best strategy, foreseeing Bonds’ “gravitating” back to his first choice after testing the waters.

Based Bonds statement that “money isn’t the issue,” the Giants were hoping to get him back for $16-18 million a year. The “money isn’t an issue” factor, however, would take a hit in Bonds’ first post-season national interview with Roy Firestone on ESPN, when he addressed the question of whether the Giants were credible in calling themselves a small market club that could not afford to match the large contract offers to ensue.

Bonds had rejected that notion, saying that San Francisco is a large market, and Boras had often pointed to the financial success of so-called small market teams who had built new stadiums and reaped great benefits. The baseball fan in him also was apparent when he showed enthusiasm over the prospect of playing for the legendary Yankees.

“I do have a gut feeling, but I’d rather not say what it is,” Magowan revealed, and one could reasonably predict that it involved the human disposition towards greed. The real work was about to occur for Magowan, general manager Brian Sabean, assistant GM Ned Colletti, vice president in charge of player personnel Dick Tidrow, CEO Larry Baer, and Baker. Aside from Bonds, the club had to make decisions on free agent pitcher Jason Schmidt, plus Jason Christiansen, Benito Santiago and Andres Galarraga. They also had to consider the “happiness” factor of Kent and Estes, who would want more money in the future based on Bonds’ salary.

“We were picked to win and I really feel should have won,” Magowan said, perhaps shedding insight into his “gut feeling.” “Why didn’t we win? We didn’t have the production we thought we would get out of some key players. Barry couldn’t do this by himself. Was it just a bad year or are these some holes that need to be fixed?”

Albee’s Sunday column pointed out that after the 1993 season, Magowan faced the re-signing of Will Clark, a popular player, but Robby Thompson was considered more indispensable. Clark had been traded, with less-than-sterling results for San Francisco. On the other hand, another Giants’ star, Matt Williams, had been sent to Cleveland in 1996 in favor of a number of less visible players. The youthful Sabean had gone way out on a limb with the Williams deal, but in the end it strengthened Baker’s club and set the table for a run of success beginning in 1997.

Albee would conclude his column with a Mick Jagger quote that rings of Pure Truth. “You don’t always get what you want.” The question would be, would they get what they need?

Chad Kreuter again found himself in the spotlight after Friday’s game. “I told him <Bonds> a fastball was coming,” he joked with the media. Of course, since Boras represents Park as well, maybe a deal was struck to give him a fastball.

“Once he hit it, it was no big deal,” said Kreuter, who had either seen a little too much history up close or just lacked a feel for great drama. “It was 5-1 at that point and we’re going to pitch to him.

Kreuter had signaled for a hard one on the inside, but “I went to catch it and my glove came back over the plate.”

Good-bye, Mr. Spaulding.
Two innings later, revealed Kreuter, he had signaled for a backdoor slider that Parks,

obviously not on top of his game, left hanging.

“His eyes got as big as saucers on that one,” Kreuter said. “It’s phenomenal that someone
can be locked in like that. It was fun. You can’t say it in any other way. It was very electric. The

noise was deafening. I soaked it all in and had fun with it.”

Another Marin County product would be a footnote of this historical weekend.

“Yeah, who was the guy who replaced Barry Bonds on the day after he broke Big Mac’s

single-season home run record?” asked the man who is the answer to this trivia question, Jalal

Leach.

In doing so, Leach made his first Major League start on Saturday. Leach was, however,

no ordinary rookie. At 32, he had broken into the league as a September call-up after having

played in the minor leagues since 1990. A 1987 graduate of San Marin High School in Novato,

he had played followed Kreuter to Pepperdine, then gone on to be the Crash Davis of baseball.

Davis was the Kevin Costner character from “Bull Durham”.

The post-homer letdown was appropriately captured by the public address system playing

“Boulevard of Broken Dreams” when Bonds emerged from the dugout prior to Saturday’s game,

only to be met by golf legend Arnold Palmer who stopped by to congratulate him.

Sadness would be mixed in with awe, too.

“This is a man,” said Santiago, “who did something that nobody can do.”

“…Bonds didn’t just have a brush with greatness,” wrote Jenkins. “He knocked down the
door, plopped down on the sofa and put his feet up.”

Somehow, ss good and as strong as the young bulls of baseball are - Rodriguez, Griffey,

Richie Sexson, Troy Glaus, Adam Dunn – Santiago’s words seemed to ring true. Nobody could
do what he had done. Not even Bonds.

“I always think one’s coming down the middle – even if I know better,” Jenkins quoted
Bonds. “My attitude is always that the next pitch is mine.”

Jenkins also seemed to capture the Bonds duality when he wrote, “Through it all, Bonds’

personality was split in half. Friends and family always knew of his soft, pleasant side, the man

who’s good to his kids, stays out of trouble and gives willingly to the community. Nobody ever
saw that at the ball park, where Bonds lived in a self-contained world, trusting no one, separating
himself in ways that seemed both selfish and immature.”

Bonds, however, had changed in the weeks leading up to the record. He had embraced the

effort. Perhaps his decision was calculated. It was definitely wise. He would often be seen in the

company of his very, very cute children, smiling and disarming his critics, who really were

searching for reasons to like him.

He would cry, his tears shed for Franklin, but also moved by the weight of circumstance

and spiritual connection with a game that transcends the American consciousness.

“But can you imagine the desolation without him?” wrote Jenkins. Certainly that thought
had been the cause of some of Barry’s tears.

Sunday, October 7, marked the final day of the season, and history again hung in the air
like a towering Bonds home run. The play-offs were all set, but Bonds would play and the fans
came out to see him add to his legend.

Mulholland, who had about as much success against Bonds as a batting practice pitcher,

was replaced by knuckleballer Dennis Springer, but it did not matter. In the first inning, in front
of 41,257, Bonds sent number 73 into the arcade. This would be his last, and the “73” would be the number that resonated through history.

In 1998, much fanfare had surrounded Big Mac’s sixty-second against Chicago at Busch Stadium. Sosa, his foil all year, was there to give him a hug. His son, Matthew, who bore a resemblance to the lovable batboy in Robert Redford’s “The Natural”, was there to extend a big hug for his old man. A Cardinal employee had caught the homer and dutifully given it to McGwire.

However, when the dust cleared in ’98, it was not “62” that people remembered, it was “70”. Felipe Alou had ordered his Expo pitchers to challenge McGwire in that last weekend, and with nothing riding on the game’s for either team, Big Mac had went yard five times.

In the off-season, a quirky comic book producer named Todd McFarlane had purchased the ball for $3 million, plus several of the balls McGwire had it out leading up to his seventieth.

McFarlane, a native of Canada, is a baseball fanatic who had played at Eastern Washington State University. At Eastern Washington State, he had met a black second baseman named Al Simmons, and they become fast friends. In the summer of 1980, he and Simmons had played for a fast collegiate summer team in Kamloops, B.C., the host of a then-prestigious amateur tournament. Upon graduation, Simmons would go on to a short minor league career in the Mariners organization. McFarlane, a bench scrub, never realized pro aspirations, but he did have artistic talent, and went to work for Marvel Comics.

In the late 1980s, McFarlane made a fateful, gutsy and entrepreneurial decision that is, at its core, the essence of the American Dream. Instead of staying at Marvel, where he had created a number of popular characters and had a secure position, McFarlane started his own company on the strength of an idea that he called “Spawn.”

Spawn was Simmons, who had accepted McFarlane’s offer to become his right-hand man at McFarlane Productions, located in Tempe, Arizona. The storyline McFarlane developed was that “Al Simmons” was a black CIA officer whose wife had been murdered by the forces of evil. Somehow Simmons gets involved with the supernatural and ends up in hell, but instead of roasting in the flames of eternity, he is chosen by an evil general to lead his forces of darkness in an earthly war that intended to give the balance of military power to the bad guys.

Simmons is converted into Spawn, complete with burned skin and muscle development that is as cross between the Incredible Hulk and a big snake. You can take it from there.

The character was a hit, and McFarlane became a multi-millionaire, with the real Simmons tagging along for the ride. Eventually, Hollywood came calling and the movie “Spawn” was produced starring Martin Sheen, who leads it off by looking into the camera and saying, “Al Simmons is the best.”

Naturally, this line is, to Al Simmons, the equivalent of Humphrey Bogart telling Ingrid Bergman, “Here’s lookin’ at you, kid.” The film is no “Casablanca”, although John Leguizamo’s turn as a perverted clown is a tour de force. Video renters are fed a post-film interview with the vainglorious McFarlane, who addresses the social importance of his creation in a serious manner worthy of an Orson Welles dissecting “Citizen Kane”.

In the interest of research, “Spawn” is worth viewing, but watching the sequel? Let us not go there, okay?

McFarlane paid far more than the market would normally have brought to get McGwire’s ball. Big Mac himself had demonstrated disdain for the guy, who had then taken it on a tour of
all big league stadiums in 1999, using as his front man the outrageous, gravel-voiced sportstalk shock jock, Scott Ferrall.

Ferrall was known for “pouring beers” for his listeners, and often prefaced his commentary with something like, “I’m in the foulest of moods possible.” You have to hear it to get it.

As Bonds got closer and closer to the record in 2001, McFarlane had gotten as nervous as the shell-shocked soldier that George Scott slaps in “Patton”. He continued to make pithy comments about Bonds, trying but not succeeding to make light of the fact that his investment was becoming almost worthless.

The fans sitting beyond the outfield fence no doubt knew how much McFarlane had paid for number 70, and the result was an ugly scramble for this one. $3 million was high, but collectors were saying that the ball would net a $1 million asking price.

It was the first inning, and nobody could guarantee it would be the last of the season, but if it was it would be a moneymaker. The ball landed in the glove of 37-year old Alex Popov, who had borrowed his girlfriend’s mitt for the day. The fact that a man borrows his girlfriend’s mitt is commentary on American society in the twenty-first century, but gist for another day.

“I tucked the glove in my stomach and I hit the ground in a protective mode,” the San Francisco resident told the media. KNTV’s television crew captured it, as did photographer Josh Keppel.

However, the ball “snow coned” on the top of his glove, like Joe Rudi’s catch of a to-the-fence drive in the 1972 World Series. A dog pile ensued, and Popov lost the ball, which was picked up by another fan named Patrick Hayashi.

“It was ugly,” said eyewitness Kathy Sorensen, who did not know Popov. “Then I saw this guy bend down and just pick up the ball.”

“Is this the ball?” Hayashi asked MLB officials, who had focused on the melee and not seen him casually pick it up.

Hayashi was ushered away to a secure room, where the ball was identified, then returned to the man. Popov and his witness, like bye-standers after a car crash, then protested to Giants officials. Despite Popov’s pleas, it was determined that the melee was not much different than what happens on most home runs hit into crowds, and stating that “Possession is nine-tenths of the law,” senior vice president of ballpark operations Jorge Costa deemed that Hayashi was its rightful owner.

Hayashi declined to do a post-game press conference or identify his hometown, but Popov told reporters that he expected him to “do the right thing.” The following day, apparently Hayashi had not done the right thing yet, so Popov went on a Bay Area media blitz of radio and TV stations, and began the process American-as-apple-pie process of taking legal action to recover damages. God bless this country.

“Today’s home run, I felt more in shock,” Bonds told reporters. “Your chances of hitting a home run on someone who throws that slow are so slim, and when I did it, I was just, ‘What else can you give me, God? What else can you give me?’”

San Francisco won the season-finale, 2-1, and Bonds also finished with a .515 on-base percentage, the highest in modern history. Of all the singles hitters of the twentieth century, guys ranging from Honus Wagner to Ty Cobb to Pete Rose to Tony Gwynn, none of these people had reached base more often that Bonds, who had done it swinging for the fences instead of playing
“Punch and Judy,” hitting one out a big league record once every 6.25 at-bats. He drew his one hundred seventy-seventh base on balls, another all-time mark.

While the home run record was an insane accomplishment, historians and statisticians will point to his slugging percentage as the most unbelievable record set by Bonds. His .863 obliterated Babe Ruth’s .847 set in 1920. That alone does not tell the story.

Ruth was the only player ever to slug over .800, having done it twice. Nobody else ever did it, not Gehrig, Foxx, Williams, Mantle, Mays, or anybody. Except Barry Bonds!

“Soon the Babe’s not going to have any records, is he?” Baker asked, having recovered the ebullience that Friday’s loss had robbed him of. “I think it’s awesome. This was one of the greatest years – no, it was the greatest year – I have seen from a single person.”

Maybe because history is not everybody’s favorite subject, or because the mystique of Ruth and even Mays overshadows their actual accomplishments, many were not seeing Bonds’ season for what it really was, the greatest season in the history of baseball by a player who, when it is all said and done, may be the best ever. Bonilla was on the case, but it says here that when the dust clears and the record is examined with a fine toothcomb, the Greatest Ever tag, not just Greatest I’ve Ever Seen moniker, will hang around Barry Bonds’ neck.

Bonds came out of the game in the eighth, having gone two-for-four with an RBI and a run scored. The home nine pushed a run across in the bottom of the seventh, right after hearing “God Bless America”, which was now being sung during the seventh inning stretch at all big leagues in honor of what people were now calling the 9-1-1 Tragedy, to win it, 2-1. Bonds finished at .328, and his club’s final record was 90-72, two games behind Arizona, three behind wild card St. Louis, who had blown their finale to the ‘stros, 9-2.

After the game, Ned Colletti said he planned to call Boras later in the week, but Bonds stated that he planned a monthlong vacation beginning in November did not “even want to hear” from Boras until he returned.

Did this mean Bonds would be irritated if he checked his voicemail on, say, November 14 and heard Boras’ voice checking? What it did mean was that the Giants would be expected to cool their heels when important decisions had to be addressed and made, all of them directly tied in to Bonds. Then again, Bonds is the kind of guy who says stuff like that, but changes up later on.

Sabean put his spin on things, stating that the previous season Baker seemed like he was “out the door,” but the club re-signed him because “when a man looks you in the eye like he did and says he wants to stay, you try to figure out a way to do it, and we’re going to try to do that with Barry.”

A 2002 season-ticket ad now appearing in the paper was showing a photo of who else but Barry Bonds. Eric Davis retired after a star-crossed career in baseball, and had nice things to say about his year in The City, stating that he had played with “the best player in the game.” Aurilia finished with 206 hits and a .324 average to go with his 37 home runs and 97 RBIs out of the two-spot.

Jim Tracy told the media he thought Bonds could have hit 100 home runs if he had not been walked 177 times.

“I’ll take 73,” Bonds said apprised of Tracy’s remarks, and when asked if thought the record could be broken, replied, “No, I wouldn’t be surprised. I’ll tell you one thing: If you break 73, I don’t know anyone’s ever going to break whatever the new number is going to be, because that’s a lot of home runs.”
The homer record is one thing, the slugging percentage mark is something else again.

John Shea was one of the few journalists who had expressed the opinion that Bonds was a pretty nice guy even before his assault on the record and accompanying efforts at rehabilitating his image. This may have something to do with Shea being more or less in Barry’s age range. The older writers tended to get down on him. Ron Bergman of the San Jose Mercury News said Bonds was an “arrogant jerk.” Bruce Magowan of KNBR, one of the nicest guys in the media, said he never had a problem with Barry because he didn’t take his slights personally, but sitting in San Rafael’s Flatiron sports bar, he told Giants’ mega-fan Pat Quinlen that Bonds was among his “top 10” toughest guys to deal with.

Shea’s October 8 Chronicle column was entitled, “Barry is caught being kind again,” citing Bonds’ emergence on the post-game field despite after having been taken out, instead of packing it in to the clubhouse. Shea might have been looking reaching by calling such a minor thing an act of kindness, but he definitely had been a better man than in the past, although he himself insisted that he had not changed.

“The more scrutiny, notoriety and pressure he was under this year, he became more open,” Shea quoted Kent, who refused to dislike Barry no matter how hard the media tried to paint him that way, “and that very uncommon for an athlete, especially for Barry, who’s been a closed type person.”

Bonds had given commemorative bats to his teammates after he hit his five hundredth homer, and after hitting his sixty-first (a symbolic number) he gave the clubhouse attendant who fished it out of a fountain at Denver’s Coors Field a motorcycle. Bonds let outsiders in, made curtain calls, granted interviews, and not just at press conferences. Most important, he did not snap when asked stupid questions.

This may very well have been a lesson he had learned from Baker, one of the best, most patient interview subjects in baseball.

“I think every week he became more open,” Shea quoted Kent. “I think he’s been better with you guys, too. I was surprised. I thought he’d blow you guys off and just focus on home runs. I wouldn’t have had a problem with that. But, heck, he’s been open with you guys and open with teammates both in the locker room and on the field.”

Kent could probably take some lessons from Bonds. During the season, he gave of himself by granting a weekly radio show on KNBR with Ralph Barbieri and Tom Tolbert, and was always gracious and full of “goldarns” and “heck yeas,” but away from the mic Kent can print journalists down with an array of four-letter epithets. For the most part, Bonds did not swear, he just blew off.

“I saw him smile a lot more than he did in the past,” said Aurilia. “It was good to see him do that. I think he tried to enjoy what he went through this year.” Of course, one does find incongruous that a man could do what Bonds did and not enjoy it, but Aurilia’s point is well taken. At mid-season, some had speculated that because he is not as popular around the league Arizona’s Luis Gonzales, San Diego’s Tony Gwynn, or the likeable McGwire, he would not get the pitches to break the mark.

Of course, they did deny him as many pitches as possible, but that had nothing to do with his personality. The “universally likeable” McGwire image is a myth, too, and perhaps leads one to consider that race is an issue when it comes to Bonds’ perception, at least when making the comparison with Big Mac.
McGwire loves children and has a heart of gold, but so does Bonds. Like Bonds, though, McGwire does not suffer the slings and arrows of celebrity easily. At USC he was serious about baseball, with a touch of the rogue. One of his best friends since childhood in Claremont, Randy Robertson, was a pitcher for the Trojans and a ladies man of the first order. Robertson lived in an off-campus apartment on Hoover Street called the Hoover House with three teammates. They included pitchers Phil Smith and Tony “Bruno” Caravalho, and outfielder Mark Stevens. Without getting into details, these fellows liked to, uh, entertain the attractive coeds that make up a large segment of the SC student body. Some of the “events” of the Hoover House are nothing less than legendary. McGwire, who lived in a nearby apartment with third baseman Craig Stevenson, was a frequent party guest who did not necessarily indulge in the more graphic sporting activities, but had a definite voyeuristic streak.

Throughout his ascension through Oakland’s minor league system, he was a happy-go-lucky fellow who frequented Trojan games before leaving for Spring Training, and maintained a self-effacing way about him despite everybody’s high hopes for his future. In his rookie year, McGwire canceled an autograph-signing session at a cigar store in San Francisco at the last minute after he discovered that the store sold pornography, which is interesting when one considers the activities of the Hoover House.

In his first few years in The Show, McGwire stayed in touch with his old pals, holding friends’ children in dugout photo sessions and always returning phone calls. Over time, however, he seemed to lose touch with those once close to him, even good friends like Robertson and Stevenson. At one point they would be invited to his Huntington Harbor home in the off-season, but eventually that stopped, and any efforts to get ahold of McGwire had to go through his agent…without good results.

One ex-teammate, Terry Marks, a Trojan pitcher who has risen to a spot near the very top of Coca-Cola’s corporate hierarchy and is an important person in his own right, tried to contact his old friend for an autograph on behalf of his son, a baseball fan. McGwire never got back to him.

“That’s just not a part of my life anymore,” McGwire said of his All-American years playing under Rod Dedeaux at USC, the most prestigious college program in the nation. When asked about the names herein mentioned, he expressed little knowledge or interest in how any of these people were doing, and in some cases did not even remember them. This may even shed some light on why he had fled to St. Louis instead of signing with Anaheim in 1998.

McGwire is busy, but so is Bonds. Bonds may be a lot of things, but he is considered very loyal by his friends, although his playing in his hometown is helpful in this regard. McGwire tolerates the media, but has a very testy side. In ’98, he virtually shunned the press when they tried to cover what was obviously a legitimate, beginning-to-end race for Maris’ record. What did he think these people were doing? He was making history, and the very essence of the press is to cover and write about just that, yet McGwire acted like they were nothing but pests instead of professionals doing a job, and serving a need that the public demands! He called the scene a “zoo.” He should have been at Watergate.

Finally, when he got to 50 prior to Labor Day, McGwire acceded to the concept that he had a chance to break the record. Of course, everybody in America had known he would break it long before that. When he started doing press conferences, he smiled and opened up, showing intelligence and grace. Everybody fell in love with the Great White Hope, but the reality is that he was no Tony Gwynn, who is the very face of Class.
UNTITLED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BARRY BONDS

Back when this was an authorized autobiography, I had to put together a proposal to New York publishers. A million dollars was on the line, according to my agent, The William Morris Agency. Their performance in this project reminded me of a Robert Downey movie from the 1980s: "Less Than Zero". That is how much work The William Morris Agency put into this project. Agents are money-grubbers who wait for you to bring them deals like Manna from Heaven. Do a little work? Make a sale happen? Forget about it. This should be instructive to prospective book writers.

The words attributed to Barry are not his words. They were mine, his ghostwriter.

After years of saying no, Barry Bonds is now ready to write his autobiography...and what a year to do so! In 2001, Bonds broke the greatest record in sports – the all-time single season home run record held over the years by Babe Ruth, Roger Maris and Mark McGwire. Bonds has taken his game to a new level, astonishing the baseball world with the greatest slugging percentage of all time, the most walks in a season, and an unreal .500 on-base percentage. The names of players whose records Bonds has surpassed this year tell the story: Ruth, McGwire, Ted Williams, Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle. With Bonds set to become the first player to win four MVP awards, his story is not just the biggest in sports in the new century. Bonds, in fact, had the greatest season in baseball history.

The son of baseball great Bobby Bonds and the cousin of another baseball legend, Reggie Jackson, as well as the Godson of Mays, Bonds is the greatest athlete in the world, the best baseball player in our lifetime, and when it is all said and done, he will make a run at the title, "Greatest Baseball Player of All Time." Bonds has all the credentials to write a landmark, best-selling baseball book - and he is eager to do so.

"I've been thinking about writing a book for some time," says Bonds. "It's a hell of a challenge and I know it's going to be a lot of work, but if I'm going to do it the timing couldn't be better.

"First and foremost, my book will be about my attempt at the greatest single-season record in sports. I don't think anything compares to breaking the home run record. But there's more to my life than just chasing Mark McGwire's record, and I think my book will prove that. This is an opportunity for me to get some things off my chest. I don't verbalize things with writers as well as I'd like to, but when I put my mind to something, like this book, I go at it 100 percent. I'll be talking about all the things people have directly to the world, and I have one hell of a lot to say. I’m not afraid to be honest. I
think I’ve earned that right.”

**Overview**
There is no doubt that for most fans Barry Bonds is a man of mystery. A misunderstood superstar who has long engaged in a running feud with the Bay Area media, Bonds has in 2001 broken new ground. His relationship with The City By the Bay has finally blossomed, not unlike his Godfather, Willie Mays, who found Orlando Cepeda and Willie McCovey to be more popular for several years.

Bonds is approaching 40. A happily married man with three children, he has matured into an elder statesman of baseball. In his book, Bonds will reveal the very kinds of inner thoughts, demons and joys that the press and public have long wanted to hear from this often-enigmatic, yet intelligent player.

The greatest single-season mark in the game is his. There was something primal to Bonds' season, and in fact his career. Long considered the game's best player, Bonds' ascension to greatness has taken him into truly rarefied air, and one gets the sense he is accomplishing all of this through some form of extra-human will and determination. It is this aspect of both his personality and physical ability that separates him from even the great stars who are his contemporary rivals: Ken Griffey, Jr., Alex Rodriguez, Cal Ripken, or anybody else.

This is also the year that Bonds can command a salary that approaches the amount garnered last year by Rodriguez. This off-season, he will have among his choices the opportunity of signing in New York, Los Angeles - or returning to his hometown of San Francisco. This man, whose intentions have been discerned and speculated on by the sporting press, in this book opens up and talks about the role of money in an athlete's life, and how dollar signs determine the pecking order of greatness as much as homers, touchdowns or even World Championship rings.

Bonds' claim to sports immortality has gone beyond even the "ESPN 50 Greatest" category, or The Sporting News' Player of the Decade for the 1990s. The 37-year old Bonds, a marvelous physical specimen whose training regimen and lifestyle are the epitome of dedication, will then embark on the next quest: Henry Aaron's all-time career mark of 755 home runs.

The first player in major league history to hit 400 home runs and steal 400 bases in a career, Bonds will soon make that the 500/500 Club. He is also an eight-time Gold Glove winner, a member of the exclusive 40 homer/40 stolen base club and a multiple member
of the 30/30 club. He will soon have his three thousandth career hit, and lifetime records for runs batted in and walks are within his range.

These are breathtaking achievements and place Bonds alongside Mays, DiMaggio, Ruth, Aaron and Ty Cobb. It allows his name to be mentioned in the same breath with Michael Jordan, Bill Russell, Jim Brown, Wayne Gretzky, Pete Sampras and Pele.

This Son of San Francisco has long received plaudits for his on-field performance. Now his book will give the fans an exclusive look at the man they all have longed to know more about, on and off the field.

**The Writing of the Book**

One half of the book will follow Bonds throughout the 2001 season as he defies the very bounds of conventional logic and reduces the art of long-ball hitting into his own personal art form. The reader will be there as Bonds comes closer and closer to the record of 70 home runs set by McGwire in 1998, and will examine reactions of McGwire and Sammy Sosa as well as following Arizona's Luis Gonzalez, who with Sosa was Bonds' foil as Sosa was to Big Mac in '98.

The book will also detail one of the most exciting, down-to-the-finish pennant races in the annals of baseball history, concluding with a September stretch in which Bonds carried his club like no player – Carl Yastrzemski of Boston in 1967 possibly comes to mind – concluding with an unbelievable final–weekend series at Pac Bell Park vs. the arch-rival Dodgers. In the first game of that series, Bonds broke McGwire’s record withhis seventy-first round-tripper against Los Angeles ace Chan Ho Park.

Although the excitement of the 2001 season will be the highlight of the book, the other half of the book will describe Bonds’ storied career. In alternate chapters the focus willswitch from the 2001 season to Bonds' childhood in Riverside, California, the hometown of his father, Bobby; to his successful high school career in the Bay Area; to his All-American career at Arizona State; and to his eventual superstar status.

He will also describe what is it was like being a black kid growing up in privileged surroundings on the Peninsula and attending mostly-white private schools. Unlike mostAfrican-Americans, he didn't get a taste of life's more unpleasant realities until he became an adult. Bonds, whose close friends are both black and white, will discuss his relationships with his teammates, white, black and Latino. He will reflect on the attendant resentment, jealousy, and envy he has experienced in the area of racial politics.
It will be a book that delves into the intensely private, proud mind and ego of a man who understands baseball history and his place in it, and who had the biggest season of any player in a free agent year ever. The Player of the Decade certainly has a big story to tell.

Chapter one will introduce the reader to Bonds' world: The luxury and lifestyle of the big-money athlete; the strain of training, practice and diet; the pressures and grind of professional sports. This will be done in concert with an overview of his 2001 season, looking back at his record-breaking home run production, fourth MVP, free agency, off-season publicity, and personal observation of the future.

Chapter two will flashback to Bonds’ youth, his happy years growing up in Riverside, California; playing ball in the San Carlos Little League (where his father hid in the car to avoid distractions); and his playing career at Serra High School in San Mateo.

Chapter three will begin the "diary" of the 2001 season, starting with Spring Training and the early part of the regular season.

The following chapters will alternate between his private and his sporting life -- highlighted by an up-close, chronological review of his record-breaking 2001, right through the end of the season. These chapters will be peppered with Bonds' candid, and sometimes controversial opinion of himself, teammates, opponents, the game, and life in general. The final chapter allows him to look at baseball history and to examine his contribution to the game.

Some of the areas Bonds will discuss include:

- **His relationship with his father.**
  "My father and I have always been very close. Even today, I don't do anything without talking to him and my mother first. He's always been there when I need him. As a child I loved being the son of a baseball star. How many kids do you know whose dad would take you the ballpark to meet stars like Catfish Hunter and Thurman Munson? And, of course, he was always giving me advice on how to play. One thing he especially didn't like was when I would get angry at striking out. He'd yell at me and say, 'Throwing down your helmet is not going to get you a hit.' His theory was that you should be more concerned when you were doing well than when you were in a slump. 'Panic when you're hitting well, because you'll soon find out that it's only for a short time.' It's funny but that's exactly how I feel today about hitting. I am much more worried when I'm in the groove than when I'm having a bad day.

"And it wasn't just my dad who criticized my play. Willie Mays kept his eye on me constantly and would often tell me I wasn't concentrating enough. Then there was cousin Reggie, always ready to get his two cents in, too. One thing all three had in common:
they would never accept excuses. I obviously appreciated their love and help but it did leave me in a difficult position of being compared to all three. It seemed to me that the media thought I was competing with them, and I would get questions like: 'Do you think you can beat your dad's 30/30 record? Can you become another Willie Mays or a Mr. October?' All I could say in reply was, 'Why can't I just be Barry Bonds?' The media wanted me to say more. I would just ignore them, which didn't go down well with the reporters. Some would call me a jerk, but I didn't care. In my younger days, I suppose I was too thin-skinned about all those comparisons. Nevertheless, living close to three baseball legends wasn't and isn't easy when you want to be judged solely by what you accomplish."

- Jim Leyland

"I owe so much to Jim that I don't know where to start. When thing weren't going so good for me in my early days at Pittsburgh, he was the one who defended me. The Pirates were having a bad spell in the late '80s and they wanted to trade me. It was Jim who kept me on that team, and he was the one who let me switch from the leadoff position to batting fourth or fifth. He knew I wasn't comfortable leading off. It was something I hadn't done before and I didn't like it at all. What I liked was being in situations where the pitcher had to be at his best. When you have runners on first and second, you know the pitcher has to bear down and make his best pitch. When that happens I want to also bear down and be a better hitter. I feel my concentration level is higher under those conditions and Jim understood that.

"In my first three years with the Pirates I only had a .256 career batting average. I kept telling everyone that I could be more productive in the RBI spot than being the leadoff hitter. None of the coaches seemed to agree with me, but Jim did. In 1990 he said, 'Okay, Barry, you're going to hit fifth - sink or swim.' I remember replying, 'I've been swimming ever since I was a baby. Don't worry. I won't let you down.'

"Jim was always trying to inspire me to work harder, and he went out of his way to show me that he had confidence in me to get the job done. When the Pirates lost Bobby Bonilla, he came up to me and said, 'I think with your leadership we can win the division title again, even without Bobby. I want you to stand up and take the responsibility.' I told him he could rely on me, and it turned out to be another winning season.

"He also had the knack of making you think you could do anything. He went out of his way to me make feel that I was something special, and he always let me play the way I wanted to play. That was probably the greatest thing he did for my career - he allowed me to be me."

- Dusty Baker.
"Dusty and Jim are the only two managers I have played for. They were both more like fathers than skippers. With Dusty it was even more personal; he's always been a part of the Bonds family since I can remember. He used to change my diapers when I was a baby. You can't get much more personal than that. I love playing for him and he's been a terrific manager. No one guides or inspires players better than Dusty. He's also an example of how well an African-American can do when given the opportunity to manage. If any African-American wants to become a Major League manager all they have to do is follow his example. It's obvious he's done a hell of a job representing African–Americans, and he still has many good years ahead of him.”

- Media relations.

"Believe it or not, there was a time when I got along well with the sports reporters. When I first played for the Pirates, Jim Leyland was actually upset that I spent so much time with the media. Those were the days when I would hang around for hours with the reporters. Jim told me to put a stop to it and devote more time preparing myself to play better. Once he gave me a lecture about how the Pirates were paying me to work, not to sit in my locker all day talking to the press. I think it's rather ironic that in later years the reporters have been upset that I don't talk to them enough. I think it's been unfortunate the way things have worked out with the media. I fault myself because I allowed them to upset me, but I also feel that some players can do whatever they want and the reporters will say nothing. Other players, including me, have to walk a straight line, or else they stick it to you. I tend to say whatever is on my mind and that is always dangerous when talking to the media. I'm making a big attempt at changing the way I handle interviews. I plan to go on the many shows that in the past I have turned down. Maybe a few jokes on Leno or Letterman will make a difference. Actually, I'm starting to have fun now with the media. It's not that I'm really changing, but perhaps I'm letting people see me a little more of the real me."

- On the Rick Reilly Sports Illustrated criticism, and David Halbertam’s “hit piece” on ESPN.com.

“I'm not who you think I am on, and if I am, I'm sorry. I've stepped on some toes. Some guys are better at dealing with the media than I am. Tony Gwynn's a natural at it. I'm not perfect. I don't run out every ground ball. I never mean to hurt any one's feelings. Once I told a writer to 'get the hell out of here,' and as soon as I said it I knew I was wrong. I have feelings. I care about other people, but I'm basically a shy person, and I have pressures and time constraints to deal with. I know I look arrogant, and I apologize for it.”

- Playing defense.

“As much as I like getting hits, I've felt my performance out on the field has been more important, both to me and to my team. Willie Mays often told me, 'You play defense for nine innings, and you get only four at-bats, maybe five, and if you walk, you may only get three at-bats.' As usual, Willie was right. If you want to know anything about defense,
Willie's your man. He and Roberto Clemente were my heroes. Both could throw from the right field corner to third base and both had great speed and agility.

- Teammates.
  "Many people have asked me why I'm not very close to my teammates. I think the answer to that is that I still haven't completely recovered from the shock of losing my best pal, Bobby Bonilla, to free agency. I was devastated when that happened. I thought we were going to be together forever. Knowing that teammates in baseball are probably just temporary colleagues has kept me from seeking long-lasting friendships. I just don't want to be crushed again. You can still get along with teammates without being the best of friends. Jeff Kent, for instance, doesn't call me up and ask me to go hunting in the winter or invite me over for dinner, but we work together very well. I know Jeff said some things to Rick Reilly about me, but it's a free country, and I respect his opinion."

- The Sid Bream incident.
  "Even today people ask, 'How come you didn't throw out Sid Bream in Game 7 of the 1992 NLCS?' I get a lot of stick mainly because Sid was not a fast runner. Before Sid made his run, we were playing shallow, trying to take away the winning run. But when Francisco Cabrera hit two bullets right off the wall - even though they were foul - we took four or five steps back to prevent the ball from going over our heads. Unfortunately, the ball was hit to my left. I made the throw, but how many players are going to throw out a runner going to their left? I made it as close as I could. Now everyone said that Bream had two bad legs, but when you are in the playoffs, you don't think about the pain in your legs. All I can say is that Sid ran faster than he ever ran in his life. He certainly didn't run like that when he was on my team."

- Women in the media.
  "I'm a New Age guy from the Bay Area, so I'm sort of a cosmopolitan. By the time I broke into The Show, there were women reporters in the clubhouse. It's never bothered me. But when the women first started venturing into the clubhouse, there was a great deal of resentment. One of the Yankee players told me about the time at Yankee Stadium when somebody baked a cake in the shape of a fully erect penis, just to embarrass some lady reporter. She figured the guilty party was Graig Nettles. She asked him if he was the one who brought the cake and he said, 'Naw, I just modeled for it.' Today guys are buck-

- Religion.
  "I went to Catholic school. Anybody who has gone to Catholic school, and experienced the Latin Mass, and all the symbolism of that religion, is affected by it. Profoundly. Catholicism is different from Protestant religions. A lot of people turn away from the strict teachings of Catholicism, they can't handle the guilt, but most come back. A lot of African-Americans are Muslims. When Malcolm X came on the scene, they said it was the 'black religion.' Part of that was probably a reaction to praying to this blonde-haired, blue-eyed God called Jesus. You see some of these Muslims, and they definitely have an opinion, but you have to give them credit, they don't do drugs, they don't womanize, they
don't drink, and they're neat, organized people. Family means everything to them, and I
can relate to that. I read 'The Autobiography of Malcolm X', and you have to admire the
guy. He came from nothing, he made something of himself through hard work, and he
was willing to change with the times. We all have to change with the times, you know. I
can't explain why I'm hitting so many home runs. The writers ask me about it, and I just
say, 'Ask God.' Because I'm Barry Bonds, whatever that means, people think I'm being a
smart-ass, but I really mean it like it sounds, because God has blessed me with abilities that I
can't explain."

• Modern American politics.

"Is this an area that athletes should stay away from? Why? Other entertainers, namely
actors, get knee deep in politics all the time. How come athletes do not express their
views on important issues more often? What makes Alec Baldwin such an expert? Most
professional athletes are Republicans, for the obvious reason that we make a lot of
money and prefer lower tax rates, but most of us were the Big Man On Campus at some
point. We're conservative by nature. We prefer order to anarchy."

• Important players in baseball history.

"Ty Cobb was a complex human being. They say he was racist, and he was, but he set up
college funds for numerous African-Americans in his hometown in Georgia. He believed
in separation of the races, but he was not a redneck advocating lynch mobs. When he saw
Willie Mays play, he finally came around to believing the game was better off integrated.
It's kind of funny, he lived in Atherton at the end of his life, and that's where Willie
moved in. In a way, that says a lot about America. Who is the greatest baseball player
ever? Hey, I love Mays. I think I'm up there. But Ruth? Oh man, the best way to explain
it would be if Pedro Martinez held a press conference tomorrow to announce he was
switching to right field, and over the next 15 years he hit 700 homers. As for Henry
Aaron, I can really feel a close bond with him. Like me he was a left fielder who tried to
get the job done without going crazy. I can relate to that. But I wouldn't have stood for
all that racist crap and death threats he received when chasing Ruth's record. If I had been
Jackie Robinson in 1947, I wouldn't have put up with what he went through for two
seconds. Branch Rickey would have asked me if I was 'man enough not to fight back' and
I would have been like, 'Are you kidding? I'm gonna kick some ass.' I would have been
lot more like Jack Johnson than Jack Robinson."

• Homosexuality in sports.

"My teammate, Eric Davis, says he would want to know if a teammate was gay so he
could steer clear of him. My Catholic school experience affects my opinion, but so does
my experience living in San Francisco. I know what the Bible says, and I say, ignore
God's word at your own peril. At the same time, I leave judgment up to Him. It's not my
place to judge. Besides, man, I can tell you stories of depraved heterosexual activities that
would make the hair stand up on the back of your neck. If straights can do things like
that, they have no business judging gays. There's supposed to be a gay player whose
dating a prominent gay journalist, who wants him to 'out' him. At first, he'd be the
Jackie Robinson of gays, but things are more accepted and less shocking than in the past, so over time if he could hit or pitch he'd do okay."

- **His divorce.**

  "I met my first wife, Sun, in a Montreal gentleman's club, and after a whirlwind courtship, she signed a pre-nuptial agreement without the representation of an attorney. Later, when we divorced, she was not held to the limits of the pre-nuptial in a case that is considered precedent setting in California and national legal circles. I've kept my mouth shut on this subject, and a lot of people savaged me over it. The whole story is not known, but I look at the glass as half full, not half empty. My son, whose in the seventh grade now, was born and I thank God for him. A lot of folks make mistakes but learn their lessons privately. Some writers question whether I can handle pressure, but I was winning the MVP award while all this was going on. If I can handle myself on the field during nerve-wracking times like the divorce, I can handle all the pressure you want to throw at me."

- **His college coach, Jim Brock at Arizona State.**

  "He was a man whose reputation was maligned during life, but he died an early, tragic death. I guess I can talk about this, because it's out there. Some people found some pictures at his house. I'll let you use your imagination, but word got out, and fans in other towns gave him a hard time about it. I felt sorry for him. He wasn't the best coach, he was more a PR guy, but he built Arizona State into the top program in the nation by the time I got there."

- **Family values.**

  "I'm a big supporter of family values. It's the most important thing in my life. Jeff Kent is the same way. Now Jeff is a plain spoken guy, a real conservative whose father was a CHP officer, and he doesn't suffer fools well. We've never been close. As a matter of fact he told me once, 'We're on different highways but headed to the same place.' But when we played together on an exhibition tour in Japan, I got to know him better, I realized how much we had in common, and the key was the way he is with his family. He's like a teddy bear. Watching a man who loves his kids like he does makes me cry, and makes me just love him, too."

- **On the World Trade Center and Pentagon disasters.**

  “Our country’s in trouble, and my performance as an athlete is not terribly important in the light of something like that. At the same time, I know how important sports are to people’s lives. During World War II, Franklin Roosevelt insisted that baseball keep playing to maintain morale. If my breaking the record is a diversion for people, I’m glad and proud to accomplish it. I also think we came together as a people. A lot of fans were antagonistic towards me, but this has made us see we’re in it together."

- **Promotion.**

  Bonds is eager to cooperate in the publicity, interviewing and appearances necessary to ensuring the book's success. He will be available during the off-season and throughout
the 2002 regular season, schedule permitting.

PARTIAL “SAMPLE” CHAPTER
UNTITLED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BARRY BONDS

I wrote this during the 2001 season. This is ghostwritten, "first-person" Bonds, but of course it is not actually Bonds. I was trying to get in the head of the enigmatic superstar, not an easy task. This was shown to Barry and he liked it.

The Sunday series finale in St. Louis ended in a 7-3 loss to the Cardinals. Even though we lost some momentum, taking two defeats in three days to drop another game behind Arizona, I enjoyed the visit to the River City. My best friend in baseball, Bobby Bonilla, and I went out to dinner, and I saw, more than ever, what is happening because of my home run pace.

I am always recognized, but in the past no more other celebrity athletes. In St. Louis, though, it took on added dimensions. Cardinal fans are, possibly, the best in baseball. Baseball is the number one sport there, no doubt. They have been playing ball in that town for well over 100 years, and their fans are very knowledgeable.

Now, fans knowledgeable in a lot of cities. Boston, New York and Chicago fans are great. California fans are different. Because of the transitory nature of the state, a lot of people are from some place else. Their loyalties may be with the visiting team. Fans in San Francisco and Los Angeles tend to be good, knowledgeable fans, too, but there is not the sense of fanaticism found in New York, or the loyalty and devotion found in St. Louis.

Cardinal fans are just plain nice. New York fans can be, well, let’s just say they have some attitude, which is fine. I have attitude, too. The fans in St. Louis love baseball, but they do not get belligerent about it. They tend to come with their families, and with school out, St. Louis becomes the Great Midwest Mecca. Fans show up with license plates from Kentucky, Indiana, and all the surrounding states, their radio stations tuned in to KMOX, the Voice of Cardinal Baseball. The whole thing is old-fashioned, such a patriotic kind of Mom-and-Apple-Pie thing that it makes me proud to be an American.

I mean, I play for the other team, and there is no doubt they want the Cardinals to beat us. A lot of their fans did not want to see me beat Mac’s record. A lot said they were rooting for me. All of them, however, were nice. They would come to my table and wish me luck. There was such a sense of fairness to it. It was a righteous experience, and the whole weekend made me realize that this thing happening to me is something to enjoy, have fun with, and embrace.

I suppose the Cardinal series had some symbolic importance in my Quest. It was the first of the summer, and it pitted me against the old champion. McGwire had been experiencing a frustrating, injury-plagued season, and I felt for the guy. Here is the greatest home run slugger in the game, maybe of all time. With his mental discipline, work ethic and training regimen, if he
could just play baseball without injuries, the man would have a real chance to break Hank Aaron’s record of 755 career home runs.

McGwire is like another Southern California redhead beset by aches and pains. When I was growing up, I used to love watching Bill Walton play basketball. I was a little young to appreciate his career at UCLA, but I got a good look at him when he led the Portland Trailblazers to the NBA championship over Julius Erving’s Philadelphia 76ers in 1977. One year later, he had the Blazers on the trail to another title when he virtually tore his foot in half on the court. He played again, and in fact helped Boston to a World Championship in the 1980s, but he was never the same. As a fan, I would have loved to see what he could truly have done.

McGwire has not been as star-crossed as Walton, but he has faced similar kinds of freaky injuries to his back and feet. Some injuries are easy to figure out. If a pitcher tears his rotator cuff, it is obvious he cannot perform. Achilles tendons, hamstring pulls, concussions - there isn’t much mystery to them.

McGwire has endured some unseen aches and pains that have kept him out of action, yet perplexed the fans. You look at a man that big and strong, who seems to live in the weight room and has this impervious image, and it is hard for some people to realize such a man could be felled by the kind of physical frailties that break down mere mortals like me.

The media asked me whether McGwire had any advice for me. The answer is no. We talked briefly about our families when I stopped at first base, but really, what is he going to do? McGwire is not the kind of guy who is going to arrive at the yard, find me during batting practice, and say, "Now Barry, I’ve been following your exploits heretofore, and I’ve written down some suggestions on how to handle National League pitching, the expectations of fans, and the pressure of the media. Let’s grab some pine and go over them."

Maybe his old Bash Brother, Jose Canseco, would have taken it upon himself to do something along those lines. I like Jose, it’s just that he’s a little eccentric. But McGwire is the Quiet Man, only more Gary Cooper than John Wayne. He respects me, and I respect him. I go beyond respecting him, I admire the dude.

He told the media, when they inevitably came to ask him "Can Barry do it?", that it was too early for such speculation. Of course, he was right, but like me he also has a sense for the entertainment value of baseball. It is a game for the fans. It’s a fun thing to speculate on whether a player can break a record, whether a team can go all the way. It is part of the whole bar room mystique of sports, and I understand it totally.

So McGwire at first chastised the press for even bringing it up. He said that, just as "talk" of the record should only start if he had 50 home runs by September 1, 1998, a similar standard should exist for me, only he had upped the ante to the point where I need 60 by Labor Day.

Of course, having 60 by September does not guarantee that I could hit 11 in a month, which is a great month - in any other year. I mean, by the time the Cardinal series came and went, I really,
honestly could say that I didn’t know what was going on. It was fun, yes, but I can’t explain it. I took some ribbing when I would answer questions with the phrase, "Ask God!" but honestly, I’m human and limited in my ability to explain what this crazy thing is all about.

When I cranked number 39 on Saturday night at Busch Stadium, McGwire softened a little bit.

"He has a chance to do it, sure," he conceded. Was he rooting for me? I think, like a lot of athletes, he would have mixed emotions about something like that, but records are made to be broken and Mac knows it. He respects excellence and I know he felt good for me. Of course, he was not about seeing any of my big flies beat his team or hurt their chances at the pennant, and on Saturday we let one get away. Beating St. Louis on the road is tough enough, but losing games we should win eats at me. The Diamondbacks were putting on a run, and as we headed towards the Fourth of July and the All-Star break after that, I knew like all my teammates that every game was precious like children.

Winning nine of 10 and putting on a road winning streak, which we had done, makes you hungry to turn it into a major streak. Somehow Seattle got it going like that in the first half of 2001, but the game is so darn humbling and filled with inconsistencies that you have to take what you can get.

Anyway, McGwire also might have sensed that, as I approached 40 home runs, my chances were becoming fairly good, and he probably did not want to seem sour about the whole thing. I knew exactly what he meant when he said that it was just too early. He was trying to get people to give me a break, and my best interests were at the root of his commentary, but the baseball fan in him also seemed to be breaking out.

Let’s face it, 39 long ones prior to the summer solstice is pretty impressive. It just is. In 1969, Uncle Reggie – that’s Reggie Jackson, who really is my uncle - at the time in only his second full year in the Major Leagues with Oakland, had 37 at the break, the most first-half homers ever at up until then. I was two ahead of that number, and a month ahead of that pace.

Jackson broke down in the second half of 1969, which was understandable for several reasons. First, his youth and inexperience made it hard for him to deal with the pressures of getting to 61. Maris’ record was only eight years old, so it was still relatively fresh in people’s minds, but Roger had had such a difficult time attaining it that the press already attached a mythic quality to the number. Reggie was asked to carry a young A’s team that faltered against the veteran Minnesota Twins that summer, and he only hit eight in the second half to finish with 47. The Twins’ Harmon Killebrew ended up with 49, and Washington’s Frank Howard knocked 48.

McGwire equaled Jackson’s first-half record in 1998. Maybe because he had Sammy Sosa to compete against, or because his team was not a contender that year, or just because the dude is Paul Bunyan and can hit home runs like nobody I have ever seen before - for whatever reason, McGwire just tackled that record the second half. He had it done by September 7, and added five more the last weekend to finish with 70.
Thanks, Mark. If he had just tailed off a little and finished with 63, or even tied Sosa at 66, the record would have been more attainable. Oh no, he could not do that! The man had to go on a tear, and get his seventieth the last day of the year.

That off-season, an Arizona comic book tycoon named Todd McFarlane bought that ball at auction for $1.5 million. McFarlane is a big-time baseball fan who once played collegiate summer ball in Canada with Steve Travers, my collaborator on this book. I’m told he was good-field, no-hit (and maybe not so good field), but he did produce a pretty trippy film. The guy invented the Spawn character that became a 1997 movie, starring Martin Sheen and John Leguizamo. I like the start of that flick, when Sheen, an evil politician who wants to use the Armies of hell to advance his policy agenda (and people complained about Bill Clinton?) looks into the camera and says, "Al Simmons is the best."

Simmons is the main character, some kind of secret agent who commits murder to avenge his wife’s killing and goes to hell for it, but is morphed into Spawn, allowing him to leave hell and either do good or do evil. The inside joke is that the real Al Simmons was a second baseman in the Seattle Mariners organization who played ball with McFarlane at Eastern Washington State University, and is his right-hand man at McFarlane Productions in Tempe.

Hey, it’s fanatical fans like McFarlane who make this game fun - and profitable!

Anyway, McGwire was gracious, as always, in St. Louis, but like me he was more interested in his club winning games and getting to the playoffs than in my breaking his record. Now, the media was a big part of the St. Louis series, but the atmosphere is not as frenzied as it gets in New York. There was a genteel quality to the scene that somehow does not happen in the Big Apple.

That was also the weekend my interview on ESPN’s "Up Close With Roy Firestone" came out. We had taped it in San Diego earlier in the road trip, and it played two parts, before the series finale against the Cardinals on Friday, and prior to our home-stand opener against Los Angeles on Monday.

The press seemed to pick up on my new-found accessibility during this period of time, which I found humorous. Yes, I was getting to the point where I was embracing the whole show, and of course I was having fun. But I was also doing my job. First and foremost, I have to be ready to play baseball, and earn the top salary I get my leading my team. There is, however, an undefined requirement to adhere to media requests. I have a spotty record in this regard, and I have paid the price for it over the years. But when you are on a pace to break the most hallowed record in sports, the whole world is watching and a lot of people show up to cover it, and to hear what you have to say.

Mainly, I was cooperating with the requests of my employer, and I have to say the Giants could not have done a better job. They started arranging press conferences for me, which were a lot easier for me than to deal with scattered one-on-one, or small-group, interview requests at my locker, on the field, or after the game.
On Monday, June 25, we returned to San Francisco - at 3:30 in the morning. The ESPN Sunday Night Game has become popular viewing, and we played it that weekend in St. Louis. Because of the time difference, we lose three hours, and sleep is a precious commodity for an athlete. Especially a baseball player. San Francisco International Airport is located in South San Francisco, accessible to the Peninsula and the South Bay, where most of the Giants live. Still, by the time I got my bags, caught a ride home, and wound down (remember, my body was still on Central time), it was between 4:30 and 5:00 A.M.

In the minor leagues, we kept these kinds of hours all the time. A lot of the travel is by bus, and there are very, very few days off. It’s a balls out thing, believe me. But you’re young in the minors. Some guys are 17 or 18. Very few are much older than 25, and if you are 25 you better be in Triple-A by then if you want to have a future in the game. Not many of the guys are married, and even if they are wives usually do not live with players in the minors. Housing accommodations are often a cheap apartment, maybe a trailer, sometimes even a room rented in somebody’s household.

The other thing is that almost all the games in the minors are played at night. In the early part of the season, there might be some Saturday and Sunday afternoon games, but once spring starts turning into summer most of the games are at night. The majority of minor league cities are located in places that are as hot as bejeesus. Lord, some of these places get hot! You try to avoid day games in places like that, so even Sunday games are at night.

I’m a San Franciscan, and you know what Mark Twain said about The City: "The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco."

Old Samuel Clemens (his real name - I never saw why he needed to change it) was exaggerating a little, I suppose. It gets foggy in the summer and the wind can blow, but the weather is not all that bad. Candlestick (later 3-Com) Park was located in an area that got a lot of nasty wind and fog, but Pacific Bell Park, located in China Basin, is a lot nicer. They also designed it in such a way so that the most severe off-shore breeze is diverted from the playing field.

Former Oakland manager Tony LaRussa used to say that the Bay Area weather was an advantage, because in late summer most big league cities have debilitating heat, but the Bay Area is refreshing.

San Francisco weather is a real trip, man. It can be 55 degrees and fog-shrouded. You drive across the Golden Gate Bridge, and by the time you’re in San Rafael it is 90. Where I grew up, in San Carlos about 20 miles south of The City, we got some Bay wind, but the temperature was often considerably warmer than in San Francisco.

Getting back to playing in the minors, towns in the Texas League, the Southern League and some of these places are so hot that when dogs chase cats, they’re both walkin’. Eggs frying on the sidewalk hot. You get my drift? Hot.
I got a taste of real hot weather at Arizona State, but we would be finished up with the games by Memorial Day, before the really unbelievable stuff came in.

Anyway, the thing of it is, when you are a kid in the minor leagues, you’re lifestyle is a lot different. It pretty much revolves around taking a shower after the game, getting something to eat, then drinking beer and looking for girls until the wee hours of the morning. 12 noon is like the crack of dawn after a while. You get up in an air-conditioned room, then walk out the door into an absolute cauldron of heat. You go get something to eat, pop in a dip of Copenhagen, then return to the room. By this time you’re soaked with sweat after a five-minute walk. The air-conditioned air hits you, and unless you’re careful you have a soar throat pretty soon. Change your shirt, then leave for the yard, likely by foot. By the time you get to the clubhouse you’re sweat-soaked again.

You put on your uniform, take batting practice and do some running, and now it’s 6:00 P.M. and you’re perspiring like a sieve. Time for another shower, and a fresh uniform for the game.

So, in an existence like this, you spend a lot of time in the sack. The good news is, you live alone and can just snooze without a care in the world.

A lot of big leaguers are family men and things change when that happens, especially in the summer after school lets out. By the time the Dodger series rolled around, a lot of the wives were in town. That means kids everywhere, which I love. There are kids in the clubhouse, kids in the dugout, kids on the field – and kids in your bedroom at seven in the morning.

Armando Rios has a little one, Armando, Jr., and little Mando could care less that daddy was operating on four hours sleep, tops. A little guy wants some “daddy time.” Armando is such a good father that he gets up when he is at home to take his children to school, and he was doing that even on the first day back from a tough road trip. On top of that, he had a dentist’s appointment to keep, so the man was slightly bleary-eyed when he showed up at the park.

We could have been excused if we let up in the first game against Los Angeles. It was raining, which causes that summer pavement smell, and the air was humi by San Francisco standards. None of these factors increases ones desire to play baseball. Announcer Mike Krukow was openly lobbying for a rainout, but Dusty Baker was on him like a cheap suit when Kruk tried it around him.

“Are you kidding me?” yelled Dusty, half-kidding. “We got a game to play against the Dodgers and we’re gonna play it.”

“I guess he told me off,” Kruk said to himself, smiling. He knew we would be ready, and we were.

We were facing our rivals, in front of a packed house in the heat of a pennant race. Baby, that’s baseball. I wish I could say Dusty’s enthusiasm spurred me to great heights, but against Chan Ho
Park I didn’t do much. Jeff Kent made up for me with three hits, including a tie-breaking homer to lead off the fourth, and we won it, 5-2.

On Tuesday, we faced Kevin Brown. Brown had been out with injuries that were supposed to sideline him for a long time. Right. I heard that and knew he would be facing us, and he did. He was not at his sharpest, though, but we failed to capitalize. It was a four hour-plus night game on a cold, windy night. I didn’t swing the bat well, we blew the lead, and lost. Blowing a game you should win, on a night you face a pitcher like Brown, is galling.

The next day I was trying to get some shut-eye when my phone rang. It was my daughter’s new private school, the Crystal School, telling me it was the last day to enroll her and they needed to have her tuition that day.

Oh man, I was like Dagwood Bumstead scrambling out of there. I had a meeting scheduled that day, and I knew I wouldn’t make it. The Crystal School needed 18 grand. I don’t just carry $18,000 in checking. I had to do some banking, get to the school, take meetings with teachers and school administrators, and fill out more paperwork than a government agency.

People think “superstars” just have assistants to take care of the mundanities of life. Not.

But you know, I’d do anything for my little girl, and I’m so grateful I can be there to do “dad stuff” like enrolling her in school and taking parent/teacher conferences. In that regard, my life is no different than anybody reading this who has kids.

After losing two out of three to L.A., St. Louis invaded Pac Bell, but the Cards are struggling. We took three straight, thanks to great pitching, and not much to my hitting. I didn’t go yard the whole series, making it eight days since my last big fly.

McGwire struggled at the plate. He is the kind of hitter who has to get a lot of swings in order to get his timing. His injuries have put him in a situation where he has to get his “spring training” during the regular season, and it showed.

Saturday was a perfect day. First, it was one of those picture-postcard days, like the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce ordered it up for a weekend tourist attraction. It was an early start, 12:15, we beat St. Louis, and after the game there was plenty of time for Bobby Bo and I to go out to dinner and relax.

I needed my sleep, because on Sunday I had to get to the park early to put my hands in wet cement. The Giants’ honored my five hundredth career homer, commemorating it with a display on the walkway behind right field, overlooking McCovey Cove. Before the game, my parents, Jim Leyland, Dave Steve Stevens, my coach at Serra, and other important people in my life made remarks to the crowd.

I was, by this time, starting to really enjoy this season, to embrace it for all it’s worth. I already knew by this point in the season that I would be writing a book, so I started noticing things.
You know, like a writer. Ha, how’s that for irony!?

Arizona was on a roll, they just kept winning, so we needed the sweep just to stay within six games heading into a crucial four-game series at Dodger Stadium. I always love playing in L.A. The Riverside Bonds’s all show up, and I hire a limo to do the town. My wife, Liz, made the trip to do some shopping on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, and I always from the Dodger fans.

Of course, the biggest thing is that it’s the Giants vs. the Dodgers, and as usual, the games mean something. It doesn’t get any better than this, a four-game, Fourth of July series in L.A. Big crowds every night (booing me lustily), and the Dodgers on a roll.

We couldn’t stop them. Every night it was the same thing. We would be close, but the Dogs got key hits when they needed them. Paul LoDuca stepped up with a couple of key home runs, and Jeff Shaw shut us down late. It was even more impressive on their part because they have injuries right now. Kevin Brown was struggling with arm problems, and Darren Dreifort was out for the year. They just have a bunch of guys who throw real hard.

The press had been saying that, since I was hitting all those home runs, I would not be getting a lot of pitches to hit, but they were wrong in Los Angeles. Jeff Kent had gotten hot and nobody wanted to put an extra man on base. Guys like Chan Ho Park throw hard, and they challenge you. That’s what makes them successful pitchers, and they’re not going to change their ways just because I’m hot. Park challenged me, alright, with a 95 mile-an-hour heater into my torso.

Pitchers have to come inside. I understand that. The umpire tried to back me away from approaching Park, but I was never a threat to charge the mound.

They also have this guy, Luke Prokopec. Oh man! This dude is from Australia, and he throws gas. Maybe because he’s an Aussie, or just a rookie, but he just challenged me all night.

He got me, but if he keeps that up I knew Id get him sooner or later. It didn’t help that the umpires were generous to a fault with the strike zone. They called every backdoor slider and near-the-black outside fastball.

There’s something else the press misses when they say pitchers will not challenge me, and that’s the ego of these guys. Especially power pitchers. Ever seen Bull Durham, the scene when Nuke Lalouche says to Kevin Costner, "I want to announce my presence with authority."

That’s your typical big league pitcher. He’s been blowing his fastball by people since he was eight, and he wants to do the same thing to you. He doesn’t want to pitch around me, avoid me, evade me. He wants to challenge me. He wants to announce his presence with authority. Prokopec announced his and got away with it. That time.

We lost three straight, and were looking to get Dusty Baker his seven hundredth career victory in front of the fans he played for in the 1970s. I don’t want to call the Thursday series finale
desperate, but it was pretty damn important. If we lost, we would have been seven and a half behind Arizona, and almost as important, four and half back of the Dodgers for the wild-card. Russ Ortiz went eight innings, All-Star shortstop Rich Aurilia singled in the go-ahead run in the top of the ninth, and Rob Nenn held them to send us back to San Francisco in salvage mode.

Nenn is a great relief pitcher, a guy who throws a 95 mile-an-hour heater and a 91 mile-an-hour slider on the black. Mets manager Bobby Valentine, the All-Star skipper, picked L.A.s Jeff Shaw for the game in Seattle, even though Nenn was the saves leader. His save against Los Angeles was his twenty-sixth of the year against Shaws 23, but Nenn would not be going to Seattle for the game.

Baseball is soweird. Frustrating, exhilarating, humbling, its all of these things. We swept St. Louis and rolled into Los Angeles like Napoleon in his Italian Campaign.

Boom! Dodger Stadium was almost Waterloo. It would have been if we hadnt pulled out that 3-2 squeaker. We flew from LAX to San Francisco, and on Friday morning I woke up and saw that Fox baseball analyst Tim McCarver had ripped me big time.

As I piled up more and more homers, the media of course was all over me, and as I said I was accommodating them with press conferences each series, as arranged by the club. After I got to 39, and I started talking more to the writers, I stopped hitting.

Now, I didnt blame the press, but everybody started trying to figure out some reason. The reason, of course, is that baseball is a game of streaks and I just was settling into a period in which I was not hitting. It happens. Ive played this game my whole life and I know how to handle it, but when youre chasin Ruth. Maris, Sosa and Big Mac, everybody and his brother wants answers.

I never said it was the medias fault, but Dusty thought it might be affecting me.

"Were a `routine breed," he said. "We get to the park at 2:30 to stretch, and we follow a schedule. This has changed Barrys schedule. One of these days, either Barry or I is gonna have to tell the media to lay off."

Now Dusty said it, not me. I didnt feel like the media was causing my problems. Anyway, McCarver had picked up on how I was holding press conferences, and he was all over me, saying that.

**BONDS PASSES MURRAY**

The late Harry Caray knew Sammy Sosa was going places.

"Thammy Thothas gonna be a thuperthtar," said Caray between sips of a big Budweiser.
That was back when the former Dominican shoeshine boy had been let go by George W. Bush and the Texas Rangers. Saying that playing for Chicago has been good for Sosa is like saying that the "Titanic" song worked out pretty well for Celine Dione.

On Sunday before 41,059 sun-drenched fans at Pacific Bell Park, Sosa unloaded an opposite field home run off Livan Hernandez to propel the Cubs to an 11-2 victory over the Giants.

"I hit it real good," said Sosa. "The difference in the team this year is pitching. We came out of Spring Training ready to go. Right now, everybodys doing their job."

Barry Bonds continued his power surge with the five hundred fifth homer of his career, placing him ahead of Eddie Murray and into sole possession of sixteenth place on the all-time list.

In the sixth, Bonds lost Matt Stairs pop in a high sun. A ground ball advanced Stairs to third, and he scored on a short fly to Armando Rios in right. Rios throw could have gotten the slow-moving Stairs, but it hit the dirt unevenly and skipped past Bobby Estalella.

Manny Aybar started for Chicago, leaving for a pinch-hitter with a 6-1 lead after five. Former Texas schoolboy sensation and one-time hope of the Oakland As, Todd Van Poppel, entered the game. Marvin Benard, who is in the middle of a terrible hitting slump, struck out. Rich Aurilia hit a sharp grounder to third baseman Bill Mueller, who made a terrific grab and a not-so-terrific toss to first. The ball got by Stairs, but Aurilia had to hold up.

Bonds, with the weight of a team that is not hitting on his shoulders, tried to hit a five-run homer, and instead went down swinging. Jeff Kents frozen rope to center moved Aurilia to second. Van Poppel, showing the kind of non-command that earned him a ticket out of Oakland, walked J.T. Snow. Watching him work reminds one of ex-Phillie Mitch "Wild Man" Williams, but Russ Davis let him off the hook with a pop that Sosa flagged down despite the high sky, leaving the bases filled.

"I have no regrets," Van Poppel said of his decision to sign out of high school in 1990 instead of attend Texas. "Ive met interesting people and been places I wouldnt have been."

"We gotta just work through this," said Dusty Baker regarding the performance of Benard. "We have the guys we have, and we have to believe in them if they are to believe in themselves."

Bonds made a nice defensive play on Eric Youngs searing, sinking liner to start the seventh. Mueller singled up the middle, but reliever Tim Worrell, one of Dusty Bakers most pleasant surprises, struck out Sosa looking and induced Todd Hundley to fly to Marvin Benard, who battled the sun to make the catch and end the inning.

In the seventh, Estalella homered to left, but alas the bases were emptier than a porn stars heart. 6-2. Benards only hope to get to first base these days came on his pop to short, which was barely nabbed, as it was lost in the sign by Augie Ojeda.
Damon Buford, who used to work around the Candlestick Park clubhouse when his father, Don was a Giants coach in the 1980s, belted a solo homer for the Cubs off Chad Zerbe in the eighth.

"I got a fastball," said Buford, who has not been playing regularly. "This really felt good for my confidence."

Kyle Farnsworth, a big right-hander who is making the transition from "potential" to power pitcher, came on in the eighth for Chicago. Bonds, still trying to do too much, hit a 390-foot fly out to center with a man on. The struggling Jeff Kent (.235 coming in) got around on Farnsworth with a line-hugging single to left. Farnsworth got the next two men with hard stuff and a good hook.

"I've been swinging the bat well for a couple of days," said Kent, "but hits are overrated. It was just a bad day. Aybars just another pitcher. Anybody on their staff probably could've stopped us today."

Alan Embree who was touched for four earned runs, giving the Windy City nine an 11-2 lead. Benard, whose defense is not much better than his hitting right now, errored on Matt Stairs routine grounder to let in the extra run that sent Embree to the showers. Aaron Fultz got the last out.

Southpaw Jeff Fassero ended the game with the help of his defense. Do not look now, folks, but Chicago looks like a contender.

**AUTHORIZED BARRY BONDS BOOK PROJECT**

*Here is a letter to Barry after the first proposal to New York publishers was turned down. As Jack Nicholson said in *A Few Good Men*, "don't I look like the fuckin' asshole."

July 17, 2001

Mr. Barry Bonds
c/o Steve Hoskins
Fax No.: (650) 631-8331

Re.: Authorized Barry Bonds autobiography

Dear Barry:

My agent, Basil Kane, has circulated our proposal to all the major New York publishers. I am sorry to report that, as of now and unless the situation changes, we will not be getting any offers.
It is possible that, should you break Mark McGwire’s home run record, we could get good offers, but I must admit that I overestimated the value of this project, based on Basil’s projections of what we could get.

Now, this leaves us several things to consider. The first is, as I say, to “wait and see” if you hit 71 home runs, or lead the Giants to the World Championship, both scenarios that could drastically change the situation. However, these scenarios, exciting as they are, are not the kind of things to rely on.

The next thing to consider is that at least two small publishing houses, Sports Publishing, Inc., and McFarland Publishers, have asked me to write a book about you. It is assumed that such a book would be an unauthorized biography, because while they would like to have you ink a contract for an authorized autobiography, they do not have up-front money to pay you for such a thing.

An authorized autobiography would sell much more than an unauthorized biography. If you do not break the home run record or Hank Aaron’s career mark, then this year (2001-02) is the best, most marketable time for you to write your book. Age 37, roughly three years prior to age 40 and retirement, is known as the best period for an athlete to write a book.

If you are excited about writing a book, getting your message out, and telling your story, I would be happy to continue working with you on this project. We could write an exciting, edgy book together. This would require my spending time at the park and some road trips, but not being with you substantially more than any other journalist.

In the off-season, I would ask one workday (seven hours) per week with you. On this schedule, I could have a manuscript prepared by the first of the year. At that point, we could go back to the publishers who, upon seeing the completed work and convinced of your cooperation, would provide, in my view, a good compensatory package for the book.

However, I am unable to write an authorized book without being paid. If you are interested in having me do this project with you and under your direction, I would be happy to discuss compensation. Should we arrive at a deal together, I can assure that the message and tone of the book would be yours.

Absent that, I still think a book about you is a good project, and would take one of the two small publishers up on their offers to have me write an unauthorized biography. I must stress that such a biography will not be as lucrative as one you authorize.

My personal suggestion is that you proceed with the authorized autobiography with me. With no unauthorized projects to compete with, it would be in a position to do well financially.

The reason large houses have not been willing to give you big up-front advances is that they are not convinced of your cooperation, and this was not an argument Basil was able to overcome.
Should you wish to help us overcome this argument, which would revive the prospect of up-front advances, we would be happy to make this happen. This would require your active participation in an attempt to sell this idea to publishers by:

(1) Engaging in phone conversations with publishers;
(2) Providing me with anecdotes to up-grade the proposal in order to re-ignite interest with publishers; and
(3) Meeting with publishers when you go to New York in August.

Even if we proceeded without an up-front advance, if you were to write a book with me, complete with edgy, insightful anecdotes, this would be the tangible proof they are looking for to provide us the money such a project is, in my view, worth.

I sincerely wish I had better, more substantial news on this project. I have worked very hard on it and consider it a very important sports book. I think there is a New York bias involved, and after having gotten to know you and Steve Hoskins better, I now have a good understanding and grasp of why you may feel misunderstood by the media.

I continue to want to pursue this deal with you. Strategies in business often take twists and turns, but obstacles can be overcome.

Very truly your,

STEVEN R. TRAVERS
SRT: st

UNTITLED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BARRY BONDS

As they say, at first you don't succeed, try, try again. I switched agents and put another proposal to the New York publishers. Here it is.

After years of saying no, Barry Bonds is now ready to write his autobiography...and what a year to do so! Well on his way to breaking the home run record, Bonds has taken his game to a new level, astonishing the baseball world with his 39 homers by July 4. With Bonds set to become the first player to win four MVP awards, by the time the season is over his story will be the biggest in sports in the new century.

The son of baseball great Bobby Bonds and the cousin of another baseball legend, Reggie Jackson, as well as the Godson of Willie Mays, Bonds has all the credentials to write a landmark baseball book - and he is eager to do so.

“I’ve been thinking of writing a book for some time,” says Bonds. “It’s a hell of a challenge and I know it’s going to be a lot of work, but if I’m going to do it the timing couldn’t be better.
“First and foremost, my book will be about my attempt at the greatest single-season record in sports. I don’t think anything in athletics compares to breaking the home run record. But there’s more to my life than just chasing Mark McGwire, and I think my book will prove that.”

Overview
There is no doubt that Barry Bonds is a man of mystery. A misunderstood superstar who has long engaged in a running feud with the Bay Area media while maintaining popularity with the region’s knowledgeable baseball fans, Bonds has in 2001 broken new ground. His relationship with The City By the Bay has truly blossomed, not unlike Mays, who found Orlando Cepeda and Willie McCovey to be more popular for several years.

Bonds is approaching 40. A happily-married man with two children, he has matured into an elder statesman of baseball. In his book, Bonds will reveal the very kinds of inner thoughts, demons and joys that the press and public have long wanted to hear from this often-enigmatic, yet intelligent player.

The greatest single-season mark in the game is his for the taking. There is something primal to Bonds' season, and in fact his career. Long considered the game's best player, Bonds' ascension to greatness has taken him into truly rarefied air, and one gets the sense he is accomplishing all of this through some form of extra-human will and determination. It is this aspect of both his personality and physical ability that separates him from even the great stars who are his contemporary rivals: Ken Griffey, Jr., Alex Rodriguez, Cal Ripken, or anybody else.

This off-season will, the free agent Bonds can command a salary that approaches the amount garnered last year by Rodriguez. He will have among his choices the opportunity of signing in New York, Los Angeles - or returning to his hometown of San Francisco. This man, whose intentions have been discerned and speculated on by the sporting press, in this book opens up and talks about the role of money in an athlete's life, and how dollar signs determine the pecking order of greatness as much as homers, touchdowns or even World Championship rings.

Bonds’ claim to sports immortality has gone beyond even the "ESPN 50 Greatest" category, or the The Sporting News’ Player of the Decade for the 1990s. In 2001, he is ready to break McGwire’s single-season record, he is moving inexorably to his fourth MVP award, and he is also poised (along with his loyal manager, Dusty Baker) to lead the Giants in a determined challenge of a World Series ring that is the cap to any superstar’s career. The 37-year old Bonds, a marvelous physical specimen whose training regimen and lifestyle are the epitome of dedication, will then embark on the next quest: Henry Aaron's all-time career mark of 755 home runs.

As he approaches all these new records, Bonds is also making a serious bid for the title "Greatest Baseball Player of All Time." He is already an eight-time Gold Glove winner. He is a member of the exclusive 40 homer/40 stolen base club and a multiple member of the 30/30 club, one of only four players to hit 300 homers and steal 300 bases (his father, Bobby, being one of these players), and soon he will be the only man with 500 career homers and 500 stolen bases. In addition to all this, Bonds will eventually make a run at 3,000 career hits.
These breathtaking achievements place Bonds alongside Mays, DiMaggio, Ruth, Aaron and Ty Cobb. It allows his name to be mentioned in the same breath with Michael Jordan, Bill Russell, Jim Brown, Wayne Gretzky, Pete Sampras and Pele.

This Son of San Francisco has long received plaudits for his on-field performance. Now this book will give fans an exclusive look at the man they have all longed to know more about, on and off the field.

The Writing of the Book
One half of the book will follow Bond's 2001 season as he defies the very bounds of conventional logic and reduces the art of long-ball hitting into his own personal art form. The reader will be there as Bonds comes closer and closer to the record of 70 home runs set by McGwire in 1998, and will examine reactions of McGwire and Sammy Sosa as well as following Arizona's Luis Gonzalez (35 homers by Independence Day), who promises to be Bonds' foil as Sosa was to Big Mac in '98.

The chance to make it to the World Series also appears within the reach of Bonds. Traditionally a slow starter, Bonds, who because of his great mental discipline and extraordinary training regimen has finished with a strong second half in every season of his career, particularly in September, when pitchers are tired and many rosters are stocked with young arms called up from the minor leagues. It should also be pointed out that Bonds’ teammate (and the man who bats clean-up behind him in the order), 2000 National League MVP Jeff Kent, has gotten off to a slow start, but appears to be hitting his stride as his team and the weather heat up. The schedule also favors Barry, because he will face the same pitching more often within his division. The more times a hitter faces a pitcher, the advantage shifts to the batter. These factors are enormous positives in the question/equation: “Can Barry do it?”

Although the excitement of the 2001 season will be the highlight of the book, the other half of the will describe Bonds’ storied career. In alternate chapters the focus will switch from the 2001 season to Bonds’ childhood in Riverside, California, the hometown of his father; to his successful high school career in the Bay Area; to his All-American career at Arizona State; and to his eventual superstar status.

He will also describe what is was like being a black kid growing up in privileged surroundings on the Peninsula and attending mostly-white private schools. Unlike most African-Americans, he did not get a taste of life’s more unpleasant realities until he became an adult. Bonds, whose close friends are both black and white, will discuss his relationships with teammates, white, black and Latino. He will reflect on the attendant resentment, jealousy, and envy he has experienced in the area of racial politics.

It will be a book that delves into the intensely private, proud mind and ego of a man who understands history and his place in it, and who is having the biggest season of any player in a free agent year ever. The Player of the Decade certainly has a big story to tell.
Chapter Outline (switching)

Chapter one will introduce the reader to Bonds' world: the luxury and lifestyle of the big-money athlete; the strain of training, practice and diet; the pressures and grind of professional sports. This will be done in concert with an overview of his 2001 season, looking back at his record-breaking home run production, fourth MVP, post-season success, free agency, off-season publicity, and personal observations of the future.

Chapter two will flashback to Barry's youth, his happy years growing up in Riverside; playing ball in the San Carlos Little League (where his father hid in the car to avoid distractions); and his playing career at Serra High School in San Mateo.

Chapter three will begin the "diary" of the 2001 season, starting with Spring Training and the early part of the regular season.

The following chapters will revert between his private and sporting life – highlighted by an up-close, chronological review of his record-breaking 2001, right through the end of the regular season and on into the World Series. These chapters will be peppered with Bonds' candid, and sometimes controversial opinion of himself, teammates, opponents, the game, and life in general. The final chapter allows him to look at baseball history and to examine his contribution to the game.

Some of the areas Bonds will discuss include:

- **Not winning the 2000 National League MVP award.** “First of all, Jeff Kent had an insane season and deserved it. I was happy for him. Could I have won it? Sure, I could have won it. Why didn’t I? Maybe some writers thought I already have three, so give it to another deserving player. Maybe some writers don’t like me because I’ve stood a few of ‘em up. I’d be lying if I said it didn’t cross my mind. That’s the power of the press. So I have two choices. I can be bitter and let it fester, or I can learn from it and grow. I’m gonna learn from it and grow.”

- **Women in the media and feminism.** “I’m a New Age guy from the Bay Area, so I’m sort of a cosmopolitan. By the time I broke into The Show, there were women reporters in the clubhouse. It’s never bothered me, but when women first started venturing into the clubhouse, there was resentment. One of the Yankee players told me about the time at Yankee Stadium when somebody baked a cake in the shape of a fully erect male phallic, just to embarrass some lady reporter. She figured the guilty party was Graig Nettles. She asked him if he was the one who brought the cake and he said, ‘Naw, I just modeled for it.’ Today, guys are buck-naked and nobody thinks twice about having women in the locker room, but with cable some of these women are really hot, like Lisa Guerrero and Jillian Barberie at Fox. I mean, I have no problem with it, but it’s gotten kind of obvious that some women are there for sex appeal a lot more than for sports expertise.”
• **Religion.** “I went to Catholic school. Anybody whose gone to Catholic school, and experienced the Latin Mass, and all the symbolism of that religion, is affected by it. Profoundly. Catholicism is different from Protestant religions. A lot of people turn away from the strict teachings of Catholicism, they can’t handle the guilt, but most come back…A lot of African-Americans are Muslims. When Malcolm X came on the scene, they said it was the ‘black religion.’ Part of that was probably a reaction to praying to this blonde-haired, blue-eyed God called Jesus. You see some of these Muslims, and they definitely have an opinion, but you have to give them credit, they don’t do drugs, they don’t womanize, they don’t drink, and they’re neat, organized people. Family means everything to them, and I can relate to that. I read ’The Autobiography of Malcolm X’, and you have to admire the guy. He came from nothing, he made something of himself through hard work, and he was willing to change with the times. We all have to change with the times, ya know…I can’t explain why I’m hitting so many home runs. The writers ask me about it, and I just say, ’Ask God.’ Because I’m Barry Bonds, whatever that means, people think I’m being a smart-ass, but I really mean it like it sounds, because God has blessed me with abilities that I can’t explain.”

• **His view of President George Bush.** “The Texas Rangers’ players all loved Bush. I know most of us like his tax plan. It’s kind of funny, though. Somebody wrote that the Presidency is just a resume-builder for the job he really covets, which is Commissioner of Baseball.”

• **His youth, his high school buddies, his years at Arizona State and the minor leagues, and having a good time.** “I’m loyal, and I’m still friends with guys from school. I like to have fun, but I’ve never been the kind of guy who hangs out at Barney’s Beanery or the Rainbow on the Sunset Strip until four in the morning.”

• **Drug and alcohol abuse in and out of professional sports.** “Athletes are more straight-arrow than ever before. The result is that we are the best-conditioned, most highly-skilled players in baseball history. It also means we’re pretty boring. In the 1960s and ‘70s, everybody was doing blow, and somehow they were creative. Just look at Hollywood. They were making ’The Exorcist’, ’The Godfather’, ’Chinatown’. Same in music: The Stones, The Who, Credence, Smokey Robinson. Half of these people OD’d, of course, so now everybody drinks bottled water, makes bad movies, worse music, and better sports.”

• **Steroid use by athletes.** “The truth is that athletes use ‘roids because they work. They make you faster, stronger and quicker. Anybody who saw Ben Johnson break out of the gate in the 1988 Olympic 100 sprint knew that. Furthermore, it’s easy to mask. Everybody accuses Mark McGwire of being on the juice. Is he? I don’t know. I know he was taking Andro, but I can’t say he was sticking a needle in his side or not. If a guy gets real big real fast, that’s a good indication he takes steroids. Mac’s lifted weights for years, and he has great genetic strength, so it’s not automatic that his power is medically-enhanced. I think some actors might be more likely to use
steroids. I’m thinking of Lou Diamond Phillips and Edward Norton, specifically. People look at me, I’ve put on size and my face is rounder, and they say, ‘He’s on the juice.’ Hey, look at yourself in the mirror. I bet your face is rounder at 37 than it was at 21, too.”

- **The accusation that he occasionally does not hustle.** “Some times, if I hit a weak grounder I could never beat out, I don’t run all-out down the line. Should I run harder? Yes. The fact is, I feel like I need to pace myself over 162 games. I give a lot of myself, and contribute a great deal to my team, and the fans enjoy seeing me play. I’m not Pete Rose or Willie Mays. I’m not perfect, but I play the game the best way I know how.”

- **Teammates.** "Many people have asked me why I'm not very close to my teammates. I think the answer to that is that I still haven't completely recovered from the shock of losing my best pal, Bobby Bonilla, to free agency. I was devastated when that happened. I thought we were going to be together forever. Knowing that teammates in baseball are probably just temporary colleagues has kept me from seeking long-lasting friendships. I just don't want to be crushed again. You can still get along with teammates without being the best of friends. Jeff Kent, for instance, doesn't call me up and ask me to go hunting in the winter or invite me over for dinner, but we work together very well."

- **The Sid Bream incident.** "Even today people ask, 'How come you didn't throw out Sid Bream in game seven of the 1992 NLCS?' I get a lot of stick mainly because Sid wasn't a fast runner. Before Sid made his run, we were playing shallow, trying to take away the winning run. But when Francisco Cabrera hit two bullets right off the wall - even though they were foul - we took four or five steps back to prevent the ball from going over our heads. Unfortunately, the ball was hit to my left. I made the throw, but how many southpaws are going to throw out a runner going to their left? I made it as close as I could. Now everyone said that Bream had two bad legs, but when you’re in the playoffs, you don't think about the pain in your legs. All I can say is that Sid ran faster than he ever ran in his life. He certainly didn't run like that when he was on my team.”

- **Family values.** “I’m a big supporter of family values. It’s the most important thing in my life. Jeff Kent is the same way. We’ve never been close. As a matter of fact he told me once, ‘We’re on different highways but headed to the same place.’ But when we played together on an exhibition tour in Japan, I got to know him better, I realized how much we had in common, and the key was the way he is with his family. He’s like a teddy bear. Watching a man who loves his kids like he does makes me cry, and makes me just love him, too.”
Bonds is eager to cooperate in the publicity, interviewing and appearances necessary to ensure the book’s success. He will be available during the season as well as the off-season.

Bonds plans to make appearances on the “Tonight Show” with Jay Leno, “Late Night With David Letterman”, and other high-profile programs, and agreed to announce plans for the book in these high-publicity forums.

Barry has promised that he will speak to reporters about this book as soon as a deal is reached with the publisher.

**EXCERPT FROM "BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN**

There are several reasons why great players tend to do well in September. For one, lesser players lose focus while great ones maintain theirs. Teams that drop out of the race may be dogging it, and a lot of younger players are given a shot, especially when rosters are expanded.

Bonds, like him or not, has matured into a player with focus, a worker, a dedicated athlete who yearns to win. In Pittsburgh, he gave everything he had to get his teams into the post-season. Did he simply having nothing left to challenge the great talents of Atlanta's pitchers?

"Here's a guy winning two MVPs, he's getting us to the play-offs, but once we're there he disappeared," Bob Walk told "Sports Century."

The two Championship Series' between Atlanta and Pittsburgh in 1991 and 1992 go down in history along with some of the most intense post-season rivalries in sports. The nature of the games, the intensity, and building pressure of these games rank with the Dodger-Yankee Subway Series' of the 1950s; the Packer-Cowboy NFL Play-Off games of 1966-67; the Raider-Steelers battles of the 1970s; and the longstanding Celtic-Laker rivalry.

*Then there was Smoltz!* Bonds must wake up at night seeing his mustachioed visage peering in for the sign; the wind-up and big kick; the horsehide traveling hard and swift to an unhittable corner of the plate. For eight innings on October 6, he did just that, in a tidy four-hitter over eight innings, for the 5-1 win. Ex-Pirate Bream, the man who once wanted to beat up Barry Bonds, was now a Brave, and he had two hits and scored twice to lead the victory.

The passions of the games, the rivalry, the pressure, were building up like the crescendo of Shakespeare's "Othello." In game two, the Bucs knew only frustration. A four-run second inning was all that Avery needed in Atlanta's 13-4 victory, forcing Bonds and his team back home down 2-0, with their backs against the wall.

They needed to rally. Staying with the Shakespeare theme, Leyland may not be a modern Henry V, urging his "band of brothers" to rally against a powerful enemy, but he does not accept losing well. He has a way of forcing his men to pick themselves up and come back, no matter how dreary the circumstances. This is one of the reasons Bonds, who also hates to lose, admires the man so much.

It would not be easy. Knuckleballer Tim Wakefield was facing Glavine at Three Rivers Stadium, but the rookie was up to the task. He went the distance, baffling the Braves with an assortment of floating knucklers. Van Slyke's sacrifice fly in the seventh gave his club the edge, and he and his mates hung on for dear life to crawl back in it, winning 3-2.
Then came Smoltz again, for six and a third innings over Drabek. Now the Pirates not only felt the wall, but also could see the Braves loading their weapons and forming a firing squad.

Bonds finally showed life in a play-off game the next day. With his team down three games to one, he, King and Lloyd McClendon hit consecutive run-scoring doubles in a four-run first inning. Avery was knocked out with only one out, and Walk went the distance in a 7-1 victory that sent the series back to Atlanta with the Braves up, 3-2.

In game six, Bonds again showed up. He led off the second inning with a homer off Glavine, igniting an eight-run inning. Wakefield went the distance, the Pirates won, 13-4, and it was time for the rubber match.

There was John Smoltz standing in their way, but he had to be tired, trying for his third win of the series. The Pirates touched him in the first, 1-0. They scored another run in the sixth inning after inning, Doug Drabek held off Atlanta. Goose eggs.

Now, we are in the ninth inning at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. Last chance for the home team. The fans, standing as one, and in full Tomahawk Chop. Even Jane Fonda woke up and lifted her head off Ted Turner's shoulder.

"C'mon, baby," says Barry Bonds to himself, slapping his glove against his thigh in left field. "Three more outs."

It was not to be. The Braves rallied, had one run in, and men on second and third with one. Drabek was gone, Stan Belinda was in. Francisco Cabrera, a journeyman, was at the plate. Standing at second base, the potential winning run, stood Bream, who nobody will ever mistake with Maury Wills.

Bonds hears something. The place is a cacophony of noise, but he looks over at Van Slyke in center field. He is whistling to him.

Van Slyke uses his glove to motion, "Move in and to your left."

Bonds does not budge.

McClenon sees the exchange.

"Why isn't Barry moving over?" he thinks to himself.

Van Slyke sees Barry remain deep and close to the line.

"C'mon, Barry," but to no avail.


Heart pumping. Clean pick. Hop-skip for momentum.

"Find the target." Look up, there is the catcher, fire it, center mass. Bream running.

Throwing a baseball is a delicate act. A slight twist of the wrist, finger pressure, releasing it at just the right or wrong point. Bonds throw looked at first to be there, but veered slightly off, bounced, and came to the catcher a few feet up the first base line.

It was not a bad throw, but it was not perfect. Somehow, it represents the ever-so-close nature that has always tinged Bonds' career with semi-tragic imperfection. In the mind's eye, one is convinced that Mays or DiMaggio make that throw.

Bream, no speedster, barely eluded the tag for the game-winner.

Bonds watched Bream score, dropped to his knees, then just walked off the field.

Drabek became the first pitcher to ever lose three games in one series.
This was not Shakespeare, it was Charles Dickens' "Bleak House."

Bonds acknowledged that Van Slyke had signaled him, but defended his decision not to do so. He said that Van Slyke, being a center fielder, could roam more, but said, "if he hits a bullet that ball's gonna go by me." Today he uses positioning to make up for the fact that his arm is not as strong as it was then.

"The ball was to my left, coming across your left to have to make that throw, across your body, the play was still close," Bonds told "Sports Century." "There were other chances for us to win that had nothing to do with me."

"Once again they focused on Barry because he was the star," said Leyland. "Barry didn't choke and I don't think anybody should judge his career by that."

The soft crying of Bonds interrupted the stone silence of the losing clubhouse.

Now, the emphasis shifted to his future. Leyland told Bonds there was no way Pittsburgh could afford him, and the team never offered him a contract. Towards the end of his last season at Pittsburgh, Bonds was interviewed on the field by a Pittsburgh TV personality, amid fans' shouts of "Stay Barry, stay."

The Pirates knew they had lost Bonds. Bonilla was gone. They had kept it together for one more season, and came agonizingly close to going to the World Series, but now they were reconciled to facing a re-building period.

Other teams have dealt with the question of losing a superstar. In Minnesota, the Twins had a player, Kirby Puckett, who was not just a Hall of Famer, but valuable to the team because of his high standing in the community. The same thing in San Diego with Gwynn. Bonds?

"There were players on his own team who would go up to him and give him a baseball, and he won't sign it," Jim Rooker told "Sports Century." "I've never heard of that anywhere."

"I think Barry wants the best for his teammates on the field, but he certainly communicates that 'your not important to me' off the field," said Andy van Slyke.

"If you want a friend, buy a dog," Bonds once said in Pittsburgh. Such warmth! Bonds had not been happy that Van Slyke was making twice as much. Bonds called him the "Great White Hope."

"Barry and Bobby both lost arbitration cases," recalled pitcher John Smiley. "Doug Drabek and myself both won, they were trying to say it was a black thing. I don't think his agent was too prepared. How can you put up numbers like that and lose an arbitration case?"

Bonds won his second MVP award.

"He saw other guys getting taken care of, guys who were not as integral to the club as he was," said Perrotto on "Sports Century."

Bonds in Pittsburgh was not meant to be.

**EXCERPTS FROM "BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN":**

The August 27 issue of *Sports Illustrated* hit the San Francisco Giants like a bombshell. Rick Reilly, one of the most-respected sportswriters in America, had this to say:

† "In the San Francisco Giants' clubhouse, everybody knows the score: 24-1."

† "There are 24 teammates, and there's Barry Bonds."

† "There are 24 teammates who show up to pose for the team picture, and there's Bonds, who has blown it off for the last two years."
"There are 24 teammates who go out on the field before the game to stretch together, and there's Bonds, who usually stretches indoors with his own flex guy.

There are 24 teammates who get on the players' bus at the hotel to go to the park, and there's Bonds, who gets on the bus with the broadcasters, the trainers and the manager who coddles him.

"There are 24 teammates who eat the clubhouse spread, and there's Bonds, whose nutritionist brings in special meals for him.

"There are 24 teammates who deal with the Giants' publicity man, and there's Bonds, who has his own clubhouse-roving PR guy, a freelance artist named Steve Hoskins, who turned down George Will's request for an interview with Bonds because Hoskins had never heard of him.

"There are 24 teammates who hang out with one another, play cards and bond, and there's Bonds, sequestered in the far corner of the clubhouse with his PR man, masseur, flex guy, weight trainer, three lockers, a reclining massage chair and a big-screen television that only he can see.

"Last week, after Bonds hit his 51st home run in a 13-7 win over the Florida Marlins, most of the players stayed to celebrate the victory, and at least one was gone before the press arrived in the clubhouse: Bonds.

"That's Barry,' says San Francisco second baseman Jeff Kent. 'He doesn't answer questions. He palms everybody off on us, so we have to do his talking for him. But you get used to it. Barry does a lot of questionable things. But you get used to it. Sometimes it rubs the younger guys the wrong way, and sometimes it rubs the veterans the wrong way. You just hope he shows up for the game and performs. I've learned not to worry about it or think about it or analyze it. I was raised to be a team guy, and I am, but Barry's Barry. It took me two years to learn to live with it, but I learned.'

"If you get the feeling that Kent, who's in his fifth season with San Francisco, wouldn't spit on Bonds if Bonds were on fire, you might be right. Maybe it has something to do with last year, when Kent and Bonds were running neck and neck for the National League MVP award. The week before the award was to be announced, Bonds had a member of his entourage call the commissioner's office to try to find out who had won. We've got to know, said the stooge, because if he's not going to win, he can get out of town.

"Perfect! No staying around to congratulate Kent. Or going to the press conference to shake his hand. Just, 'If it ain't me, I'm outta here.' The commissioner's office didn't know the results of the voting. Kent won.

"Someday they'll be able to hold Bonds's funeral in a fitting room. When Bonds hit his 500th home run, in April, only one person came out of the dugout to greet him at the plate: The Giants' batgirl. Sitting in the stands, you could've caught a cold from the freeze he got. Teammates 24, Bonds 1.

"Bonds isn't beloved by his teammates. He's not even beliked. He often doesn't run out grounders, doesn't run out flies. If a Giants pitcher gives up a monster home run over Bonds in leftfield, Bonds keeps his hands on his knees and merely swivels his head to watch the ball sail over the fence. He's an MTV diva, only with bigger earrings.

"'On the field, we're fine,' says Kent, 'but off the field, I don't care about Barry and Barry doesn't care about me. <Pause.> Or anybody else.'

"Bonds will be a free agent after this season, and if he decides to sign elsewhere, will the Giants be devastated? Kent grimaces. 'See: Seattle Mariners,' he says, walking away."

When Bonds arrived in New York for a four-game series at Shea Stadium, the New York press was all over him. Some said Bonds' breaking the record so soon cheapened it. Billy
Crystal's HBO movie "61*" suggested that there should be nostalgia for this record, but Bonds was heading for it with all the subtlety of Sherman marching through Georgia, with the ink barely dry on McGwire's new record in the books. Some said Bonds deserved the record because he was a great player having a great year, as opposed to Maris, a good player who had a great year. Comparisons were made with Luis Gonzalez, a good player having a great year. Was McGwire a great player? He was a great home run hitter, but he could not hold Bonds dirty jock strap, as they say, as an all-around ball player.

Others argued that McGwire and Bonds had "earned" the right to chase the record, since they were already members of the 500-homer club. Maris had not even hit 300 career home runs and will not make the Hall of Fame.

The season-long argument that Bonds neither had the support, nor endured the scrutiny endured by McGwire in 1998, was brought up. He lacked "charm." He was not the "rightful heir" to the record. Sosa was.

Bonds gap between his previous high, 49 and a potential record would be similar to Maris' 39-to-61 jump. Bonds, however, like Aaron, had four 40-homer seasons, six 30-homer seasons and the kind of consistency that enabled Hammer to reach 755.

In an article called "Bonding With Barry", New York Daily News sports writer John Harper said "no matter what Barry Bonds does, his remarkable run at history was never going to resemble the feel-good story that Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa authored in 1998." He continued with the New York theory that the mystique surrounding baseball's single-season home run record disappeared along with Maris' name from the record book.

"But now, as Bonds brings his 54 home runs to center stage in New York tonight for a weekend series with the Mets," wrote Harper, "he is being portrayed nationally as a player so selfish that his teammates can barely tolerate him."

The spacious quarters apart from his teammates in the Pac Bell clubhouse that included a recliner and a big-screen TV for his personal use were brought up as "evidence" that makes Bonds "easy to dislike, and perhaps difficult for America to embrace..."

Mike Piazza at one point shared a superstar status on a par with Bonds, yet he could o't be more different in personality. He blends in easily among teammates. Piazza thought it "absurd" for Bonds' superstar trappings to be such an issue.

"Me, I don't like an entourage," Piazza told Harper. "If I'm going to go shopping, I just go. I don't need any special treatment. In here, I like being one of the guys, hanging out. "Barry Bonds may be different, but if he's getting results, I don't care. The locker room stuff, I think that's so overrated. You don't have to be the best of friends with everybody in the locker room. You don't have to take guys out to dinner.

"Don't get me wrong. I think it's good when you have good guys on a team, but it's sort of a bonus. There's nothing Barry Bonds can't do on a baseball field, so as far as I'm concerned, I want him on my team. I don't have to be his best buddy."

Piazza was also probably frustrated by the Mets' disappointing season, and was thinking about the run production Bonds would bring to his club, plus the fat pitches he would see with Barry hitting in front or behind him. Piazza was astonished that anybody on his own team, in the middle of a pennant race the Giants were in the thick of, would take shots at their star player.

"How can you criticize a guy who's carrying you to the playoffs?" Piazza asked. "If Barry Bonds was a nice guy, very gracious, cheery, outgoing, a breath of fresh air - great. But he's not, at least not all the time. I don't think he's a bad guy, but hasn't he been this way his whole career?
"Why all of a sudden is this coming out now? Because he's having the year he's having?"

In the wake of Reilly's piece, Kent insisted his quotes were "doctored up pretty good," and accused Reilly of bearing a grudge because Bonds turned down an interview request from him the previous week.

"He wanted to pull the trigger big-time," Kent told the press. "It sounds like he did."

"What do they think, that we're supposed to be break-dancing in here?" Bonds had said.

The controversy added a little excitement to Bonds' home run chase as he arrived at Shea, a place in need of some pizzazz in this down year for the home team.

"If he does hit 70, wow, I can't even think in those terms," Piazza said. "I don't have a problem celebrating it. I think it'd be a cool thing."

The Associated Press had this to say during the Mets' series:

"He doesn't care whether fans like him. He doesn't care whether teammates like him. "Winning a World Series, that he does care about."

"Is it important for you to be liked by your colleagues?" Bonds asked Friday at a news conference at Shea Stadium. "Yes. But what can you do if they don't? That's life. You can't change it. You pray for these people."

Bonds arrived in New York with 55 homers, needing 15 in San Francisco's final 35 games to tie the season record

"I don't feel I have a bad relationship with Jeff," he said. After games, Bonds said, "we all go our separate ways. That's normal. He has his family and goes his way and I have my family and I go my way."

"... If he wants to go out to lunch with me, I'd love to go. If he wants to ride motorcycles, we'll ride motorcycles."

So is Bonds a "lone wolf?"

"That's between us," Baker answered when asked that question.

"I don't want to get into that, I really don't," owner Magowan said.

Magowan, wearing a Giants cap, sat on an end of the third row for the New York news conference but didn't ask any questions of his biggest star, who earned $55.2 million in his first nine seasons in San Francisco.

Bonds, who frequently claimed he was misquoted or taken out of context, was making himself available primarily in group interviews, where there is taped evidence of the exact words.

When McGwire and Sosa chased Maris, they generated a "warm, fuzzy feeling among many fans," said the AP. "The impression Bonds has left is of distance and coolness, which he says is created by a media unhappy with him.

"Bonds, who is black, didn't give a direct answer when asked if he thought racism played a part in the reaction to his chase.

"Does the KKK exist?" he answered. "Sure. Probably. I don't know. Is it affecting me? No. Does it bother me? No."

"It hasn't changed drastically," he continued in reference to the racism faced by Aaron in 1974.

"There are still people don't like people of all kinds of races," said Baker, who played in the latter part of Aaron's era. "One thing I've noticed: The lack of fans of color in every ballpark."
"I think about Hank Aaron," Bonds said in a telling remark. "Babe Ruth is second. I don't think about second place. I've been there before."

MORE EXCERPTS FROM "BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN"

The Cincinnati writers, stuck with a 46-65 team, mired in fifth place in the Central, finally had something fun to write about. Bonds’ homer made him the fastest to 48 ever (113 games). Babe Ruth had gotten there in 114 games in 1921.

“So, Barry, talk to us.”

“…anybody who talks about home runs, I’m walking away,” Bonds told the professionals doing their jobs to feed their families.

What were they going to ask him about, the Intifada? Would Barry Bonds have the slightest clue what the Intifada is?

Watching Bonds deal with the press, I came to realize why I always felt uncomfortable working as a journalist around professional athletes. It was not just Bonds. No way. I had seen it for several years; baseball, basketball, football, tennis players. I had seen it in Los Angeles, where I had a magazine column, and had written for the L.A. Times. Now I was seeing it in San Francisco, where I wrote a column for the Examiner.

The professionals had it bad, but the college kids were working on it. There was even a select group of very talented high school athletes who had it. “It” was attitude. Arrogance. Everybody knows athletes have “it.” It gets spoken about regularly. But breaking down what it was, the dynamics of attitude and class structure in professional sports, that was something I had not seen written about. So, I will try to put my finger on it here.

I had felt from the beginning that pro athletes would never intimidate me because I had been one myself. True, I had only played a few years of minor league baseball, but you would be amazed how much minor league baseball players think of themselves. You have to be on the inside, where they drink, gamble, bum chewing tobacco, and screw their women to see it. They want to be like the big leaguers. Playing like the big boys is difficult. Emulating their chauvinistic attitudes towards women, or their arrogance towards the press, is easier.

Take a guy like Matt Williams. If Williams did not play baseball, he would be an accountant, a real estate guy, maybe the man who delivers your FedEx packages. He would be very normal, which is what he is. He would smile and be very nice, and he would be considered one of the most dependable, likeable people in your neighborhood.

“Where are the kids, honey?”

“Over at the Williams’s.”

“Oh, okay.”

Maybe he would still be married, instead of divorced, but that is not something I can say I know about. I just know what kind of guy he is. The media like Williams because he is accessible and gives good interviews.

Still, there are stories about Williams occasionally flying off the handle, yelling at people, and making himself hard to like. My point is, those aspects of his personality have a much better chance of publicly manifesting themselves because he is a high-priced, fawned-over, idolized big league baseball player than if he delivered for FedEx.
So, I had been one of those guys, kind of. I knew the drill and was ready for it. Still, I would walk in the clubhouse and not feel quite right. It was not just if I did not know people, those situations do not faze me. It was the social order.

A baseball team has a class structure, and it is not Democratic. It is more on the order of the (Eastern) Indian caste system. The players are the Untouchables. Within their class, superstars, stars, regulars, and scrubs occupied the rungs in that order. However, it is a free market class. Any player can get better, advance, and their earning power can reach the sky.

I have no problem with baseball salaries. They make what they make in a free market, just like actors, singers and others talented entertainers. My problem is with the baseball union. Admittedly, when Marvin Miller started the union, when the big league minimum was around $7,000 a year, the owners were taking advantage of them. Not exploiting them, because everybody was doing what they wanted to do and doing it of their own free will, but taking advantage of them.

The Yankees were notorious for “resting” pitchers for the World Series when they got close to 20 wins, then using the "failure" to be a 20-game winner as leverage in contract negotiations. They also told players what they did not make in salary would be made up in Series shares, which actually had some truth to it.

By 2001, however, the union had badly hurt the game. The players, spoiled children anyway, have come to believe it is their right, not a privilege, to be wealthy beyond the bounds of imagination. Many, many Major Leaguers are interchangeable with minor leaguers, and yet even mediocre players are paid exorbitant sums. Fine, the money apparently is there, but the union wants to codify these salaries, guaranteeing players’ monies far beyond what is reasonable.

The game is talking about contraction, by eliminating two money-losing franchises. Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota probably describes the union mindset better than anybody when he says that to eliminate two unsuccessful franchises is “just so that these business owners can keep from losing money.”

Lord in Heaven, what cloud does this guy live on? Baseball players, spurred on by greedy agents and union hacks, think owners do not have a right to avoid losing money. They exist in a profession - American sports - that is the only one (outside the government) that engages in this whacked-out way of thinking.

Operating on a strangely parallel plane is team ownership. Then there is the general manager and the manager. They, too, are free marketers. They have power, they make good money, and have the potential to earn excellent salaries. Still, they are lion tamers, of sorts, whose duty it is to keep the prima donnas from rebelling.

The GM and the manager probably could go out and make a good living doing something else. Not baseball money, but a good living. Most of the players are not at that level, so there is unspoken tension, especially with the GM. Think of the GM as the colonel, and the manager as the top sergeant.

After that, you have the announcers. They are still in the free market, but their situations vary tremendously. Some are free agents who have star power. Others are schills for their teams. Others are media celebrities who work for the cable stations and the news channels. They derive their status from their own careers, and the team is just a part of what they do. They dress better and lord about, in a manner that frustrates the writers, who have to wait until these electronic deadline dudes ask their post-game questions for the 11 o’clock news.
Next are the sports babes. Sports babes work on television. There are women who work for newspapers, and some of them fill a politically correct vacuum, but by and large the female writers are competent.

The TV sports babes are there for sex appeal. No complaints, but that is what they are there for.

When the women first started venturing into the clubhouse, there was a great deal of resentment. In “The Bronx Zoo,” former Yankee relief pitcher Sparky Lyle told about the time at Yankee Stadium when somebody baked a cake in the shape of fully erect male genitalia, just to embarrass some lady reporter. She figured the guilty party was Graig Nettles. She asked him if he was the one who brought the cake and he said, “Naw, I just modeled for it.” Today guys are buck-naked and nobody thinks twice about having women in the locker room.

One funny depiction is the "dropped mic" scene in Oliver Stone's excellent football epic, "Any Given Sunday." A female reporter bends down to pick up her equipment and has to twist her neck to avoid the enormous "equipment" of an African-American player, hanging in front of her at mouth level. Players seem to have no problem with it, but it has gotten kind of obvious that some women are there for sex appeal a lot more than for sports expertise.

Now, I know Lisa Guerrero at Fox. I worked with her at StreetZebra. Beautiful girl, and smart as a whip. She is a very nice lady. I respect her and am happy for her. But I know for a fact we ran her “One Sports Chick’s Opinion” column at StreetZebra magazine because we could put pictures of her, wearing a tube top, next to the column. If she were ordinary looking, she would not have gotten the gig.

If she were ordinary looking, she would be successful because she is intelligent and has drive. She would not be on TV.

There is a scene from a film called “Swimming With Sharks” that defines the difference between men and women in sports television. Kevin Spacey, playing a thinly disguised Scott Rudin, a leading producer, explains the meaning of life to Frank Whaley. He is talking about Hollywood, but the words apply to sports TV.

“You can’t sleep your way to the top,” like a female producer who slept her way to the top, Spacey tells Whaley. “Noooo. Guys like us…we gotta fight, and scratch and claw our way up.”

I know a lot of women who have slept their way up the ladder. This is an unspoken fact among the media. Well, it is spoken by men to men, and women not only admit it to each other, they brag about it. But men and women do not talk about it to each other, except maybe in code after the man in power has slept with the woman seeking power, and there is some kind of acknowledgement that the act shall be rewarded.

Happens all the damn time. Like Howard Cosell said, it is “telling it like it is.”

So the men view the women in media with suspicion because they climb the ladder in ways men cannot. Now, the unfortunate aspect to all of this is that women do not benefit from this system, only good-looking women. Go to the grocery store and look around. Unless you live in Scottsdale, Arizona, a certain part of Beverly Hills, or it is spring break at Ft. Lauderdale, you will just see ordinary-looking women. Plus, ordinary-looking men. The reason is that people are ordinary looking. Attractive people are relatively rare.

Consequently, ordinary looking, yet talented women do not get the TV jobs they are qualified for. However, the talent pool for jobs in sports media, in general, is larger and more competitive because women are applying for positions they never used to dream of trying for.
Are women on TV more competent than the women who were on TV back when the Christine Craft lawsuit exposed the sex angle (as if anybody did not already know about it)? Take as an example Andrea Thompson.

Thompson was a decent actor on "NYPD Blue," and nice looking. She is abominable as a news anchor, but was placed there for looks and glitter. Thompson has the lips of a porn star, which makes her a great object of fantasy, but creates difficulties when it comes to reading big words off the Teleprompter. While she is now the exception, brains are still secondary to looks among TV women. Any doubt that this premise rings of Truth can be dispelled by looking at what happened with Paula Zahn.

Zahn is the sexy blonde who was a star at Fox News, then moved over to CNN because CNN needed sex appeal. Now, Paula is no spring chicken, so at least "older" women are getting a chance to work in front of the camera. Of course, she spent $7,000 to highlight her hair and has zero body fat. She is competent, but would not be where she is if she was not still a hottie, whereas many (but not all) of her male associates are not "hunks."

CNN promoted her with an ad that stated she was "just a little sexy," along with the sound of a zipper being opened. The implication, for those of you in Rio Linda, California, is that a significant portion of the viewing audience was not watching her to find out if the Marines were closer to capturing bin Laden, but rather to stroke up some wood.

Zahn, preferring to live a myth, was outraged, so CNN went PC and took the ad off the air. Meanwhile, the men on television continue to often look like Larry King or Aaron Bown, Zahn's average-looking male counterpart.

There is a reality to which "men" get a lot of jobs in media these days, too, and it is not pretty. The corporations that run radio and cable TV stations, which proliferate the sports scene, eschew the experienced journalists in favor of Gen-X boys who will work for much less than the middle class. These people pander to a skateboard mentality that the programmers think sells. It involves, instead of insight, rock music and "shock jock," lowest common denominator humor in the Howard Stern tradition. It is cheap and will not last in the sports genre.

So, around the ballpark, everybody is checking everybody else out, wondering how so-and-so landed such-and-such a gig. It is a real soap opera down there on the field before the game. Not surprisingly, sports babes in LA and New York are better looking than sports babes in San Francisco or other towns.

Then there are the writers. What a group of unshaven ragamuffins. First, you have to get past the characters at your own paper.

Every copy editor and assistant editor has his own little fiefdom, and if ever the term "no good deed goes unpunished" is apropos, it is at the sports desk. Some of these little people will offer their help, then when you take them up on the offer, they use it to stab you in the back, saying that you cannot carry your own weight.

Editors sometimes act like kings, taking exception to employees who know true things about them, or have the temerity to actually remember the words they say and the promises they fail to keep. Unfortunately, the true things about them are not always good things.

Beat guys treat new writers the way northern Yankee veterans on the Tigers treated the Confederate Ty Cobb, when the Georgia Peach came up to Detroit.

I approached one beat writer about membership in the Baseball Writers Association of America when I arrived in San Francisco from L.A. As God is my witness, I was as sweet as honey, and complimentary, too.
He looked at me like I had Ebola. Pure attitude. Then my assistant editor told me this
guy, whom he had worked with a few years prior, told him I had attitude.

The thing about the writers, and the thing I discovered I did not like about it, was that we
are the serf class of the “above-the-line” talent. “Above-the-line” is a movie term, meaning you
are one of the people whose name is credited before the film starts - stars, director, producers,
writer, cinematographer, etc. All the rest are “below-the-line” people - keygrips, wardrobe
consultants, blah, blah, blah.

The writer is an interesting species in the baseball universe. They can hurt the players, or
make them. Day-by-day, they have more local influence than anybody does. Still, the players
occasionally treat writers like crap in ways they would never act with TV people. Bonds is as
nice to Roy Firestone as a boy scout with a little old lady, but he does not give Henry Schulman
that respect.

Sometimes race is an issue. Latin players favor Latin writers. A black writer might have a
better chance with a black player. It is interesting to note that Bonds and Firestone get along
famously, yet obviously Bonds and Tim McCarver did not.

Some columnists have a little star power, but you usually cannot tell one from the other.
You might see some grommet walking around, and only when you see him sitting at his assigned
seat in the press box, where the name tags are, do you realize it is a writer you always respected.

Bruce Macgowan of KNBR lives by this rule, “Be nice to everyone, and nicer to the
people you don’t have to be nice to.” God bless him, but he is not average.

The problem with the writers, why I have a hard time with it and subconsciously so do
the players, is they are not free marketers like the others. A working journalist makes a finite
amount of money, even most columnists. They are limited. They are working stiffs, the
proletariats of sport. In the framework of newspaper and most magazine careers, the best you can
do is make editor and columnist. Neither will pay you what Julia Roberts or Alex Rodriguez
make.

The players can make millions. The manager can make millions. So can the GM. The
owner already has made his. A few of the TV stars can walk those golden stairs. There are
writers who make big dough like George Will, but within the confines of a sports beat, they will
not. You have a guy making $50,000 dealing with guys making $15 million.

So, writers being humans, sometimes feel resentment. At first they are just glad to be
there, because they are fans and this is a dream job. Big league sportswriting is one of the best
jobs you can have, no question. But over time the fantasy fades into reality.

Me, I am an entrepreneur. I never liked that claustrophobic economic feeling you get
amongst the writers. The rabble. I have pursued the more lucrative areas of writing, such as
screenwriting, political speechwriting, public relations, and obviously the book you are reading.

Then there is the “below-the-line” talent. These are the youngsters working in the club’s
PR department, usually right out of college. It is a great job and a resume-builder, but they will
have to decide between a lower-paying career in team sports media, or to move elsewhere. A lot
of them put up with a ton of crap from the player’s, and unfortunately from everybody else, too.

After that there are the elevator operators, the stadium workers, the gatekeepers who
make sure you have your pass. There are the cooks and the press dining room workers, and the
clubhouse attendants.

These people are usually union, locked in to a certain wage that will rise only with cost-
of-living adjustments, and they can be difficult. Every stadium has them, and you move through
them with kid gloves. They are like the lifetime workers of socialism. Some "celebrity" in the media may treat these people with a big smile and a lot of love, but one cannot shake off the feeling they are being condescending. It looks like the king's advisors being kind to serfs.

Being locked in financially is not the sole irritant many writers have. In the old days, writers were guys who ran away from home, and instead of joining the circus, went to work at 16 as a copy boy for the newspaper. Read Budd Schulberg's “What Makes Sammy Run.”

They eventually became writers. Fed all the free booze and food that clubs used to provide, they quickly became alcoholics, reprobates and freeloaders.

Nowadays, a writer majors in journalism at San Diego State, where they wrote for the student newspaper. They are erudite, well-educated people. They have a gym membership, not a pass to a speakeasy. However, because they live in the sports world, some of them dumb themselves down to their environment. Like so many of the athletes they cover, some writers tend to lose focus on events in politics and society. However, most of them maintain a good, working knowledge of issues and events. After all, they work for newspapers.

Now, here is the rub. A very large number of the athletes they cover are not very smart. In fact, a good percentage of them can be listed as being members of the Dumbellionite Class.

You know the Dumbellionites. In ancient times, there were the Canaanites, the Israelites and the Mennonites. Those tribes came and, for the most part, went. The Dumbellionites stayed to roam the plains of the Earth. They are immersed amongst us today in numbers greater than all other tribes. The Dumbellionites.

A lot of baseball players are Dumbellionites. Most do not read books or newspapers. Some cannot read. Their knowledge of things outside how to prepare for and play a boy’s game is often nil. The "jockocracy," as Cosell used to say. Many could have developed knowledge, but were slid through school to stay eligible for sports, never finding a need to educate themselves.

The college guys usually are decent interviews, but few scholar athletes in college are scholars. They were the guys who chewed tobacco, spit in cups and left it in class, then got the girls at frat parties. Those guys.

Every writer knew those guys in high school and college. Most resented them, although it did not stop them from kissing their butts. Now, they are doing the same thing, only getting paid (a lot less than the jocks) for it.

Then there are the foreign players, who usually come from impoverished backgrounds. The Americans, being Americans, have enough moxie acquired through osmosis to make a living for themselves even if they were not baseball players. Of course, instead of being paid $7.2 million guaranteed for two years, they would be making $45,000 unguaranteed with no contract. The Latin players, particularly the Dominicans, might be able to make a living coaching and scouting in their home country, but outside of the game, their prospects are dim (outside being a player) if they are not born in the U.S.A.

The recently retired Stan Javier, a Dominican, played with me. He has some education because his father played in the Majors and raised him with prospects outside of the game, even though he signed with St. Louis at 15 or 16. Miguel Batista of Arizona admires Albert Einstein and quotes poetry, but he is as rare as rare can be.

Unfortunately, the writer lives in a one-bedroom flat with a Bunsen burner, if they can afford City rents at all. The player lives on a hill with 19 TV sets. On the road, the writers stay to themselves. In the old days, the scribes would drink with the players, and sometimes even get some of their “left over” women. Nowadays, the players go clubbing, but not with writers. The
writer just looks on in envy while the players get all these porn star types. Then he goes back
to his room and calls phone sex.

In every single walk of life in most civilized countries, the educated people make more
money than uneducated people do. What a concept. This reminds me of the joint Harvard-Yale
study that took two years and cost $1 million. All these academics determined that people with a
college education who possessed specific job skills earned more money than people without a
college education who did not possess specific job skills.

Except for pro athletes, and baseball players are the least of the species. Not that playing
football at the University of Miami guarantees knowledge. Remember Jerome Brown? Prior to
the 1987 Fiesta Bowl, an Army fatigues-clad Brown stood up at a banquet involving Miami and
Penn State players, and said the following:

"Did the Japanese <sic> siddown to dinna with Pearl Harba before dey bombed him? No.
Fellas, let's go." The Hurricanes followed Brown out of the room. At least football and basketball
players go to some kind of college, though. Baseball players often sign out of high school,
sometimes before they finish high school if they went to high school. If they went to college,
they usually sign after their junior year, or out of a community college. Basketball and football
players rarely sign out of high school or JC. Football players are much more likely to go in the
draft after their senior year than their junior year.

Of course, playing sports really well is a heck of a job skill. Still, the writers are placed in
this position of cow-towing, sniveling around, and kissing up to these uneducated dudes who, in
any other walk of life, would not likely be in their social or economic class. It is a real upside-
down world. It goes a long, long way to determining the reason there is tension between athletes
and writers. Writers do this knowing there is a complete ceiling, and this is no glass ceiling, but a
thick, impenetrable one, that separates their lot in life from the players. This is their destiny,
unless he makes a daring break for the land of David Halberstam, Tom Clancy or Aaron Sorkin.

If an athlete can complete a sentence, he is pronounced “articulate.” If he does not swear
at the writers, he is spoken of in reverent tones as if he were Gandhi. There is this politically
correct dance that everybody thinks about, but nobody comments on.

The writer, or the broadcaster, interviews the player. The media person asks intelligent
questions, but is careful not to stray into territory that would show the player’s lack of smarts. At
the same time, the interviewer tries not to be condescending.

The player opens his mouth. Sometimes you cannot tell what the hell they are saying. If
this were a job interview, they would not get past the first round, because people do judge you by
the words you use. They are likely to have no idea how to use the English language and have no
grammatical structure.

It is changing. There are some refreshing interviewees, and Jim Rome is great at bringing
the best out of them. Rome is tops because he has broken out of the mold and is “one of them”
financially, so the players “get with him.” His big bucks bring him respect.

Mostly, though, the interview ends, the interviewer thanks the athlete profusely, and the
athlete walks away. The interviewer then just sighs to himself.

Me? I am not concerned with the intelligence of the athletes. They are living the
American Dream and God bless ‘em for it. What always bothered me, and I now can put my
finger on, is that the baseball clubhouse is not free market enterprise. So, I have made that break
for the land of Halberstam, Clancy and Sorkin.
PROLOGUE

BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN

The 2001 baseball season saw Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants break the greatest record in sports - the single-season home run record previously held by Babe Ruth, Roger Maris, and Mark McGwire. In the process of becoming the game's first-ever four-time Most Valuable Player, Bonds may have had the greatest season in baseball history. There is no doubt that for most fans Barry Bonds is a man of mystery. However, despite being a misunderstood superstar who has long engaged in a running feud with the media, Bonds broke new ground in 2001 by maturing into an elder statesman of baseball. In "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman," author Steven Travers documents the superstar's 2001 campaign as he defied the very bounds of conventional logic and turned the art of longball hitting into his personal art form.

This is a comprehensive biography of the man currently considered by many people to be the greatest athlete in the world. Travers' book also describes Bonds' childhood in Riverside, California, the hometown of his father Bobby; his successful high school years in the Bay Area; and his All-American career at Arizona State University. As Barry Bonds embarks on even more milestones - 3,000 career hits, 755 home runs, a World Series championship - he may one day be thought of as the greatest baseball player of all-time. "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" promises to delve into the intensely private, proud mind and ego of a man who understands baseball history and his place in it.

EPILOGUE FROM "BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN":

Will Barry Bonds Retire the Greatest Player in Baseball History?

In the aftermath of the 2001 baseball season, Barry Bonds’ incredible performance was viewed as the Great Distraction from the events of 9/11. He had done for America what Joltin’ Joe did during World War II, the Sultan of Swat after the Black Sox scandal. He had turned himself into as big a Bay Area hero as Mays, DiMaggio, Montana, Walsh, Jackson, Bill Russell, Ken Stabler, Rick Barry. His reputation with the fans and the media had turned full circle, like Williams in Boston and Mantle in New York. He had performed on-field heroics of mythic proportions that put him in a class with Lou Gehrig.

He had completely eclipsed the names of Rodriguez, Griffey, Giambi, and Juan Gonzalez from any of the usual “whose the best player in the game?” discussions. Bonds had warded off the MVP aspirations of Sosa and the relative newcomer Luis Gonzalez. He had made people forget the likes of Michael Jordan. He had forced Tiger Woods and Shaquille O’Neal to wait their turn at the title World’s Greatest Athlete. He had placed himself in the position of frontrunner for all the Player of Year awards.
If Mays had been the Greatest Living Ballplayer, his Godson had come along and symbolically said, “MAYBE I AM.” If Ruth was the greatest player ever, Bonds had entered the campaign that someday may place that moniker alongside his name, not the Babe’s.

No name in sports was larger than Bonds's name now. Not Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabar, Hank Aaron, Ty Cobb, Jim Brown, O.J. Simpson, Johnny Unitas, Pete Sampras, Rod Laver, Pele, Wayne Gretzky, Bobby Orr, Gordie Howe, or Dale Earnhardt.

No record was greater or more sacred. The single-season home run record is the greatest in sports. Next is Aaron’s 755 home runs, and Bonds is after that now as surely as the U.S. is after Osama bin Laden.

Other records pale in comparison when it comes to luster. Not Eric Dickerson’s rushing record or Chamberlain’s season points-per-game average. Not other big time baseball records, such as Cy Young’s 511 career victories, Pete Rose’s 4,256 career hits, Rogers Hornsby’s .424 single-season batting mark, DiMaggio’s 56-game hitting streak, or Cobb’s .367 lifetime average.

What does Bonds need to do to attain Greatest Player Ever status?

1. Win a World Championship.
2. Break Hank Aaron’s home run record (and, for good measure, Japanese star Sadaharu Oh’s all-time mark) while making a run at 800.
3. Get 500 career steals, which will happen in 2002.
4. Get 3,000 career hits, which according to Scott Boras’ calculations is attainable.
5. Hit .300 lifetime.
6. Approach all-time records for bases on balls and runs batted in.
7. Win a batting championship, and for good measure, a Triple Crown.

All of these goals are absolutely attainable.

Q & A: STEVEN TRAVERS:

Q: I understand that this book was originally an authorized ghostwritten autobiography?

A: Barry authorized me to write his autobiography in June. I spent the whole season covering him, and spent private time with him. After he broke the record, he wanted so much money up front that the proposed publishers did not meet the asking price, which left me looking at nothing, but I found a publisher on my own, and it went from an autobiography to a biography. If it makes $2 million in legit sales, the money is mine, and I do not have to split it with Barry, who I suspect will miss no meals regardless.

Q: What about Barry’s attitude towards race?

A: Barry has white friends and is fair in his feelings, but race is a part of his attitude about life. This goes to Willie Mays and other influences. I met Mays in college and listened to him harangue a white audience for 45 minutes on racial attitudes in Alabama in the late 1940s as if the people were recalcitrant schoolkids. A black baseball colleague told me that when not around whites, Dusty Baker is – quote – “very black” – obsessed with race, convinced that he is up against it because of it his color – and he is a guy who changed Bonds’ diapers once.
Q: Did Bonds sleep with numerous women when he was younger?

A: He was no monk, but to his credit he was not a guy who “lined up” women, despite efforts by Johnny Metheny to do just that for him at the old Johnny Love’s on Broadway.

Q: Is Bonds the greatest player of all time?

A: Not yet. If the Giants win the World Series and he breaks Hank Aaron’s home run record, he will be. He can further solid the “greatest” tag by getting 3,000 career hits, his 500th stolen base, winning a batting title, and finishing above .300 lifetime.

Q: Was 2001 the best season ever by a player?

A: Yes. The previous best was 1920 or ’21 by Babe Ruth, but Bonds out-did that. The argument about better pitching in the old days is a fallacy. Ruth never faced blacks, Dominicans, other Latins, or a lot of other people. Bonds faces talent culled from a huge worldwide pool of people who have better diets and training methods.

Q: Is Bonds misunderstood?

A: No. He is out there, obvious on its face. He acted like a jerk a lot. He was spoiled, he was arrogant. However, rather than being misunderstood, he is a conundrum. He is like Ted Williams, who was a conservative Republican who feuded with the Kennedyites in the liberal Boston press. Bonds is not political, but he speaks his mind and has respect for people not afraid to air their opinions. That’s why he chooses guys like Gary Sheffield and Bobby Bonilla as friends. They are outspoken. He is, however, religious and has love in his heart. He wishes good things for people, LOVES kids, and has too many nice traits to tag the “jerk” label on him.

Q: So why the two Bonds’s?

A: Just speculation, but he may have a chemical imbalance. The press hates the duality because they think he is not respecting them, but they fail to realize that Barry’s two sides are sides he shows Sheffield, Charles Scott, Dusty Baker, Mays, everybody, his teammates – except his kids. Children are what tame the savage beast within him.

Q: What is Barry really like with the media?

A: One day a writer will get his time and a lot of love from Bonds. The next day Bonds gives him what I call the “Patrick Swayze effect.” I’ve seen media folks approach Bonds like Dorothy approaching the Wizard of Oz, but instead of saying, “How dare you approach the great Wizard of Bonds,” they get the Patrick Swayze effect. In the movie “Ghost”, people ignored the ghost Swayze as if he was not there. Bonds acts like this sometimes, as if a man standing before him does not exist.

A: Does Bonds put on an act for press conferences?
Q: Sometimes. He fails to understand that he owes the media, which creates the buzz that gets the public excited enough to dole out the money that makes him rich. Yes, he does it on the field, but the media publicizes his derring-do. I’ve seen Barry conduct press conferences where he was all charm and smiles, then a writer walked up to him and said he was friends with one of Bonds’ ASU teammates. Bonds gave him the Patrick Swayze effect. Bonds favors TV people to writers, who he called “green flies” who are “like ants who gravitate to something sweet.” That’s okay, Chuck Yeager called ‘em “root weevils.” As it was pointed out in “The Right Stuff”, “those root weevils write history.” Bonds favors a media personality of color, like Roy Firestone. He prefers one-on-one to large gatherings. He favors national media to local press, too.

Q: Is it necessary to have played to know the game to know the game.

A: No, I don’t think so, but a lot of players will ask, “How would you know, you never played?” I did play, for the Cardinals and the A’s, so I can answer yes to that question. In fact, I struck out Kevin Mitchell five times in a single game. I struck out the side against the Giants once.


A: No question it does. Hemingway, Fitzgerald, they went to Paris, became worldly, and gave us the work of the Lost Generation. Thomas Wolfe emerged from his Southern shadow and went to New York to get a grasp on it all. Great writing used to come from really being on the inside. Read Budd Schulberg’s “What Makes Sammy Run?” The old schoolers dropped out of high school at 16 to be copy boys. They’d cover sports and become freeloaders and reprobates who consumed all the free booze and food the ball clubs gave ‘em. They drank with Babe Ruth and the players, and sometimes got their leftover women. The Jim Murray’s, the Jimmy Breslin’s, the Jimmy Cannon’s are no longer writing. Those guys are what I model myself after.

Q: So, getting back to Bonds, how is he perceived by his teammates?

A: As the guy who puts money in their pockets. Recently Jeff Kent has taken the “bad guy” mantel, but the team’s success saved him. Bonds is happily married and an elder statesman of the game. His success makes it easier, but his understanding of history and the mentoring of guys like Mays allows him to handle the position of superstar in the proper way. Barry’s teammates know he is special, and athletes are willing to tolerate personality discrepancies if it comes from a great player.

Q: As a writer, what was it like observing and writing about history?

A: It was like being the guy from Stars and Stripes assigned to cover George Patton during and after the Battle of the Bulge, or the guy sitting in a railroad car with Lincoln when he was writing
the Gettysburg Address. There is no greater opportunity for a journalist, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see and document history.

Q: How did you get Charlie Sheen to write the foreword?

A: I wrote a screenplay, “Once He Was An Angel”, about ex-pitcher Bo Belinsky. It was meant to do for Sheen what “Pulp Fiction” did for John Travolta, but ended up in what they call “development hell” in Hollywood. I had a guy in the Bay Area who said he was a producer but he was a zero. Frank Capra, Jr., son of the famed director, had it at one time. It’s currently with the company that made “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” which is like John Woo doing a re-make of “Gone With the Wind”. To Charlie’s credit, he made his career rebound all on his own, but he was appreciative of what he called the “opportunity” to write the foreword, which I asked him to do because of his association with baseball movies.

Q: What has been the Giants' reaction?

A: I suppose it's understandable that they were wary of it, because they have a lot invested in him and his image. Bonds is a lightning rod for controversy, so you'd have to avoid an awful lot of territory to write a non-controversial book about him. Still, I've done some PR work for them in that I say Barry had the best season ever, maybe the best ever, that a former Giant (Mays) is the guy who may have held that title until now, and their park is the best in the game. It's never been my intention to do a "hit piece" and it did not turn out to be one. USA TODAY Baseball Weekly calls it a "warts-and-all profile that remains truthful without becoming a mean-spirited hatchet job."

In the end, any problems I had have been chalked up to misunderstanding. I have been a guest on KNBR, the "Giant 68" three or four times, and the book is now available at the stadium, as well as most every place else books are sold.

Q: Does Barry Bonds like "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman"?

A: Honestly, if I wrote a book that Barry had no complaints about, it would not be a very good book. Trying to write about him without mentioning his controversial side would be like putting toothpaste back in the tube. Bonds respects truth and people who do things without seeking approval, or who kiss a lot of butt. He should respect the fact that I have written a book that is a true recitation of facts, and that when I told him I was going to write a book about him, authorized or unauthorized, I meant what I said. I'll say this, if somebody wrote that I was the best baseball player of all time, I'd like it.

BARRY BONDS: WARTS AND ALL

In June, 2001, Barry Bonds authorized me to ghostwrite his autobiography. A lot of things have happened since then. He broke the greatest record in sports (the single-season home run mark, now at 73). The autobiography became a biography. I wrote it. It is now available everywhere.
Another curious thing happened. People would approach me with "Bonds stories." Many of the folks who would tell me tales out of school were in the media. Most were horror stories. One radio guy who grew up near Bonds in San Carlos, California said that Barry once owned a car which he would park anywhere he damn well pleased, which included blocking a neighbor's driveway. When the neighbor asked Barry if he would please move his vehicle, Barry is supposed to have said, "Fuck you."

If true, this would fall in line with the greatest influence in his life, his Godfather, Willie Mays. It has been widely reported that a fellow airline passenger once asked Mays an innocuous question during a flight, and Mays answer was, "Fuck you."

Niiice!

One thing that has been said of Bonds is that he does not do drugs or party heavily. When I asked him, prior to a road trip to Los Angeles, whether he planned to hit the Sunset Strip, he said, "I never did that."

When I wrote my book, I reported that Bonds has never been a hard-charging partier or playboy, but since its publication, I have been approached by more people with "Bonds stories," some of which contradict the image I wrote of him.

One blonde media babe told me the following when she heard I had written Bonds' biography:

"It was around 1992, when he was still married. I had sex with Barry Bonds. It was in L.A., during the off-season. A girlfriend of mine called and said she was with Bonds and <another Major League player>. They wanted to party with me. I had a flight to catch early the next day and said no, but they insisted. Everybody was doing blow, except me. First, we went to a warehouse and bought colognes from some Dominican guy who was a Dodger coach, I think. Then we partied all night. Bonds was doing lines and was wired out of his mind. We all went back to my house in Pasadena. I went to bed, but Bonds, <the other player>, and my girlfriend stayed up doing blow. In the morning, Bonds was still high, but I asked if I could drive his Suburban to LAX <Los Angeles International Airport>. He was a passenger. On that stretch of the 110 Harbor Freeway that is curvy, I had an accident. I had to leave Barry, who was still under the influence, to tend for himself at the accident scene on the side of the road. He gave me a hundred bucks for cab fare and I barely made my plane."

Barry's father is Bobby Bonds, an All-Star with the Giants and other clubs in the 1970s. Bobby's best buddy growing up in Riverside was Dusty Baker, who changed Barry's diapers when he was a baby, and later became his manager in San Francisco.

Barry grew up in the Giants' clubhouse, hearing all the ribald baseball stories told by Willie McCovey, Juan Marichal, broadcaster Lon Simmons, and everybody else associated with the Giants' "family."
He also had powerful mentors in the form of his coach at Serra High School in San Mateo, Dave Stevens, his Arizona State coach, Jim Brock, and his manager at Pittsburgh, Jim Leyland. Not to mention his mother, Pat.

"I'm a mama's boy," Barry says of his relationship with her.

However, far and away the biggest influence in his life is the "Say-Hey Kid," Mays. Mays' influence extends not just to his on-field style, but to his personal life, as well.

"Willie's the best because he's the most fun," says Bonds, and his words carry double meaning. In some ways, Mays' relationship with the budding star replaced the one he did not have, or at least the incomplete one he had, with father Bobby.

"I never knew if my dad would show up drunk and embarrass me," Barry says.

Bobby, who had a bad drinking problem during Barry's youth, was described as "militant," the New Breed of black athlete in the early 1970s. The Alabama-born Mays and McCovey were less obvious in their racial resentments, but only on the surface.

Mays once spoke to a large gathering of mostly-white baseball fans in a Nevada casino, and instead of regaling them with stories of Leo Durocher and his fabulous career, he described, in intimate detail, the racial attitudes of Southerners in several minor league towns he played in the late 1940s.

Mays taught Bobby, as well as Barry, to be suspicious of white people in general, and white reporters in particular. There is a racial element to Barry's longstanding problems with the media, and it emanates from Willie Mays.

Willie was one of the most eligible black bachelors in America when he starred for the Giants. One day he arrived in the Giants' clubhouse, and made a general statement.

"Hey fellas," he said. "I got married over the weekend."

Everybody showered him with good wishes.

"You all know her," he then said, "Marguerite."

Stone silence fell. Apparently, they "all did know her."

Cut to 1988, when history eerily repeats itself. Barry Bonds, one of the most eligible bachelors in America, suddenly marries an exotic Canadian girl of Swedish descent named Sun in a quickie Las Vegas wedding.

It has been circulated in the rounds of the baseball world that Sun had been a Montreal stripper, and "friendly" with National League stars who came to town to play the Expos.
Several players, who wish to remain anonymous, said Bonds called them to ask a favor. The favor was to stop sleeping with Sun.

One of Barry's best friends is former minor league pitcher Charles Scott. Scott met Bonds when they were freshmen at Arizona State. They had much in common. Both were black men who had gone to mostly-white high schools. They became roommates, and to this day remain the best of the friends.

"I don't know if Sun was a stripper or not," Charles said. "I did hear the stories that she had been with a lot of other players. She was no angel. As for Barry calling up other players, that just doesn’t sound like him. Barry doesn't need to be validated by anybody else's opinion."

Bonds' marriage to Sun was no more successful than Willie's marriage to Marguerite. Both had a talent for spending their husband's money in imaginative ways. When Bonds signed a free agent contract and became a San Francisco Giant in 1993, the divorce was a messy, public affair. Bonds accused Barry of hitting her, and counter-allegations were made that she had done the same to him. The press had little trouble believing that these two passionate, sexually-charged people were both capable of some violence.

Bonds attorney, Bon Nachschin, was asked his opinion of Sun.

"According to the divorce decree," he said, "none of the parties are allowed to say anything negative about the other publicly. Therefore, I have nothing to say about her." In other words, since nothing bad can be said of Sun, nothing is left outside of bad things to say about her.

A marriage made in Heaven it was not.

Sun's alleged promiscuousness did become a very public thing, and Barry had more than a little to do with it.

"Once at Candlestick Park," recalls KNBR radio personality Ralph Barbieri, "a heckler yelled to Bonds, kneeling in the on-deck circle, `Hey Bonds, where's your wife.'

"'I don't know,' Bonds said to the heckler. 'Maybe she spent the night with you last night.' Bonds then strode to the plate and hit a home run."

Bonds is capable of channeling his energy on the field, probably his greatest single attribute as a player.

"I won the MVP when I was going through my divorce," he said in 2001. "That proves I can handle anything."

Barry also learned valuable lessons from his Godfather on the field. Willie had a "quicksilver" quality to his game, playing with all-out abandon. Bonds is an automaton who approaches hitting like a shark silently moving in on its prey.
The lesson learned by Barry has to do with the expenditure of energy. Bonds has been criticized for occasionally not running out ground balls to second base. Baseball is, on its face, not a taxing game. However, the playing of it, 162 games a season for 20 years, with all the mental and physical preparation that goes into making one a true professional, is one of the most arduous tasks in sports.

In 1962, Mays collapsed from exhaustion in Cincinnati and had to be hospitalized, because "I play hard all the time. I don't know any other way."

He taught Barry to pace himself. While the occasional jog down the first base line might enrage fans who see it as a failure to hustle from an arrogant superstar, Barry is giving himself the edge he will need in September, always his best month. Nobody can argue with the results, can they? Mays taught him to do it that way because he tired down the stretch several times and was "old" by the time he reached Barry's current age.

It is instructive to understand what makes Barry tick, because he is a complex man, loyal to his friends and family, yet often distant even to those he loves. He is the product of strong men and women. While his father was obviously an influence on him, it was Mays who helped shaped both of them at the same time.

The media mainly dislikes Bonds because they take his rebuffs of them personally.

Some writers have had wonderful conversations with him one day, only to be ignored by him the next.

"It's not personal," says Charles Scott. "He's like that with everybody. His family, his friends, his teammates, Dusty Baker on down."

I have seen media professionals approach Bonds at his insulated Pacific Bell locker like Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz." Instead of bellowing out, "How dare you approach the great Wizard of Bonds!", Bonds ignores them. I call it the "Patrick Swayze effect." In the film "Ghost", Swayze dies and is a ghost, unseen and, therefore ignored by all except Whoopi Goldberg. People will approach Bonds, who acts as if they are unseen to him.

The "Patrick Swayze effect."

What many in the media fail to understand is that this is not a personal affront of them, nor his attempt to keep the media in its place, but rather a side of his personality that is felt by all around him, except for kids. He is "ga-gag for kids," says Scott.

Does Barry have a chemical imbalance that creates these mood swings?

"I don't know about that," says Scott, "I do know that you have to have a strong personality to tolerate him. I have respect for him as an athlete, and so I give him lee-way, but if he was just an average person, I would not be friends with him."
Today, Barry has expanded beyond his self-protected shell, and become an elder statesman of the game. The bitterness of Mays has faded from Barry, who embraced his record-breaking 73-home run campaign in 2001, and now has an understanding of history and his place in it.

One can only imagine what great star of the next generation will be most influenced by Barry. Obviously, there is tradition that is linked by greatness. His life is, partially thanks to me, an open book. His warts have been exposed, but one must understand that he made youthful mistakes in a spotlight that most people do not face. He has learned, matured, and developed into a man. His second, successful marriage has mellowed him, and the lessons he passes on are words of well-earned wisdom.

KUDOS FOR
"BARRY BONDS: BASEBALL'S SUPERMAN"
by
STEVEN TRAVERS

BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman received near-unanimous positive reviews in over 40 publications, including the San Francisco Chronicle and USA TODAY.

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"Travers' new book finally explains the phenomenon"

In an intriguing new book by author Steven Travers entitled BARRY BONDS: Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman (Sports Publishing, Inc.), the Bonds tale is spelled out in the most thorough, interesting, revealing, concise manner ever reached.

Travers deserves much credit for exploring all of the Bonds past in an objective light. He has seen the complete man, warts and all, and concludes that his playing skills have been undiminished by a surly sense and a joyless attack on the game.

Somehow, Travers got Bonds to cooperate with this work and it reads fairly, honestly and dramatically. I wish every ball player I ever interviewed greeted me with a smile. Can’t happen. MAURY ALLEN/WWW.THECOLUMNISTS.COM, GANNETT NEWSPAPERS

Because he is one of the big names in our pro sports scene today, and since he has shattered a record that was only broken three years ago, it’s appropriate that my good friend Steven Travers has chronicled Bonds’ amazing season. But hopefully the reader will find even more interesting, Travers's rare look at this reluctant superstar.

Bonds trusted Travers enough to open up and share some private thoughts with him, about his life as an athlete, as a kid growing up and watching his dad Bobby play in the Majors, and some of his opinions regarding our turbulent society.

Rare…is the opportunity to read first-hand about the man who authored such a feat. Read and enjoy this book about an unusual athlete and an incredible season. I think you’ll not only enjoy yourself but learn a few things that you didn’t know about Barry Bonds. And perhaps
you’ll come to realize as I have, that he’s not only a great ballplayer, but a most interesting person.

**BRUCE MACGOWAN/KNBR RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO**

Steven Travers tackles the daunting task of trying to better understand the mercurial superstar by revisiting events from his childhood and college career that shaped Bonds' character.

Travers appears to have the right credentials for the task: He is a former minor leaguer who also penned screenplays in addition to a column for the *San Francisco Examiner*. He calls on that background in crafting a straightforward, warts-and-all profile that remains truthful without becoming a mean-spirited hatchet job…

**USA TODAY BASEBALL WEEKLY**

"(Steve Travers) is a Renaissance Man...a great read...entertaining."

**JIM ROME SHOW**

This book "has many layers..." Travers gives both supporters and detractors of Bonds their say...interesting…

**ARIZONA REPUBLIC**

…follow Bonds' historic season…

**CORPUS CHRISTI CALLER TIMES**

"Step up to bat with *BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman.*"

**MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL**

"A great new baseball book and must-read for fans of the Giants and Barry Bonds."

**MIKE MCDOWD/KFTY 50, SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA**

Travers’ work is a remarkably frank assessment of Bonds’ character, his background, his flaws and virtues...There also are some interesting, frank accounts of the media, race and sports and the vast sums of money made by professional athletes...they’re important in the discussion of why or why not Bonds is the most admired or most detested man in baseball -- and it’s possible he’s both.

**PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE**

"Steve Travers is a great writer, an educated athlete who knows how to get inside the player's heads, and when that happens, greatness occurs. He's gonna be a superstar...the best columnist in the Bay Area."

**DAVE BURGIN/EDITOR, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER**

"Steve Travers is a phenomenal writer, an artist who labors over every word to get it just right, and he has an encyclopedic knowledge of sports and history."

**STREETZEBRA MAGAZINE**
"Bonds books paints tough portrait"

Travers takes a good stab at illuminating the nonbaseball Bonds...
...the biographical format gives Travers a good deal more freedom to comment on his subject -- and he has no hesitancy in doing that, with fact, rumor and strong opinions...

Travers also writes incisively of things such as Bonds' roller-coaster relationship with the press...Give Travers credit...for turning out a portrait that is often tough -- and far from one-dimensional.

DWIGHT CHAPIN/SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

...follow Bonds during his historic season and the Giants' hard-fought, if unsuccessful, struggle to make the playoffs...

SACRAMENTO BEE

"A very interesting read which is not your average baseball book; in fact, it offers something to non-baseball fans, too...The author struck out Kevin Mitchell five times in a single game, which had to sting. Kevin Mitchell must not like Steve Travers very much...but this lets us know that Steve has achieved his bona fides when it comes to having the credentials to write a book like this."

GEOFF METCALFE/KSFO RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO; SYNDICATED ON WORLDNETDAILY

"I read the book when I have an author as a guest. A lot of talk show people don't. This is a fascinating book written by a man who knows his subject matter inside and out. He has written quite a book - a great effort for number one. He couldn't have picked a more difficult person to write about - but he captured Barry and gave us insight into who he really is. Congratulations."

IRV KAZE/KRLA RADIO, LOS ANGELES

"Get this book. You've brought Bonds to life."

FRED WALLIN, SYNDICATED SPORTSTALK RADIO HOST, LOS ANGELES

"This promises to be the biggest sports book of 2002."

GREP PAPA/KTCT RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO

"This cat struck out Kevin Mitchell five times in one game. I'll read the book for that reason alone. Plus, he hangs out with Charlie Sheen. How do I get that gig?"

ROD BROOKS/KTCT RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO

In his gossipy, easy-to-read tale, Travers - a former professional baseball pitcher and former sports columnist for the San Francisco Examiner - tries to show that Bonds is greatly misunderstood. Travers explores the sports culture that influences this distinguished slugger... entertaining.

LIBRARY JOURNAL
"Warts-and-all." Travers does deal with the issue of Barry's relationship with his dad, former big-leaguer Bobby Bonds.

Travers explores Bonds' mercurial temper and place in baseball history. The irony about Bonds...is that he is held to two different standards.

**NOVATO ADVANCE**

...a relationship between Charlie Sheen and Travers flowered, and Sheen has written the foreword...

**LEAH GARCHIK/ SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**

Not only is this the first comprehensive biography of Barry Bonds, but it features a foreword by Charlie Sheen.

**BUD GERACIE/ SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS**

Travers thought he hit the jackpot...

**FURMAN BISCHER/ ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION**

Travers...hit the big time...the book, will be a bestseller...compelling...beauty and grace to true baseball fans. Travers got to know all sides of Bonds from interviews with the superstar and others who know him well. Travers...established himself as a writer of many dimensions...a natural.

**JOHN JACKSON/ ROSS VALLEY REPORTER**

Travers is a minor league pitcher turned sports writer, and therefore qualified to evaluate [Larry] Dierker's thought process in ordering all those walks regardless of the score or the situation.

It's easier to squeeze toothpaste back in a tube...than to write a book about Barry Bonds without pointing out some flaws.

**STAN HOCHMAN/ PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS**

...follow Bonds' historic season...

**KNOXVILLE NEWS**

I suppose it would be impossible to write a book about Barry Bonds that is not controversial. If Bonds likes a book about him, it would have to omit a lot. Somehow, *BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman* looks at all of Barry's warts, yet remains in the end favorable to him. Not an easy balancing act. This is not your average sports book. It is edgy and filled with laughs... and inside baseball. Good, solid reading.

**AMAZON.COM**

GRAND SLAM HOME RUN. Travers, a former baseball pitcher himself, delves into the mind of Bonds.

**BORDERS.COM**
Travers offers plenty of chronological information - where he grew up, what he achieved... his years with the Pirates and his first marriage and divorce, gleaning information from long-time friends and acquaintances...examine the rivalry between father and son, and the relationship with Willie Mays. "It reveals some aspects of his relationship with Willie Mays and is instructive in what makes Barry tick, good and bad."

STOCKTON RECORD

"It's a great read."

PETE WILSON/KGO RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO

"This a good book that really covers his whole life, and informs us where Bonds is coming from. His entire life is laid out. He is very qualified to continue to write books such as this one. Good job."

MARTY LURIE/"RIGHT OFF THE BAT" OAKLAND A'S PRE-GAME HOST

Steven Travers' biography on Barry Bonds is a quality piece that does not portray Barry Bonds as the mean-spirited person that the San Francisco media often makes him out to be. It is by no means a heralding tale of what a great guy Barry Bonds is, or can be, either. It paints Bonds for who he is - a superstar athlete, who has his quirks, but one who has matured into a husband, father, and possibly the greatest baseball player of all-time... (Travers) uses his experiences in baseball to setup the next section on Bonds, often times providing a humorous glimpse into the life of a player. Would I recommend this book? Absolutely. I would especially recommend it to anybody that has derived their viewpoint of Bonds from nothing other than negative media coverage. For myself, knowing much of Bonds' early years through high school, I still learned new things about him, baseball life in general, and laughed out loud several times at Travers' unique way of explaining his experiences. This book is definitely worth the time.

JOHN KENNY/ESPORTNEWS.COM

Travers’ account mentions everything from cocaine to sex to car crashes to what Bonds said he would do to Roger Clemens if Clemens hit him with a pitch (so Clemens did this season). But Travers describes the book as a warts-and-all account more than a “hit” piece.

JOHNSON CITY PRESS

Travers' book presents a more wide-ranging biographical portrait of Bonds... Travers' book does do a more well-rounded job of solving the mystery of who Bonds is... Travers spends much time trying to understand Bonds' personality...appealing...is the more inside look at Bonds in Travers' book.

SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

Regardless of Bonds' character, Travers' work is every baseball aficionado's dream. Filled with almost play-by-play analysis of Bonds' duels with pitchers the likes of John Smoltz and Tom Glavine and littered with angry dialogue between Bonds and others, like manager Jim Leyland, Travers' book brings the behind-the-scenes antics of America's pastime to light.

FAIRFIELD DAILY REPUBLIC
Travers talked to manager Dusty Baker and some of Bonds' friends…

**SIOUXLAND WEEKLY**

Steven Travers, **BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman.**

**CONTRA COSTA TIMES**

"You've created quite a stir here at the station, with the Giants, and throughout baseball."

**RICK BARRY SHOW/KNBR RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO**

"You've stirred a hornet's nest here, man."

**JT "THE BRICK"/SYNDICATED NATIONAL SPORTS HOST**

"This is a controversial subject and a controversial player, but you've educated us."

**RON BARR/"SPORTSLINE", ARMED FORCES RADIO NETWORK**

"A baseball player who can write…who knew? This one sure can!"

**ARNY "THE STINKIN' GENIUS" SPANYER/FOX SPORTS RADIO, LOS ANGELES**

"You know baseball like few people I've ever spoken to."

**ANDY DORFF/SPORTSTALK HOST, PHOENIX, PHILADELPHIA AND NEW JERSEY**

"Congratulations…a tour de force."

**KATE DELANCEY/WFAN RADIO, NEW YORK CITY**

"Good work!"

**DON SHIELDS/WRKD RADIO, HONOLULU**

"I really loved this book."

**DAVID UNKLE/WNJC RADIO, NEW JERSEY**

"Good stuff."

**BRIAN LONG/KGEO RADIO, BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA**

"Congratulations!"

**WGN TV, CHICAGO**

"We're McGwire people, but this book gives Bonds his due."

**KMOX RADIO, ST. LOUIS**

"Read this."

**MIKE SIGEL/KIRO RADIO, SEATTLE**
"I can't stand Bonds, but you've done a good job with a difficult subject."
GRANT NAPIER/SACRAMENTO SPORTSTALK HOST

"Steve's a literate ex-athlete, an ex-Trojan and a veteran of Hollywood, too."
LEE "HACKSAW" HAMILTON/XTRA RADIO, SAN DIEGO

"A great book about a great player."
KTHK RADIO, SACRAMENTO

A gem.
ROSEVILLE PRESS-TRIBUNE

"Here's the man to talk to regarding the subject of Barry Bonds."
JOHN LOBERTINI/KPIX TV, SAN FRANCISCO

"He's enlightened us on the subject of Bonds, his father, and Godfather, Willie Mays."
BRIAN SUSSMAN/KPIX TV, SAN FRANCISCO

"I hate Bonds, but you're okay."
SCOTT FERRALL/SYNDICATED NATIONAL AND NEW YORK SPORTSTALK HOST

"You've done some good writin', dude."
KFOG RADIO, SAN FRANCISCO

"One of the better baseball books I've read."
KOA RADIO, DENVER

"Our next guest has written the 'last word' on Barry Bonds…"
SCOTT REIS/ESPN TV

"Our next guest is the author of a hot new biography on Barry Bonds…"
DARIAN HAGAN/CNN

"We're please to have with us today one of the great sportswriters on the current American scene, Steve Travers…"
JOE SHEA/RADIO TALK HOST, BRADENTON, FLORIDA AND EDITOR, AMERICAN-REPORTER.COM

PUBLICITY

Travers appeared, promoting **BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman**, on:
Steve was a guest on the Jim Rome Show. He has appeared numerous times with Bruce Magowan and on the Rick Barry Show, on KNBR, the "Giant 68". He has been a guest on the Greg Papa Show and with Rod Brooks on KTCT in San Francisco. Other appearances include:

Fred Wallin's nationally-syndicated radio program

"JT the Brick's" nationally-syndicated show

Arny Spanyer on KXTA in Los Angeles

Lee "Hacksaw" Hamilton on XTRA in San Diego

The Pete Wilson program on KGO in San Francisco

With Kate DeLancey on WFAN in New York City

"Sportsline", Ron Barr's nationally-syndicated program (including the Armed Forces Radio Network)

Marty Lurie's "Right Off the Bat" Oakland A's pre-game show on KSFO in San Francisco

Grant Napier's program on KTHK in Sacramento


He has been written up in *USC Trojan Family*, the USC Film School newsletter, the UCLA Writers' Program newsletter, and received notice in:

Mal Florence's column in the *Los Angeles Times*

Scott Ostler in the *San Francisco Chronicle*

Skip Bayless and Bud Geracie in the *San Jose Mercury News*

Numerous publications have given *BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman* predominantly good-to-excellent reviews.
I studied in the USC Film School of Cinema-Television and the UCLA Writers' School, and developed an expert's knowledge of Hollywood.

"A FEW GOOD MEN" WAS REINER/SORKIN'S SUBTLE MESSAGE OF THEIR

Unlike other obviously partisan Hollywood films from the likes of Robert Redford and Oliver Stone, "A Few Good Men" (1992) delivered a subtler message from liberals Rob Reiner (director) and screenwriter Aaron Sorkin ("The West Wing"). It was also an example of how liberals sometimes shoot themselves in the foot in their attempts to demonstrate the goodness of their point and the faults of their political opposites.

This has happened on more than one occasion. In 1964, radical screenwriter Terry Southern ("Easy Rider") penned "Dr. Strangelove". The film attempted to make fun of bombastic military figures, lampooning Air Force General Curtis LeMay through George C. Scott's comedic General "Buck Turgidson". It succeeded as a great film, but not as a political statement. Ronald Reagan loved it.

A few years later, a '60s peacenik named Francis Ford Coppola, fresh out of UCLA Film School, wrote "Patton". He attempted to portray the World War II general as a mentally unbalanced warmonger. Scott's performance was one of the best in history. The result was the greatest, most patriotic war film ever made. Coppola (who won the Academy Award), could not have foreseen that Richard Nixon, after viewing "Patton" several times, would be emboldened to invade Cambodia, and that generations of West Point grads would consider the film a virtual primer.

Set right after the 1991 Persian Gulf War, "A Few Good Men" tries to show why officers from the "Patton school" were out-dated. The beauty of the script is in the character arc of Lieutenant Daniel Caffey (Tom Cruise). His father is the former Attorney General of the United States, and in this capacity he was a civil rights hero. Caffey never lived up to his dad's high expectations, although he graduated from Harvard Law School. He is skating by in the Navy JAG corps to satisfy family tradition. Demi Moore is a dedicated JAG lawyer who wants to do great things.

Kevin Pollack (Lieutenant Sam Weinberg) is the guy who got picked on when he was a kid. The three of them get assigned to a case involving two "poster" Marines accused of murder at Guantanamo Bay. The Commander at Gitmo is Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Jessup (Jack Nicholson), in a role he did not win the Academy Award for, which is unbelievable. Jessup is about to be Assistant National Security Advisor, so he is very high up the Pentagon food chain. Cruise is a slacker who pleads his cases, and is offered a sweetheart deal by the prosecutor, a Marine buddy played by Kevin Bacon. If the Marines plead out, the case goes away and after six months they are out of jail. The Marines are straight up and down, and say no. Demi, a so-so actress who rises to Oscar performance in a role she was born to play, takes Cruise to task.

Normally a sexpot, she is not portrayed as anything but a professional officer and lawyer, and she wears it well. There is sexual tension with Cruise, but nicely underplayed. The elephant in the corner is the "code red" that everybody knows Nicholson ordered, but nobody can ask about. If he ordered the "code red," the boys are free, which leaves a slight fact discrepancy because a Marine died because of a hazing they administered. It is fair to ask why they are free if they were ordered, hung if not, since their actions are still the same.

Demi gets Cruise to stage two of his character arc by committing him to the case and to get Nicholson to admit to the "code red," which Cruise plans to do because he knows Jack does not
like "hiding" from him. Pollack has been shuffling along with his "I have no responsibilities here whatsoever" act, but his role in the script is made clear. He backs up Demi's earlier faith in Cruise, and for the first time Cruise realizes he has special talent and can win. The finale is a doozie with Nicholson thundering away with a speech that Sorkin and Reiner must have really agonized over.

Nicholson represents Plato's "warrior spirit," protecting America's liberal peaceniks like Reiner and Sorkin. He gives an incredible dissertation on what it takes to do the heavy lifting that protects our cherished freedoms. Reiner and Sorkin resisted the chance to demonize Nicholson into the tired old conservative boogieman; the racist white officer (one of the Marines is black), stupid, a war glorifier. Instead, they let Nicholson make a speech that has been memorized and made into legend by conservatives and military officers. But Jack makes a mistake and lets Cruise lead him one step too far, admitting to the "code red" that wins the day. The twist, and the message, is in the final verdict in which the Marines are declared "not guilty" but are dishonorably discharged for "conduct unbecoming Marines." The black Marine gives the film its intended meaning by saying their conduct was unbecoming because they were not supposed to follow an illegal "code red" order (given to them by a Southern racist Christian, Kiefer Sutherland), against a weaker man, despite the consequences. Cruise tells them they do not need a patch to have honor, a line of pure gold. Pollack, who identified with the weaker man and did not like the macho Marines, melts because he sees his childhood tormentors symbolically apologize to him. Cruise has now earned his spurs and is no longer just Lionel Caffey's son.

"A Few Good Men" is a barnburner. The Sutherland role is its most heavy-handed bias. When he is told Cruise's father "made a lot of enemies in your neck of the woods" - Dixie - by letting "a little black girl" go to an all-white school, the subtle message is that he is a racist. Sutherland is further painted as a Bible thumper, the kind who have little patience for those who are not. Hollywood just brutalizes Christians. Nicholson also sneers at Pollack's screen name, Lieutenant Weinberg, a point that probably worked more against the Sorkin/Reiner message than for it. Nicholson is pointing out that Jews tend to be lawyers, while the Anglos do the fighting. The effect of the reference, however, causes people to make mental note of the fact that he is not entirely wrong. Reiner and Sorkin's "mistake" was in making Nicholson's character the real deal. In so doing, Jack thunders away with some of the best lines ever written.

"You both rise and sleep under the very blanket of freedom that I provide, then criticize the way I provide it," he tells Cruise. "I'd just as soon you said 'thank you' and went on your way, or picked up a weapon and stood a post. Either way, I don't give damn what it is you think you're entitled to."

The producers, like Coppola before them, likely failed to recognize that by not demonizing Nicholson enough, they left the door open to a point of view that runs counter-productive to their own. Nicholson speaks about "honor, code, loyalty. We use these words as the backbone of a life spent defending something!"

Stone was horrified to discover that after excoriating "Wall Street" (1987), corporate hotshots for years thanked him for making a film that inspired their careers in high finance. Similarly, Reiner and Sorkin created a "monster" (Nicholson) who has inspired many to hear the words of Nathan Jessup and say, "Right on!"

(Screenwriter Steven Travers studied in the University of Southern California School of Cinema-Television. He is the author of "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" and "God's Country: A
conservative, Christian worldview of how history formed the United States Empire and America's Manifest Destiny for the 21st Century.

LIBERALS ARE ON WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY

The Truth, as they say, will set us free. This simple fact explains why the inexorable tide of history favors conservatism and leaves the liberals in the dust. Mona Charen's book is just straightforward facts that have been obscured by the people who had a vested interest in keeping the facts from becoming known. Winners write the history, and conservatives are the winners. The underlying question throughout Charen's book is, why do liberals harm America? It requires some psychology, applied to the issue of order and power. First, there is a strain that runs through a never-ending segment of the population that is anarchistic in nature, embodied by Russian emigre "Red Emma" Goldman. This strain believes there should be no government, just a body of "elites" who will make the right decisions that most yahoos are not smart enough to make. Combine this with their great unease with the power of America. History tells us global power is corrupting. Conservatives think God endowed America with the ability to do His good work after centuries of evil. Liberals prefer either not to believe in God, or that He places no special sanction on America. Therefore, they say America is not checked by morality, its leaders prone to the mistakes of Napoleon, the Roman Empire, the Spanish Inquisition, etc. Conservatism requires a faith in America to do the right thing, and Charen demonstrates that we have rewarded that faith from the beginning. Liberals are the ones who do not do the right thing, so they must discredit those who do in order to hide their own inadequacies.

THE PURE DISPENSATION OF TRUTH

Ann Coulter is the H.L. Mencken of our time. Her legal training comes in handy, because she lays out her argument in the logical, orderly manner of an attorney prosecuting a case. Ann makes use of the "but for" premise of the law, otherwise known as proximate causation. That is, she truthfully details how history plays out. Time after time, good results of history would not have occurred "but for" the bold actions of conservatives, while poor results of history would not have occurred "but for" the weak actions of liberals. She lays out straightforward facts that simply detail Truth by reading them with no need for additional commentary. There is another legal term for this: Res ipsa loquiter ("The things speaks for itself"). She does not claim that all liberals are traitors. There is a need for liberal argument in a two-party system. But she does demonstrate that when liberals have power, millions of human beings die. She chillingly describes how the 1995 Venona Project confirmed the worst suspicions of Richard Nixon and Joe McCarthy, that some 500 Communist spies worked for the State Department and the Roosevelt/Truman Administrations, at a time when the U.N. Charter was written to favor the Soviets and China was lost to Communism. Result: Mass murder above and beyond Hitler's regime. She goes on to describe weak-kneed Democrats, who allow every major war to start but never finish them, exposing Lyndon Johnson's losing strategy in Vietnam, as compared to the way Richard Nixon (who had the 1960 election stolen from him by the Kennedys) or Barry Goldwater would have brought victory to Vietnam if they had the opportunity in the beginning.
She describes the disgusting manner in which the Teddy Kennedy Democrats used Watergate as pure political theatre, creating first the Church hearings that left the U.S. vulnerable, then hung the South Vietnamese out to dry. Result: North Vietnamese savagery and Pol Pot's Cambodia, where some 2 million died under Communism. Jimmy Carter's Presidency invited Communist expansion and Islamic terror, but Ronald Reagan turned it back. Ann describes Reagan winning the Cold War without firing a shot, and shows us how close we would be to losing the War on Terror if liberals were prevailing in the current climate. God bless a country - America - that produces the likes of Ann Coulter.

"WITNESS" BY WHITTAKER CHAMBERS WAS ULTIMATE CAUTIONARY TALE, GAVE BIRTH TO MODERN CONSERVATIVISM

Conservatism is the most successful political movement in history. In my upcoming book, "God's Country", I argue that it is the winning ideology of 2,000 years of history. But conservatism was stagnant during the Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman Administrations. When did the modern conservative movement start? Who propelled it?

Many argue the merits of William F. Buckley's "God and Man at Yale". Ronald Reagan rose to prominence in concert with Barry Goldwater's 1964 Presidential campaign. But modern conservatism began in 1938, when a Communist apparatchik named Whittaker Chambers broke from Moscow, contacted Federal authorities, and informed them that a rising Democrat star named Alger Hiss was a Soviet spy.

It took a decade for Chambers' accusations to be made public. Chambers most likely would have faded into obscurity, but for a chain of events and a few patriots. FDR did not pay heed to the accusation that Communists had infiltrated his government, but Naval intelligence intercepted word that Joseph Stalin was planning a separate peace with Adolf Hitler. The Navy did not trust the Democrats. They devised the Venona project, intercepting Soviet cables, and discovered that Chambers was right about Hiss. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover refused to go public with Venona (not opened until the 1990s), because the on-going intercepts were too important to be exposed. But he told the right political people. The case went to HUAC, led by the young California Congressman, Richard Nixon. The Left excoriated Chambers. Hoover refused to shed light on Venona, letting the wheels of justice grind on their own terms. Hiss was proven right. Nixon became the first hero of conservatism. McCarthyism followed, and sides were taken.

The Hiss-Chambers duel changed the entire dynamic of American politics. Personal destruction and vitriol increased ever since. Liberals invested all their energies into Hiss. They found themselves between a rock and a hard place, forced to deny that Communism was as insidious as Nazism, or that it was even much of a threat. The Left despised Nixon for rising to power on the Hiss case, and marshaled all their forces to discredit the right during and after ensuing McCarthyism. The dominant media culture became their witting accomplices. When Vietnam and Watergate hit, they lost their last vestiges of balance. Enraged by the refusal of conservatism to go quietly into that good night, Democrats were increasingly frustrated at the electoral success of Republicans. To their dismay, they were forced again to back the Clintons in the same manner...
as they had Hiss, because they were their only links to power. When the Republicans exposed their lies, the Left's only "weapon" became the ongoing, nefarious and futile attempt to call George W. Bush and the Republicans "liars," too.

But it all started with Chambers. The power of Chambers' story was rooted in three things. One, he told a true story and had the evidence to prove it. Two, his Truth was rooted in Christianity. Three, he described worldwide evil, and woke America up to the fact that it was our duty to defeat this evil in order to survive.

In 1948 Chambers testified that Hiss was a Soviet spy, and part of an elaborate Communist ring. Eventually, Hiss was convicted. Chambers told the entire story, from start to finish in one of the best books ever written. "Witness" was a 1952 best seller, but has been forgotten with the passage of time. It is the first book any inquiring political mind should read, because it not only describes one of the most challenging confrontations in history, but also offers a cautionary tale for our current generation. "Witness" should be required reading in every public, private and religious school. It should be first on the list in every political science class.

Written in the darkest days of the Cold War, when Stalin still lived and the Korean War raged, Chambers expressed grave pessimism for the future of humanity. Despite his evangelical Christianity, he believed that Communists were more committed to their cause than the West. This assessment had a mixed reality, since he was "right" about the North Vietnamese, but wrong about the citizenry of Eastern Europe. But Chambers identified something that absolutely must be paid attention to by our generation. He was drawn to Communism because he identified with a Third World mindset that had no allegiance to nations and believed it offered the only answer to the tragedy of history. Eventually, news of Stalin's gulags and his own religious faith drove him from atheistic Communism.

Since publication of "Witness", we found that religious yearning, combined with fundamental economic failures, destroyed Communism. But the mindset that Chambers identified with, in fact never truly veered away from, is eternal. This is a strain of society that combines Machiavelli's nostrum that people choose security over freedom with Emma Goldman's anarchism. Finally, it has found a home in the misguided religiosity (which was missing in Communism) of Islam, and balls it all up under the banner of Terrorism. Post-Communist guilty liberalism provides its "useful idiots."

Hiss was an open Communist who edited the Daily Worker. He was then recruited into the underground espionage network operating in the New York/D.C./Baltimore corridor during the Great Depression. He met Hiss, who was never "open," choosing to operate as a spy while rising in FDR's New Deal. Hiss befriended Chambers. Chambers decided to break from the party, begging Hiss to do the same. He described in "Witness" hatred from Hiss at this suggestion that could only be called evil. Chambers went to the FBI.

His accusations were hard to prove. People used aliases and left no paper trail. FDR gave the reports no credibility. Chambers did not know about Venona. The simple truth is that Venona's secrets were believed by the Republicans, but the Democrats chose to protect their Communists. There is no other way to describe it. Hiss became highly placed in the State
Department, and we now know that his input at the Big Three Conference and in formulating the U.N. Charter favored the Soviet Union.

By 1948, Stalin's Russia was an obvious enemy. Nixon was among a group of conservatives who saw that a great threat to the world existed, and it lived amongst the American people. The Hiss evidence, among other cases, was presented to him. Hearings were held, Chambers testified, and all hell broke loose. When China fell and Korea started, the issue of Communists in government became a heated one. 40 years later, Venona informed us that we might have held the line in China if Communists like Hiss had not steered policy away from Chiang-kai Shek.

The great historical value of "Witness" is that it describes, in no uncertain terms, just how far-reaching and insidious was the threat of Communism and the pervasiveness of Moscow's espionage in our society. Chambers knew Communism from the inside. He described liberal Americans convinced that our system would fail; foreign radicals, fueled by hatred, searching for an answer to hunger and poverty; and the hardcore Soviet spies who "handled" their Western minions.

What is so instructive about Chambers' story is that he sheds light on the Communists who stuck with the program despite news of Stalin's genocide. Chambers and other 1930s ex-Communists can be "excused" for misguided humanity. Those who continued to pledge their allegiance to the most murderous ideology in history separated themselves from the pack, and in so doing can only be described as evil.

"BUT THEY CAN'T BEAT US" BY RANDY ROBERTS

The 1986 film "Hoosiers", based on the true story of tiny Milan High School's 1954 state championship, told the story of legendary Indiana basketball. Certainly, the state has great tradition, going back to John Wooden and Piggy Lambert, right on up to Rick Mount, Bobby Knight and Larry Bird. Now, Purdue University history professor Randy Roberts tells a little different story about Midwestern sports. The Crispus Attacks High School basketball team from Indianapolis, a team comprised of poor, urban black kids, overcame terrific obstacles to capture for coach Ray Crowe the 1955 and 1956 state titles.

Crowe's talented squad was led by Oscar Robertson, who would go on to a hall of Fame career with the Cincinnati Royals and Milwaukee Bucks. The "Big O" would also capture a Gold Medal at the Rome Olympics'. In '55, Crispus Attucks became the first all-black school to capture a state championship. In '56, they were the first to go undefeated.

Crispus Attucks "helped define and enshrine the Hoosiers' myth by being its negation," according to Roberts. This is an inspiring story of race, joy and achievement during a critical time in this nation's history. While Crispus Attucks was winning on the hardwood, hard-fought civil rights were being won for black people in the Supreme Court (Brown vs. Board of Education). What is often forgotten is that many of the key battlegrounds of the civil rights era were not in the South, but in the North—that is, the Midwest.

Roberts' story of social upheaval, racism and the dawn of a new era in politics centers on a school that was built for blacks. Actually, Crispus Attucks was built so white students would not have to sit next to black students in the 1920s. The school first had to petition the Indiana High School Athletic Association just to compete in the state tournament.
Roberts' also tells how "The Big O" spurned Indiana U. because coach Branch McCracken was said to be a racist. Indiana native John Wooden tried to get him to U.C.L.A. (can you imagine that?), but Oscar envisioned a long bus ride (he was afraid of airplanes) and chose Cincinnati instead.

Roberts has written a number of sports history books. In "But They Can't Beat Us", he tells the story of Robertson, a shy kid who shined in athletics. He tells the story of Coach Crowe, who instilled his team with pride and discipline. Through hard work and talent, the Tigers' were able to forge one of the great stories in prep sports history. For fans of high school sports, and particularly Indiana basketball, "But They Can't Beat Us" is a must read.

"THE LAST OF THE BEST" BY JIM MURRAY

He was not a columnist, he was a poet. He was to the written word what Stradivarius was to the violin, Patton to the tank, Aristotle to philosophy.

Jim Murray did not pen what he wrote, he conjured it up. No mere mortal could come up with the stuff he did.

He never met hyperbole he did not like.

USC, coming from behind against Notre Dame, was not just a football team. They were the Wehrmacht marching on Poland. Sherman burning Atlanta.

A big game was not just a big game, it was the Roman Legion vs. Hannibal, Grant taking Richmond.

Murray did not reserve this kind of bluster for only the mighty in the world of sport.

"Al Scates?!" he once exclaimed of UCLA's volleyball coach. "He is to volleyball what Napoleon was to artillery."

Every morning, Southern Californians woke up and were reminded of one of the very best reasons for living here. Jim Murray's column in the Los Angeles Times was that reason. Actually, Murray was syndicated, so it was not just Los Angelenos who enjoyed his work, but the fact that he belonged to us was a source of civic pride, like the Beach Boys, the film industry, or our coastline.

If you were a writer, you read him in awe, like an actor watching Olivier do Othelo, or a young pitcher checking out Randy Johnson. If you liked sports, or even if you did not, you just appreciated the guy.

When some friends of mine lived in Paris, I would send them care packages from home. Nothing was more valuable to them than Jim Murray's column.
When Jim passed away a few years ago, it was like seeing part of the Smithsonian lost to a
fire. When the *Times* published a selection of his columns from 1990-98, it was like seeing the
demolished portion of the great museum re-furbished. Or at least like a farewell exhibit.

He is gone, we will never see his likes again, but we can at least read and re-read "The Last of
the Best", with a forward by Tommy Lasorda and an introduction by the *Times* venerable sports
editor, Bill Dwyre.

Murray towers above his profession, like Grantland Rice and Red Smith, but as *New York Times*
columnist Dave Anderson says, he is to be compared with the likes of Twain and Hemingway. A
great American. His work: Literature.

Murray was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1990, and his response was "I never thought you could
win a Pulitzer Prize just for quoting Tommy Lasorda correctly."

Lasorda was greatly honored that Murray thought of him during his great moment, and Tommy
has it right. Like Vin Scully and very, very few others, Murray was a guy who towered above the
athletes he covered. The ones with some brains and respect for history knew that. If they did not,
Murray never let it bother him. Let the ignorant wallow in their stupidity!

Murray came to sportswriting after covering Hollywood. He once had a date with Marilyn
Monroe, but she left him before the night was over for another guy.

Murray understood. The other guy was Joe DiMaggio.

Murray wrote with his heart. He had compassion. He also read like crazy. He was a man of great
knowledge who never wrote down to his readers. Many chose to educate themselves on who
some great violinist or ballet dancer was, simply because Murray would mention them in a
column. He make erudition a very cool thing.

In so doing, he did for sportswriting what Clarence Darrow did for the legal profession,
MacArthur for a career in the military. He made it important, something to be attained and
worked for.

Sportswriters were like carnival barkers before Murray came along. Hacks who drank too much
and wrote like high school dropouts, which most of them were.

Nowadays, they study guys like Murray and Jimmy Cannon at prestigious journalism schools.

Mostly, though, he entertained. He made you think, and he made you laugh. Read "The Last of
the Best".

God bless Jim Murray.
"RUDY" IS IRISH SENTIMENTALITY, BUT ENTERTAINING

"Rudy" (1993) is one of those stories that could only be told about an institution like Notre Dame University. If anybody tried to make a film about a scrub trying to make the varsity at UCLA or Nebraska, they would never get it off the ground. As it is, Rudy Ruettiger had his share of troubles pitching the true tale of his appearance in Notre Dame's final 1975 game to Hollywood.

"I had an appointment with a producer," Ruettiger recalls, "but he didn't show up at the appointed time and place. I was in Santa Monica, and I knew he lived nearby, so I asked the postman if he knew this guy."

Ruettiger looks enough like the Midwestern rube he has been portrayed as than the sort of city psychopath the mailman might have suspected him to be, because he sent him right to the guy's house. The producer tried to fend Rudy off by telling him he was not a Notre Dame fan, but it ended up at Orion Pictures anyway, and was released just as the 1993 college football season was getting underway. Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz actually was threatened with N.C.A.A. penalties because he showed a bootleg copy to his players prior to the opener, trying to inspire the boys a la Knute Rockne. The infraction was providing entertainment to his team not available to the rest of the student body (somebody ought to go on a secret mission to Shawnnee Mission, Kansas and do a demolition of this near-useless organization). Anyway, it worked that day and most days in '93, as the Irish came within one loss to Boston College of the National Championship, but that is a different Irish tale. Despite a pretty good reception, the movie did not save Orion from folding up its operation about a year later.

Patty Duke's son, Sean Astin (remember him in "Like Father, Like Son" with Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron?) stars as a blue-collar kid from a blue-collar family. He is a poor student, and a below-average high school football player despite his very best efforts. Upon graduation he goes to work in the steel mill just like everybody who ever lived in his home town, yet still clings to the fantasy of going to play ball in South Bend. Everybody scoffs at his craziness except his best buddy, who considers Rudy's goal quite within reach.

When that buddy is killed in a mill accident, Rudy realizes it is now or never. Despite being closer to graduation than freshman age, he journeys to South Bend, is met by many obstacles and a kindly priest, enrolls in a junior college and makes good enough grades to get into N.D.

Once there, he tries out for the football team, is kept around for four years as a "tackling dummy," but due to his popularity on the team and among the student body, new coach Dan Devine fulfills old coach Ara Parseghian's promise to let him play a few minutes. Rudy even makes a tackle during garbage time of a game against Michigan State.

Director David Anspaugh ("Hoosiers") focuses on the character development of Angelo Pizzo's screenplay. The story is predictable (being true it was not easy to hide), but that matters less than Astin's inspired gullibility. Charles Dutton is terrific as the stadium groundskeeper, and Ned Beatty is great as his dad.
Look, if you hate Notre Dame, this film will probably make you sick, but if you can at least tolerate the mythology for a couple hours, "Rudy" is one of the better sports movies of recent years.

**WIZARD OF WESTWOOD**

"Dwight Chapin and Jeff Prugh are legends, all-time greats," says Bill Walton, managing to sound like he is endorsing a Cadillac dealership.

"He didn't talk to us for a number of years after the book came out," says Prugh.


Hall of Fame basketball legend Walton was a college student possessing massive intelligence and radical political views. He also held to the mantra of his era: "Don't trust anyone over 30."

Chapin and Prugh were over 30, albeit just barely.

As a kid growing up in Marin rooting for Cal, the A's and the Raiders, "the book" opened my eyes to the outside world. "The Wizard of Westwood" was not just a sports book, but also a book about American society during the turbulent 1960s and early 1970s. It just happened to be written through the prism of UCLA basketball.

It is ostensibly a biography of legendary UCLA coach John Wooden. It is provocative, where Wooden's autobiography, "They Call Me Coach", is vanilla. I recently had a chance to speak to Chapin and Prugh.

"I was going to write a book *with* Wooden, and he had agreed to," says Chapin. "I was sitting in his office with him and my book agent, and had actually signed the contract. When he had the pen in his hand, he stopped, and said, 'No, I think I want to wait until I'm finished coaching to do this.'"

"When we started digging deeper into things, we heard that John got scared of what he heard we were going to say, and decided to write his own book."

"Digging deeper" meant going into the subject of Sam Gilbert, an infamous Bruin booster who arranged abortions and payoffs for players.

Did Wooden know details about Gilbert?

As a former Los Angeles sportswriter, I dug into this subject myself. An impeccable source, very highly placed in the UCLA Athletic Department and in a position to know, told me flat out, "Wooden knew. He had to know."

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"I took Bill Walton to lunch at a steakhouse on Wilshire Boulevard," recalls Chapin. "He was so self-conscious about his height then that he insisted we get a table way in back of the restaurant, where it was very dark and we wouldn't be noticed. We talked for a couple of hours, off the record. A few days later, Vic Kelley, the UCLA sports information director, told me he was not going to do any more interviews."

Obviously, somebody "got to" Walton. His natural distrust of authority did not make it hard to convince him to clam up with the press.

"I think Sam Gilbert told him not to talk to us," opined Chapin. "I never talked to him directly again at any point in his UCLA career. Later, when Walton played for Portland, I was at a UCLA-Oregon State game, when I felt a hand tap me on the shoulder. It was Walton, who said, `How are you doing, Dwight?' I said, `Fine, Bill, but I don't have time to talk to you right now.' Amazing that you can't shut the guy up now."

* * *

"UCLA was not insulated from the outside world," says Prugh. "When you stepped on campus you were exposed to all the socio-political cross-currents of that era. Wooden was a man from rural Indiana, and of an older generation, but he had a social conscience.

"Lew Alcindor <later Kareem Abdul-Jabbar> discerned that about Wooden," continues Prugh. "Lew said no white American could know what it is like to be black, but Wooden had as close an understanding of the issue as he could.

"Curtis Rowe said Wooden did not see color, just players. The players of that era were the first to express other than one-dimensional views of the world. Therefore, we no longer saw them as just stats, but as humans with frailties. TV forced newspapers to show us the 'how and why.'

When Prugh walked the Berkeley campus during road trips, his short hair made him look like an FBI agent to the Cal students.

The draft was going on, but the UCLA players did not talk about it, according to Prugh, although they were "almost all opposed to the war. From 1968-73, there was mounting dissatisfaction with the way institutions were run. Woodstock was big, Nixon went to China, then Watergate happened.

The radical Walton clashed with his coach in those days. Now he is part of The Establishment and calls him "My hero John Wooden." Chapin and Prugh, meanwhile, represent fascinating windows into the most interesting and important period in American history since the Civil War.

“BALL FOUR” by Jim Bouton (1970)

The truth about athlete as role models occurred with the bombshell publication of Jim Bouton’s “Ball Four” in 1970. The result was a diary of the 1969 season, in which the former star pitcher talked about drinking, drugs, sex and RACE, all subjects the liberal “clubhouse
lawyer” had an axe to grind on. “Ball Four” had more edge than a Doors concert, breaking new ground long before Watergate, the Internet and Monica Lewinsky. The old protocols had protected J.F.K.’s sex life, but Bouton, who probably idolized Daniel Ellsberg, felt the clubhouse adage “What you do here, what you say here, what you see here, let it stay here,” did not apply.

Bouton pissed off Commissioner Bowie Kuhn with his expose of players’ common habit of popping amphetamines. He pissed off a lot of wives by revealing a peculiar member of the female species known as “Baseball Annies,” attractive young women who enjoy sleeping with ballplayers. He pissed off his old Yankee teammates by putting the myth to Mickey Mantle’s legend, paying homage to The Mick’s Olympian abilities, but talking about Mantle’s equally prodigious drinking habit.

Bouton describes “beaver hunting,” a popular player pastime in which they drilled holes in the dugout in order to look up the dresses of girls in the front row. Gives a whole new meaning to the term “box seat,” doesn’t it?

Bouton comes from the “white man is to blame for all the black man’s problems” ideology, and he put the lie to baseball’s claim of being color blind, with enlightening racial statistics that revealed that many of the game’s stars were black, but few journeymen were. Many of his conservative teammates felt he was a bit of a Communist. It has been said that Stalin would have had a job in baseball if he brought the high heat, which Bouton could do, but the Yankees dropped him like a bad habit as soon as he hurt his arm. “Ball Four” made Bouton rich and famous, holds up well today, and is a gem of humor, irony and inside baseball.

“OCTOBER 1964” by David Halberstam (1995)

Sometimes the best sports books are not really sports books, as is the case with David Halberstam’s brilliant “October 1964”, which tells the story of a changing America through the microcosm of two very different baseball teams.

Halberstam, one of the great living American writers, concentrates on events that occurred during tumultuous times. Halberstam examines the loser of the 1964 World Series, the New York Yankees, who represent the old America, and the winners, the St. Louis Cardinals, who represent the new.

The Yankees were the Republican Party, conservative, white, country club elite, old money, Wall Street, the status quo, featuring Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, and Whitey Ford. Their style of play was to not take chances, and they only had a couple black players.

The Cardinals mirrored Berkeley rabble rousers, and they played “National League baseball”—aggressive, stealing bases, stretching singles into doubles. Bob Gibson—black, college-educated, a man’s man with something to prove, was their undisputed leader. Curt Flood was another thoughtful black athlete who harbored quiet resentment over his treatment by rednecks in Southern minor league towns. Tim McCarver came from a well-to-do white family in Memphis that employed black servants, his only frame of reference, until Gibson asked to take a sip from his coke. McCarver hesitatingly handed Gibby the can, Gibby took a big old honkin’ Samuel L. Jackson sip, flashed the kid a giant smile, and handed the can back. McCarver’s lesson: Sharing with black’s is just like sharing with whites.
Halberstam details the metaphor of these two clubs, in which the Yankees would fall from their lofty perch, only to rise once they changed their ways in accordance with the world around them, mirroring the Reagan Revolution. The Cardinals would win three pennants in the ‘60s, Gibson ascending to Hall of Fame status, while McCarver grew up to be the modicum of tolerance. Flood became the symbol of the union movement with a fall-on-his-sword lawsuit challenging the reserve clause, opening the door to freedom and riches for numerous players.

JERRY MAGUIRE

Jerry Maguire should have won the Best Film Academy Award for 1996. Rock’n’roller Cameron Crowe, who wrote Fast Times At Ridgemont High for Rolling Stone, infuses Maguire with some terrific musical selections, including The Who’s raucous version of “Magic Bus” from the “Live at Leeds” album. Cuba Gooding, Jr. is over-the-top, although an Oscar performance I do not believe he delivers. That being said, the film breaks some major rules of the American screenwriting paradigm.

First of all, Maguire’s character arc is all in the beginning. Jerry (Tom Cruise, loosely playing superagent Leigh Steinberg) “grows a conscience” in the film’s opening sequence, proposing that his company take on fewer clients. Most films are about the main character arriving at this kind of revelation over a two-hour period.

The second fault that Jerry Maguire must overcome is the goal of its main characters, which is to make money. We are asked to feel sorry for Jerry because he is fired, but here is a guy who has made a ton of dough and possesses a law degree. His only client is Arizona Cardinals “shrimp” wide receiver Rod Strickland (Gooding). The leap of faith includes the audience’s requirement of empathizing with Strickland, who is on the cusp of stardom playing in a small media market, carries a big attitude, and bitches about money from beginning to end. He is offered a four-year, $1.7 million deal by the club, and acts as if it is chicken feed. This begs the questions: How much money would he earn if he was not a pro football player, why are the Cardinals responsible for his never having to work after retirement, and couldn’t you make do with 1.7 mil? When Strickland leads the Cardinals into the Play-Offs with a big catch to beat Dallas, he is rewarded with a four-year, $11.7 million deal. Conversely, in today’s financial sports climate, that is not all that much.

Another hurdle the film is forced to climb is the passive aspect of its star (Cruise) when the going gets tough. Strickland appears to be paralyzed after his spectacular touchdown grab, but Jerry is a helpless by-stander who can only serve platitudes in his cell phone conversation with Rod's bitchy wife, Marcy. The star is supposed to be the guy who does something to save the day.

The real story of Jerry Maguire is the love interest, Dorothy Boyd (Renee Zellwegger) and her adorable son, Ray. She shows loyalty to Jerry, is rewarded with marriage to Tom Cruise, who finally does something when he decides, months after the ceremony, to fall in love with his wife.
This film hit home with this reader particularly, because I *was* *Jerry Maguire*, absent the happy ending: A sports agent with one client (a Pittsburgh Pirate outfielder), who in the end lost the client (and big commissions) as a result of my business partner’s obfuscation’s. In my case, I did not get the girl or the coin, but I got the kwon. My failure as an agent led to the priceless realization that a writing career is what *really* makes me happy! Despite its flaws, *Jerry Maguire* is a highly entertaining, realistic story, and one of the top sports films ever made.

**NORTH DALLAS 40**

BY PETER GENT (1973)

FILM STARRING NICK NOLTE AND MAC DAVIS (1978)

**SEMI-TOUGH**

BY DAN JENKINS

FILM STARRING BURT REYNOLDS, KRIS KRISTOFERSON AND JILL CLAYBURGH (1975)

Some great sports books are terrible films, such as Dan Jenkins’ riotous *Semi-Tough*, which was a clunker 1975 film starring Burt Reynolds, Kris Kristoferson and the abysmal Jill Clayburgh. Then there are great sports books that make pretty good films, as is the case with Peter Gent’s *North Dallas 40*. The 1978 film, starring Nick Nolte, was about as good as sports movies got in that era. Subsequent efforts have raised the bar, but despite some hokiness, good acting and story development hold it up.

*North Dallas 40* followed the same pattern as *Semi-Tough*, depicting in semi-fictional manner the intertwining of football, manhood and Texas. These are probably the two best football novels ever written; both are raw, funny and sexy. *North Dallas 40* takes the story one step further, by introducing tragedy and *pathos*. Today, every Tom, Dick and Harry loves to pretend they know The Bard, and would say this book was Shakespearean. I would not go that far, but it is good! Finally, *North Dallas 40* is the third of the great “tell-all” sports books of the 1970s. Before *North* and *Semi*, there was Jim Bouton’s *Ball Four*.

*North Dallas 40* unsuccessfully tries to pass off an opening disclaimer that the characters are fictional. Forget about it. Phil Elliott is Peter Gent, a Dallas Cowboy’s wide receiver in the 1960s. B.A. is Tom Landy, the Cowboys legendary coach. Seth Maxwell is Don Meredith, their quarterback from 1960 to 1968 (some tried to say he was Craig Morton, but he is “Dandy Don”). Thomas Richardson is Duane Thomas, the surly black militant Dallas running back and star of the 1972 Super Bowl. Conrad Hunter is straight-arrow owner Clint Murchison, Art Hartman is Roger Staubach, and Jo Bob Williams is probably Bob Lilly.
It is a simple enough tale of a week in Elliott’s life, preparing with his team for a pivotal game against Fran Tarkenton’s New York Giants at Yankee Stadium (circa 1969). Elliott is a rebel, a malcontent, a non-conformist, a drug addict, an alcoholic, a bi-curious womanizer, an atheist, maybe a Communist, and a clutch wide receiver. He is appealing in that “bad boy” way that we love dark characters, like Paul Newman in “Hud”. He is having an affair with the fiancée of the owner’s younger brother, all the while soothing his terrible aches and bodily pains with a variety of pills, booze and pot. His pot-smoking partner is Maxwell.

B.A. is a straight-arrow Christian who cannot understand why everybody cannot be like that. He also has no personal feelings for his players, all of whom he motivates by mixing an even dose of fear, loathing, intimidation and pain. Much of Landry’s “plastic computer coach” reputation stemmed from this book. Maxwell is not anybody’s friend, but rather a totally self-centered genius leader on a football field. Elliott gets hooked up with the lovely Charlotte Caulder, and after the loss to the Giants, he is ex-communicated from the club for smoking pot. Maxwell’s pot smoking is conveniently overlooked. Elliott’s real crime is sleeping with the fiancée of Conrad’s brother.

In the book, when he returns to Charlotte, he finds that she and her black lover have been killed in a grisly love triangle murder. The film, featuring the brooding Nolte at his anti-social best, and an excellent “good ol’ boy” performance from Davis, steers from this hole and leaves us with the memory of Phil as victim of corporate hypocrisy.

*Semi-Tough* is much lighter, filled with sex, semi-macho Texas homilies, and Jenkins at his pure funniest. It is the story of three childhood friends. Billy Clyde Puckett (Reynolds) and Shake Tiller (Kristoferson) are superstar football players with the New York Giants who played together in high school in Ft. Worth, Texas, then at T.C.U.. Barbara Jane Bookman has been with them every step of the way since kindergarten. The film is destroyed by Clayburgh’s portrayal. In the book, she is described as Pamela Anderson fine. In 1975 Loni Anderson might have cut the mustard. Okay, her character had depth, so they needed an actress, but Clayburgh was semi-pretty at the very best. The idea that men would fall for her in the manner required is ludicrous.

The book succeeds because it can meander in and out of Billy Clyde’s fervent imagination, making full use of his storytelling skills. Billy Clyde describes writing *Semi-Tough* while Jenkins writes *Semi-Tough*, all during the week leading up to the Giants Super Bowl match-up with the Jets at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

Films, which require a tight, three-act structure, fail when they meander, as this one does. All the sight gags that Jenkins has the reader rolling in the aisles over are duds on the screen. Nevertheless, three out of four ain’t bad.

"HISTORY OF FOOTBALL IN LOS ANGELES" BY BRUCE MCINTOSH, RICK OBRAND AND BILL PECK
It is 46 pages long and threatens neither Hemingway, Shakespeare nor Hunter S. Thompson, but for hardcore L.A. sports fans with local pride, this document is beautiful literature! It is published by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, and covers prep sports through the 1989 season (hey guys, time for an up-date). Obrand and Peck were instrumental in helping this writer compile research for StreetZebra's So Cal All-Century feature. The publication is financed by a distinguished Board of Directors that included Peter O'Malley, Lew Wasserman, Rafer Johnson, David Wolper and the late Tom Bradley.

Basically, this compendium gives a brief review of the history and formation of the L.A. high school sports system.

Part I contains all the City championship teams, their records, and coaches, from 1896 (when Los Angeles High somehow was named "consensus" champs on the strength of their 0-1-0 record?), to 1989, the year Franklin (led by coach Armando Gonzales) defeated Garfield, 24-6, to capture the 3-A division, and Dorsey knocked off Carson for the 4-A title.

Part II takes us on a trip down Memory Lane with All-City selections beginning in 1915. Part III is about "Notable Alumni", listing great City players who went on to major college and pro careers. It is an awesome compilation, and proof positive that Los Angeles is far and away the producer of the greatest football players in the world! This thing only includes City Section players, so imagine the Southern Section and the rest of the state and you have an idea of what a treasure of sports heroes we are blessed to have around us.

TY COBB BY CHARLES C. ALEXANDER (1984)

Audio book review

Charles C. Alexander’s Ty Cobb is an illuminating review of the legendary early Twentieth Century baseball superstar. This audio book, read by Walter Zimmerman, is written more like historical biography than a baseball book

Alexander dispels many long-held Cobb myths. Cobb was mean and nasty, but not nearly the ogre of legend. In fact, Cobb was a devout Christian (Baptist), very well spoken, a man who cared about his public image, and engaged himself in many acts of on and off-field kindness. Caricatured as a savage racist by revisionist history, Cobb actually was kindly in his relations with the many black people he grew up with in Georgia, some of whom worked for his family. He had no patience for blacks he considered uppity. He was not Branch Rickey, but he was not the Grand Dragon of the K.K.K., either. Miserly? Sometimes, but without fanfare he took care of players who had hit the skids. A spikes-sharpened demon? You bet, but Ty also shook hands with his combatants after the dust settled, and performed various acts of dovish peacemaking for the benefit of hostile fans.

Alexander is not a psychiatrist, but it is obvious that the fact that Cobb’s mother killed his father in what may not have been an accident, during an incident that occurred because Mr. Cobb suspected Mrs. Cobb of having an affair, shaped Ty’s combative nature. What has been lost over the years is that Cobb became friendly with Babe Ruth (common legend holding that he always hated him). Cobb was a shrewd millionaire investor who never needed to work after baseball, therefore separating himself from regular contact with people while living in huge mansions that were too big for him, after his wife left. Most telling is the relationship Cobb had with his two
male children. He raised them strictly, and because of baseball travel left much of the child rearing to his wife. When he retired, they were grown up and on their own, and Cobb had genuine regrets for “missing” their childhood’s. He wished he had been a doctor, so he could have been home for his kids, and when one of his sons went into medicine, Cobb lamented that if he, too, were a doctor they would have something in common. With all that baggage in tow, Cobb had to endure the premature deaths of both of the boys from untimely illnesses, living the last 20-odd bitter years of his life blaming himself.

Cobb may have been hard to live with, but this book empathetically explains some of the demons that drove the man into becoming a brilliant stock manipulator, a taskmaster father, an unfeeling husband, a reviled teammate, a hated opponent, and in the opinion of those who saw him, perhaps the greatest baseball player who ever lived!

"EVERY PITCHER TELL A STORY"

Seth Swirsky is a Beverly Hills sports memorabilia collector who has spent a lifetime writing to baseball players and keeping the many letters and notes sent to him in return. "Every Pitcher Tells A Story" (1999, Time Books) is a compilation of those letters. While many of the athletes are not pitchers, Seth has a special fondness for moundsmen.

"But the tales that pitchers tell stand out above those told by all other players," Swirsky writes. "A pitcher stands alone on the mound..." Swirsky has compiled letters by pitchers in the Hall of Fame, and by pitchers the average baseball fan never heard of. His letters go back as far as Walter Johnson, but also includes such modern non-luminaries as Turk Wendell.

Superstar Steve Carlton writes that he went silent because the press was "breaking the trust that came with their access to the players." Roger Clemens refers to himself as "ROCKET". Cy Young's almost-indiscernible handwritten letter states that baseball cannot be learned "overnight." Cy spent about 30 years in the big leagues, so he ought to know. Bill "Spaceman" Lee probably sprinkled too much marijuana on his pancakes the day he wrote his chicken-scratch letter to Swirsky. Other letters of note include one from Dick Nixon on the Vice President's stationary; a once-classified order from O.S.S. boss "Wild Bill" Donavan directing catcher-turned-spy Moe Berg to capture a Nazi rocket scientist (Berg was later confused by a movie producer with the "Three Stooges" Moe); and self-publicity from "Ball Four" pitcher/author Jim Bouton.

Perhaps the most interesting is the1923 typed correspondence on letterhead saying "BASEBALL," in which Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis crushes banned "Black Sox" star "Shoeless Joe" Jackson's desperate hope for re-instatement.

Book Review: "Atlas Shrugged" by Ayn Rand

A POWERFUL BOOK THAT DEFINED A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND INFLUENCED INFLUENTIAL MINDS
Published in 1957 after years in the works, Ayn Rand's *magnum opus*, "Atlas Shrugged" is one of the most influential novels in history. It, and its author, have been vilified and deified. Reviewing this book is as challenging as it was reading all 1168 of its pages. "Atlas Shrugged" is truly a "piece of work." It is a triumph of philosophy, much more so than the quintessential "great American novel." The greatness of this book is in its ideas more so than its literary value. Rand is not a writer on par with Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, or Thomas Wolfe. However, she is a visionary, like her hero, Aristotle. Her fans are fans of her vision, not just her words, and she has spawned millions of them over the years.

"Atlas Shrugged" was Ronald Reagan's favorite novel. It was the most influential book William F. Buckley, Jr. ever read. Obviously, this gives away its premise, which is conservative in nature and therefore anathema to liberals and the literary establishment they control. "Atlas Shrugged" and Rand herself were shoved into second-tier status by college professors and bookstore chains, but long before talk radio, she proved that conservatives win in the marketplace of ideas. Her works have been international best sellers for decades. Clubs, forums, seminars, web sites, and chat rooms devoted to Rand have given her legions of loyal supporters a chance to ask and get answers to the many, many questions that her novels have inspired. For years, Rand toured the country, delighting audiences who seemed to literally worship her.

Following her own novel, "The Fountainhead", and influential non-fiction books "God and Man At Yale" by Buckley, and Whittaker Chambers' essential "Witness" (1952), "Atlas Shrugged" gave impetus to the conservative movement, which broke from the Rockefeller wing of the Republican party to launch Barry Goldwater's Quixote-like 1964 campaign; eventually the Reagan Revolution; and finally the sea change which promises to make the first half of the 21st Century an era of unparalleled American power.

As a reviewer of "Atlas Shrugged", I think it is necessary to declare my political allegiance in a way that is unnecessary in dissecting Hemingway, or even the works of John Steinbeck. I came to Rand late in life. After hearing mythological stories of Rand's influence, I felt the need to know what others have come to know before me. However, I have never attended a Rand seminar, and outside of reading a few web sites, I am a relative babe in the Randian woods. I think this is to my benefit, since I do not possess the answers to the many questions "Atlas Shrugged" inspires. I shall endeavor to ask these questions in the course of this review.

I am conservative, and therefore pre-disposed to accept Rand's philosophy. Upon learning that "Atlas" helped form the minds of Buckley and Reagan, no self-respecting member of the "vast right wing conspiracy" could resist Ayn Rand. That said, this book has many faults, and I will list them first.

First, the characters are not the most believable. Rand has created people who make her points, through their virtues or their faults. Sometimes this leads to black-and-white characterizations, and language that nobody really speaks. Her heroic characters tend to break into speechifying, sometimes going page after page, laying lofty, perfect language on each other. It would be like expecting John Kennedy to give his "ask not what you can do for your country" speech while in casual conversation with his brother Bobby.

The main heroes are supermen (plus one superwoman, Dagny Taggart). They are very close to perfect, if not actually perfect, which is not wholly believable. They are like the Greek gods who made up the human ideal that Aristotle, Plato and Socrates strived to attain, or describe. They are physically beautiful, inspiringly intelligent and completely impervious to
human corruption (although the liberals would argue their philosophical moorings are corrupt in and of themselves).

Their enemies possess few traits that might be considered admirable. There is a propagandistic quality to Rand's descriptions which, I hate to say this, reminds me (in a subtle manner) of the way undesirables were painted by the Nazi public relations machine. Knowing little about Rand personally, I have the freedom to conjecture about her motives based solely on my virgin reading of "Atlas Shrugged". If one is prone to finding racism behind every tree, which many are, I suppose Rand's cast of WASPISH upper crust heroes could be viewed as lacking in diversity. However, this book was written in the 1940s and '50s, so it should be judged accordingly. Few novelists of that era were creating great black or Jewish characters. Even Steinbeck's Okies were all white. Rand, being a woman, centers the book on Dagny, who I think must be the model for how Rand sees herself, so give her credit there. Furthermore, all the "bad guys" are rich (or connected) white guys, so the racism angle very possibly has no legs.

Rand's background no doubt plays a major role in her philosophy. She was born in Russia, and achieved a literate education, with the desire of becoming a writer. Her formative years ran smack dab into the Communist revolution. Being an educated woman, Rand was given the chance to rise in the Communist hierarchy of V.I. Lenin. Whether she ever bought into Communism or not I do not know. At some point, which seems to coincide with Josef Stalin's ascension to power, Rand found herself opposing the system. She fell out of favor, and managed to escape to America, the country she identified as the ideal place for her budding philosophy, which combines entrepreneurialism, freedom, and Aristotle's realism into something she calls objectivism.

Rand made her way to Hollywood, where her exotic European good looks and intellect made her stand out. She found work behind the scenes, and wrote screenplays. She struggled to succeed as a novelist, enduring the rejection letters of publishers. Eventually, "The Fountainhead" was published, and over time it became a huge success. She wrote the screenplay for "The Fountainhead", which starred Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal. By the time "Atlas Shrugged" was published, it was highly anticipated by her millions of devoted fans, and it did not disappoint. Rand married a man named Frank O'Connor, who is the archetype of her male characters and inspired her notions of male-female romance.

To those of you who are new to Ayn Rand, I suggest as a primer watching "The Fountainhead" on video, available in most public libraries. After reading "Atlas", then read "Getting It Right", Buckley's novel about Rand's influence.

Describing "Atlas Shrugged" is a challenge. There is a mystical quality to it. At times, one gets the feeling that you are reading a "Twi-Light Zone" episode. There are events that seem too convenient, coincidental or unexplained. Like Rod Serling, Rand writes scenes as much for effect as for organic reality. "Atlas" is not for everyone. Many readers could labor through this beast without a clue. Sometimes the reader feels as if he or she should be a member of Mensa in order to get what Rand is trying to convey.

However, the story is not as fanciful as it may appear at first glance. As best I can gather, it takes place either in the 1950s, or in some future projected beyond the '50s. While it does not provide the information, it seems to describe what America and the world would have been like had World War II not interrupted the Great Depression of the 1930s. The world remained at peace, but without the U.S. ascending to power via military dominance. Socialism has become the world's political system. The U.S. valiantly fights its overwhelming tides, while many in its
midst advocate socialism on American soil. Every country except the U.S. calls itself a People's State, as in the People's State of Mexico, the People's State of England, etc.

Dagny Taggart is the heiress of a huge railroad company, Taggart Transcontinental. Dagny is totally self-sufficient and never for a second apologizes for being a woman in a man's world. She has inherited wealth, but her intelligence and work ethic is greater than any who might aspire to replace her. She is attractive but avoids the accoutrements of feminine flash. She is sexually liberated, but there are only a handful of extraordinary men who are capable of stirring her passions. She believes that she and her company are entitled to the profits earned through hard work and the creation of a better product in a competitive marketplace.

Dagny's brother, Jim, co-runs the railroad. He may be a capitalist, but he holds lofty notions of man's duty to society. The problem with this is that his altruism is based on theory, not reality.

Early on, a bum is heard asking the question, "Who is John Galt?" This is the repeated question that fuels the mystery of "Atlas Shrugged". This question is a catchphrase of society, echoing an increasing agitation among the masses that life is bound to result in fruitless disappointment.

The legend revolves around the question of who and what Galt is. An urban myth has it that Galt created the "engine that runs the world," but destroyed it, then took his knowledge to some kind of modern Atlantis. Dr. Robert Stadler provides one clue. Stadler is a brilliant scientist who sold out, choosing to run a pedestrian state-run institute instead of using his great mind to create the inventions that optimize modern society. Stadler had three great students.

One is Hank Rearden, who has developed a metal that is cheaper and easier to make than any previous metal. If his metal proves to be reliable, it will change the steel industry. Another is Francisco d'Anconia, the scion of a Latin American copper dynasty. D'Anconia is the only "non-white" among Rand's cast of major characters, but he is from old Spanish stock, so he is far from the "affirmative action" hero of the story. The third of Stadler's prodigies is Galt.

Dagny and industrialist Ellis Wyatt take a chance on the unproven Rearden Metal, which proves to be reliable. The result is an expansion of the railroad lines into the Midwest and Rocky Mountains, and huge profits for the companies that take a chance on the Metal.

Dagny has an affair as a young woman with Francisco, but he inexplicably cuts it off. Then he goes on a wild playboy spree, letting his copper empire suffer terrible losses. Dagny then moves on to Hank Rearden, who is married to a loveless woman in it for his riches. Rand makes no effort to apologize for this act of adultery. Dagny's intellect and respect for Rearden make up for any immorality associated with marital infidelity.

As the world economy gets worse and worse, the government institutes a series of draconian taxes and laws designed to cut into profits, for the "good" of society. It is possible that Rand was inspired to make the steel industry the locus of her story based on President Harry Truman's handling of the steel crisis during the Korean War, although she never makes any mention of Presidents or how the formal American government works. She chooses to portray the government through a scummy cabal of bureaucrats, who are described as little more than looters. Their socialist creed is called evil, but it is in demonstrating why it is evil, more than the basics of the story itself, in which Rand achieves her triumph.

Eventually, the interference and outright theft of profits by the government makes it extremely difficult for Dagny, Rearden and Wyatt to do business. Wyatt disappears, supposedly
a suicide victim. He leaves an oil derrick burning uncontrollably. Seen from 100 miles away on the steppes of the Rocky Mountains, it is called Wyatt's Torch.

The economic depression gets worse and worse. The government loots more and more. Most of the top minds in America mysteriously disappear - oilmen, scientists, inventors, industrialists, business geniuses. Eventually, Dagny flies her private plane into a seemingly uninhabitable gulch in the Southwest. She has "found" Galt's Gulch. The mystery is revealed: Galt, at the age of 26, had built a motor that would change the world. It would make all forms of transportation and machinery obsolete, replacing old tools with new technology that would cost less and produce more. His engine promised to have an effect on the world in the manner of Henry Ford's Model T, the radio, Edison's creation of electricity, railroads, and other huge innovations. But Galt, frustrated at the interference of government bureaucrats and attempts to cut into his projected profits, abandoned the motor and disappeared. He created a self-sustained society, hidden by some kind of ray that prevents it from being detected by the outside world. He then ventured undetected into the world, recruiting the greatest minds in America with the promise of a life free of socialist intervention and plans for a future in which their minds could be free to re-build a broken world; broken by the lack of entrepreneurialism, free market capitalism and unfettered genius.

Among Galt's recruits are Wyatt, d'Anconia, and eventually Rearden. Wyatt has not committed suicide. D'Anconia has let his company be run into the ground to deny the government from looting his profits, and his playboy spree was a façade.

The best way to describe Galt's world in modern terms would be to imagine if Bill Gates just closed Microsoft, disappeared, and recruited all the top minds in America to simply go on strike. Their strike is simply to stop thinking and producing. This is the heart of Rand's philosophy. Without great thinkers, the world crumbles. Thus, the title, "Atlas Shrugged". Galt is the man who holds the world symbolically on his shoulders. He shrugs, and the rest of the world is unable to maintain its equilibrium.

Rand's story is one in which greatness is rewarded by brutal taxation, and bureaucrats steal intellectual property. She defends capitalism and the profit-motive, not just for the sake of money, but as the incentive that creates the kind of production that makes the world's populace able to live in health and comfort, yet the industrialists are accused of taking advantage, of plundering, the poor and the helpless. Rand makes no bones about describing the unfairness of a world in which Third World savages hate those who, through intellectual superiority and hard work, make products and create a world that allows them to survive instead of dying of diseases that would go untreated if not for their inventions.

Like George Orwell's "Animal Farm", Rand demonstrates through ruthless realism why Communism is evil, without ever saying a single word about Communism, or mentioning any of its dictators.

The one question I had while reading "Atlas Shrugged" revolved around Rand's religious convictions, particularly whether she believes in Christianity. The best way of describing my feelings about her philosophy is that I agree up to about 90 percent. Rand's objectivism is based on the concept that any man is responsible only for himself. He is due the profits of his labor, and the benefit that society derives from his inventions is secondary. I have never adhered to the concept that Christianity and capitalism are opposed to each other, since capitalism is the engine that makes people strive to make for a world in which everyone can benefit. However, man does owe his fellow man. Pure selfishness is wrong.
In the end, Galt is captured by the bureaucrats, who attempt to get him to lead the country, lending his talents and the team he has recruited, to re-build the economy. Galt will not give in, insisting that taxation be revoked and that the government "get the hell out of the way" so "men of the mind" will be free to do great work. Society will revive as a natural by-product of their work, even though its revival will not be the motivation of these great men. When Galt is tortured in order to force his acquiescence, his followers rescue him, and they retreat to their hideaway. The world crumbles into a terrible depression. Galt and his followers simply plan to wait it out, and when anarchy has taken over, they will return to purify society with their great works.

OUR CAMPUSES IN CONTEXT

Long before the battles between the Randians, Goldwaterites and Rockefeller wing of the GOP; before the Reagan Revolution and the Contract with America, even before Whittaker Chambers' "Witness", there was young Bill Buckley, Russell Kirk and a few little-known economists preaching conservatism. Lost in the McCarthy rhetoric, the underpinnings of conservatism were drowned out, but Buckley was and continues to be a voice that gives it reason. The prescience of this book is in its dissection of liberalism on college campuses, and centers on the modernist swing away from God and towards Man. Buckley's best argument throughout the work might be called the "marketplace of ideas," which today conservatives are winning. He points out the political views of many of the families who send their kids to college, particularly Yale. Most of the parents are found to disagree with the new Leftist stridency of Yale and other colleges, but the parents have little if any choice in the matter of getting their children educated within a more balanced environment. This situation has not gotten better over the years. Reading "God and Man At Yale" teaches us that campus radicalism did not begin during the Vietnam War.

READ AS PART OF A THREE-PART PROCESS

Bill Buckley is a giant of intellect and a hero of the conservative movement. This novel details influential times in his life. It is well written and, if one is politically savvy, enjoyable, but not a masterpiece. My opinion is that this book should be viewed as part of a three-setp process, which involves Ayn Rand. Buckley was influenced by Rand and this book details the struggle in the early 1960s between the Randian, Goldwater and Rockefeller wings of the pre-Vietnam Republican party. My suggestion is to read this book, then watch Rand's "The Fountainhead" on video, then read Rand's "Atlas Shrugged" (all 1168 pages). Then you should get the overall context.

BUSH IS AN UNDERRATED TOP GUN FIGHTER JOCK

I finally read this book, and did so in light of the mounting criticism of Bush as "dumb," along with attempts to discredit his military career. My sense at this point is to look at the available empirical evidence. George W. Bush was admitted to Yale and graduated in four years. He was a
legacy, so getting in was assured, but many students do not graduate in four years, as he did. This is to his credit. His grades have not been released, but most of those who were there say he was about a B- student, which is quite respectable.

Next, he entered the U.S. Air Force, their version of the Reserves, which in his case was the Texas Air Guard. Perhaps he received some favoritism over others in getting a slot, but the evidence is he did not. The fact is, he was willing to "go jets," which few were willing or qualified to try out for. Bush went through a series of rigorous tests and passed them. He entered flight school, where the "wash out" rate is about 80 percent. He passed. He entered flight test, where the wash out rate is quite high. He passed. He qualified and flew jets. Here is the thing: People make movies and write books about this experience. "The Right Stuff", "Top Gun", "An Officer and a Gentleman" are all about exceptional young men who walk this trial by fire. Bush is one of them. He is a Top Gun - no, not the actual guys who are selected for Miramar by the Navy, not a Blue Angel, not Chuck Yeager, but he is one of an elite group of awesome Americans.

When Fleet Week comes around, and I see these pilots walking around town, my first reaction is that by virtue of having those wings they are top flight individuals, outstanding people. I do not ask whether they flew in combat or missed some drills. I know if they are wearing that uniform and have those wings they are studs. Bush was one of those men.

Apparentely Bush missed a few drills in 1973 after five years in the Air Force. I was in the Reserves and missed some drills. Everybody misses drill occasionally, for a million valid reasons, none of which means we were AWOL. Bush was never AWOL.

One other thing. Bush never flew in Vietnam, but I bet he is glad of this. Had he, no doubt his detractors would say he dropped napalm on villages and killed civilians.

Bush applied to the University of Texas Law School and was turned down. So much for having every door opened to him because of his "daddy," who had been a Texas Congressman and two-time Texas Senate candidate. Bush applied to the Harvard Business School. Guess the percentage of people who are not accepted. 80 percent? 90? Point made.

Bush was accepted. He was not a Harvard legacy. It would appear he got in on merit, being a Yale grad of good grades and a fighter pilot. Their conclusion: This guy has an impressive background. He studied the courses, and graduated with an MBA. How many enter the MBA program and wash out? Many do.

Accordingly to the not-Republican Atlantic Monthly, Bush has never lost a political debate. He has squared off with some tough characters, like Ann Richards and Al Gore. Dumb? This issue has has been studied and analyzed. The conclusion? Bush is no dummy.

"GOD'S LONELY MAN."

John Milius is the greatest screenwriter you never heard of, not to mention a terrific director. He describes the "Dirty Harry" Callahan character as "God's lonely man." Milius is that rarest of rarities, a Hollywood conservative. He herein wrote a film for the Republican Clint Eastwood that spoke to the hopes and fears of an America yearning for justice, law'n'order in a world dominated by overarching liberalism in the 1960s and '70s.
Picture America at that time: Vietnam, the streets and campuses exploding in riot, and a new social ethos that was willing to blame a racist white establishment for the crimes of this nation's increasing population of criminals.

In the 1960s, the Supreme Court became activist to the hilt. The most obvious of these cases was the famous Miranda ruling from Arizona, in which a criminal was allowed to go free because he had not understood his rights, not understanding the English language spoken by the arresting officer. His subsequent confessions were thrown out. The Court spoke of the "forbidden fruit" of evidence gathered by overzealous officers who "failed" to inform criminals that they were being searched just before they discovered their weapons, their drugs, their evidence. A police officer who found evidence of crimes was unable to make the case unless he had probable cause ahead of time to find the evidence.

In "Dirty Harry", a character (Andy Robinson) based on the never-caught Zodiac killer who terrorized the San Francisco Bay Area at that time, goes on a murder rampage. Eastwood catches him at Kezar Stadium. A little girl is lying in a hole some place. She has a limited amount of air left. Eastwood knows the guy did it. We know it. God knows it. The scene is worth watching in light of Abu Ghraib and the concept of the "ticking time bomb" theory of interrogation that the terror era has brought upon us.

Eastwood knows that if the man is arrested and booked, he will not talk, hiding behind a lawyer, and that the girl will suffocate. He applies a little bit of torture to Robinson, the Scorpio killer. What he wants is to know where the little girl is, so she can be saved. Scorpio wines about having rights and wanting a lawyer. Eastwood extracts the information from him. The girl, however, has died before she can be found by the cops.

Eastwood is confronted by the D.A., who tells him not only that the killer had rights, but that he will walk as soon as he is healthy, and he has brought in a Berkeley professor to detail to Clint how he violated the criminal's rights and, in essence, is worse than the Scorpio killer.

The end? We've all seen it a million times on TBS's "Movies For Guys Who Like Movies." Eastwood gets his man. He receives zero gratitude from the authorities. Millions of ordinary American citizens appreciated him in theatres and TVs since then, however.

BRILLIANT BUT SLIGHTLY DISTURBED

In American literature, there are two distinct "schools" that emerged from the Lost Generation of ex-patriates who lived in Paris after World War I. These are the Hemingway and Fitzgerald wings of political novelization.

Fitzgerald was a member of the East Coast elite, the Ivy Leaguers of the Hamptons known as the "idle rich." Hemingway represents a more red-blooded Midwesternism, tempered by the war and its physical and mental horrors.

"The Great Gatsby" describes a con man from the lower classes of Middle America who remakes himself. He achieves fabulous wealth in the heady early days of the Roaring 20s, at time when the stock market was unregulated by the SEC and such things could be accomplished. In the manner of the Count of Monte Cristo, he makes a fantastic splash on High Society, a nouveau riche pretty boy, supposedly an officer in the Army during the Great War, who owns a huge Long Island mansion and holds enormous Summer parties.
The book centers on the angst of the idle rich, the love affairs of the morally ambiguous, people who must look for newer and more outrageous ways to tickle their fancies. Naturally, Gatsby's attractiveness among the gorgeous socialite women of the Hamptons stirs resentment among the old school boys, who question his validity. Fitzgerald here describes a world from the standpoint of guilt; guilt at being rich. He paints a picture of people who have money without having earned it, who are not worthy of it in the entrepreneurial sense. This is an elite, liberal view - the opposite of the more hard-scrabble Hemingway world. Political views aside, Fitzgerald is a fabulous writer who lends a distinct voice to the American literary scene. This is the proverbial Great American Novel.

MAN'S TIMELESS YEARNING FOR FREEDOM

The Great Escape may be the greatest tribute to man's yearning to be free ever portrayed on the cinema.

SHOULD BE REQUIRED READING IN WASHINGTON AND U.N.

This is timeless Shakespearean drama, about a King and his three daughters, wrapped around corruption, betrayal and tragedy. It speaks to the power and pressure of leadership, and modern politicians would well to heed its valuable lessons.

THE SHARK IS A METAPHOR FOR LIFE

This is a short book Ernest Hemingway wrote late in his life, during his Cuban years. The fisherman's struggle to bring his greatest catch ever, the shark, in from the sea while it is slowly and painfully bitten and chewed up by the other fish along the way is the metaphor for life's struggles. Every unknown man, trying to achieve something in anonymopus splendor, can relate to it. It also revived Hemingway as a great writer after a few lean years.

ORWELL'S PARODY OF COMMUNISM IS TREMENDOUS

George Orwell was a Socialist who came to see, in the years after Joe Stalin's crimes were known, that Communism was the new evil replacing Naziism in this world of ours. His story of animals, re-creating the Russian Revolution, sounds ridiculous until you read it. Read it! Then read it again. There are lessons in this book that are divinely inspired.

COURAGEOUS AND BEAUTIFUL

For a book like this to have been written when it was, about and in the place it was, by a person of that timew and place, is nothing less than courageous. Harper Lee's beautiful story of
redemption, love and humanity pre-cursors the works of Martin Luther King, and can be called one of the early, great influences that inspired the long-denied civil rights of African-Americans. Fantastic. As a writer, I am in awe of this kind of work, and acknowledge that I can read it, I can admire it, but I can never duplicate it.

**THIS IS WRITING AT ITS BEST**

There is no denying John Steinbeck's brilliance. I feel that his best work is "East of Eden", but "The Grapes of Wrath" is a monumental work, probably the one that captures his political sensibilities and the times he wrote about better than any. "Grapes" has character development, pathos, irony and social commentary, all biting, poignant and loving at the same time. Its political message is Socialist. The problem with this is that it offers great misery, packaged in the plight of the Joad family and Okies headed to California during the Dust Bowl '30s, but it does not offer solutions. Business owners, capitalists, policemen and authority figures are fairly evenly displayed as unfeeling, selfish, sometimes racist, and mean.

What Steinbeck chose not to do was to see the 1930s from their standpoint. The message would seem to indicate that he advocated that the government just handle all the Okies' problems, but this creates some problems. First, the FDR Administration did more in this regard than any previous government, or any since, possibly. With this in mind, then the question devolves into the conclusion that government intervention is not the answer.

The question I kept asking was, Why do roadside business owners or cops or others barely struggling during terrible times owe something to these Okies? From the Christian standpoint, they do. But the Okies had no job skills. They offered little. They were not marketable. They were willing to work, but they could not do anything other than manual labor.

It is easy to criticize them for coming to California where there were more people than jobs, but they apparently were coerced into it by misleading flyers advertising fruit waiting to be picked and jobs aplenty.

In the light of historical retrospect, the unsaid message of this book at its time was that the people described would be "saved" if they lived in Communism. Those who flirted with Communism in America in the 1930s can be excused, considering the times. But Steinbeck was an educated man, and by the time he finished this book, the basic facts about Stalin's Russia were known. Russia was in shambles, millions had already been murdered, starved and imprisoned. It was hell on Earth. Steinbeck had to know, if not every gory detail, enough to establish the fact that Communism was utterly evil.

This left him, it seems, between a rock and a hard place, which was the big problem for all the Communists and fellow travelers in the West. The Utopian ideal does not adhere to reality. In the end, "Grapes" describes misery and plays to guilt, a powerful strategy.

What history tells us is that the "answer" to the Okies' predicament, while not perfect, while not timely, was in the end the fact that they lived in America, which to paraphrase Churchill is "the worst country known to man with the exception of all other countries known to man."

To live in America offered more hope and more chance of success to these people than all other Earthly possibility. Steinbeck does not portray that. He does not necessarily deserve to be excoriated for it; it would require perhaps more vision than he had in light of his publication and probable editorial time constraints. However, travel the California landscape today and one will
find the children and grandchildren of these Okies, and they will mainly tell you stories of
struggle that ended in various forms of happiness and success for the ancestors of the Okies.
Despite any political differences, Steinbeck is a writer of such talent and inner greatness that it
cannot be denied.

**TAKES MORE SMARTS THAN I HAVE**

I made the decision that I was an educated person. As such, in order to be well read, there were
certain books I needed to read. One of them is "Ulysses". I struggled. It was almost beyond my
ken. My feeling is it can be read and understood as part of a class, in which the reader takes notes
and periodically discusses it with an expert. As far as "pleasure reading," I leave it to smarter
people than me.

**AT THE PLATE . . . WITH SAMMY SOSA**

This is a fun book that looks at a great superstar whose legacy will get better over time.

**I ENJOYED THIS BOOK**

I enjoyed reading this book and recommend it to others.

**POLITICALLY INFLUENTIAL**

Like "Atlas Shrugged" a century later, "The Brothers Karamazov" is not only a great novel that
delves deep into the human psyche and the Russian soul, but it has been studied by political
scholars. Dostoevsky came from an aristocratic family and served in the military, but gave up all
that this promised him in the post-Napoleonic years to write full time.
The most telling section in "Brothers", in my view, is the conversation between Christ and the
old priest during the Spanish Inquisition. This is very telling as it pertains to the "new" view of
the Catholic church, a fallout of reformation, the Inquisition, and a re-thinking of Christianity.
My feeling is that Islam would be well served and possibly saved if a modern Dostoevsky
woulde emerge from its ranks.
When Christ forgives the evil old priest, a Satanic figure really, this is as true a view of real
Christianity as any. The pomp and circumstance of Catholicism, the tortures and abuses, fade
away in the blinding light of Christ's foregiveness and love. Bravo.

**LIKE BEING IN A TIME CAPSULE**

"DON QUIXOTE" HAS BEEN CALLED THE FIRST NOVEL EVER WRITTEN AND THE
BEST NOVEL EVER WRITTEN. MANY OF THE LEADING LITERARY FIGURES OF THE
PAST CENTURY MAKE THE POINT OF READING IT EVERY YEAR. IT IS A LONG
BOOK BUT WORTH IT, A JOY EACH EVENING. IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY READING. ANYTHING THAT OLD IS GOING TO HAVE ITS PATCHES, BUT THE STORY IS LYRICAL, SWEET, BRAVE, COURAGEOUS, IRONIC AND MANY OTHER THINGS.

READING CERVANTES IS LIKE GOING BACK IN TIME. IT IS A WINDOW INTO EUROPE AROUND 1600. CERVANTES WAS A MILITARY MAN AND FAILED WRITER UNTIL "DON QUIXOTE'S" PUBLICATION AND THE SUCCESS OF SOME OF HIS STAGEPLAYS BROUGHT HIM FAME AND FORTUNE THE LAST COUPLE YEARS OF HIS LIFE. HIS BACKGROUND AND INSIGHT REMINDS ME SOMEWHAT OF DOSTOEVSKY.


I KNEW BILL LEE. BILL LEE IS A FRIEND OF MINE...

To any modern athlete who thinks of himself as an iconoclast, a funnyman, an intellectual, a wit - whether it be Jason Williams, Barry Zito, Michael Irvin, Charles Barkley, you name it, I say that I knew Bill Lee. I worked with Bill Lee. Bill Lee is a friend of mine, and you are no Bill Lee. This is no put down of those who are not the Spaceman. It is an ode to Lee. I love this character.

This is as funny a book as has ever been written about baseball. It is so unique, so California New Age, so filled with Boston baseball lore and Ruthian curse that reading it is just one big pleasure cruise. Lee is in the tradition of Casey Stengel and Rod Dedeaux, whose lineage he follows.

Lee's aunt was the main character described in "A League of Their Own". This is a guy surrounded by men's men growing up (his old man, his Uncle Grover), yet it is his aunt who taught him how to pitch. Amazingly, I know most of Bill's family, and they are Ed McMahon to Bill's Carson. His father was a straight arrow phone company exec. His aunt just smiles at Bill's buffoonery. She pitched a perfect game in the women's pro league on June 6, 1944 and, when asked if events of that day distracted her, she just said she had the ability to focus.

Recently Spaceman told an audience that "I don't believe in killing anybody, but the Unabomber had some good ideas." Like Hunter Thompson, here is a guy whose politics are the polar opposite of mine, yet I just dig the man.

If you grew up in the San Fernando Valley or Marin County, went to USC (particularly when Dedeaux coached there), or matriculated at Fenway Park, this book will tickle your jones for those memories. Lee is the closest guy I can think of (outside of George Patton) to making me
think reincarnation is possible. I see him as a court jester of Camelot, always funny, always taking the minority view and making you shake your head - and smile.

I once had Bill as a guest at my home. At 6 A.M. I went to wake him, and he was gone. I looked out my window and Space was doing Tai-Kwan do with my 119-year old Chinese neighbor, a guy who probably was the emperor's body guard in 1880. I took Space to work. At a law office, I was in conference when the secretary came in yelling to "call 911. A guy's having a heart attack in the parking lot." I looked out the window. Space was doing his afternoon Tai-kwan do. I asked Space to meet me and my SC baseball buddies at the 501 Club in L.A. that night. The guys were all there, skeptical that Space would show. He showed and drank beer with us all night, filling us with stories. When a Doors song came on the juke Space announced, "My brother got stabbed at a Doors concert once." Survived. Space made nice-nice with an SC cutie, regaling her with stories about the 1968 College World Series vs. the Southern Illinois Salukis. Only Space could have captured some chick's attention with memories of the Southern Illinois Salukis. You had to be there.

Space spoke to the Orange County Young Republicans when he was running for President on Canada's Rhino ticket in 1988. The YRs were aghast at Space filling their precious speaker's rostrum until he took stage and had these buttoned-down types - and I do not exaggerate here - literally rolling in the aisles with laughter. Space in front of a crowd is up there with Carlin or Robin Williams.

These anecdotes are a typical example of what is in his autobiography. Not everybody can have the experience of spending time with Lee, but you all can get the next best thing, which is reading this book.

MAYBE THE BEST POLITICAL BOOK EVER WRITTEN

Hunter Thompson would despise me. I am a conservative Reaganite. I thought Dick Nixon a brilliant President. I think the Lord Jesus Christ saves my soul. Whereas I despise Michael Moore and do not think he speaks the truth, I admire Hunter Thompson, who is probably a lot closer to Moore's politics than mine. It is not just the passage of time that heals divisions, it is more than that. If I were to analyze Hunter's political nostrums, I would probably find much that I know to be wrong, and that Hunter had enough education and knowledge available to him to know it was wrong but he wrote it anyway. Still, whatever visceral reaction I have to Moore I do not have for Hunter.

I guess humor must be why. Hunter is absolutely inconoclastic. He is side-splitting. He never smiles, and his writing has no funniness in it. I picture him writing out of dread and hate, yet it magically transforms itself into laughs when my eyes meet his words and transfer to my brain. Forgive my bad attempt to get into his head and "explain" Hunter. It's all I can do to try.

This book is phenomenal. It contains events that are different from any descriptions ever. Others have novelized reality, but nobody splits the difference like Hunter. Hunter's supposed on-scene reportage of Edmund Muskie coming unglued in the New Hampshire snow, Frank Mankiewiczs' furious (drug induced?) ramblings, the one-on-one with Nixon himelf, leaves the reader exhausted in an effort to separate reality from fantasy. Hunter is like the great con man who uses Truth to augment his lies. This is not calling Hunter a liar, it is just an example. The fact that I don't see this as lies is telling, and separates Hunter and his times from the current political
climate, in which his spawn, if you will, the likes of Moore and Al Franken, try to make Hunteresque points but leave themselves exposed as obfuscators instead. The answer is that Thompson is just so much better than almost all other writers that he cannot be duplicated or even imitated. To try is pointless. Many, including myself, have tried to be the "next Jim Murray," but like Murray nobody can be Hunter, either.

**OPPOSITES ATTRACT**

The beauty of a free country and free artistic expression is that it allows polar opposites to find themselves. Bill "Spaceman" Lee once told a conservative political audience that "I'm so conservative I eat road kill" and "I'm so conservative I'm standing back-to-back with Chairman Mao." Funny? Doesn't seem that way, but you never heard such laughter as responded to Lee's delivery. The same goes for my love affair with the writing of Hunter S. Thompson. You could walk the fruited plain from California to the New York Island and not find somebody more different from Thompson than me. Thompson would read my opinions and pronounce that I am an "enemy of the people." If I spent a weekend at his cabin in Woody Creek, however, we'd find common ground. I'm an absolute Reagan conservative, a total Christian, a flag-waving American patriot, an admirer of the military (particularly George Patton), a devotee of law'n'order...and a giant fan of Jim Morrison and Thompson!

"Fear and Loathing" is so brilliant, so funny, so biting in its commentary, so revolutionary that I cannot do it justice herein. Thompson is just plain awesome. An insane writer, in the admirable as well as the literal sense. How to describe this book? "The '60s meets the John Birch Society"? "The American Dream meets the American nightmare"? I don't have it in me to analyze Hunter. He's too good, too out there. Just admiration, that's all I have left for him. The only thing left is mystique, because Thompson, despite years of stories and in-depth analyses, is still very much unknown. Can he be the guy he describes and survive? The truth, or the Truth as Hunter might call it, is that he probably is putting on a little act, but it is just questionable enough to leave doubt, or Doubt! I think Thompson is what Michael Moore wishes he was.

**GEORGE HITS A HOMER**

"Men At Work" is a great, great baseball book. Is it as good as "The Summer Game", "Five Seasons", "A False Spring"? Interestingly, it is and it isn't. Technically it is. It contains superb reportage and loving writing about a game George Will adores. But the there is a technology to Will's writing, a one-two-three, a but-for premise that borders on lawyering, advocacy. I love it, yes, but I have to rate this just below the pure romance of Roger Angell or the raunchy, man's-man baseball-as-life stories that infuses Pat Jordan's work. Will has written here a book that precursors "Moneyball". It describes the new age of baseball, an age of computers and preparation that replaces the Joe Schultz "Let's beat 'em, then pound some Budweiser" era described by Jim Bouton's "Ball Four".
"Five Seasons" is just as good as "The Summer Game", but my personal perceptions, part of maturation, changed my perception of the book. Roger Angell's first work covered events before I was aware of them and then those that occurred in my most formative, fanatical, baseball-crazy years. "Five Seasons" describes years in which I was still a huge baseball fan (I always have been and always will be), but they are all events I witnessed. For this reason, and because as I grew older my interests - girls, cars, awareness, life - changed, so too does my impression of Angell's writing. Do not take this as any kind of put down. To a younger reader who did not witness the events in "Five Seasons", I assure you that Angell's writing can fill you with wonder as much as "The Summer Game" did for me. It has been said, and I agree here, that baseball is the preferred game of intellectuals, or at least educated people. Nobody embodies this reality better than Angell and his writings.

YES, HE IS THE POET LAUREATE OF BASEBALL

There are some great baseball writers. Roger Kahn and Pat Jordan come to mind. Roger Angell is the very best of them all. This book is as much a part of my youth as family vacations. I have read this book numerous times, often just picking up random pages and reading for hours until sleep overtook me. There is something about New York City, the 1950s, and the Brooklyn Dodgers that contributed to the axiom that the best sportswriting is baseball writing. Angell is it, in its purest form. Jaques Barzun, a French writer, visited America around the turn of the century to discover what de Toqueville had found some 70 years earlier. Barzun concluded that, "In order to know America, you have to know baseball." To a current generation of young baseball enthusiasts who want to grasp what an older generation felt about this game, I recommend "The Summer Game" above all others. "Five Seasons" might be next, but "The Summer Game" is the best of the lot. It carries forward from Angell's 1950s experiences, and is part of his reportage for The New Yorker. Somehow he infuses the high art literacy necessary for a publication of this sort with the most lyrical, dead-on analysis of baseball ever. He starts with the 1962 Mets, and covers them over several Casey Stengel Polo Grounds seasons. No description ever conveys the wackiness of those lovable losers better, or the old-style devotion of New York fans of the bygone era. This is the Brooklyn Dodger contingent transferred to Polo and Shea. Angell covers the '67 Red Sox, the '68 World Series (McClain vs Gibson overshadowed by Lolich), the Amazin' Mets, the Bay Area in their season of two division champs (1971), and other events, always including the World Series' played between '62 and '71. His writing about Dodger Stadium and Dodger fans in 1966 demonstrates the best of the "new age" Los Angeles baseball enthusiasts, the modernists if you will. It describes vividly how an era has turned. He paints a picture of a beautiful new stadium bathed in California sunlight that is pure romanticism. To a young California reader, as I once was, it was the most perfect imagery.

HE PLAYED THE GAME
Those of us who are professional sportswriters spend a lot of time in press boxes with other writers who criticize what they see on the field, but either never played the game or never played it well. "The Suitors of Spring" is brilliantly written by Pat Jordan, who did play the game. It also brings to mind some of the best sports books ever. "Ball Four's" Jim Bouton played the game. "North Dallas Forty's" Peter Gent played the game. Having stood on the mound, facing down a hitter with the bases loaded, the crowd yelling, the opposition hurling insults, your future on the line and the hair standing up on the back of his neck, is an experience known by few. Jordan knows it.

Here he writes about pitchers, his specialty. He writes about superstars like Tom Seaver, playboys like Bo Belinsky, hardthrowing drunks like Steve Dalkowski, 6-6 lefties who never lived up their potential, like Sam McDowell, and prep phenoms from his home state of Connecticut who met the same fate as the author. Jordan's talent is not one that can be learned in a literary class. He is of the school of hard knoocks, rough hewn, real, human. Bravo, Pat.

ONE OF THE GREATEST SPORTS BOOK OF ALL TIME

"A False Spring" is so good I cannot do it justice here. It is, along with "Ball Four", "The Suitors of Spring" (also by Pat Jordan) and "Bo: Pitching and Wooing" by Maury Allen, one of the best baseball books ever written. This book describes minor league baseball, the hopes and dreams of a young athlete, youthful sex, raunchiness, crushing disappointment, and Americana. I read this book and memorized it, then went off to play minor league ball myself and totally lived all of it. My experiences in the Cardinal and A's organization did not resemble Jordan's, they rhymed. This book tells the story of thousands of young hopefuls who live amongst us, and many more of us can relate to it than can relate to the superhuman life and accomplishments of Barry Bonds.

HISTORY DOES NOT REPEAT, IT RHYMES

This is a novel, written in the style of Bill Safire's "Freedom". It allows Colleen McCullough the opportunity to make history come alive. For me, the Italian and Latin names were hard to keep up with, especially since people often were referred to using their full names and titles. The use of maps of the time are fascinating. It is definitely about warfare and reminds one of the truism that "war is politics by another means." What is most effective about this book is that in reading it, I was struck by the fact that I could have been reading about the Civil War, World War I, Churchill's writings about "The Gathering Storm", or even the Middle East. The Roman Empire lasted for multiple centuries, but it took on many faces. It was not always totalitarian, dictatorial, and cruel. Caesar's time was a time of intrigue. This story describes the desperate struggle of politicians and militarists trying to find out about themselves, asking of their civilization whether they were overwhelming armies, a republic, following in the Platonic tradition, or a little bit of all the above. Outstanding.

A REAL-LIFE JOHN LE CARRE CHARACTER
Moe Berg is truly one of the most interesting, and enigmatic, characters in sports history. What always fascinated me was how, after WWII and no longer in baseball, Berg never worked. He would stay at friends and relatives' homes throughout the country, reading multiple newspapers, and maintaining strict control of those papers. My guess, and this would make for an interesting investigative study, is that he stayed on the OSS/CIA payroll and was working for them, in some capacity: Dissecting the news, dealing with Communist espionage - or who knows, maybe he was working with foreign elements. Berg was something. He has to be considered a major hero. Surely the fact that he was an ex-ballplayer makes him stand out from the other heroes under "Wild Bill" Donovan, as does the fact that a Jew was sent to Nazi-controlled Finland to get German scientists. This is a terrific story. (…)

SOCIALISM?

The title of this book comes from an African proverb. It is based on the theory that a child is best raised by a caring community. Within its pages are many well-intentioned statements that advocate the beauty of a world in which children are provided all that they need - education, health care, love and caring. To discredit it requires generalizing, which is never a good idea (but sometimes impossible to avoid), and to "put down" the idea that providing for kids is a good thing. Of course it is a good thing. The problem starts with Hillary Clinton, who speaks often about "the children." An overall assessment of Hillary - her background, her marriage and partnership with Bill Clinton, Hillarycare, the accusations against her and the inside stories of those who knew her best in Little Rock and D.C., are that her real desire is not to further the betterment of kids, but of her hold on power in America. She uses kids as a smokescreen in this effort. There is no arguing some of the things she advocates are good ideas, and so judging her and this book requires a Kabuki dance between truth and politics. This is what obfuscators are good at creating. There is a conservative opposition to Hillary's book, some of whom call it "It Takes A Village Idiot", which is based on the idea that raising kids is the job of parents, not the state. This is of course correct, but again requires generalizing. To advocate it blindly discredits the role of teachers, Foster parents, neighbors and social workers. Sometimes there are no biological parents around. The health care issue is a big one, and is easy to jump on. It sounds good, of course, to say that all kids should have health care. We live in a country in which they all do not. However, the Canadian-style Hillarycare that was so roundly defeated a decade ago is not the answer. It was explored inside and out at the time and found to be totally lacking as practical application. What we are left after Hillarycare is just Hillary. She is smart and knows how to pull our heartstrings. Watch out for her.(…)

SEEMS SHAKY

As a lay person, like most, I have no real idea whether global warming is real, or at least a real threat. The problem I have is that those who say it is a real threat are not believable to me. They may be right, but I reserve all possibility that they are totally off the mark. It seems that this issue has been coopted by a certain segment of the political class, and is used not in an effort to further
real science, but to further their political agenda. This is somewhat, if not totally, socialist in nature.
Al Gore spoke about global warming on the coldest day in New York City in 150 years, then endorsed "The Day After Tomorrow" as a big movie about global warming that has to be seen. It was so bad, got such terrible reviews, and was so universally panned as lies that it cannot be described herein. Gore has now taken to podiums, changing his voice to sound like Huey Long or George Wallace or some such Southern populist, rolling his r's, leavin' the "n's" off his words, and every time he makes these speeches those he opposes rise in the polls. Al said he "had" to be President, and now he just seems unable to accept his fate. Unfortunately, his association with global warming seems to discredit it. "The Day After Tomorrow" certainly did the issue no good. There are so-called "right wing" scientists who oppose the global warming threat, calling it "junk science." They may have a political agenda. They may be wrong. Personally, I think they are less likely to be wrong than the Leftists. I could be wrong, but that is just my opinion. The problem is that this issue has become so political that, until something really verifiable comes along, it is just a tug-of-war with no real truth attached to it.

GORE'S LEGACY

Al Gore is a good man. Al Gore is an honest man. This may have been his problem. As an honest man, he found himelf at odds with the Clintons. Try as he might, he is linked to them, and this is the nexus of his demise. Whereas Clinton enjoyed popularity without coattails, Gore lacked the popularity and the coattails. Everything the Clinton/Gore team has touched since November, 2000 has been hurt by association with them. Gore lost the election. Joe Lieberman, his V.P., found his honesty drowned out in a sea of misinformation. Hillary tried to speak to firefighters and was bood off the stage after 9/11. Gore's book did poorly. Clinton/Gore campaigned for Democrats in 2002 and they were swamped. Clinton campaigned for Gray Davis in 2003 and he was beaten back. Gore spoke about global warming on the coldest day in New York City in 150 years, then endorsed "The Day After Tomorrow" as a big movie about global warming that has to be seen. It was so bad, got such terrible reviews, and was so universally panned as lies that it cannot be described herein. Gore has now taken to podiums, changing his voice to sound like Huey Long or George Wallace or some such Southern populist, rolling his r's, leavin' the "n's" off his words, and every time he makes these speaches those he opposes rise in the polls. Al said he "had" to be President, and now he just seems unable to accept his fate.

I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE OF HOLLYWOOD. THEIR NAMES ARE LOGAN AND NOAH MILLER

Touching Home is the best indie film, twin baseball-playing actors will be the hottest sensations, since Affleck/Damon and Vaugh/Favreau. Ed Harris is Oscar-worthy

In 1996-97, independent films reached what we now see was its one-decade plateau. John Sayles had made a number of successful, low-budget movies. Quentin Tarantino was hotter than a pistol. Harvey Weinstein was said to be the most powerful executive in Hollywood.
Three films directed or screenwritten by young, or at least relatively new filmmakers, were all the rage. There was *Sling Blade* by Billy Bob Thornton; *Swingers* from Vince Vaughn and Jon Favreau; and *Good Will Hunting*, written by and starring the duo of Matt Damon with Ben Affleck.

These films inspired a cult of screenwriting classes, seminars on independent movie making, and "meet 'n' greets" between screenwriting hopefuls and development executives. The Sundance Film Festival, Cannes, and other festivals promised moviegoers first-time glimpses at The Next Big Thing. The Independent Film Channel became popular cable fare.

A decade or so later, the concept that with some credit cards, a dream and the sweat of one's creative brow, you too can be the next John Cassavetes, has produced almost as many disappointments as a weekend splurge in Las Vegas, often with far more damaging economic results. Now, just when it looked like great moviemaking was a lost art; that only huge studios had the wherewithal to make and market a hit film; and that spirituality, family values and character arc were lost altogether in Tinseltown, mocked as shrill voices of conservatism, comes Noah and Logan Miller and their absolutely wonderful *Touching Home*.

Describing this film and its backstory is to give witness to a literal miracle, for the story of the twins, the story the movie tells, and how it all happened, are a collection of parables, allegories and metaphors of their lives . . . and of life!

In assessing how good *Touching Home* (www.touchinghomemovie.com) is, let’s start with an understandable scale. It is better than *Breaking Away*; perhaps significantly better. Whether it is better than *Swingers* (which was a totally different film) or *Good Will Hunting* (which had similar themes) is debatable. Maybe a notch below. The point is made, however. It is in the conversation. It is akin to saying a baseball hitter may not be the league Most Valuable Player, but after hitting .310 with 25 homers and 90 runs batted in his first season, he is Rookie of the Year and in the top 10 of the MVP balloting.

The film sure as heck deserves a distribution deal. It may not get enough publicity, and perhaps may not even be released this year, so star actor Ed Harris probably will not be nominated for an Academy Award. But if there are five people up for Best Supporting Actor Oscars in 2009 who were better in their movies than Harris is in this, then I will switch my registration from the Reagan wing of the Republican Party to the Communists.

Forget your shoot-'em-ups and your action/adventure blockbusters. Go to any film school and study what it is that makes a great screenplay great; character arc, caring for the characters . . . it is all in *Touching Home*. They will be using this film at the USC and UCLA film schools some day, but try as they might, future students will not be able to duplicate it. Why? Because what a couple of kids in their early 30s, with limited education and no formal filmmaking experience pulled off is . . . a miracle of the heart. Yes, they have talent. Yes, they worked hard. Yes, they deserve their newfound success, but there is a difference between luck and miracles. The twins as well as anybody can attest to this. The film itself achieves this profound truth.
The Millers have a big future as actors. They have the looks and the screen presence to be major sex symbols and models. They have natural thespian chops with some comic relief thrown in. Their biggest challenge will be the ones Tarantino, Orson Welles and Norman Mailer faced: duplicating themselves. *Touching Home* is too personal to be duplicated, but for now let us stay in the moment.

The story is simple. Two twin brothers are baseball prospects. One is in the Colorado Rockies' minor league Arizona Spring Training camp. The other pitches for nearby Pima Community College. On the same day, the pro catcher is released and the college pitcher flunks out of school. They return home to west Marin County, California with their tails between their legs. Their old friends ride them, trying to bring them down to their level. They have a dysfunctional family; a kind-but-mentally-challenged uncle; an alcoholic grandmother; and a more-alcoholic father (Harris) who works hard in a quarry every day but still lives in his truck.

The film tells the tale of how the two brothers alternately love and are disappointed by their dad, who lets them down time and time again. The Biblical model of Cain and Abel threatens to be their destiny. Every obstacle is placed between the brothers and their goals. One is determined to stay in shape, hoping to go after more pro try-outs. The other gives up, preferring to drink beer and shelve his dreams. His pretty new schoolteacher girlfriend never dissuades him from trying again, but she is adorable enough to make most guys just want to settle down. The let's-quit bro is peeved when the gung-ho bro lifts weights, runs and trains. They fight about it.

One friend (Evan Jones from *Jarhead*) is a cut-up who at first is happy to see the twins, always stars of little league and local baseball fame, get brought down to Earth, but in a wise twist of storytelling he comes around, supporting them. Another friend encourages them to try again, not unlike Sean Astin's pal in *Rudy*.

All their hopes are frustrated by the old man (Harris), who cannot overcome his addictions to alcohol and gambling, which is why despite the same work ethic he passed on to his sons, he cannot hold onto his dough long enough to get a place of his own. A friendly police officer and coach (Robert Forster) tries to help, but just when all seems good, the alcohol ruins everything.

Harris did this for scale, but the performance he renders is as good - and probably better - than the one he would have performed for a $5 million payday. He is the *essence* of a professional actor!

The film intersperses light moments with dark ones, but seems headed towards the abyss until the San Francisco Giants announce try-outs for local prospects. Here is where the writing and the direction are so masterful. The mood changes to an up-beat one at just the right time. The let's-quit bro suddenly finds motivation, and three weeks of intense training follow. The musical choices are beautiful and perfectly timed. It is not unlike *Field of Dreams* when James Earl Jones tells Kevin Costner, "It means we're goin' to Minnesota," which is followed by brilliant open-road sunshine accompanied by China Grove, courtesy of The Doobie Brothers. The scenes of the brothers pushing themselves on the weights and on the baseball diamond are *paean* to *Rocky*. 
To go much further threatens to ruin the plot, but additional twists and turns await. No mountain is too high. What can be said is that more fabulous acting infuses each scene, and that every one is a life lesson. This is not a "baseball movie." It does not end with the pitcher bro striking out a guy to win the World Series with his catcher bro jumping into his arms. Baseball is a metaphor. It is about the journey, and what a journey it is.

The old man finally contributes to his sons and comes around. The family unit is kept together, but Shakespearean tragedy is always a wild pitch away. The genius of Harris's character, and of the direction he got from the filmmaker/brothers, was the ability to play this flawed man without judgment. All he wants is love from sons he seems to have done all to push away, yet he gets it anyway. In it is found a Christian grace that is subtle yet profound. The father has not earned love through works, yet eventually receives it like water irrigating a barren valley. At the same time, the man who disappointed, even stole from his sons, has given them something worth more than gold. Redemption and forgiveness are the messages. If you watch this without at least tearing up a bit, you need to see a physician. Or a pastor.

It is real life, not everybody walking into the sunset to live happily ever after, but the beauty of Touching Home is that the hopes and dreams of true lives is the sense that we all can live happily ever after. This film somehow, some way - but only if you open your heart and are willing to see it - gives us the meaning of life, and it ain't multi-million-dollar bonus contracts or World Series adulation.

Then there is the cinematography. When one attends film festivals or watches indie films, there is an expectation of something grainy; pretty good for a first effort or worthy of an A in film class. But line producer Jeremy Zajonc's father, the famed (within flying circles) "Bobby Z.," who flew three tours in Vietnam as a helicopter ace before taking his talents, like Dale Dye, to liberal Hollywood, provided some great aerial footage. West Marin County is simply another character in the story; its awesome Redwood forest beauty intertwined with the tale, and herein we find some more rural wisdom.

Marin County is one of the most Left-wing places in America. It is a bastion of elitism with some of the lowest church attendance in the nation, but west Marin, separated from the salons of Sausalito and Mill Valley by towering Mt. Tamalpais, is a rural, truck-and-gun-rack culture more resembling the Bible Belt South. Resembling, perhaps, but by no means mirroring. West Marin is unique. West Marin is the Miller brothers, and they paint this portrait exquisitely.

Touching Home is a Christian story, but its spiritual themes are handled in a subtle manner that allows anybody to enjoy it without feeling preached to; not an easy feat. The brothers are hard to tell apart, but it works and besides, it will just be a good excuse for audiences to see the film over and over until they get it straight. Furthermore, it could prove a unique, winning formula in the long acting career that awaits them.

Touching Home played to an audience that sold out a month in advance of its debut on Saturday, April 26 at the San Francisco Film Festival, held at the Kabuki Theatre. Three days later, at 12:30 in the afternoon on a Tuesday, a part of The City with limited parking (the garage was full
well before the movie started) and meters that dole out 10 whole minutes for a quarter and do not allow for more than an hour's worth of valuable time, the theatre was again jam-packed. So was the question-and-answer session that lasted some 45 minutes after its showing. It was the hit of the festival in every way. The reaction of the audience during and after the film was indicative of genuine feeling that they had seen something special. In an industry that pumps out film after film after film, mostly (and increasingly) dreck, the people saw stardom born and knew it.

Being local lads, many knew the story of the Miller twins, from a baseball and a filmmaking perspective. Their lives are metaphors for the making of the movie, just as the movie is a metaphor for their lives. They were raised in the San Geronimo valley area of west Marin, a sprawling, hilly area of farms, ranches, bed-and-breakfasts, surf communities and rugged, mountainous coast line that is not unfamiliar to people. It encompasses the cliffs to the west of the Golden Gate Bridge and winds for some 40 or 50 miles up the coast. A number of movies have been filmed there, most notably Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, near the Marin-Sonoma border.

They played baseball at Sir Francis Drake High School in San Anselmo, but Drake is better known as a basketball powerhouse. In the early 1980s under coach Pete Hawyard, the Pirates won two straight state championships while breaking the California record for consecutive wins, previously held by San Diego Helix when the great Bill Walton prepped there. Former UCLA basketball coach Steve Lavin (1996-2003) and his Bruins coaching staff were products of the Drake hoops dynasty.

Logan and Noah had diamond skills, one as a catcher and the other as a pitcher/oufielder. After playing for Marin County coaching legend Al Endriss in junior college, they took baseball to the next level; the Toronto Blue Jays' team in the class-A Florida State League and Southern Arkansas State University, respectively. They are both legitimate baseball players. The on-field scenes in *Touching Home* are as authentic as any in movies. Kevin Costner, who was a walk-on at Cal State Fullerton, displayed passable ability in *Bull Durham*, but the Millers both look signable, especially the Charlie Lau-style one-hand-finish batting stroke made famous by George Brett and later the Chicago White Sox of the early 1990s. Line drives are not computer graphics. Fastballs, curves and change-ups are not "movie magic," although "throwing strikes" was described as "the hardest part about making the movie." They could give pointers to Barry Zito.

As an ex-professional baseball player in my own right, I judged with extra precision and found nothing wanting. The way they wore their gear, warmed up, played catch, took batting practice, did drills; even their haircuts and the can of Copenhagen tucked into the uniform back pocket rang true. Their plan also touched home for me, since they were preparing to pay their own way to Arizona for try-outs with professional teams that hold Spring Training and participate in the Arizona Fall League. Once upon a time, I was released by the St. Louis Cardinals, spent the off-season lifting, running and pitching, then paid my way to Phoenix, where the Oakland A’s gave me a month-long try-out before signing me to a minor league contract. I did not make it to the Major Leagues, and neither did the Millers, which is not the point. The point is the journey; to say that one gave it all they had and left it all on the field without regrets.
In 2000, I was a columnist for *StreetZebra*, a sports magazine in Los Angeles. I got a call from my friend Chet Aldridge, who said he was in town hanging out with the Millers. We met for dinner, cocktails and stories in Marina Del Rey. The drinks flowed and they said they were trying to forge a career as actors/models. They were living in an apartment in Hollywood with no furniture. They were writing screenplays, I was told.

"Yeah, sure you are," I thought.

Periodically over the next few years I asked Chet about them.

"They're a powerhouse," Chet would say. "They're just making it happen."

"Yeah, sure they are," I said to myself. Again.

Around 2006 I saw an article in the local paper about the Millers filming some baseball scenes at College of Marin. One of the "actors" was my pal Tony Shapiro. I had seen this all too often; poor schmucks trying to make a movie using a VCR or whatnot. It almost saddened me, but I could not help admire these kids who were pursuing their dreams. After all, it is about the journey.

A few months ago I found myself quaffing a few icy cold brews at 19 Broadway with my good pal Mike McDowd when I ran into Jeremy Zajonc, an old friend from Gold's Gym. I knew Jeremy had gone to Hollywood trying to break into the film industry. The fact that I ran into him in Marin County indicated, at first glance, that he had failed and was back home, like the proverbial ballplayer who cannot handle the curveball. But I had seen him a few times before that and this was not the whole story. He had gone to UCLA and studied movies there, then gained valuable experience working with a variety of agents, producers and TV productions. Now, he told me, "Ed Harris is in my movie."

"Yeah, sure he is," I said to myself. It was around this time that I switched from beer to Vodka. Jeremy and Ed Harris, huh. Harris, one of the world's great actors, a man who demands and gets millions, but Jeremy, whose dad told him he would pay for one year of college before he was on his own; *this guy* had gotten Ed Harris? I forgot about it almost as soon as he said it. Keep dreamin', pal.

The rest of the story I did not hear about until that dream became reality, part one, in the form of a boffo debut at the San Francisco Film Festival, complete with major coverage in the Bay Area media. I asked Tony Shapiro if he had seen the movie. He said it was good, but did not want to tell me more, that I needed to see it for myself. I did not pursue the film's details and endeavored to do as Tony suggested. I expected to see a nice first effort, something that would give them hope to keep trying; a calling card that would land them an agent, a part in another flick, an open door somewhere.

What I saw blew me away. The gentle reader has the right to say I am biased; I knew these guys; we're all part of the same crew. Not so. I had met Logan and Noah once and have no reason to
toot their horn. I am no exaggerator. I studied film at USC and have written 15 screenplays. I have seen so many films that I cannot find anything new at the video store. But what I saw at the Kabuki was true greatness. It was a once-in-a-lifetime type of thing, like the first time I viewed *Pulp Fiction*. A new voice. A stand out performance. A completely professional effort made by amateurs who have now made their pro debut.

It is interesting to note that the Millers went to Hollywood and did not succeed. It was when they returned to their roots in west Marin that they found . . . Hollywood success, at least if the making of Hollywood's best-known product can be defined as such a thing. It was in San Francisco, not Tinseltown, where it all came together for them, two years ago at the same film festival they now star in. Ed Harris was being honored and featured in a question-and-answer session. Harris has some Bay Area film ties in that he once played the "clean Marine," John Glenn, in City filmmaker Phil Kaufman's *The Right Stuff*. The twins saw Harris as their dad, the ultimate role reversal from the heroic Glenn and a tribute to the actor's range.

They wanted him to play an alcoholic in his late 50s; disheveled, dirty, homeless, arrested by the cops, even a thief who steals his son's savings. This was the true story of the Millers' own father, who died in 2006 in the Marin County Jail. Unable to get Harris's attention despite a front row seat, they apoplectically stalked him to the backstage. While they argued with security, Harris saw the commotion and motioned them in. They went to the alley. Harris dragged on a cigarette and they showed a homemade trailer on their laptop. Harris was intrigued. Phone calls were made and a meeting at an L.A. Starbucks ensued. Harris read the screenplay and agreed to do the role.

"I've never seen anybody like them," said Harris.

Great, except the Miller's had no dough. They were certainly not "trust fund babies" like the neurotic *Medellin* investor in HBO's *Entourage*. The very screenplay they wrote screamed, "We don't come from money and we have none." They had grown up in one of the richest counties in America and gone to high school with kids from wealthy families, but they always had to use talent and charisma to substitute for what they did not have.

"We didn't sleep at night because we didn't want Ed to know we had no money," they said (they say all their sentences together; one starts and the other finishes). But Harris's involvement enticed investors.

"It was everything when he came on board," they said.

Harris had two weeks to film in Marin. It was December of 2006.

"As anybody who knows this area knows, it can rain 30 days' straight in December here," they said. In March of 2006 it had done just that. In October, normally a dry, Indian summer period, it had rained heavily again. Marin being Marin, "global warming" had everybody convinced that strange weather patterns caused this inconsistency.
"It was a big concern," the brothers stated. "We were afraid that our summer movie would become a rainy movie and would screw up the consistency of the shots."

Either way, God graced them with baseball weather in which to film the Harris scenes, almost all in the great outdoors. All the scenes are those of gorgeous, blue sky days. They won a grant to use state of the art equipment. "Bobby Z." lent his helicopter and expertise. Somehow, these first-time amateurs, who learned to write screenplays from a book purchased at a store, managed to direct a cinematically beautiful film, then handled the post-production editing. Marin's world famous reputation as "Hollywood north" came in handy, in the form of George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic along with a healthy dose of benevolence.

They are still virgin territory, with no agent and no distribution deal yet, but whoever hooks up with these guys has the potential to make millions. It is no sure thing. Mistakes can be made. Bad luck can happen. But the twins are gamers and will fight to the last out. The larger hazard I see is not failure or lack of breaks, but ego and money. The nature of Touching Home lends one to think that these guys have the spiritual gifts to keep them grounded, but they are two good-lookin' cats who will have temptress women and big bucks thrown at them sooner rather than later. Heck, when you look like Logan and Noah Miller, you will have girls throw themselves at you no matter what.

They will have to stick together, which is the theme of their movie and their lives. At some point, one will get a big break and the other will not, and they will have to deal with that in a mature way; not like the Mitchell brothers, Artie and Jim, of 1991 Marin fratricide infamy. But the Miller's are Christians and the Mitchell's were pornographers, and there is a big karmic difference in that dynamic. There is magic in their combined chemistry and hopefully this will be the formula of their success, not unlike the Coens and the Farrellys minus the violence and flatulence. Herein we see the potential not just for the Millers to succeed, but maybe for a return to real Frank Capra-style class in the long-God forsaken movie industry.

There are no grand slam home runs to win the big game in Touching Home, just a perfect game thrown by Logan and Noah Miller, maybe with a little help from above. Ask them and they will tell you, their old man is in Heaven and he is proud. At least they would if the question did not cause them to react like human beings and start to cry. God bless 'em.

For more information go to www.touchinghomemovie.com. Email producer JeremyZajonc at jeromiahz@yahoo.com or the Miller bothers at themillerbrothers@yahoo.com.

IS THIS TITLE NECESSARY?

I realize Al Franken is being humorous in calling Rush Limbaugh a big fat idiot, but the tone of it is telling. I think it speaks for itself. It seems to indicate that where substance is not in his favor, he will substitute it with put-downs. It gets laughs, I guess, but does not inform.
"BUSH...GREAT PRESIDENT." - BOB WOODWARD

"In 20 years, George W. Bush may be considered one of our greatest Presidents," author Bob Woodward told a book-signing audience in Thousand Oaks, California in May of 2004. The remarks were mentioned on several national talk shows. Woodward spells out in "Bush at War" why this is his opinion. Woodward is thought of as a liberal because of his Watergate background, but in reality he is a former Naval officer and Republican. For this reason, he is considered balanced and is respected. He had great access to Bush and like the embedded reporters who saw up close what great work the military actually did, Woodward reports that Bush was on top of his game. His remarks in Thousand Oaks reflect the view of many that, like Ronald Reagan's victory over Communism which was criticized at the time, Bush will achieve his lofty goals that take time to flower.

"BUSH...ONE OF OUR GREATEST PRESIDENTS..." - BOB WOODWARD

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YANKEES ARE METAPHOR FOR AMERICA

The Yankees are a metaphor for America. They are the best of all time. People who do not like them feel that way just because they do not want one single team (or country) to be so much better than everybody else, which does not change the fact that they are. People who grow up in New York and still hate the Yankees are like liberals in America who still hate their country.

THIS BOOK BACKS THE BUSH PLAN IN IRAQ

When Bob Woodward's "Plan of Attack" came out, a lot of people automatically assumed that it would attack George Bush, which is the Democrats' strategy for 2004. A funny thing happened along the way. Woodward, despite his Watergate personna, was a Naval officer and Republican before "All the President's Men", and he does not feature the big-time lies of so much of the liberal media. This is actually why he is so respected. So Woodward embedded himself with the Bush team, and like the embedded reporters with troops in Iraq, he came to see that the work
Bush did was good stuff. It is spelled out in this work, in which he had great access and, based on this, describes a cogent effort to change a dangerous world for the better. In 2020, the Left will all say they were with Bush, just like now they all say they were with Reagan when in fact they were working against America in the 1980s.

**DRIVING THE LEFT OUT OF THEIR MINDS**

G. Gordon Liddy drives the liberals as batty as Rush, because he was an official Republican "bad guy," the man behind Watergate. So what does he do? He drives a fancy sports car with the license plates, "H20GATE." Liddy, like Oliver North, makes no effort to hide behind his official actions, and was elevated to high status by the opinion of millions of American citizens that what he did was actually good. In Liddy's case, people view Watergate as something Kennedy and Johnson had done, and in light if the "civil war" atmosphere in the streets, and the desire not to let the Kennedys steal another election, the break-in was almost justified.

Liddy plays to highly macho sensibilities, is extremely sexual, loves guns, has a Pattonesque view of warfare, and takes on a conspiratorial, partisan view of the Clintons. He is nobody's fool, speaking several languages, and his education is first rate. He also has his pet peeves, such as "prison guards," who he has low regard for because they were his overseers when he served time. (...)

**COMMUNISM WAS EVIL, EVIL, EVIL**

One lonely conservative voice has been trying to shout out from the "wilderness" for years. Lionel Chetwynd is a writer/producer who made "The Hanoi Hilton", which actually described the North Vietnamese as the evil torturers they were. The "Hilton" was the moniker given the infamous prison camp where American POW's were kept while Jane Fonda was flirting with our enemies. Liberal film reviewers criticized it. Do not believe them. It is good stuff.

**COMPARE THE CUBAN CRISIS WITH IRAN-CONTRA**

"Thirteen Days" re-created the Cuban Missile Crisis, elevating the Kennedys to virtual sainthood while painting Curt LeMay as an advocate for nuclear holocaust. It was a fantastic picture, like many of them, but in it is an interesting scene in which Kenny O'Donnell, played by Kevin Costner, tells a Navy plot to lie to LeMay about being shot at, because LeMay would supposedly have ordered a strike if he had been. The film paints this lie as the right thing to do because it advocates the Kennedy's position, which was to maintain level heads and a calm demeanor. However, in 1987 Ollie North was excoriated by the Left for lying about the funding of anti-Communist guerrillas, which was Reagan's position. Funny about that.

**BACK HAND SWIPE AT BUSH 41**
"Three Kings" starred the ultra-liberal George Clooney in a convoluted story of U.S. soldiers trying to get rich in war torn 1991 Iraq, possibly re-creating the theme of Clint Eastwood's 1970 film "Kelly's Heroes". "Kings" is not a highly political story, but leaves little doubt that it views the first President Bush's war in Iraq, particularly the Kurdish uprising that he encouraged and did not back, as a cynical American lie.

**CLINTON PARODY**

"Wag the Dog" was straight out of the Clinton files. The President (partially shown, but apparently not resembling Clinton physically or politically) defiles a girl scout on a White House trip and it becomes public. In real life Clinton lobbed bombs at Iraq and Bosnia to get the story off page one. In the movie a Bob Evans-type movie producer (Dustin Hoffman) is asked to create fake footage of a war with Albania, in order to get the girl scout story off page one. Think of the personal characteristics of Ron Reagn, then the personal characteristics of Bill Clinton. Nuf sed.

**BILL CLINTON'S CRIMES?**

"Murder at 1600" had me thinking that somebody read my screenplay, "A Murderous Campaign", used my idea but gave me no credit. Maybe. This plays on the public perception that Bill Clinton might just be a murderer. However, the President bears no resemblance to Clinton and the film does not take a partisan tone, although Alan Alda seems to be a caricatured right wing militarist.

**THIS TAKES A SWIPE AT CLINTON**

"Absolute Power" had me thinking that somebody read my screenplay, "A Murderous Campaign", used my idea but gave me no credit. Maybe. "Absolute" is a Clint Eastwood picture, playing on the public perception that Bill Clinton might just be a murderer. However, the President bears no resemblance to Clinton.

**"CONTENDER" TRIES TO PUT DOWN CLINTON INVESTIGATION**

"The Contender" was made by a former West Point guy who is a liberal, a rarity in and of itself. It does not take a highly liberal position, but it is not conservative. The film's message is that the right's overarching investigations into Clinton's sex life were intrusive, although it does not examine the fact that his lies came under legal oath. The V.P. dies and a woman Senator is nominated to replace him. A rumor circulates that while in college she was gangbanged by a fraternity. She refuses to answer the allegations. A conservative Senator (Gary Oldham, who is actually conservative and later expressed dismay at script changes to make conservatives look worse than originally planned), opposes her because
of her alleged youthful promiscuity. He is also in league with another Senator who he wants to get the nod. The President (Jeff Bridges) sticks by the nominee and after a few twists and turns she gets in. The charges are never publicly refuted, which is the film's message. She reveals privately that the gangbang story was false, and the moral is that politician's personal lives are not open season for the press. This resonates to an extent, but the timing of the film, in light of the Clinton scandals, makes it obvious that the purpose is to dissuade the public that Clinton's immorality is our business.

POWERFUL MESSAGE

"American History X" may not have have accomplished what it set out to accomplish. The film centers on a white supremacist in the once-pleasant, now-crime stricken Los Angeles beach enclave of Venice. Edward Norton plays the racist, but the dialogue is sharp and intelligent. While there is no question that Norton is not in the right, and that his racial hatreds have taken him down a perilous personal path, he makes certain biting commentary about race and society that are entirely true and worth agreeing with. Whether the filmmakers wanted whites (and blacks) in the audience nodding in agreement with a guy they would like to show to be a monster is not known. He is charismatic, and intelligent enough to see the light after being stigmatized in prison. With the help of a black teacher, he turns his life around, but sees the damage he has caused to those around him. Heavy-handed political bias cannot be helped. Norton's sidekick is an utterly reprehensible, stupid white racist of the worst stereotype, who blathers about those who do not agree with him as "Democrats."

ROBBINS, SARANDON AT THEIR BEST

Tim Robbins made another "political" film." "Dead Man Walking" stayed on an even keel. Starring Sean Penn in a bravura performance as a murderer getting ready for his execution, it takes a surprisingly Catholic point of view, in which Susan Sarandon plays a nun who makes him take responsibility for his actions, ostensibly to save his soul. It could be interpreted as being against the death penalty, but this is actually a stretch. This film is a good example of how much talent Robbins has and how, when he avoids major Left wing politics, he produces some real genius.

THOSE RIGHT WING WACKOS

After Tim McVeigh blew up the Oklahoma Federal Building, the Left went berserk, although their own Ted Kazcysnski (the Unabomber) beat them back. What has emerged in the years since is that if a real bad guy looks like McVeigh, he does the "perp walk" and is displayed for the cameras. If he is black, a black Muslim, or some such thing, he gets the hidden suspect treatment. "Arlington Road" is Robbins as a right-wing wacko who plans to blow up the government. The message is that the right in this country is dominated by white racists who think nothing of
killing many, because they are Fascists. It is heavy-handed and compared with Truth fails miserably.

PULLEASE

"Bob Roberts" was Tim Robbins first foray into political filmmaking. He draws on his family experience as traveling folk singers and fashions a story of a conservative, religious political candidate who sings family songs on the campaign trail. The film itself is good stuff, well acted and produced, but the message is clear: White conservative Christians are just frauds and cannot be trusted. One watches it and wonders what a truthful depiction of Jesse Jackson would look like. Or an inside look at Joseph P. Kennedy pulling the strings in Jack's Congressional and Senate campaigns? Or the inside deals that kept Teddy Kennedy in office after Mary Jo Kopechne was killed? How about Al Sharpton and the Tawana Brawley incident? "Bob Roberts" is one of those movies that you just watch and shake your head.

NATURALLY BAD CONGRESSMAN WAS REPUBLICAN

"Strip Tease" was typical. In it, Burt Reynolds was depicted as so many Republican politicians are depicted: Stupid, immoral, greedy, corrupt?am I leaving anything out?

THANK YOU

"Saving Private Ryan" was gold, Steven Spielberg's best work ever. Anybody who walks away from this 1998 account of America saving the world on D-Day, without a glowing respect for what we sacrificed, is an idiot or a "useful idiot."

THE REAL DEAL

CHUK YEAGER IS A GENUINE AMERICAN HERO. NO QUESTION.

WHOSE THE BEST WRITER I EVER READ? I'M REVIEWIN' HIM, BABY

"The Right Stuff" BY Tom Wolfe's book was a wonderful American story about the Mercury space program that told the tale of U.S. pilots just brimming with gusto, bravado and...the right stuff.

FABULOUS
"The Right Stuff", based on Tom Wolfe's book and directed by Phillip Kaufman, was a wonderful American story about the Mercury space program that told the tale of U.S. pilots just brimming with gusto, bravado and...the right stuff.

I'M ROOTIN' FOR AMERICA!

"Apollo 13" (1995) was Ron Howard's excellent, patriotic re-enactment of the 1970 moonshot that went awry. The Soviets offered their assistance, but NASA said they would handle their own house, and they did. It is virtually impossible to conceive that any other country on Earth could have produced astronauts and ground crew that could have gotten that ship home safely. Howard makes a film that has you waving the flag when you walk out. At least you should.

AS FAIR AS HOLLYWOOD GETS

A fair look at the clash of white-Indian civilization was in John Milius' excellent "Geronimo", the story of the last Apache captured and brought in, bringing to an end the Indian Wars in 1890. Gene Hackman plays the officer charged with negotiating and capturing Geronimo. It fairly shows brave Indians, a well-meaning government, circumstances that were beyond control of the ability to foresee, white settlers whose ingenuity made use of the land that was previously unheard of, and how these events brought about bad feelings in the Indian community. The film is even without demonizing either side.

MYTHOLOGY

Indians are a favorite pet of the liberal establishment. "Dances With Wolves" is a fine movie. Most of them are. Nobody ever said these people are not brilliant. There is no real lie in "Dances" that I can see, but it does seem stylized. The Indians are pictured as peaceful, spiritual conservers of the land. Real-life Indians had every potential of being violent savages without anybody's prompting. Just ask the Mexicans who were systematically robbed by them every harvest until American mountain men with guns were recruited to provide a little security. The soldiers are dumbellionites, as are most of the whites that Kevin Costner "escapes" from in his effort to find the real West. While Indians certainly knew how to preserve the land, an act of necessity for them, they took plenty from it without replenishment. Whites stripped and mined the land, but they also came up with ingenious technologies that re-generated the land.

B.S.

You can search far and wide, and you will not find Hollywood films that openly portray a Democrat as the bad guy. I wrote a screenplay a few years ago called "A Murderous Campaign". It had all the elements of a great script. A beautiful porn star has an affair with a Democrat Louisiana Senator. She overhears him plotting the assassination of a political rival, but they find
out she heard the plan. They try to kill her, so she goes into hiding and hooks up with a crusty old Washington reporter who is considered kooky because he has been accusing this Democrat of these crimes for years. A retired FBI friend of the reporter helps them. The Democrat announces a Presidential bid. The porn star uses her considerable charms and discovers that the Governor of New Jersey is the assassination target at a Statue of Liberty rally. She saves the Governor, and the plot is revealed, but the Democrat candidate goes into spin control. Nobody can really prove the plan. It looks like he will win the nomination, having weathered the politics of personal destruction. Finally, the porn girl and the reporter find the old father of the Democrat's chief of staff, a former Ku Klux Klansman who wants to get what he knows off his chest before passing from this mortal coil. He tells them about the drug smuggling operation the candidate has been running in the Louisiana Bayou. The reporter's FBI pal arranges a raid. They discover all the "smoking gun" evidence of a series of political murders going back years. The girl is re-united with her family, gets out of the porn business, the reporter wins the Pulitzer, and it is jail time for the Democrat. The end.

Creative execs who loved the verbal pitch when I simply described the Democrat as a "politician," a "candidate" or the "Senator" all passed when they read the part in the script that identifies him as an actual Democrat. Pamela Anderson would be perfect as the porn chick. I could see Denzel Washington as the reporter, and Gary Busey as the Democrat Senator. I was asked if I would change him to a Republican. My answer was that I wanted to maintain the realism of the story. See ya.

GOOD DEMOCRATS, BAD REPUBLICANS, SAME OLD STORY

The film "Dave" went through a script change. The story of a Presidential look-alike (Kevin Kline) who fills in for the secretly deceased real thing, the original story featured a Republican who brought his skills as a small entrepreneur to the job. Hollywood turned him into a Democrat, but kept his G.O.P common sense, such as when he and his partner look at the Federal budget and balance it by using the methods any small businessman would use. Naturally, pet liberal projects are all interjected while "Republican priorities" are given the heave-ho. You can search far and wide, and you will not find Hollywood films that openly portray a Democrat as the bad guy. I wrote a screenplay a few years ago called "A Murderous Campaign". It had all the elements of a great script. A beautiful porn star has an affair with a Democrat Louisiana Senator. She overhears him plotting the assassination of a political rival, but they find out she heard the plan. They try to kill her, so she goes into hiding and hooks up with a crusty old Washington reporter who is considered kooky because he has been accusing this Democrat of these crimes for years. A retired FBI friend of the reporter helps them. The Democrat announces a Presidential bid. The porn star uses her considerable charms and discovers that the Governor of New Jersey is the assassination target at a Statue of Liberty rally. She saves the Governor, and the plot is revealed, but the Democrat candidate goes into spin control. Nobody can really prove the plan. It looks like he will win the nomination, having weathered the politics of personal destruction. Finally, the porn girl and the reporter find the old father of the Democrat's chief of staff, a former Ku Klux Klansman who wants to get what he knows off his chest before passing from this mortal coil. He tells them about the drug smuggling operation the candidate has been running in the Louisiana Bayou. The reporter's FBI pal arranges a raid. They discover all the
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CONSERVATIVE THEME

"Forrest Gump" (1994), directed by USC alum Robert Zemeckis, was considered a fairly conservative film, featuring a breakout role by Tom Hanks.

WAY OVERRATED HYPOCRISY

"Issues" liberals may be people of conscience with good intentions who give of their time, energy and money for a variety of causes to better society, usually by helping disadvantaged kids or the afflicted. Hooray for them. They cannot get too much applause for that. But they jumped on the anti-tobacco bandwagon, which is in my view real hypocrisy. First, Hollywood always displays macho men and femme fatale women smoking cigarettes and looking cool. Tobacco has been around for centuries. It is a legal product that people want. The fact that it is bad for you is simply common knowledge, yet trial lawyers, the biggest Democrat special interest group, file nefarious multi-million dollar class action lawsuits and tort claims against tobacco companies, as if some plaintiff who smoked for 50 years before getting lung cancer was forced by the company to do so.

During the Clinton years, the Democrats jumped on this issue like there was no tomorrow, actually making government ads against legal American tobacco corporations and the tobacco industry in a move that cannot be legal, civilly and maybe Constitutionally. These ads typically show a couple of (always) white tobacco execs plotting to poison kids, then laughing about it. Turn this ad around and direct it at anybody else and the hue and cry would be endless. These companies contribute enormous taxes and employ thousands. I myself was addicted to chewing tobacco (Copenhagen) for 16 years. I knew I had to quit, tried several times, but went back to it. I knew the dangers of snuff and that it was a disgusting habit. Nobody dragged my arm. I chose to do it, chose to quit, girded my will power and accomplished this task. Period. Just like George W. Bush when he quit drinking.

Speaking of alcohol, this is worse than tobacco. It causes drunk driving deaths and has to be as unhealthy as smoking cigarettes, but it is not a target. On top of that, the real kicker is that if you go to Hollywood parties, or hang out at certain industry hot spots in Studio City, Universal City, Beverly Hills, or Santa Monica, you will find movie executives puffing on huge cigars like the one Bill Clinton asked Monica to use as a phallic. Such hypocrisy.
Russell Crowe played a tobacco exec a few years ago opposite Al Pacino in "The Insider", a film that never got anywhere. The crux of the film was that Brown & Williamson, a tobacco road company with a long, venerable tradition in old Carolina, had hid the fact that cigarettes are bad for people. For decades.
Really? Bad for people?
Basiclly they went out and advertised their product like any other capitalist organization, in an effort to get people to buy it. People buy tobacco for the same reason I used to buy it. They know it is bad for them. They joke and call them "cancer sticks." Oh, but kids are being duped, they say. There is no group of individuals on Earth more acutely aware of the danger of smoking than kids, to my knowledge. When my daughter was six or seven she was all over this issue. These same anti-tobacco crusaders are the same ones who will argue six ways from Sunday that marijuana should be legal, too. Let them stop abortion before stopping smoking.

GOTTA WATCH OUT FOR ALL THOSE CHRISTIAN MURDERERS

In "Cape Fear", Marty Scorsese introduces a Fourth of July parade scene rife with sluggish Americana. The scene is slowed down, given morbid music, and depicts patriotic icons with bland expressions, going through the motions while an unenthusiastic crowd masks a black-and-white cancer. It also chooses to make Bob DeNiro a really dangerous Christian who quotes Scripture, speaks in tongues and preaches while he commits his acts of violence. Outside of one episode of "The X Files" in which a sect of Hasidic Jews included some ghost-Jew character who kills in the name of same ancient Hebrew tenet, I cannot recall seeing openly Jewish killers on screen.

STYLIZED WITH FLAWS AND A LOT OF BLASPHEMY

Martin Scorsese is no conservative and generally stays away from political, but it is worth mentioning that he is obsessed with Christianity. He is a Catholic, or a lapsed Catholic, and his New York youth apparently put the zap on his head in a big way. He went to church and believed in God, asked for his sins to be washed away in confession, but like the characters in "Mean Streets" (1973), he lived in Little Italy, where murder, extortion and immorality were a way of life.
Scorsese came up with some funky ideas, and laid it all out for the world to see in "The Last Temptation of Christ" (1988). It is actually based on a book by Nikos Kazantzakis, but like all of Scorsese's work the screen version must be attributed to him. It is hard to say what he is trying to accomplish. I call the film "Bronx Jesus" because he populates it with New York actors (Harvey Keitel as Judas, Willem Dafoe as Jesus), except for evil, which Hollywood always says has an upper crust English accent (a very telling psycho-trait regarding class envy perhaps). On the one hand, Scorsese loves his Jesus. He is obviously very personal to him. He has a vision for who Jesus was, and it is a human vision. This is the crux of the story, because if Jesus is "human," then His suffering and trials are not just for show. In order for Jesus to die for our sins, He has to feel our pain and be tempted just as any mortal would be.
The finale is confusing and I have only seen it once, so forgive me, but as best I can recall Christ accepts a "deal" from Satan. A dream sequence follows, in which Christ is apparently fooled by Satan, disguised as a little girl. Apparently, he did not die for our sins, and Scorsese's message is muddled, possibly leading us to believe that the screwed-up world we live in is because of this. The Catholics and other Christian groups were outraged. It is not quite the "risen Christ on Easter Sunday" message of hope that we have all been counting on. Personally, I do not see Scorsese as anti-Christian for making it, although I do come away from such expenditures of theology believing there are just things we will never know until we die, and we had best live good lives until then!

**MOST REALISTIC SPORTS MOVIE EVER**

Among Oliver Stone's work includes "Any Given Sunday" (1999), as good and realistic a sports movie as has ever been made. It features an over-the-top performance by Al Pacino as a veteran pro football coach who can still motivate his over-paid, over-sexed, over-drugged, slightly thuggish, mostly black (except for a few White Aryan Brotherhood linemen) mercenaries with a speech that sends Knute Rockne to the bench.

He reportedly is working on the story of the 1934 Republican industrialists who recruited Marine hero Smedley Butler to overthrow Franklin Roosevelt, which was the genesis of "Seven Days in May". We are still waiting for Tinsel Town to take on Kennedy stealing the 1960 election. It could be a long wait. If any producers are reading this, I am offering my services at the Writers Guild minimum.

**A PLEASANT SURPRISE**

He inferences that the beast is embodied in the Central Intelligence Agency, which in turn controls the U.S. A sequence showing Nixon visiting CIA Director Richard Helms (Sam Waterston) was mostly cut out of the original film, but the video shows it in its entirety at the end of the movie. Helms and his agency are virtually said to be the devil. Flowers in Helms' office are shown to bloom and wilt in supernatural ways, presumably depending on Helms' evil whim. Waterston's eyes are shown to be coal black. He is Satan!

Nixon asks himself the rhetorical question, "Whose helping us?" while staring into a fireplace flame under a portrait of Kennedy. The theme is first brought forth in Nixon's college years, when his older brother dies, and apparently this frees up money through an unexplained source (an insurance policy?) that allows Nixon to go to law school. In light of two Kennedy assassinations, the answer to Nixon's question seems to be the same one that Mick Jagger gives in "Sympathy for the Devil".

"After all, it was you and me," Jagger sings, and Stone would have you believe it was the devil in silent concert with Nixon and his brand of...something. Jingoism, patriotism, xenophobia, bloodthirstiness? Nixon is seen on a couple of occasions shadowed by a devil-like winged creature (the beast), and his conversation with a female college student at the Lincoln Memorial ends with her identification of the beast as the controlling force in American politics. Presumably the girl is able to see this clearly because her heart is pure.
Stone invents secret cabals that never happened between Nixon and John Birch Texas businessmen, racist to the core, who along with a smirking Cuban are there to tell us that because Nixon was in Texas on November 22, 1963 he was somehow plotting JFK's murder. The conspiracy link between "JFK" and "Nixon" exists in this reference, and the CIA "tracks" like the one Agent X talks about in "JFK", apparently tie Guatemala, Iran and the Bay of Pigs to subsequent events. The Bay of Pigs tie-in, led by E. Howard Hunt and his Cubans, Bernard Barker, Eugenio Martinez, et al, is real enough, but the assassination is one Stone insists is part of the same "track." Something on the list of "horribles," which Nixon discusses with H.R. Haldeman (James Woods), who then talks about "bodies," references to something I still have never figured out after watching the film 15 times. The Kennedy's bodies? Vietnam dead bodies? Stone gives Watergate its due, but lets the actual events speak for themselves without embellishing it with more hate towards Nixon than that era produced of its own accord. He actually does a solid job of demonstrating the semi-legitimate reasons for creating the Plumbers in the first place, which was to plug leaks in light of Daniel Ellsberg's treacherous "Pentagon Papers" revelation, in concert with the bunker mentality caused by anti-war protesters threatening, in their mind at the time, a civil war like the one that forced Lincoln to declare martial law.

Stone also makes it clear that Nixon and his people were convinced that Kennedy stole the 1960 election, and he does not try to deny it (without advocating it, either). Murray Chotiner represents the realpolitik Republicans who, Stone wants us to know, pulled the same fraudulent tricks, when he says, "They stole it fair and square."

Nixon is depicted as foul-mouthed and quite the drinker. His salty language apparently was learned well into adulthood, and he did occasionally imbibe after years as a teetotaler, but his associates insist it was by no means a regular thing. Woods' Haldeman is no friend of the Hebrews, and Paul Sorvino, doing a big league Henry Kissinger, finds himself constantly at war with the inside Nixon team, put down for his Jewishness. Powers Boothe is a cold-blooded Alexander Haig, representing the reality of Watergate's final conclusion.

It never would have happened under J. Edgar Hoover, Nixon says, and Haig agrees that Hoover, who died just before Watergate, was a "realist" who would have kept it locked up. Nixon discusses suicide with Haig, who eases him out of that but never really tells him not to. When Nixon asks for any final suggestion, Haig says something the real man probably never said: "You have the Army. Lincoln used it."

Sure.

Nixon breaks down, incredulous that for all his accomplishments, he can be brought down by such a nothing event. Stone allows Hopkins to infuse this scene with Shakespearean irony. Stone gives Nixon his due in many ways. He demonstrates that he was utterly faithful to his wife, Pat, turning down a right wing lovely served up by the Birchers, while telling the girl that he entered politics to help people. His hardscrabble youth is nicely portrayed, with Mary Steenburgen playing his long-suffering Quaker mother. Young Nixon is utterly faithful to her and the honest, religious ethic of the family. But in a later scene, Steenburgen looks questioningly at his Presidential aspirations, saying he is destined to lead, but only if God is on his side. It is a telling statement playing to his theme that dark forces are the wind at Nixon's sails. He enters politics as an idealist, and becomes something else because he discovers he has the talent for it. He is industrious, in contrast to the Kennedys, and will earn everything he has simply by out-working everybody.
An entirely loving portrait of Dick Nixon would have no credibility. Stone does a great job with the movie, which is as balanced as it could be with a side of liberal righteousness. (...)

A RIDDLE WRAPPED INSIDE AN ENIGMA

What really has set the Left back is not just the failure of this film medium to accomplish their goals, but also the lack of faith accorded college professors, school textbooks, and mainstream news. So who is left to tell the real story? Weeeeeeell, my friends, we are out there. We have been waiting in the wings all these years, gathering the facts in silence, not showing our hand, waiting for judgment day. The day of reckoning is upon us. Let freedom reign.

As for "JFK", it is a complicated piece of fiction that would require some real research to effectively discredit all of its lies. What it did in the theatre was have one asking, "Jeez, did that really happen?" or "My God, is this true?" or "Holy cow, I can't believe this could be." It is major sensory overload. Innocent civilians who knew things are killed. Deception and murder are used to cover up the sordid deeds. The film requires several viewings, and frankly time, probably years, to unravel it. What happens is that various reviews, reports from historical figures and historians are read and pieced together. After a while the discovery is made that a particular "witness" never existed, a certain "police officer" is a figment of Stone's imagination, smoke in the trees, conversations, special ops guys with the inside scoop (particular "Major X" played by Canadian Donald Sutherland) are invented out of whole cloth. A proposition is one thing, but "JFK" is "Alice in Wonderland", a "riddle wrapped inside an enigma, tied by a puzzle" or whatever it is Joe Pesci says. It is exhausting.

So who killed JFK? Oh, maaaan! Stone's answer, as best I can tell, was Lyndon Johnson, in league with the joint chiefs, because Kennedy wanted out of Vietnam and they wanted in (because American industry needed the war?), working with right wing Birchers, who were part of rogue elements of the CIA (?), who were a "track," whatever that is, that could not be stopped because it was an inexorable connection starting in Guatemala ("good"), Iran ("good"), and Bay of Pigs ("not so good"), that had become dominated by Cuban exile "Republicans," working in league with the Soviets (KGB?), who recruited Lee Harvey Oswald, who learned to shoot in the Marines, who lived and married in Russia then came back, who promoted Marxism but was funded by Birchers (?), who was a patsy for the Dallas Mafia, who had Oswald-lookalikes say incriminating things, who worked with JFK, who worked with La Casa Nostra (who turned on him?), who were tied to Naval Intelligence (?), who operated out of a corner in New Orleans in which the Feds, the NIS and somebody else all had offices, who were tied to right wing homosexual businessmen, defrocked priests, gay prostitutes and guys with tempers like Ed Asner, whose activities were known by corrupt New Orleans lawyers and politicians, who were in league with the New Orleans International Trade Mart or something like that, protected by Dallas strip club owners, who hatched a plan that involved Cubans training in the Florida swamps or Latin America by gay militia commandos, who bought a bad Italian rifle with a bolt action release via mail instead of purchasing a better weapon through the black market or a store, who gave it to Oswald, who may or may not have fired at JFK but could not possibly have hit his mark from the Texas Book Depository, who with Secret Service agents working to kill the
President had assassins disguised as police officers and bums in the bushes, a car wreck lot and a grassy knoll, and created a triangulated cross-fire that killed the President then got away. Now, friends and neighbors, after all of that, at no time does Mr. Stone suggest that the assassination was the work of a fellow he later visited and said was a great man, named Fidel Castro, who is the most likely suspect.

Res ipsa loquiter.

Castro and the mob? Maybe. The confusion of Stone's plot twists is highly, precisely and to quintessential effect that with which the real killers want. Stone's film vastly hurts the attempt to learn the truth. He raises plenty of legitimate questions, mainly regarding the so-called "magic bullet," and he operates on at least one fairly solid foundation, which is that the Zapruder film seems to show more than one shooter. Saying Oswald was not a lone gunman is a premise I can give credence to, but beyond that God knows.

One thing is puzzling, and that is that in all the years since nobody has "stepped forward." Every so often somebody shows up on Larry King Live and says his father, usually a "Dallas cop," was the shooter, but these stories always have the crackpot feel to them. I want a deathbed confession from a Cuban, one of Sam Giancana's guys, something solid. When all the smoke clears, you still have a Communist sympathizer, Oswald, killing a President who just humiliated Kruschev over the Bay of Pigs, is a threat to Castro and is building up troops to fight Commies in Vietnam. It is plausible he had help and they were on the Grassy Knoll, they got away and Jack Ruby killed Oswald to shut him up. Maybe a little too convenient. The Warren Commission report came out only one year later, not enough time to sort out everything. The Church hearings were too open to get the real stuff beyond salacious sex. Secret CIA/FBI investigations might have been the only real answer, and who knows, maybe they were conducted, and maybe the gullible public cannot handle the truth. Who knows? Not Oliver Stone.

THEY ALWAYS BLAME AMERICA FIRST

In 1989 Oliver Stone came out with "Born on the Fourth of July", the true story of Ron Kovic, a gung-ho Marine who is paralyzed in combat in Vietnam. The film is realistic and compelling. Stone is a master and Tom Cruise as Kovic gives one of his best-ever performances, proving him to be a bona fide acting talent. The film depicts the heartbreaking American experience in Vietnam, and the character arc of Kovic is as complete as any ever captured. He returns home, desperate to believe that his sacrifice was in a noble cause, but this is chipped away by the well-known elements of '60s radicalism. The "generation gap" between longhaired youths and crew cut, religious parents is profound. Kovic sinks into the depravity of drugs and alcohol, but battles back to become a "hero" of the anti-war Left. He wheels into the 1972 Republican National Convention, where he tries to tell the clean-cut, well-heeled patriots that they are wrong and he is right. The idea is that they are all warmongers who have not fought, while he is a pacifist because he has. While there is truth to the premise, in choosing to tell this story, Stone establishes Hollywood as the home of solidly liberal ideas. In 1972, Nixon won 49 states over the ant-war McGovern. The idea that all those Americans, subject daily to reports from Peter Arnett and Dan Rather, the bias of Walter Cronkite, and the hate of the New York Times and the Washington Post, chose Nixon because they were bloodthirsty imperialists is just malarkey. Furthermore, Nixon had made 18-year olds eligible to vote. The concept that all of American
youth protested in the streets is a myth. The anti-war movement was propped by TV that made pockets of outrage look like a widespread movement. The Silent Majority spoke out in '72. Big time.

Stone's depiction is fair in and of itself, but he takes advantage of the power of his medium in creating a mindset that such horrors as Kovic experienced are just part of the "Vietnam experience." Kovic's life mirrors soldiers going back to the Roman Legion and beyond. The Left has taken Vietnam as one of those core issues and stuck to it, just as they found themselves wedded to Alger Hiss, Bill Clinton and now the losing side of the War on Terrorism. McCarthy was going after genuine Communists, and genuine Communists were trying to enslave South Vietnam. It took some fighting to stop them. Nixon and Kissinger had the best plan available to them at the time, and the public recognized it. Watergate killed them and the Democrats used it to abandon our allies. Millions died because of them. Democrats will have you believe that we "created" the "killing fields." They have to say things like that, to cling to this nebulous theory, somehow unable to blame the rabid haters and murderers of Communist history, apparently because they are wedded to McCarthyism. Their movies are their best tool in perpetuating their lies. Not on my watch.

STONE TRIED TO DISS CAPITALISM, GLORIFIED IT INSTEAD

In 1987 OLIVER STONE again starred Charlie Sheen, this time as Bud Fox, along with Martin Sheen and Michael Douglas, in "Wall Street". Stone, like Coppola's "Patton", tapped into a part of America he really wanted to discredit, but instead glorified. Based on the go-go stock markets of the Reagan '80s, it is loosely based on inside arbitrageurs and junk bond kings like Ivan Boesky and Michael Milken. Fox/Sheen is an idealistic, ambitious young stockbroker, his father is his conscience, and Douglas as Gordon Gekko is pure tantalizing temptation. Fox must violate SEC laws and get inside information in order to do business with the "big elephant" Gekko. Gekko's star fades when a big deal-gone-bad has personal ramifications, and Fox turns a dime on him. The film is supposed to show that America is a greedy place that "produces nothing" in a "zero sum game" in which the rich only make money on the backs of the poor. Gekko's (Stone's) statements about economics are pure, unadulterated economic lies shown to be lies simply by? observing factual things. Where Stone may have had second thoughts was the reaction the film got. As the years went by, he and others were approached countless times by Young Republicans and Wall Street execs who told him the depiction of the exciting world of finance led them into that very career, which they thanked him for! Stone had hoped to create an egalitarian class. Instead, he created a decade full of Gordon Gekkos. They in turn fueled the dot-com boom. It was not unlike the Democrats who hoped to expose Oliver North and the Republicans in the Iran-Contra "scandal," only to discover that millions thought Ollie and his White House pals were doing God's work in fighting Communism.

Res ipsa loquiter.

DID JOHN KERRY CONSULT STONE ON THIS FILM?
The essential story is only true if it describes William Calley and My Lai, or what that could have been if the villagers had been saved by a Messianic Sergeant Elias (Dafoe) instead of being gunned down by a Satanic Barnes (Berenger as a Calley knock-off). If Stone had simply made it the "My Lai Massacre", it would have been historically accurate, but what he did was pernicious. He wanted to convey to millions of moviegoers that My Lai was the norm, and he cast this ordinary platoon of grunts as driven to a My Lai-type war crime by the very nature of his view of our illegitimate role in Vietnam.

Stone was in Vietnam and I was not, but the history of Vietnam is not a history of ordinary units run amok in racist killing sprees. Stone infuses the story with humanity and heroes. Sheen plays Chris, an idealist, based on Stone's vision of himself. Want a fact? Here is a fact. Oliver Stone is not in the same league with the idealized Chris character. He is not a pimple on Chris's rear end. Chris is a hero and a survivor. Dafoe, as Elias, is a Christ-like figure who protects his "brothers" and shows no fear, even when chasing "Charlie" into that most dangerous of places, the underground tunnel system. His death, portrayed on the posters, is a wide-armed crucifix, and it is avenged by Chris, his disciple who takes to the challenge with the passion of the converted. A final battle also shows something that rarely, if ever, happened. North Vietnamese regulars overrun the Americans. In actuality, they won all the battles against the NVA. Then, the commander has to make a call and have the whole "pod," friend and foe alike, napalmed in another stretch on history.

Berenger and his "super lifer" pals are shown to be corrupt, have a taste for death, and little accountability in a situation that lets them kill "gooks" with racist impunity. This is not out of the question. Soldiers are trained killers, and combat de-humanizes them. The Audie Murphy characterizations are not true, either. But Stone has created a vision of the Vietnam experience that is not portrayed as a special circumstance, but rather the average, the every day. His political message is very clear, and it is to discredit the objectives of the war. He also discredits a lot of his buddies who fought with him. He does demonstrate the inhuman behavior of the Communists, which as a combat Marine he saw for himself, but strongly urges the viewer to buy into the sickness of America.

This film seems to parody the lies of John Kerry during the Winter Soldier investigation. Me? I'm rootin' for America.

A NAVY RECRUITING FILM

"Top Gun", starring Tom Cruise and Val Kilmer in 1986, was a glamorous showcase film for the Navy. Actual Navy recruiters set up shop in theatre lobbies, signing up young hopefuls filled with visions of drinking beer while singing "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'", making afternoon delight with Kelly McGillis, while tear-assing through the skies like a bat out off freedom.

LARRY FLYNT: DEMOCRAT

When Ronald Reagan became the President, a shift to conservatism occurred in Hollywood and the media. Hustler founder Larry Flynt flirted with Christianity, but it did not take. When his editors suggested that the Reagan mood should portend more "family friendly" fare, Flynt fired
that messenger and went from sick and disgusting to really hardcore porn (which is better than sick and disgusting). He aligned himself against the Republicans, who were asking 7-11s to keep their porn mags away from minors (a move since described by liberals as tantamount to Stalinist censorship). In 1998, Flynt became the mouthpiece of the Democrat party, a de facto Clinton spokesman and unofficial public relations firm for the DNC. In 2003 he decided to run for Governor of California as a Democrat. While his intentions may be to benefit the Democrats, he could not have harmed them more. Republicans need say nothing about this fact. It exists for what it is, on it face. Republicans just smile and say, "Hey, you Democrats, you can have Larry Flynt." They have him and he has them. A marriage made in...?

COMMUNISM: AN IDEOLOGY OF MURDER

In 1984 Sam Waterston starred as New York Times reporter Sidney Scheinberg in "The Killing Fields". Clint Eastwood was offered the role, but turned it down. He said it was because he is a "Western WASP," not an East Coast Jew, but he probably ran from it because he is a Republican and knew that Scheinberg had been a biased Vietnam reporter and did not want to promote that. Scheinberg filed numerous reports advocating the message that the U.S. was not doing the right thing in Vietnam. The early part of the film promotes the liberal myth that it was U.S. bombs and U.S. aggression that created the situation in Cambodia. The perfidy of such a concept is mind-boggling. The U.S. did create the situation in Cambodia, because it was U.S. Democrats, led by Chappaquiddick Teddy, who de-funded the South Vietnamese until they collapsed. Then they have the bluster to tell the world, using their powerful friends in the film industry, that the Cambodian holocaust was not because they disarmed the forces of freedom, but because the Communists were incensed at American crimes, therefore justifying their rampages of mass murder against innocent civilians. Is there some alternate Universe in which this can be true. Answer: No.

However, like a fair number of films that liberals make, "The Killing Fields" ends up promoting a semi-conservative message when it gets into truthful events that cannot be portrayed any other way. Pol Pot's murder of Cambodia is undeniable. In putting it on film, it simply speaks for itself. There is little to conclude in walking out of the theatres that showed "The Killing Fields" beyond the simple conclusion that, "Communists killed millions of people," which is a fact that does not allow for much leeway. Leftists still try to find that leeway, however.

HORSE MANURE

As if to counter-balance "The Deer Hunter", good old Jane Fonda starred in "Coming Home" (1978) with Jon Voight. Saved by the pure benevolence of American goodwill from a treason trial, she was allowed to pursue her craft (she is excellent at it). "Coming Home" seemed to be the realization of the self-fulfilling prophecy she created in 1972. It was that year that she traveled to Hanoi, the heart of America's enemy, and allowed herself to be posed on Communist tanks, wearing an army helmet. It was blatant "aid and comfort" provided to an enemy during a time of war. Jane did not stop there. Like a modern day Tokyo Rose, she got on the radio and told the troops their wives and girlfriends were having sex with hippies and protestors back
home. To this day, the G.I.s have never forgiven "Hanoi Jane". She tried to apologize and say she was wrong, but her heart was never in it.

Eventually she married CNN founder Ted Turner, a man who may not be the anti-Christ (but may be), and may not have achieved his success by invoking Satan (but may have). When Turner saw CNN employees adorned in "ashes" to worship Ash Wednesday, he went ballistic about "Jesus freaks" in his employ. Such a crime! Jane, in the first move she ever did that I liked (other than wearing skintight sex clothes in her hot-selling workout vids), declared she was a "born again Christian." That was the last straw for Turner, who divorced her. There is no word on whether Christianity took in Jane's life, but I wish her well.

In "Coming Home", she portrays the very cheating wife she described to the boys in her "Hanoi Jane" days. She tries to pepper the performance with an apology to her officer husband, Bruce Dern, but it ends up being more of an explanation, which in light of what we know about Vietnam does not wash. Two thumbs down.

A CONSERVATIVE HOLLYWOOD REFLECTION

"The Deer Hunter" (1978) starred Robert DeNiro. The film breaks numerous rules in terms of length of time and attention to detail. It can truly be called art. Small town values of American patriotism, loyalty and religious faith hold a sad story of native sons ruined in the 'Nam. The Communists are shown for what they were, savage beasts with no redeeming value. The film is an enduring monument in film history and made huge coin, but its "failure" to hue to the liberal line, especially on the nasty subject of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, made enemies for its director, Michael Cimino. When Cimino made another bid for artistic greatness, falling short with "Heaven's Gate", Hollywood turned on him in a way they never would have if his failures were liberal failures. Directors like Woody Allen are allowed to make boner after boner because they all are peppered with potshots at conservatism, Republicans, McCarthy and Christianity. How charming he is.

SCORSES'S GENIUS IS OBVIOUS

In 1976, Martin Scorsese directed "Taxi Driver", starring Robert DeNiro. Calling this a "conservative" movie is a stretch, but it is a prescient look at New York attitudes that preceded the age of Giuliani. Paul Schrader wrote it. His story is a hoot in and of itself. He and his brother were raised in a strict Calvinist Pennsylvania family, emphasizing the strictest tenets of Scripture and absolutism. The Calvinists are big on pre-ordained destiny. Released from this environment, he came to Hollywood and tried everything. Naturally, he was a mess; a drug addict, an alcoholic and a heterosexual so confused he tried homosexuality just to try it. Given the assignment to write a screenplay, he was holed up in a downtown L.A. hotel for weeks, then months. He had little social contact except occasional taxi rides to restaurants in and around L.A.'s skid row. He began to see the world from inside the taxi, and came up with a character and a plot revolving around the concept.

DeNiro's Travis Bickle is a Vietnam Marine vet, off kilter but moral, who is sickened by the crime, drugs and immorality of 1970s New York City, seen from the taxi he drives night and
The message of "Taxi Driver" is that peace comes from strength. It was a popular theme in a number of flicks. Hollywood seemed to fail to grasp some important realities about its marketplace. Time after time, movies that veered away from "touchy feely" liberalism and gave teeth to conservative characters (Eastwood's "Dirty Harry", Bronson, DeNiro, and others) made boffo box office, yet the industry has never come to grips with itself. They return time after time to premises that insult conservative audiences, and wonder why the lines get shorter.

"MISSILES" IS A BARNBURNER

"The Missiles of October" starred William DeVane as JFK and Martin Sheen as RFK. Both of these actors portrayed the Kennedys better than any actors ever have. This is a patriotic film that depicts how close we came to nuclear combat toe to toe with the Russkies, and how the Kennedys saw us through the crisis. This may have been the beginning of Martin Sheen's political awakening.

THEN REDFORD MADE THE KENNEDY-STOLE-1960-ELECTION MOVIE??

"All the President's Men", based on the book by Woodward and Bernstein, was impossible to resist for Redford. Nixon! Oh boy! Again, Hollywood passed up the Kennedy-stole-the-election story. What a shock! You have to hand it to these guys, though; they have talent. "President's" was masterful, thanks in large part to Goldman, who knew how to condense the story. Redford tried to play it close to the vest, and comes close to making it come off as straight and narrow. The actual truth portrayed betrays the lack of objectivity, however, at the Washington Post. Redford is Bob Woodward, a former Navy officer and a Republican. This is revealed to Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman) who gives him a furtive look upon learning this shocking truth. Jason Robards is Ben Bradlee, the Post's editor. We all know the story: The DNC is broken into by Cubans with White House phone numbers in their address books, and in investigating the burglary Woodward and Bernstein suspect a larger plot, which they uncover through dogged journalism that cannot be denied. The two writers are shown to be complete heroes. Hal Halbrooke plays "Deep Throat", the White House insider who gives Woodward the leads he needs to keep investigating. To this day his identity is unknown, and it remains entirely plausible that he was invented out of whole cloth.

The story is the story, and there is no room for liberal bias in that. To Redford's credit, he does not demonize the Republicans or sermonize. Implicit threat against the pair are made, but not expanded into anything. G. Gordon Liddy did volunteer to "off" Jack Anderson for revealing CIA assets in the U.S.S.R., but there is no evidence that Nixon's Republicans ever thought about blowing Woodward and Bernstein away. Domestic political murders, as best as I can tell, are the
province of the Democrats. Even in Oliver Stone's "JFK", it is Lyndon Johnson who supposedly was in on the plan to kill the President. The bias in "All the President's Men" is subliminal, but leave it to yours truly to see it. First, there is the acronym CREEP, which stands for Committee to Re-elect the President. There have been numerous such committees over the years, and they always go by the acronym CRP. But Woodward and Bernstein turned it into CREEP. Gotcha. There is also a scene in which Bradlee, who in real life was a drinking buddy (and God knows what else) of Kennedy's, getting the news that the story is progressing and has real legs. "You run that baby," he tells Woodward and Bernstein, then does little jig as he leaves the office. This is telling. Redford and director Alan Pakula allowed it, probably because it let them impart their own happiness over Nixon's downfall through the character. In another scene, Robards/Bradlee tells the reporters, "There's not much riding on this. Just the First Amendment and the Constitution of the United States."

Now just hoooold on there, Ben. Was Watergate really about the Constitution? Was that august document threatened? This begs the question, Where was Bradlee and Post publisher Katherine Graham when the Constitution really was threatened by their pal JFK, who stole the 1960 election? Where were they when their pal Bobby Kennedy was wiretapping Martin Luther King? Democrat operatives had to break into homes, hotels and offices to wiretap Dr. King just as the Plumbers had to break into Dr. Fielding's office, and Larry O'Brien's. A free press is undoubtedly the cornerstone of Democracy, but it functions best when it is not populated by over-inflated egos who think they are the soul arbiter of freedom of expression.

**GREAT FILM, UNIMPRESIVE POLITICAL VIEWS**

Robert Redford made a clunker called "The Way We Were" with Barbra Streisand that desperately tried to explain, apologize for, justify, glorify and approve of being an American Communist during McCarthyism, but just plain fails. He made the 1973 classic "Three Days of the Condor" (1973), with Cliff Robertson and Faye Dunnaway. He plays a CIA reader, a kind of pre-Tom Clancy research guy, a benign fellow among other benign CIA fellows, all of whom are murdered in a fuzzily explained hit by bad CIA fellows. After escaping, Redford tries to get to the bottom of it. Since he is a genius he has the intellectual tools to outwit his chasers. This is the film's highlight, revolving around the sexual tension between Redford and the redoubtable Faye, who he "kidnaps" in order to have a place to hide out, her apartment. The movie goes off the deep when the whole conspiracy turns out to be about the CIA's covert operations in the Middle East, where the U.S. apparently is planning the invasion (that never actually occurred) to take over OPEC. The message is that The Company murders innocents, the U.S. is a warmongering empire, and tool of capitalist greed. It is Redford's answer to Guatemala, Iran and Chile, where the people killed were generally Communists. Redford would rather show the CIA killing Chinese- and African-Americans and other non-threats.

**EXCELLENT POLITICAL FLICK**
Robert Redford was behind the entertaining political movie "The Candidate" (1972), which goes a long way towards explaining how the game works. This film is really not a liberal one, which is what makes it worthwhile even after 30 years. It is supposed to be based on Edmund "Jerry" Brown, former California Governor Pat Brown's son. Jerry Brown at the time was a youthful Secretary of State who would go on to two terms as Governor. He was a new kind of pol, attractive, a bit of swinger who dated rock star Linda Rohnstadt, and representative of the Golden State image of the 1970s. They called him "Governor Moonbeam".

Redford plays the son of the former Governor of California, played by Melvyn Douglas. The old man is old school all the way, having schmoozed his way up the slippery slope through implied corrupt deals with labor unions and other Democrat special interests. Redford is a young man who played football at Stanford and is now a social issues lawyer of the pro bono variety, helping Mexicans in Central California. Peter Boyle knew him at Stanford and is now a Democrat political consultant who recruits Redford to run for Senator against Crocker Jarman, an entrenched conservative Orange County Republican. Jarman could be Reagan, but he is as much a composite of the traditional Republican: Strong on defense, down on affirmative action and welfare, a real "up by the bootstraps" guy who emerged from the Depression and World War II to make us our "greatest generation."

The film does an about-face on perceptions that, in many cases, turn out to be true. Redford is the rich kid with connections. Jarman beat the Depression like the rest of the U.S., without a social worker. "How did we do it?" he mocks.

Redford's film wife is played by Karen Carlson, pure eye candy (but what happened to her career I cannot say?). She has ambitions of her own, and pushes him to do it because he has the "power," an undefined sexual charisma of the JFK variety. Redford plays a caricature of himself, handsome but considered an empty suit. His deal is he can say any outrageous thing because he cannot win anyway, and in so doing shows he has the brains. When he creeps up in the polls, the idealism gives way to standard politicking, complete with deals with his old man's crooked labor buddies. He wins, demonstrating the power of looks and TV advertising. In the end he expresses that he is not prepared for the task.

KENNEDY STOLE 1960 FROM NIXON, BUT NOBODY MAKES THAT MOVIE

"All the President's Men" (1976) was Robert Redford's breakthrough from pretty boy star to filmmaker with clout. Redford, a former baseball player at L.A.'s Van Nuys High School whose classmates were Dodger Hall of Fame pitcher Don Drysdale and (...) Natalie Wood, had been typecast by his looks and blonde hair into Malibu beach boy roles early on. This offended his sensibilities as an artist. Redford is in some ways the patron saint of liberal movie stars, and his story is a common one. He is no Dumbellionite, even though he dropped out of college. Like so many, he was drawn like a bee to honey to the theatre, trekking to New York as a teenager. His liberal views apparently were formed in his youth, growing up in the Mexican section of Santa Monica and seeing racism up close (at least, that is the story he tells). His lack of formal education in no way speaks to a lack of political knowledge, but his success and looks speak to a certain amount of good luck while others his age were in Southeast Asia. This very likely created
a guilt complex that Redford, a star with an ego, could not manifest upon himself, so he
found a culprit in this country, which had provided him a forum to achieve so much (...)

NOT SURE WHAT BEATTY WAS SHOOTING FOR

"The Parallax View" was big liberal Warren Beatty's attempt to describe a conspiracy involving
shadowy government agencies. It is entertaining and worth watching, but misses the mark.
Beatty seems to be trying to piece together an explanation on how, or even who, killed Kennedy.
"The Manchurian Candidate" may have inspired him. Beatty plays a journalist who goes
undercover, allowing himself to be recruited by the Parallax Corporation, presumably a CIA
front that trains assassins. His psychological profile is determined in part by watching a
disturbing montage of scenes, ranging from love, sex and patriotism to war, gore and devil
worship, mixed with the juxtaposition of wealth vs. need. The point seems to be that people go
hungry while rich America has sex and kills people?

THEY DO NOT MAKE MOVIES THIS GOOD ANY MORE

The conspiracy movies included two fictional stories, "Marathon Man" and "The Parallax View",
as well as the Watergate movie, "All the President's Men" (which Robert Redford produced after
giving long consideration to a movie about how Kennedy stole the 1960 election?not!).
"Marathon Man" was directed by John Schlesinger, written by the great William Goldman
(based on his novel), and produced by Bob Evans. Goldman, along with Towne, is considered
one of the best screenwriters of all time. "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" (1968) is an
original screenplay that gets as much study as "Chinatown", and his book "Adventures in the
Screen Trade" is a must-read for industry insiders. "Marathon Man" stars Dustin Hoffman as a
Columbia doctoral student, obsessed with his thesis about his father, who committed suicide
when he was "victimized" by McCarthyism. His brother is Roy Scheider, a super-secret agent for
an organization that handles, apparently, what the FBI cannot and the CIA will not. His pal is
William DeVane, and he is in league with the devil, a former Nazi dentist named Christian Zsell
(played to perfection by Laurence Olivier), based on Joseph Mengele. Zsell is also known as the
"White Angel". The plot revolves around millions of dollars worth of diamonds, smuggled to the
U.S. by Zsell with DeVane's (and Sheider's) help. Hoffman accidentally gets involved and foils
the plot. It is brilliant stuff in every way, shape and form, but coming on the heels of the Church
hearings, the film plays on the public's belief that the CIA is corrupt, bent more on money and
power than protecting the interests of freedom. The anti-hero is Hoffman. The backstory of his
persecuted Jewish father strengthens the myth that fine liberals of conscience were the victims of
the McCarthy witch-hunt. Like all films depicting McCarthyism, the victim is fictional and there
are no scenes based on real events. This is because actual scenes of actual "victims," if they hold
to the truth, will show actual Communists being caught in lies by public officials using perfectly
normally and legal techniques of American justice.

FABULOUS FILM THAT STILL HOLDS UP
"The Wind and the Lion" was a beautiful John Milius film and story, with a pulse-pounding sound track. Brian Keith plays Teddy Roosevelt, who orders U.S. troops to Morocco to protect U.S. interests, as well he should have. Candice Bergen is an American socialite, kidnapped by a roguish Arab sand pirate, played by Sean Connery. The film is much more story, character rivalry and romance than history, but it does not hand us any of the usual garbage portraying the U.S. as racist exploiters. Instead, America under Roosevelt is portrayed as a modern power, unafraid to flex its muscles, but not willing to go overboard.

Milius writes and directs to this day. He has a tremendous love of history, a conservative trait. The reason for this is simple. History is the accurate description of great things done by conservatives. No wonder we love history. He is not the household name that Spielberg, Coppola or Lucas are. He says he is comfortable with the decisions he made, which were to be up-front about his politics regardless of whether it cost him. He freely admits that his conservatism indeed did prevent him from the kind of greatness that he was capable of.

UNDERRATED CLASSIC

In 1984, John Milius wrote and directed "Red Dawn", starring Patrick Swayze and Charlie Sheen. It describes a joint Communist Cuban/Soviet invasion of the Rocky Mountains. Aside from its Cold War warning, it was an ode to the gun lobby. In an early scene, a pick-up truck has a bumper sticker reading "You can have my gun when you pry it from my cold, dead fingers." A Communist soldier then pries a gun from the hands of a dead Colorado resident. A group of high school football players who had been taught how to hunt, fish and live off the land by their dad, take to the mountains and form a guerilla unit, attacking the Communist occupiers in series of daring raids. In the end, the Communists are defeated and World War III is won. The high school boys are memorialized for their courage and daring in the early, dark days of the fight for freedom.

THIS IS WHAT FILM IS SUPPOSED TO BE

The mid-1970s saw a spate of "government conspiracy" films, all with liberal themes that emanated from Watergate. None of them were about Kennedy stealing the 1960 election. Hmm. "Chinatown" (1974) may be the best screenplay ever written. A historical look at 1930s Los Angeles, it actually condensed events from the 1900s with events that, uh, never happened but made for good drama. Written by L.A. native Robert Towne, directed by Roman Polanski, produced by Evans and starring Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunnaway and famed director John Huston, it told the story of how Los Angeles became a metropolis. In Towne's version, Huston "owns" the L.A. Department of Water & Power with a character based on actual L.A. City engineer William Mulholland. Mulholland had orchestrated the political deal which built the aqueduct that brought water from the Owens Valley into the L.A. Basin, allowing millions of Southern Californians to keep their lawns green to this day.

The Mulholland character is "sacrificed" at the altar of greed, embodied by Huston, who secretly buys the San Fernando Valley, knowing that once the water deal is set, it will be incorporated
into the city, making him a gazillionaire. It is rather cynical, although nobody suggests the L.A. "city fathers" were boy scouts. The same old theme is that capitalism and American political power are corrupt. To make sure the audience is convinced the corruption is beyond redemption, Huston is in the end found out to be an insatiable, incestual monster. He plays the role so well it brings up minds-eye imagery of his real daughter, Angelica. The film is utterly beyond any criticism, regardless of political colorization. For decades, film students and screenwriters have studied it. It spawned an artistic quest to lace the screen with symbols, metaphors, backstory, and twists.

"Chinatown" seems to be the apex of the American film period, the mid-1970s. The period from 1960 to 1979 is unparalleled, but the backstory of the people who created these classics is a telling tale of why the genre leans to the Left. In the 1960s, film schools became popular. Four schools emerged, and have held their place as the place to learn the craft. In Los Angeles there was the USC School of Cinema-Television. Their first big alumnus was "Star Wars" director George Lucas. UCLA combined their film school with their drama program, so as to bring actors, writers, directors and producers together. Coppola went to UCLA along with a future rock star named Jim Morrison, who would form The Doors with another UCLA film alumnus, keyboardist Ray Manzarek.

**GREATEST MOVIE EVER**

"The Godfather" (1972) was a stylized masterpiece. Its auteur director, Coppola, laced it with the subtlest Leftist message that may have avoided the radar of even longtime fans who have seen the film 10 or more times. When interviewed by producer Robert Evans, Coppola said he wanted to make a movie that was a metaphor for capitalism in America. Evans told him what he could do with his metaphors, but Coppola was brilliant and an authentic Italian, a Hollywood rarity at that time. His ethnicity was considered necessary in the making of a Sicilian mob picture. In the classic Tahoe scene of "Godfather II", Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) tells a Nevada Senator that he is just as corrupt as he is. In the first film Pacino tells Diane Keaton (Kay) that his father is no different than the President, in that they are both powerful men who have other men killed. The "family" is depicted as a corporate empire that must change with the times like a car company, only the stock in trade of the mob was the transition from prohibition booze to heroin (although Michael's goal is eventual "legitimacy"). What gives Coppola's work authentic panache, as opposed to so many heavy-handed liberal messages, is that in "The Godfather(s)", his messages have the ring of truth.

**GROUNDBREAKING**

TV shows began to veer into social territory in the 1970s, especially "All In the Family". Carroll O'Connor played Archie Bunker, the epitome of everything liberals despise. In turning him into a cartoon character, and also because O'Connor's acting skills were extraordinary, they came close to overshooting their mark and making Bunker more popular than creator Norman Lear, a liberal's liberal, wanted him to be. Since that meant success and riches, however, Bunker was allowed to develop his own little cult of personality. Bunker liked nobody except the
Republicans and Nixon. He was a New York construction hardhat, like the ones who cheered
Nixon. His venom was directed at blacks, Jews, Puerto Ricans, Orientals, Europeans, Catholics,
gays, Democrats, liberals, Communists, and everybody. The assumption was that he was a
Protestant of English or Irish origin, but the writers wrote in his complaints for "drunken
Irishmen" and "fag Englishmen." His view of God was that if you did not believe in Him you
were a Communist, but beyond that little was explained. His son-in-law, Rob Reiner, ate him out
of house and home, exasperating Bunker with liberal nostrums. His wife, Edith, was a dunce
who did not stand up to him unless the writers decided that night's episode would feature
women's rights, but the next time out she was back to her mousy self.
Bunker's "castle" was constantly invaded by a host of blacks, women, Hispanics and other
minority-types from the New York "melting pot," all of them smarter than Arch and able to run
rings around him intellectually. The only characters outside of Edith who stooped to his low IQ
were his dumbass white bowling and lodge pals. The show worked, for one thing, because after
years of racial intolerance, white America was ready to loosen up, laugh at themselves, and
accept a little affirmative action comedy at their expense. It also worked because Bunker
developed a cult status that Lear had not predicted. There were those who agreed with his views,
and sitting at home these Joe Six-Packs spent the 1970s yelling, "You tell 'em, Arch."

GOTTA HAND IT TO ALTMAN, GRUDGINGLY

At the same time, Robert Altman's "M*A*S*H" came out. It, too found an audience, and truth be
told many who enjoyed "Patton" enjoyed "M*A*S*H". It was just plain funny, and the anti-
military theme was subtle. Altman walked a brilliant tightrope between a pro-American and
unpatriotic premise. There is no doubt that Altman intended it as an anti-Vietnam movie. It was
written by former Communist Ring Lardner, Jr. Lardner had been Blacklisted, and this fact
featured prominently in the politics of the film's aura. It was based on a sexy paperback novel
about surgeons in Korea. The film was set in Korea, yet made every possible attempt to convey
the image that it was actually Vietnam. Many of the movie's set pieces were deliberately
Vietnamese in nature and costume, for that very purpose. To the extent that it was unpatriotic, it
subtly described "regular Army" officers as unyielding, intolerant Christians, utterly blinded by
stupid jingoism. The draftees, however, are funny and attractive as they drink and love their way
through a bevy of good-looking nurses, all while saving lives in the style of comic Galahads.
Altman showed genius as a filmmaker. The movie avoided real controversy because it was just
so darn good.
"M*A*S*H" spurred a television show that ran for years. In the 1970s it played for its time and
audience. Re-runs, however, strain its credibility beyond Altman's original themes. Two doctors
played the "bad guy." The first was a complete buffoon. Frank Burns was prominently identified
as a Republican. He is given zero good qualities. He is ugly, a bad doctor, a coward, a racist and
all-around mean SOB who cheats on his wife with Major Margaret Hoolihan, who at least is
given some character. She is half-Vixen, half-Fascist, naturally Republican, a patriotic American
in the "worst way," who worships the idols of war. Over the years the writers gave Margaret a
little development. Very little. Burns was replaced by Major Charles Emerson Winchester, a
Boston Brahmin, naturally a Republican whose father "knows Truman. He doesn't like him, but
he knows him." Winchester, like Hoolihan, is allowed a touch of humanity when the liberal
writers felt charitable, but generally was available for all possible bashing. Two hero-doctors anchor the show by showing their intelligence, medical skills and tolerance as direct contrasts to the war effort. The CIA is lampooned, and a military effort that in reality featured MacArthur's Inchon campaign, perhaps the most brilliant invasion in history, is also played as foolish. In the end, the TV show and the film avoid being really and actually unpatriotic because they do feature an emphasis on the basic goodness of the American spirit under stress, but you will not catch me tuned in to those old re-runs(...)

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**GREATEST WAR FILM EVER MADE**
In 1970, two films juxtaposed each other. "Patton" was an unlikely winner of eight Oscars. The pacifist Scott for all practical purposes took his Buck Turgidson character and refined him into the real-life Patton. In interviews, Scott said he found his research of Patton revealed an unbalanced man, but on screen Scott nailed him as the vainglorious, brilliant, driven warmonger he was. Steiger was offered the role first but turned it down because it glorified war. Vietnam was absolutely at its apex. It was very surprising that Hollywood would make such a film at that time. But director Franklin Schaffner had served under Patton, and after making "The Planet of the Apes" had the clout to call his shots. The film did not get America behind the war, but it did cause Nixon to start bombing Cambodia because the Patton story convinced him to get tough. The screenwriter, oddly enough, was Francis Ford Coppola, who may have done himself a turn. Coppola was no war lover, and wrote "Patton" as a man obsessed with war ("God help me, I love it so"), deluded by visions of Napoleonic grandeur mixed with Episcopalian Christianity and karmic reincarnation. The intent may have been to show a psychotic military man, to de-mask his heroism, and this may have been what prompted Scott to play it. From page to screen there are virtually no changes, but if Coppola was trying to put down the military by showing Patton's human warts, the result was a brilliant work that now is one of, if not the most, conservative pictures ever made. Watching "Patton" stirs wonderful pride in two countries (Great Britain is prominent in the film) that were tough enough to stand up to the Nazis when the rest of the world cowered in victimhood. Karl Malden's Omar Bradley is Patton's perfect foil, as is the Bernard Law Montgomery character. The film saved Coppola, who was about to be fired as "The Godfather" director. When he won the Oscar for "Patton", it gave him too much clout to get the axe.

THE DUKE HAS THE LEFT TIED IN KNOTS

In 1969, John Wayne infuriated the Left with "The Green Berets", a film that made no apologies in its all-out support of America's effort in Vietnam. It was lambasted by critics, but in a very interesting sign, sold out at the box office. It plays today and while it is heavy-handed, there is little about it that rings untrue. The soldiers do not swear, complain or bastardize their uniforms like the actual guys did, but their patriotism and military professionalism was the real deal. The Communists they fight in the film are shifty little pissants. This does not deviate from the essential truth.

STEIGER AND POITIER AT THEIR HEIGHTS OF POWER

In 1967, Sidney Poitier again stirred the red-necks with "In the Heat of the Night", where he plays Virgil Tibbs, a competent Philadelphia cop stuck overnight in a Mississippi town. It must be 110 degrees at night. The white boys sweat like stuck pigs while Virgil is as cool as a cucumber in a Savoy Row suit. The sheriff, Rod Steiger, is discomfited by circumstances in which Tibbs is "lent" to him to solve a murder that happens to occur when he is there. In working together, layer after layer of characterization is stripped away in marvelous fashion, through the skill of director Norman Jewison (who tells everybody he is not a Jew, he is Methodist), until
understanding between the two men become a metaphor for the healing of a divided America. Very good stuff.

**A BEAUTIFUL FILM**

"To Sir With Love" was a beautiful story about a black teacher, Sidney Poitier, who overcomes racial barriers to teach West London toughs and toughettes the meaning of life. It was, literally, banned in Alabama, which was ruled entirely by...the Democrat party. In 1967, Poitier again stirred the red-necks with "In the Heat of the Night", where he plays Virgil Tibbs, a competent Philadelphia cop stuck overnight in a Mississippi town. It must be 110 degrees at night. The white boys sweat like stuck pigs while Virgil is as cool as a cucumber in a Savoy Row suit. The sheriff, Rod Steiger, is discomfited by circumstances in which Tibbs is "lent" to him to solve a murder that happens to occur when he is there. In working together, layer after layer of characterization is stripped away in marvelous fashion, through the skill of director Norman Jewison (who tells everybody he is not a Jew, he is Methodist), until understanding between the two men become a metaphor for the healing of a divided America. Very good stuff.

**LIBERALISM IN HOLLYWOOD AND A TERRIBLE ENDING**

In 1965, a serious nuclear movie called "Fail Safe" was released. Henry Fonda is the President. A computer glitch launches The Bomb for the U.S.S.R. Fonda cannot recall it, and apologizes to the Soviet premier. His wife is visiting New York City, and in one of the worst political decisions in Hollywood history, Fonda tells the Soviets that in order to prove to them it was an accident, he will drop a 30-megaton nuclear bomb on the Big Apple! He carries through with his decision, despite his wife's presence there. The Soviets are portrayed as suffering their fate with dignified resolve.

**CLASSIC KUBRICK**

In 1964 the first of the "bomb" movies came out. Kubrick further earned his place in the pantheon of film greats with his all-time classic "black comedy," "Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Love the Bomb". Explaining how a movie that ends in the world obliterated by nuclear (actually hydrogen) holocaust is a comedy leads me to suggest watching it. Only then you will know. The iconoclastic Kubrick made an iconoclastic film starring the extraordinary Peter Sellers in three roles. He plays the President, a lily-livered liberal in the mold of Adlai Stevenson. He plays Mandrake, a British Royal Air Force officer, and he plays Dr. Strangelove, an ex-Nazi scientist based on Werner von Braun, although some of have suggested that they see in the madman Henry Kissinger. Kissinger was not well known when the script by Terry Southern (who later wrote "Easy Rider" but died destitute) was turned in.

The premise is that an Air Force General, Jack Ripper (most of the characters are given descriptive names), played by the Communist bohemian and Sausalito weed smoker Sterling Hayden, goes mad. He is convinced that because water is fluoridated the Communists have
conspired to deprive red-blooded Americans of their "essence," their "vital bodily fluids"...their semen. For this obviously stupid (believed only by right wing wackos) reason, Ripper overrides Air Force protocol and orders his nuclear attack wing to bomb Russia back to the stone age. Of course this is meant to show that the military is filled with lunatic fringe elements with their hands on the button. In an interesting bit of terminology, the words Soviet Union are never uttered, only Russia, presumably to "humanize" all those agrarian reformers. Thought I hadn't caught that, huh? Anyway, real-life pacifist George C. Scott, playing General Buck Turgidson, discovers Ripper's plan. He is another Curt LeMay take-off, bombastic and filled to the brim with sexual testosterone that seemingly can only be released by his bikini-clad girl Friday, or by bombing the Russkies to smithereens.

A plan is hatched to inform the Communists how to shoot down the wing, in order to prevent nuclear holocaust. Turgidson thinks that is a terrible idea and that as long as the boys are on their way, they should drop their payload on the bastards. The Russian Ambassador, however, puts a crimp in those plans by informing the President that this would set off a Doomsday Machine, guaranteed to destroy all life on Earth. Turgidson laments the fact that there is a "gap" between the Soviet possession of such a device, which the Americans lack, no doubt due to liberal malfeasance. Forced by the Doomsday scenario to avoid holocaust, the Americans and Russians work together to shoot down all the U.S. planes, save one. Meanwhile, Ripper kills himself and his aide de camp, Mandrake/Sellers, discovers the recall code. But the last plane, piloted by good ol' boy Slim Pickens, is as Turgidson/Scott describes, wily enough to evade radar, while damage from a heat-seeking missile has rendered it unable to receive the recall. They make their run.

Pickens makes his cowboy speech about going "toe to toe, nuclear combat with the Russkies" and emphasizes the crew, including a young James Earl Jones, is due commendations "regardless of race, color or creed." With Pickens personally releasing and riding his bomb into a Valhallic destiny, the deed is done, leaving the Doomsday shroud to envelop the Earth. All is not lost, however, because Dr. Strangelove/Sellers, messianically saluting the President as "mein Fuhrer," describes how mineshafts can be converted into underground government societies for the next 100 years. The boys all smile when Strangelove says that in order to further the human race through procreation, many more attractive women than men would have to be recruited to do "prodigious sexual work." Unfortunately, monogamy would have to be a thing of the past. The end.

"Dr. Strangelove" may be one of the 10 greatest movie ever made, but its comic message was clear: The military is not to be trusted, nuclear weapons serve no good purpose, and the Soviets are likely to be victims of our aggression. Like a number of movies, however, its political message is stilted. Reagan said it was his favorite(...)

A PRESCRIPT DRAMA

Marlon Brando starred in "The Ugly American", which despite its title was not liberal, but proved to be prescient. It was loosely based on the friendship developed between an American fighter pilot, shot down and fighting with guerillas, and Ho Chi Minh, who was fighting the Japanese during World War II. Marlon, the former pilot-turned-PR-executive, is named ambassador to a small Southeast Asian nation modeled on Indochina. The reason he is appointed is because of his friendship with a populist leader there who the U.S. fears may be a Communist.
Brando assures them the man is not one, but when he gets there he discovers the man is. Their friendship turns into mortal enmity, and America's largesse, goodwill and social conscience are thrown back at us by savage mobs roiled by Marxist ideology. The final scene shows a press conference detailing the crisis, with a businessman changing the channel on his TV to show American indifference to the world's crises. Considering what happened in Vietnam over the next years, it proved to be a real cautionary tale.

GREAT POLITICAL THRILLER

One year after "The Manchurian Candidate", John Frankenheimer was back at it with "Seven Days in May", screenwritten by "Twi-Light Zone" creator Rod Serling. Serling's "Zone's" were a masterpiece of semi-liberal social conscience. Frankenheimer seized on another 1950s novel based on the real events of 1934, in which Republican industrialists recruited Marine hero Smedley Butler to orchestrate a coup d'etat against FDR. The novel and Frankenheimer's film fictionalize the event. It was, again, one of the best movies ever made, but completely liberal. Frankly, I have to ask why in 1963 the decision was made to examine a political conspiracy from 1934 when the worst political crime in U.S. history, the stealing of the 1960 election by Kennedy over Nixon, had occurred just three years prior. The answer to that question, my friend, is blarin' in the wind.

After JFK's assassination, "The Manchurian Candidate" was pulled because it hit too close to home, but in June, 1968 RFK was staying at Frankenheimer's Malibu home the night of the California Primary. He was tired and wanted to stay there. The enthusiasm of his victory that night convinced him to make the long drive on a twisting, turning Pacific Coast Highway, up the Santa Monica Freeway to downtown Los Angeles, where Sirhan Sirhan was waiting for him with a gun at the Ambassador Hotel.

Kirk Douglas is the Butler character In "Seven Days In May", an upright Marine whose politics are explained early by a fellow officer who says to him, "I though you'd be an ACLU lawyer by now, protecting the great unwashed." Douglas describes this officer as the kind who would be better suited for an army that goosesteps. Good dialogue, though. Burt Lancaster is the right wing Air Force General and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He is modeled after Curtis LeMay, although the Lancaster swagger and charisma make him far more appealing. Frederick March is President Jordan Lyman, an ardent liberal who has just signed a peace treaty with the Soviets that presumably dismantles much of our nuclear arsenal. Lancaster does not trust the Soviet will honor their end of the bargain. Therefore he is convinced they will strike and America will be lost. A U.S. Senator is in on Lancaster's plot to take over the Presidency. They make him from California just to make sure he is affiliated with Dick Nixon. Nice touch. The public is solidly against the President, fueled by a right wing radio host in a prescient script device. In the end, the "protector of the great unwashed," Douglas, foils the plot and March's speech to the D.C. press corps is met by a standing ovation. Oh, those evil militarists and Republicans.

ANTI-COMMUNIST OR NOT ANTI-COMMUNIST?
In 1962, John Frankenheimer made "The Manchurian Candidate", which starred and was produced by Frank Sinatra. The film has alternately been described anti-Communist by some, not so by others, including Frankenheimer, who was (ironically as I shall demonstrate) a close friend of Robert Kennedy's. RFK was his guest the last night of his life. Based on a 1950s novel, the film shows an Army unit in Korea, captured by the Communists, and made to endure "brainwashing" techniques, which they cannot remember except in their sleep. Lawrence Harvey wins a Congressional Medal of Honor for actions that in reality never happened, but were programmed into the mind of the unit. He is the son of a Hillary Clinton-type dragon lady, played to perfection by Angela Lansbury. Her husband, his stepfather, is Senator Johnny Iselin, a McCarthy figure. The political affiliation is a little fuzzy, but it can be assumed he is a Republican, although another Senator is viewed as an ACLU liberal, yet still a member of Iselin's party (?).

The Iselin (McCarthy) character is depicted as a buffoon and a drunkard with no redeeming qualities. He makes scurrilous accusations about Communists in the government with no proof, and when asked to name how many, arrives at the random number "52" because of an available bottle of Heinz 52 catsup. It is without a doubt a classic film, and to its credit the Communists are shown to be bloodthirsty animals. There is some confusion because Lansbury and her husband are right wing ideologues, except that it turns out Lansbury is a Communist spy, using the cover of the right to plan the assassination of a Presidential candidate. The idea is for Iselin (who is unaware of his wife's espionage?) to become President. Presumably somebody like McCarthy in the White House is the worst possible scenario for America, and plays into Moscow's hands. The shooting is to be carried out by her son, Harvey, but Sinatra gums up the works by figuring out how he was brainwashed, and catastrophe is averted in the end.

**THIS FILM ENDED THE BLACKLIST**

1960 was the "official" end of the Blacklist. A young director named Stanley Kubrick had made a brilliant movie about military justice, "Paths to Glory", starring Kirk Douglas in 1958. In 1960, he directed the classic, "Spartacus". "Spartacus" starred Douglas as a slave of the Roman Empire, depicting his deadly rivalry with the Roman General Crassus (played to perfection by Laurence Olivier). The film was rife with social message. The slaves who rise up against their Roman oppressors are metaphors for the working class, especially minorities, rising up against white oppression. One black slave, played by ex-football star Woody Strode, gives his life so Spartacus can live. The fact that he was black was well calculated. Dalton Trumbo, a former Communist, wrote "Spartacus". He penned it under an assumed name because he was still Blacklisted. When it came time to edit the film for release, Douglas, a huge star and its producer, made the decision to list Trumbo as the writer. His power and the film's success combined with this act ended the Blacklist. In a notorious scene that was cut from the original but has since been restored, a slave named Antoninus (Tony Curtis) bathes Crassus/Olivier. Strange wordplay about a preference between snails and oysters at first seems irrelevant until one realizes it is Trumbo's effort to introduce a homosexual theme to the story, using snails and oysters as metaphors for straight and gay love. Isn't that special?
POLITICS AS THEATRE

Based on a great novel by Allen Drury, "Advise and Consent" was a 1950s film that holds up today as one of the best political movies ever. It revolves around the nomination of Henry Fonda to be Secretary of State. The fictional account portrays Fonda, based on Alger Hiss, and his nomination raises a huge hullabaloo. In Hollywood's perfect world, Hiss/Fonda is not convicted, and a bungling Burgess Meredith plays the Whittaker Chambers character. Instead of using his Christian resolve to uncover the Truth via his "pumpkin papers," he is discredited as a liar. It also offers an insidious plot to blackmail a bi-curious Republican Senator. It is good stuff, but definitely political revisionism.

THE LAST "CONSERVATIVE" MOVIE?

In 1939, Frank Capra made "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington", starring Jimmy Stewart. I have sources that tell me a film was made 10 years later that depicted the Republican as a good guy, but I could not verify it. To the best of my knowledge, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" is the last big screen film in which the Democrat was the bad guy, and even then it is only inferred. In Capra's classic, a Midwestern political machine based on the corrupt Democrat organization in Kansas City that Harry Truman rose to power in, is exposed by an idealistic young Senator (Stewart). Claude Rains plays the Truman character. He looked just like him, and in end gives a Senate floor mea culpa of his complicity with Democrat crimes, which is highly, precisely and to quintessential effect the same one "Give 'em hell Harry" should have given, but never did. All is not lost for the Democrats, however, because Stewart is still a Democrat, and the hope for the future. In reality, the Democrats just got more corrupt, and Hollywood would be their willing ally.

REAGAN DIDN'T JUST CHANGE LIVES, HE SAVED 'EM: THE REAGAN THEORY

Why do I think Ronald Reagan was the greatest President of the 20th Century, on par with George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt? Aside from his good character, his economic triumphs and patriotism, it comes down to a theory that I came up with after hearing Margaret Thatcher say he won the Cold War "without firing a shot." First, it entails an analysis of World War II, in which some 50 to 60 million people died, yet the world says it was worth it to defeat Hitler and Japan. This leads to my theory, which is based on the unfought World War III. Say this struggle was fought between freedom, led by the U.S., and Communism, led by the U.S.S.R., between 1983 and 1989. Say that during this period, 50 to 60 million people died, and the world was caught up in an Apocalypse just as terrible as the one fought in the 1940s. Say that, through better technology, leadership, military doctrine, and with the help of God, the U.S. wins World War III. Say further that the political fallout of the war is exactly and precisely that which actually happened in 1989-91. I say that had it happened this way, the world would again say it was worth it, to defeat Communism. Reagan did it without firing a shot, and this is why I love him so much. Furthermore, in an ironic twist, Bill Clinton owes much of his success to Reagan. The Republicans were victims of their own success in
1992. Having defeated Communism, the Military Industrial Complex came to a standstill, causing the brief economic downturn that cost George Bush his re-election. This in turn led to the Cold War dividend in which all those smart defense techies fueled the Internet revolution. Clinton, presiding over a world made peaceful by Reagan-Bush policies, his feet held to the fire by a Republican Congress bent on maintaining Reagan's economic principles, takes credit (and some of it rightly so) for a period of huge expansion of the economy.

**THOSE WHO DO NOT REMEMBER HISTORY ARE DOOMED TO RE-LIVE IT**

When American G.I.s arrived at German concentration camps at the end of World War II, Dwight Eisenhower ordered camera crews to capture all of it. He said that if not, nobody would believe it, and it would not be remembered. Thus, the Holocaust is memorialized and detailed for history.

Jewish Nazi hunters echo the cry, "Never again," but alas, history does repeat itself. Some might even say it rhymes. International Communism is responsible for the murder of 100 million human beings in roughly 72 years, in the U.S.S.R., China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba, East Germany and throughout the Warsaw Pact countries. 12 million died in the Holocaust, 50-60 million in WWII.

Then there are the genocides in Rwanda, Congo, by Idi Amin and other despots, and it all just keeps comin'. Absent camera crews like the ones Ike ordered turned on, it just flies right past our radar. Somehow, Communism is this dinosaur of the Cold War. To call somebody a Communist just has no real bite anymore, whereas to call somebody a Nazi is the worst insult. If we do not wake up and understand that evil exists, then we are doomed to just re-live it over and over again. Until it rhymes.

This a great book that makes the attempt to turn the light of Truth on some of the worst crimes ever committed, but I am afraid it is only read by those, like me, who already know about it. We must reach the apathetic and the young. Satan's best strategy is to foil these efforts and keep us stupid.

**MAURY ALLEN IS A NATIONAL TREASURE**

Now that Jim Murray and Leonard Koppett are gone, Maury Allen may be the greatest literary link to our storied sports past. The man is a treasure. He has more first-hand knowledge of great sporting events of the past 50 years than any single writer, and this latest book is just another example of a terrific scribe at work. Bravo!

**GREAT RIVALRY IN THE STANDS, NOT ON THE FIELD**

The Yankee-Red Sox rivalry is a huge big deal for fans of both teams. There may be more passion expended on these two storied franchises than any teams in sports, but there is no real rivalry on the field. To put this into political terms, the Yankees are the British and the Red Sox are the IRA. There is no real comparison. However, it's all good fun and the book is well written.
The double standard of Political Correctness may have some validity insofar as it is a response to past injustices, mostly of the racial variety, but for Michael Moore to title his book "Stupid White Men" leaves him open, in my view, to as much criticism as I would rightly receive had I written a book called "Dumbellionite Negroes". The easy put-down of Moore is to say something like, "It takes one to know one," but in all fairness, Moore is not stupid. Furthermore, conservatives such as myself love to tout the "marketplace of ideas," because it is in this free discourse of Democracy where we succeed, whether it be talk radio, best selling books, Fox News, the rising tide of country music vs. Hollywood's recent failures, or the simple fact that Republicans now dominate the White House, the Congress, the Senate, governorships and state legislatures. We must begrudgingly accept the fact, however, that Moore is the exception to this rule. He succeeds. He is rich. He is popular. Therefore, to dispute him requires some intellectual honesty.

In the bad old days, the bigots might call Moore a "traitor to his race." More appropriately, he might be considered a traitor to his class, because his arguments seem based on a refutation of the middle class system that many of us strongly believe makes America great, and we assume it is this "class" from which Moore emerges from. What we think makes America great is something Moore thinks is lousy. Does this make him anti-American and unpatriotic? Again, to say so is the easy way out.

The best way to dispute Moore is not to put him down, but to make an honest argument on behalf of America. To put things in sports terms, think of him as a guy who grows up in New York City and hates the Yankees. He has access to all the information about how the Yankees are the greatest dynasty in sports history, and is surrounded by admirers and fanatics of the team, yet he chooses to hate what represents him.

Moore emerges from what I call the "Emma Goldman school of anarchy." In the old days, guys like Moore would be dismissed as Communists and Socialists. Now that Communism has been defeated, most people do not even remember much about the ideology responsible for the murder of 100 million human beings in roughly 72 years. Calling somebody a Communist has little effect any more. So the Moore's of this world can no longer find comfort in Moscow. They no longer carry posters of Chairman Mao. What they are left with is a vague hatred for the winners, the powerful, the champions of history. In essence, the winners of history are America and Christianity. Anarchism, as espoused by Emma Goldman during World War I, is a mindset that never really goes away. In a free country it is free to be voiced, and Moore voices it.

As for America's role in the world, we have little choice but to lead. America is the most powerful empire in the history of Mankind. What some call the "shifting sands" under our power is in fact our most legitimate strength, which is Democracy. The barbs, complaints and open criticisms of America are our greatest accomplishments, the most obvious examples of how we do it better and cleaner than any previous power. Imagine, for instance, a U.N. demanding an investigation into the Roman Empire's crucifixion of the Rabbi Christ; or demands on the floor of the U.N. for Britain to leave India circa 1890.

Which brings us back to Michael Moore. Moore has access to all the information that tells anybody willing to accede to the slightest version of Truth that America is the greatest nation
ever conceived by God, yet he chooses only to criticize it. In the end, his criticisms make the U.S. stronger, because the fact that he is wrong yet still free as a bird to publicly be wrong becomes known to all, thus giving America greater legitimacy through a constant "trial by fire." Still, Moore deserves some judgment. What it comes down to is that he says things that are not true, while surely he possesses enough education and access to Truth to know they are not true. There is a word for this, and the fact that this word applies to Moore is knowledge we possess.

INSIDE BASEBALL AT ITS BEST

Bill James started out as a wacky guy who saw baseball differently from the so-called "experts." Today, those experts refer to his theories and expound beyond them. He demonstrates that it is much better to think baseball through than to chew tobacco and say things like, "Don't think, you can only hurt the ball club," which is what Rod Dedeaux used to say when I was at USC. Baseball is best approached the same way marketing, science or politics is approached - using numbers and stats, mixing experience with experiment.

WHO THE VAST RIGHT WING CONSPIRACY CONSISTS OF

The vast right wing conspiracy consists of millions of patriotic American citizens who register and vote. They might also be called the Christian Coalition, the Silent Majority, or the people not invited to cocktail parties hosted by Pauline Kael.

LIBERAL MEDIA BIAS IS AN ESTABLISHED FACT

The fact that the media is liberally biased against the right is simply that with which is established fact, and this fact is known by those who are honest, able to read, and have access to information. To deny it is tantamount to saying, for instance, "California is not a State in the Union," or "America did not win the Revolutionary War."

THERE IS MORE TO THE CLINTONS THAN BREAKING THE LAW

In light of the fact that Bill Clinton wants to be Secretary-General of a more powerful U.N. while Hillary Clinton is in an "internationalized" White House, one is struck by the uncomfortable notion that the battle of Good vs. Evil is not relegated strictly to the War on Terrorism. There may be a reason why a real Christian like George Bush is President. Are we facing a confrontation between supernatural forces, an Apocalypse? If so, are the Clintons part of it or are conservative Christians just ranting about nothing? Do we really want to set us ourselves up for the worst? America - the world - beware of the Clintons. Do not give them power.

BILL IN THE U.N., HILLARY IN THE WHITE HOUSE
Hillary Clinton is very smart. Too smart. She makes few mistakes, and leaves little room for conservatives to pick apart her Senate voting record as liberal. The Clintons have always known how to erase their paper trail, which is why they got away with Whitewater, Mena, drug-smuggling, the killing of their rivals and witnesses, and other bad acts. Now we are faced with the prospect of their return to power, only this time their power will make the Bill Clinton Presidency look like nothing. Bill wants to be Secretary-General of a U.N. infused with greater international power in light of American unpopularity, which the Clintons are delighted about. Imagine Bill in charge of the U.N. and Hillary in the White House. This is a scenario that should make people become religious, because if it happens, God alone can help us!

THE BILL CLINTON PRESIDENCY WAS JUST A PRELUDE

The Bill Clinton Presidency was just a warm-up, a prelude, to a greater disaster. Imagine if you will (as Rod Serling would say in a "Twi-Light Zone" episode) a world in which the U.S. has been weakened, giving greater power to the U.N., led by a new Secretary-General named Bill Clinton, in league with President Hillary Clinton. This creates in the mind of good people some kind of evil cabal beyond mere power, bad policy or other Earthly ruminations. Now you are talking about a scenario that favors Dark Forces. This is the kind of thing the Evil One would do. The question then is whether the Clintons are part of the Evil One's plan, knowingly or unknowingly. Is this a question we really want to get the definitive answer to? America - and the world - be warned: Do not give these people the power they crave!

BUSH IS OKAY BY ME

George W. Bush is not highly eloquent nor perfect. But he is honest, bold, backs up what he says, is not afraid to use American strength in a very real battle between good and evil, and he is Christian. That goes a long, long way by me, pardner.

STEVEN TRAVERS

EVERYBODY KNOWS THE MEDIA IS LIBERAL

The fact that the Western news media is liberal and biased in favor of Democrats is simply factual knowledge possessed by millions of Americans who can read, have access to information, and care to analyze it honestly. What is less known is that the liberal media helps Republicans. How? Over time, so many people have developed factual knowledge of liberal bias, and see that it is a bad thing, that they favor the right. Republicans have always won the White House, and now they win the Congress, the Senate, governorships, and state legislatures. As irritating as it is to hear, Republican media strategists should just let the Left keep lying, at such time as voters make note of these lies and back the GOP as a result. The Left is so bullheaded and full of itself that they do not see this reality, and apparently will not learn any lessons from their repeated mistakes.
During the Clinton years, there was a marginal swing towards moderation, caused by a combination of conservative talk radio, Fox News, and the Clinton scandals that could not be ignored. During the 2000 election, the Leftist media actually played it fairer than usual, which helped George W. Bush. After 9/11, they swung even further towards the middle, actually rooting for America, but since the Iraq War the media has become more hateful towards the right than any time since Ronald Reagan, or perhaps Nixon. Despite all this noise, the GOP will gain in every seat of political power in November. The Left will look at all its efforts and wonder where it all went wrong, just as the New York Times' Pauline Kael declared after Richard Nixon won 49 states and 62 percent in 1972, "How did he win? I don't anybody who voted for him."

Call conservatives what you want - the Christian Coalition, the Silent Majority, the Vast Right Wing Conspiracy - but they remain and shall continue to be millions of patriotic American citizens who register and vote, and they are not found at the same cocktail parties with Pauline Kael.

THE CLINTONS CAUSE A VISCERAL REACTION AMONG CONSERVATIVES

There are very few, if any, liberals who cause the kind of visceral dislike of them that the Clintons engender. Teddy Kennedy, for instance, is despised for his views and his unimpressive lifestyle, but the Clintons are even more despised. There is no way of proving this or making real sense of it, but one theory is that, like Kennedy's father, Joseph, the Clintons might not just be power hungry and bad for America, but actually bad in the most primal sense. It is hard to believe that the anti-Christ is an American, but when one looks hard at the faces of Bill and Hillary Clinton they see something dishonest, scheming and unrighteous that goes beyond the usual political machinations. America, watch out for these people.

CONSERVATISM IS THE WINNING IDEOLOGY OF HISTORY

Sean Hannity is one of the leading voices of American conservatism at a time in which this ideology is at its height. Hannity represents the straightforward, mainstream conservatism of the 2000s, which is quite open, honest, engaging and accepting. Their is a sense of triumphalism or righteousness to Hannity's message, which at its core comes from the fact that, after 2000 years of modern history, conservatism (in conjunction with Christianity) is the winning ideology of Mankind.

Even though Hannity is not from the South, he loves country music and is popular with that crowd. This is a very telling development, and speaks to the New South in a positive way. There was a time when Southerners would dismiss Hannity as a "damn Yankee," but the fact that Hannity is popular with them is a sign that, over the past 30 years, the South has probably made greater positive strides and improvements than any people or region on Earth in the past century. This I say despite arguments that Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan are now Democratic, but they "accomplished" this only after we defeated them and "forced" them to.
The South, on the other hand, voluntarily changed its ways, and it is conservative 
Republicanism, of the kind Hannity represents, that husbanded this monumental sea change in 
American politics.

I'M NOT GONNA ARGUE AGAINST THIS BOOK!

The "Left Behind" series has not become one of the most successful best sellers in history 
because Tim Lahaye and Jerry Jenkins are great writers, or even because it has a superb plot. 
They would probably be the first to admit that they just managed to tap into the fact that 
Christianity is what billions of people throughout history have thirsted for, and because those of 
us who believe (as I freely choose to do) that God makes all things possible. Apocalypse may 
happen, it may or may not happen in my lifetime. I am not going to argue against the concept. I 
choose to believe and to hope that my belief and my soul, despite my numerous sins, will be 
rewarded by Christ's salvation.

There is good and evil in this world, and they are constantly battling each other. These battles 
manifest themselves through wars, politics, the media, hi-jacked religions, slavery, terrorism and 
the very essence of Satan's method, which is to get good people to do bad things.

It is amazing to me how many people refuse to acknowledge the Truth about God, Christ, Satan 
and the universe, despite what is presented to us every day. The way Nicolae mesmerizes people 
in the book hits home, and reminds me of my theory that many successful people in Hollywood, 
rock music, or other endeavors of fame and fortune very possibly made deals with the devil, and 
their achievements are a result of their Faustian bargains.

JESUS IS LORD

"The Passion of the Christ" affirmed for me the essential Truth of my life, which is that Jesus 
Christ is Lord. With free will I do make the choice and proclaim in any and all ways for all to 
know that I believe in Him, I reject Satan and all his works, Jesus died for my sins, and that I am 
a terrible sinner whose salvation can only come about through the forgiveness of Christ.

KUDOS, CHARLIE

Charlie Sheen wrote the foreword to my biography of "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman". I 
finally got around to reading "Peace of My Mind", and found it witty, irreverent and humorous. 
Good job and I dig your work, man.

DOES ONE PERCENT OF TRUTH MAKE SOMETHING 100 PERCENT TRUE?

Michael Moore takes some facts and makes documentaries in which some small percentage of 
what he says is true, and mixes that with a huge portion of lies. Does this make the sum of the 
whole True? Answer: No.
This is the preferred method of con artists, who desire to use truth to build their larger lies. This is the identified method of Michael Moore, and the fact that this is his method is that with which is known by me and millions of humans capable of reading and analyzing information.

**NO**

The question is, Does Al Franken speak the Truth? Upon analysis and conclusion, the answer to this question is: No!

**A PATRIOTIC DEMOCRAT IS PRETTY RARE THESE DAYS**

Zell Miller is an American patriot. It is wrong to say that the Democrat party is unpatriotic, because Miller represents the best this old party has to offer. However, slowly but surely, they have been overtaken by a Leftist slant, led by Ted Kennedy, that is shameful. If I were Miller I would be disgusted, which he apparently is.

**HOLLYWOOD DOES NOT GET IT AND APPARENTLY NEVER WILL**

This book gets to an important point, which is that Hollywood is totally liberal, unable to shake itself from this malaise, and loses power because their liberalism creates a loss of credibility. The Hollywood Left is part of the dominant media culture, all of which is liberal. This includes the world of cinema, television, network news, major newspapers and magazines. At one time they controlled all the media this nation heard and saw, which is why somebody like Walter Cronkite was so "trusted." There were no alternatives to Cronkite. Today the right has a niche, which includes talk radio, country music and a few newspapers and magazines. Fox News is not conservative, but because it is fair and actually roots for America, it seems conservative in comparison to its counterparts. Wherever conservative and patriotic media go head to head with the Left, conservativism and patriotism win. Hollywood loses power. Their movies have less influence, the Oscars get lousy ratings, and people mock their most outspoken anti-Americanism. Hollywood does not learn from "The Passion of the Christ" or even "Saving Private Ryan". If they produced outright conservative films they would be enormous successes. There is a huge audience of conservatives who do not pay to see movies because they are tired of the old liberal slant. For instance, if Hollywood ever did a film that depicted, for one instance, how John Kennedy stole the 1960 election from Richard Nixon; or perhaps a story about a Democrat politician who has rivals and witneses to his crimes murdered a la a certain Arkansas politician - conservative word of mouth would spread like wildfire.

How come we never see movies that depict the murder of 100 million human beings under Communism? We see plenty of Nazi and Holocaust movies, which is fine, but Communism was just as bad and more deadly. Could it be because the Communists were embedded in the Democrat party until McCarthyism rooted them out? Could it be because down deep, many liberals like Communism, they just think it was a good idea gone wrong? A movie like "Schindler's List" set in the Soviet Gulags could be just as powerful. The Left cannot admit how
awful Communism was because they gave aid and comfort to Communism during the Vietnam War. Now they are more liberal than ever? Why? Because Communism has been defeated and forgotten by the average citizen. Liberals no longer have to worry about being associated with it. There are, however, those of us who read and remember who know the facts about these people.

Now we are engaged in the War on Terrorism. The Left is slowly but surely gravitating to the terrorists because they no longer have Communism to admire any more. They hate American power and success, so they find themselves increasingly opposing America and admiring those who hate us.

FAIR AND BALANCED

The Left accuses Bill O'Reilly of being a conservative hack who does not tell the truth. An honest appraisal of O'Reilly reveals the amazing hypocrisy of liberals. O'Reilly is honest and fair. He is conservative, but he lets the chips fall where they may. He goes out of his way to stay even on issues. His Leftist counterparts could take lessons in accountability and credibility from O'Reilly. The fact that they continue to see him as being untruthful is, in this reviewer's personal opinion, an example of how they are so blinded by their loss of power in modern American society that they cannot deal with reality.

WHY THE RIGHT GOES AFTER THE CLINTONS

The right does not go after the Clintons because Bill lied about Monica Lewinsky. They go after them because they think they may have ordered the murder of Vince Foster. They go after them because kids were murdered on railroad tracks in Mena, Arkansas because they may have witnessed their drug-running operation there in the 1980s. They go after them because there is a list of between 50 and 100 people mysteriously killed, all of whom knew the Clintons and had knowledge of their activities. These people were generally young and in good health. Did they all die by accident? To quote Shakespeare, "There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than can be dreamt of in your philosophy." In other words, it is possible they all were killed by means other than the Clintons' ordering their deaths, but it is so far from possible as to be very close to being, for all practical purposes, that with which is impossible. Bodyguards, witnesses, drug buddies, state troopers, kids, etc. Dead. If the Clintons are responsible for some or all of their deaths, they got away with all of it. THAT is why the right goes after the Clintons. If I go missing, look in Ft. Marcy Park.

SPORTS GREATEST RIVALRY?

This may be the greatest rivalry in sports. The Yankee-Red Sox rivalry is as one-sided as the British and the IRA. The Dodgers and Giants, however, are like the North vs. the South in the Civil War.
A RICH HISTORY

The Giants have given their fans many thrills, and this book describes some of the most nostalgic of their days.

SC IS SECOND ONLY TO NOTRE DAME

The only football program better than USC over the past 100 years is Notre Dame.

WILLIAMS IS NOT A GOD

I always loved Ted Williams more than any other athlete. He truly was an American hero. However, some of his comments about Jesus Christ in this book are disturbing to me, and while I will always admire him, I admire him less because of what he said.

HALBERSTAM IS A RENAISSANCE MAN

David Halberstam is both one of the best writers in the country and one of the best sportswriters, a rare combo. He lovingly describes the careers and retirements of Ted Williams, Bobby Doerr, Johnny Pesky and Dom DiMaggio in a nostalgic manner that evokes his great love for the Boston Red Sox and the beautiful game of baseball.

BASEBALL IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Michael Lewis is a fine writer and Billy Beane is a man of genius. This book puts the lie to Bud Selig's assertion that money alone creates competetiveness, and further describes the new realities of power offense vs. "little ball," and how a relief pitcher can be found to fill holes for one season.

IT'S A GOOD DAY TO BE A TROJAN!

This is terrific stuff. Southern California is a college with the first or second greatest college football tradition of all times, and this book describes how, after a long layoff, Pete Carroll has returned the Trojans to these previous heights.

"THE LAST OF THE BEST" BY JIM MURRAY
He was not a columnist, he was a poet. He was to the written word what Stradivarius was to the violin, Patton to the tank, Aristotle to philosophy.

Jim Murray did not pen what he wrote, he conjured it up. No mere mortal could come up with the stuff he did.

He never met hyperbole he did not like.

USC, coming from behind against Notre Dame, was not just a football team. They were the Wehrmacht marching on Poland. Sherman burning Atlanta.

A big game was not just a big game, it was the Roman Legion vs. Hannibal, Grant taking Richmond.

Murray did not reserve this kind of bluster for only the mighty in the world of sport. "Al Scates?!!" he once exclaimed of UCLA's volleyball coach. "He is to volleyball what Napoleon was to artillery."

Every morning, Southern Californians woke up and were reminded of one of the very best reasons for living here. Jim Murray's column in the Los Angeles Times was that reason.

Actually, Murray was syndicated, so it was not just Los Angelenos who enjoyed his work, but the fact that he belonged to us was a source of civic pride, like the Beach Boys, the film industry, or our coast line.

If you were a writer, you read him in awe, like an actor watching Olivier do Othelo, or a young pitcher checking out Randy Johnson. If you liked sports, or even if you did not, you just appreciated the guy.

When some friends of mine lived in Paris, I would send them care packages from home. Nothing was more valuable to them than Jim Murray's column.

When Jim passed away a few years ago, it was like seeing part of the Smithsonian lost to a fire. When the Times published a selection of his columns from 1990-98, it was like seeing the demolished portion of the great museum re-furbished. Or at least like a farewell exhibit.

He is gone, we will never see his likes again, but we can at least read and re-read "The Last of the Best", with a forward by Tommy Lasorda and an introduction by the Times venerable sports editor, Bill Dwyre.

Murray towers above his profession, like Grantland Rice and Red Smith, but as New York Times columnist Dave Anderson says, he is to be compared with the likes of Twain and Hemingway. A great American. His work: Literature.

Murray was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1990, and his response was "I never thought you could win a Pulitzer Prize just for quoting Tommy Lasorda correctly."

Lasorda was greatly honored that Murray thought of him during his great moment, and Tommy has it right. Like Vin Scully and very, very few others, Murray was a guy who towered above the athletes he covered. The ones with some brains and respect for history knew that. If they did not, Murray never let it bother him. Let the ignorant wallow in their stupidity!

Murray came to sportswriting after covering Hollywood. He once had a date with Marilyn Monroe, but she left him before the night was over for another guy.

Murray understood. The other guy was Joe DiMaggio.

Murray wrote with his heart. He had compassion. He also read like crazy. He was a man of great knowledge who never wrote down to his readers. Many chose to educate themselves on who some great violinist or ballet dancer was, simply because Murray would mention them in a column. He make erudition a very cool thing.
In so doing, he did for sportswriting what Clarence Darrow did for the legal profession, MacArthur for a career in the military. He made it important, something to be attained and worked for.

Sportswriters were like carnival barkers before Murray came along. Hacks who drank too much and wrote like high school dropouts, which most of them were.

Nowadays, they study guys like Murray and Jimmy Cannon at prestigious journalism schools. Mostly, though, he entertained. He made you think, and he made you laugh. Read "The Last of the Best".

God bless Jim Murray.

"YOU CAN'T SLEEP YOUR WAY TO THE TOP."

People see parallels with "The Player", which is valid, but I see "Sweet Smell of Success" in the biting dialogue and ammoral behavior.

This is a Hollywood sleeper, the inside story of a studio. It is said to be based on a big producer who is still in the biz.

Spacey just destroys Frank Whaley, turning him from a film school idealist to a killer. The best line is when Spacey informs Whaley of the facts of Hollywood life.

"You can't sleep your way to the top, like Dawn. We're guys. We gotta fight, and scratch, and claw our way up the ladder."

Don't wanna give away the ending, because like "The Player" it is genius, but it is absolutely damning. Check this out.

"AN APPLE MADE OF ARSENIC."

One of the problems with studying in film school, being a movie buff and getting older is that at some point in one's life a man ventures into the video store, peruses the shelves and reaches the conclusion that he has seen every movie worth seeing.

I thought I was getting there until a few years ago when I heard about and checked out "The Sweet Smell of Success". It was like that with "Chinatown", which I never saw until the 1990s and now consider one of the best films ever.

"Sweet Smell of Success" holds up totally even though it is black-white, set in 1957. Burt Lancaster is J.J., based on Walter Winchell, who was a leading accuser of Communists in the media.

Tony Curtis is a lackey publicist who lives on the whim of those who pay him to place items in various columns, which means he must grovel at the feet of clients and columnists. J.J. plays him like a fiddle. This has lines so vitriolic and perfect, Frank Manciewics in "All About Eve" is no more biting, and Bette Davis in "Eve" bites with the best of 'em.

Lancaster just fills the screen with irony and sardonic, hurtful wit. Curtis fends it off with skill, it is like a fencing match. Anybody who has any desire to study dialogue must watch and memorize this. Everything is tremendous; the acting, the directing, the score, the noir shadows of New York at night. The music is unreal, lots of horns, filling the room with its wailing sobs of a corrupt, naked city.
A love story between J.J.'s little sis and a musician (Martin Milner I think, who was in "Adam 12"), is the heart of the story. It is the one true, good thing, but J.J. is a monster. Perhaps Bob Towne had this in mind when he cast John Huston to be an incestuous father in "Chinatown". The inference, being the '50s, is much more subtle but it seems J.J. has the hots for sis and wants nobody to have her. He brands the musician a Commie, using sycophant secondary journalists to keep his own hands clean.

Any chance for this dark one to have a happy ending goes down the tubes when sis, as much to torment her bro, kills herself. Curtis is utterly ammoral. His picture appears in Webster's next to the word ammoral.

Many films have played off this theme. "Swimming With Sharks" (1996, Kevin Spacey, Frank Whaley) comes to mind. If this could be 20 stars I'd give it 20.

IDENTIFYING THE DUMBASS AMONGST US

I love this title. It is extremely appropriate to our current social situation, in which the Dumbass has crept out of the woodwork and made his presence known. His existence - who he is and the mindless, mocking, illiterate, ignoramus ways he spews forth words of stupidity - are identified, making knowledge of the fact that he is a Dumbass that with which is known by those who have access to facts. The Dumbass is able to get by in society by remaining silent, leaving question as to whether he is a Dumbass in doubt. When the Dumbass communicates with the general public, the question as to whether he truly is the Dumbass or not is no longer left to doubt. Anonymity is the best ally of the Dumbass. When the Dumbass exposes himself to the light of day, a large spotlight shines upon him. The spotlight says, "DUMBASS!" The Dumbass therefore confirms his Dumbassness and his Dumbassness becomes common knowledge to a wide swath of the general public, who upon hearing of the Dumbass consistently reach the general, rapid-fire conclusion, "Hey, there's a Dumbass!"
"Yeah, that's a Dumbass."
"He sure as heck is. A Dumbass"
"Who is a Dumbass?"
"Can't you tell? Check out the this Dumbass."
A few minutes to check out the Dumbass, followed by...
"Oh, how right you are. That's a Dumbass!"

The Dumbass often does not realize that he has been identified as a Dumbass, because he is a Dumbass. This is perilous for the Dumbass, because at this point, he lives like a snail on a straight razor, and his fate is not in his own hands. Those who have determined he is a Dumbass have the power to expose him as the Dumbass to a large portion of the public. The decision whether or not to expose the Dumbass is left to whoever has identified him as the Dumbass, not up to the Dumbass. He who has identified the Dumbass may expose the Dumbass at a time, place and setting of his own choosing. Whether he chooses to do this is never known by the Dumbass, who lives with threat of exposure of his Dumbassness for time immemorial. Only the possible benevolence of the one who has identified the Dumbass can save the Dumbass from exposure. The Dumbass often does not realize that he has been studied, as in the case of a Harvard/Yale study that took five years at a cost of $1 million. The determination of learned minds, upon analysis and incontrovertible evidentiary conclusion, is that the Dumbass is a Dumbass.
Therefore, it is thus and decided: He is the Dumbass. At such point, there is nothing the Dumbass can do. He is the Dumbass and nothing he does or says can relieve him of the burden of Dumbassedness. All future attempts to speak, write, mock, belittle, make fun of, criticize, lamely try to be smart, make bad attempts at humor, copy, plagiarize and generally communicate with the world in any way simply magnifies his Dumbassedness. The Dumbass at this point has no choice whatsoever except to crawl into a hole and withdraw from all contact with the world, which is best left to those who can think, analyze and through excellence make the world at least safe for Dumbasses, who in olden times were tortured and met bad fates in non-American countries that were wickedly prejudiced against Dumbasses along with sex deviants, child molesters, and those deemed to be undesirable characters of poor morality. Unfortunately, the fact that the Dumbass has been identified and now has knowledge that he is the Dumbass will probably not stop him from further action which identifies him as the Dumbass. This is because he is a stupid Dumbass. This makes him a sitting duck, because the facts are now known. Intelligent humans now know what to look for and how to determine who is the Dumbass. The instant he pops his head out of the shadows and makes any attempt at interaction, it is simply determined as fact that he is the Dumbass. He has been branded, and therefore it is.

The Dumbass resorts to drastic action, attempting to jealously bring down or reduce to his level those who are superior to him. Sometimes this leads the Dumbass to insanity or even suicide, but despite his human branding as Dumbass For Life, hope remains eternal even for the Dumbass, who despite everything is loved by God and forgiven by Christians even if though he has been identified as the Dumbass. The song "Amazing Grace" was about a Dumbass who, despite being wretched, was saved. The tricky part is for the Dumbass to recognize that he must ask for forgiveness, but God in his wisdom usually provides him just enough light to see Truth!

LENNON SAID "GIVE PEACE A CHANCE," WE "IMAGINED" POL POT

Around 1970, John Lennon, who if he lived in Vietnam would have been head of the Hanoi Communist Central Committee and if he lived in Kabul would not have lived, said "Give peace a chance." After Watergate, the "loyal opposition" led by Ted Kennedy refused to fund our "former allies" in South Vietnam. After that we "imagined" the North Vietnamese invasion and Pol Pot's "killing fields" in Cambodia. All told, when we followed Lennon's advice about 2 million human beings were murdered. That's Communism.

THE TRUTH IS MARCHING ON!

Michael Moore said he is an independent, not a Democrat, but this was exposed as just one of his lies when it was shown that he in fact is a Democrat. In 2004, he has veered from plain ol' anti-Americanism to Kerry's best hope. He is part of the "new religion" of modern media technology and is an example that works against his theme, which is that he is a censored artists, silenced by a Big Brother of corporate Republicans. Moore said Disney censured him by not distributing "Fahrenheit 9/11", but this is another lie. Their agreement was to help him produce it, never to distribute it. He used that line only to further the myth that he was restrained by corporate interests and found a huge distributor,
Miramax. It was all part of his plan. Disney released another documentary, "The Heart and Soul of America". "Heart" made no attempt to discredit "Fahrenheit". It simply is an affirmation of true, good facts about this great nation. Moore called it the work of "right wing extremists," which is like calling reporters who wrote about the Yankees' fourth World Championship in three years in 2000 "Yankee propagandists." Speaking of things in New York, Moore expressed anger at the terrorists who bombed the World Trade Center. That makes sense, but wait. He was frustrated that they chose to kill New Yorkers, since the Democrats are strong in the Big Apple. He would have preferred Osama to have killed people in a Republican stronghold. New evidence has surfaced that anti-American Leftists plan to disrupt law enforcement during the Republican convention. The Left is not just a "useful idiot" of terror but an accomplice. Is commentary really necessary?

Moore is, in reality, an example of how, as America has become the dominant power in world history, our themes - freedom of press, of expression, of dissent - are not censured but allowed to magnify. What the Left does not understand is that the likes of Moore do damage to the Democrats, and are of great value to the Republicans. They forget that their anti-war protests in the 1960s did not win them any elections but gave them instead Nixon and Reagan landslides. Actually, they may understand it, but they are obsessive-compulsives who cannot control their impulses. While Moore is not part of mainstream Hollywood, he is certainly part of the dominant media culture that the film industry embodies. Moore's documentaries get bravura responses from Hollywood and Cannes.

What Hollywood just does not understand is what kind of economic windfall they would reap if they made conservative-theme films. If they depicted the bad politicians as actual Democrats, the word of mouth among conservatives would fuel boffo box office. On the few occasions when they stray to the right, as in the "Dirty Harry" franchise, they reap a whirlwind of success. What Democrats do not grasp is that Moore is a terrible role model, and that true knowledge of who he is, combined with the fact that he is a spokesman for their party (whether he owns up to it or not) is simply a negative reflection of that party. This fact is obvious on its face and needs no commentary from the right. I will offer more anyway.

For years, Moore's work has been discredited, whether it be his documentaries or his books. Those who have seriously studied his work have consistently found him to be a liar in the main. He is a propagandist who takes 15 percent of truth, 70 percent lies and 15 percent exaggeration, and attempts to foist it off as journalism. The fact that he is a darling of the Left is as telling a true statement of their wacko views as any. Moore is the torch-carrier of Emma Goldman. He wishes he was Hunter Thompson, a gonzo journalist and a real talent, but he is a pale imitation. To believe Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" (the title stolen without permission from Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451"), one must accept the fact that George Bush knew about 9/11 ahead of time; allowed it in cahoots with Osama bin Laden and the Saudi royal family in order to justify the long-desired American invasion of the Middle East; spirited bin Laden's legitimate family out of the country because they were part of the plot (which would be done to bring oil profits to the Bush family while satisfying their personal vengeance against Saddam for attempting to kill Bush 41). The fact that Bush 41 invaded Kuwait to oust Saddam in 1991, then left without the so-called oil grab, combined with the fact that Bush 43 is in the process of leaving Iraq without the so-called oil grab (again), are just the first two of 6,778 pieces of factual evidence that have been determined by the world to discredit Moore's work as lies.
After "Fahrenheit 9/11's" first weekend, the liberal press hit us with big headlines telling us that it "broke records" and is reaching the largest audience in history, selling out theatres and influencing the election. It may have sold out theatres, but only because it played in a limited number of art houses. The fact is, it made $21 million. "The Passion of the Christ" made $117 million in its first weekend. The truth is that "Fahrenheit" finished with the 228th best opening weekend ever, just behind "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider". They were right about one thing, though. It will influence the election. In favor of Bush. Still, Moore is a hero of the Left. Because of all the historical reasons cited herein, because they are desperate and see their only source of joy, political power, being pulled away from them more and more each day, they are beyond the Truth. They lie, and we have little choice but to be merciful for those who lie. This charade, however, is getting tiresome. These Truths remain self-evident. Res ipsa loquiter.

WAR, UGH. WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS

What is war good for?
Answer: It has ended colonialism in America, Europe's attempt to subjugate Islam, Islamic rule in parts of Europe, slavery in America (which was the death of slavery), the corrupt rule of Mexico's Maximilliant and Santa Ana, tamed the American West, ended nationalism in Germany and Italy, Turkish empire in the Middle East, Naziism, Fascism, Communism, terrorism, Saddam Hussein, the Taliban, corrupt Spanish dictatorship in Latin America, Napoleon's attempt to rule the world, freed Eastern Europe, ended the corrupt Austro-Hungarian Empire, freed China from Japan, ended military fanaticism in Japan, is stopping Islamo-Fascism and kept Pol Pot from killing 1.5 million Cambodians until Ted Kennedy finally got his way.

FORGIVE FRANKEN HIS TRESSPASSES

Comedian Al Franken wrote a book called "Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them". It was about the Fox News Channel, which is a fair, balanced news organization that roots for America. The Left says they are conservative. They are not. They just look that way compared to the liberal CNN, CBS, and most of the other network and cable stations (except for MSNBC). Fair and truthful analysts have concluded that Fox is the most believable and trusted news organization. Fair and truthful analysts concluded that Franken's book was, like Michael Moore's books and documentaries, filled with lies and half-truths. Franken was fed information by the Democrat-leaning Kennedy School of Government, and funded by George Soros, a socialist billionaire, who started Air America. Air America failed immediately. Conservative talk radio succeeds where liberal talk radio fails because conservatives, like Christians, are starved for Truth and decency in a world of anti-Americanism, religious intolerance and negativism. Conservatives are more likely to be educated people who prefer to improve themselves by learning about the world by listening to talk radio. Liberals are more likely to be old '60s rockers who prefer to listen to Santana and The Grateful Dead on FM. Res ipsa loquiter.
Throughout the Cold War, does anybody really doubt that, all else being equal, the Communists "voted" for Democrats over Republicans? Is their any doubt that terrorists prefer Democrats to Republicans? Is commentary really necessary? Res ipsa loquitur.

Hollywood and the rock'n'roll world is solidly Democrat. This is a world of drug abuse, alcoholism, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, atheism and immorality. The country 'n' western community is overwhelmingly Republican. This is a world of religion, family values, patriotism, respect for the military and overall morality. Res ipsa loquitur.

Time has forced many historical facts to recede in our collective memory, replaced by a fuzzy kind of Leftist thinking that has even romanticized Communism among our youth, who do not always know the complete facts. How else to explain the popularity of Che Guevara t-shirts and posters? Some celebrities - Chevy Chase, Oliver Stone, Steven Spelberg, to name just a few - have gone so far as to travel to Cuba and meet with Castro, returning with glowing reports about the Cuban dictator's "charisma" or some such malarkey.

Based on the undeniable Truths of empirical evidence, one is left to determine the simple fact that those aligned with the right are more likely to be good and decent people, while people aligned with the Left less likely to be. To deny this is to be a sophist and rely on various and sundry lies, identifiable by those who can read, write, see and have access to facts. Franken is another of these leaches who eat away at traditinal goodness, using the youth's ignorance as his weapon.

Forgive me my trespasses as I forgive them theirs.

"ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ME?"

I have to tell a story. I have a friend who won an Oscar for editing "Apollo 13". A few years ago, he drove his girlfriend to the bank in downtown Beverly Hills. Parking being what it is in the B.H., my man waited in the car while his girlfriend went in to do her banking. My pal, being a big-time Doors fan, popped in a tape, which played "The End", loud. It was hot and the window was down. Jim Morrison was wailing about how he "took a face from the ancient gallery and...walked on down the haaaaalll, yeah..."

Suddenly, Danny Sugarman, one-time Doors assistant, now married to Iran-Contra ingenue Fawn Hall, and the author of "No One Here Gets Out Alive", appeared at the window, surprising my friend.

"Are you looking for me?" he asked my friend.

It seems that Sugarman had an appointment in the area but could not find the address. Hearing The Doors playing loudly, he figured it was a siren song, like the wailing of the mermaids drawing Ulysses to the rocks, meant to say to him, "Hey man, I'm over here."

Somehow this is a story that resonates in the memory of Jim Morrison, who is as much legend and hype as a great rock star and poet. Morrison may have been the sharpest rock singer ever. The son of a Navy admiral who was in charge at the Gulf of Tonkin, while growing up he would invite friends into his room and close his eyes.

"Pick a book," he would tell friends, gesturing to his shelves, which were stocked with thousands of titles.

"Go to any page," he would say. "Read any line."
His friends would do that, and Jim could always tell them the name of the book and the author. That is a genius.
Sugarman's work captures the genius and charisma of Morrison. It is, along with his other book, "Wonderland Avenue", just possibly the best rock book ever.

"IF I WAS GAY I COULD GET LAID ON THE SUBWAY."

Vince Vaughn is on a roll. I cannot think of a single bad movie he has ever made. "Made" is his very best. He is absolute genius in this spoof on gangster films, but so is everybody else. Jon Favreau plays his straight man, as usual, and is at his laconic best, but check out "Puff Daddy" Combs as some kind of gang leader in New York. Combs almost steals this show. In fact, everybody in every scene steals the show throughout - the fat black guy who is Combs' right hand man, the Scottish drug merchant (the "Red Dragon"), and how about Peter Falk as a smarmy L.A. Mob guy?
This flick has everything, including backstory and character development. Vaughn and Jon played football at Hollywood High but blew the Fairfax game because Jon got caught stealing, but Vince took the heat, so there is a reason for their loyalty to each other. Jon's girlfriend is a stripper who hooks on the side, but Jon refuses to see it. He gets a gig through stripper entrepreneur Falk - go to New York because they need some "strong arm guineas." The plane ride is insane with Vaughn screwing up and breaking every rule set before them. In the Apple he just goes off the deep end in a world of laughs, spoofs, hilarity and laconic irony. In the end, Vaughn's alcohol- and sleep-deprived paranoia saves their lives, and upon return to L.A. the girlfriend is revealed as a coke whore. Jon has a heart of gold when he "adopts" her beautiful daughter, and Vince now seems to have grown up, just a little.
This is a cult classic. It should be up there with "Old School", "Swingers", "Animal House", "Caddyshack" - you name it.(

"TO VOTE FOR BILL CLINTON."

In 1943, the U.S. Navy intercepted word that Josef Stalin was going to sue for a separate peace with Adolf Hitler. They also discovered that Alger Hiss, a leading New Deal Democrat and top advisor to President Roosevelt, was a Soviet spy. In addition, numerous high-level Democrats in FDR's Administration were Soviet spies and "fellow travelers." They approached FDR, whose response was "f--k off." The Navy, during this time of greatest national security threat, reached the conclusion that the Democrats could not be trusted! In response to this, they began the Venona Project, designed to read all the Soviet cable dispatches. Venona continued to confirm that the American government and society was rife with Soviet espionage from within the ranks of the anti-American Democrat Left.
When the war ended, the Republicans began to investigate these rumors. Richard Nixon asked FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to assist. Hoover told him he could not let him view Venona because it was too important to the on-going Cold War vs. Soviet Communism, but that Nixon's instincts, particularly about Hiss, were right. Hiss was convicted. Numerous Leftists were convicted or exposed, as were many in Hollywood. When McCarthy went after them, the Left...
attempted to discredit him. Venona would have justified him, but Hoover refused to disclose Venona's secret. McCarthy was sacrificed and allowed to twist in the end, and for decades the Left proffered the lie that there were no Communists in Hollywood, the government, the Army or in America.

After Ronald Reagan won the Cold War, Soviet archives were opened. Venona was discovered and became the Venona Papers. It verified that Hiss and all the accused and convicted Communists in Hollywood, the government, the Army and in America were in fact Soviet spies or "fellow travelers." One of those fellow travelers had escaped to Russia, but returned when the Statute of Limitations ran out. He returned to the U.S. in 1996. He was asked why. "To vote for Bill Clinton," he replied.

Is further commentary really necessary?

THIS IS A TOUGH ONE

Machiavellism is a name often given to politicians who have no ideals other that to get what they want, which is to achieve power. Fair enough, and I cannot argue that point. But at the same time, there are aspects of Machiavellianism, which actually is now called realpolitik more than Machiavelli, that are essential in modern politics, especially campaigning and warfare, or more appropriately, the politics of pre-war.

The crux of the author's advice to the The Prince is that it is better to be feared or respected than loved, which certainly parallels America's post-9/11 place in the world. There are times in which it is appropriate and better to be loved, but obviously this is a calculated act. It reminds me of how the Clintons did polling to determine what would be the most popular place to vacation for them with the public, or how after Moncia they "allowed" cameras to "capture" them, "cuddling" in bathing suits, or how Clinton walked into Ron Brown's funeral telling a big you-know-what-eating joke until he saw cameras, then wiped a fake tear from his eye. Pure Machiavellianism.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

With regard to the recent editorial page debate on American Exceptionalism and the role of racism in degrading our greatness, let me state that as the author of ONE NIGHT, TWO TEAMS: ALABAMA VS. USC AND THE GAME THAT CHANGED A NATION, which explores the role of football in integrating the South, I have studied and written about this matter. First, allow me to stipulate that slavery is our Original Sin, and racism was rampant for a century after it. What the detractors of America fail to understand is that America is where slavery came to die. Slavery was a thriving international industry that existed for time immemorial. Then along came America. Four score and seven years later slavery died in the U.S., never to rear its ugly head anyplace else as legitimate trade between nations. Many say Europe is racism-free because black jazz musicians were treated well there in the 1920s, but of course they were only invited after making names and often fortunes in the Southern city of New Orleans. Would Parisians have welcomed the millions of poor blacks who lived in America? Of course not. Finally, consider the 500 most famous, successful black people in the history of Mankind. I submit that 95 percent of these people are and were American citizens.
GEORGE BUSH MUST HAVE READ THIS

"The Art of War" is a book that any Wall Street dealmaker needs to read. It also is obvious that the true lessons of this book demonstrate precisely why George Bush was as right as rain when he went into Afghanistan and Iraq. Sun Tzu writes not about popularity but strength and victory. I would much rather America be strong and in control, winning the War on Terror as we are, than a crippled giant, which is the way many countries might like us - until our crippled condition makes it harder to defend them from obliteration as we have done many times. I'll take respect over love in when it comes to geo-politics.

"THERE IS GOLD IN AQUABA."

This is David Lean's greatest film, a masterpiece of historical cinema that includes breathtaking photography and acting performances for the ages. Lean seems to have wanted to tell us, in 1962, where the world was and why it was there. This was the middle of the Cold War, Israel was beginning to become a major international issue, and oil in the Middle East was an overriding concern. Still, "Lawrence" does not make the attempt to educate through a lot of exposition, dialogue or otherwise. There is little reference to the fact that this all occurs during World War I, or what was known at the time as The Great War. Lean assumes the audience, then (and now) knows the history, but it is worth putting it in perspective. World War I broke out in 1914 on two fronts, with the Germans invading France through Belgium and fighting the British and French, while establishing a Russian Front against the Tsar. The Middle East is almost totally controlled by Turkey, which for centuries has dominated through its Ottoman Empire. They are a secular empire, although Islamic by far. The Ottoman has a loose affiliation with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which controls Germanic states and the Balkans, and through natural identity is allied with Germany. Turkey hitchs its wagon to Germany and becomes the third wheel of the Central Powers. They believe Germany will win and Democracy will not. Oil is just beginning to become a huge political issue in the region as the car and the airplane are now commonplace. Turkey sees a chance to create hegemony with a Germanic Empire by consolidating power through the steppes, the backdoor from Turkey (the old Byzantine Empire) into Eastern Europe and Russia. A squeeze play, if you will. This is the third front.

Winston Churchill is in charge of the British Navy and sees the Turkish intent. He decides to counteract it early via an amphibious invasion at Gallipoli in the Dardanelles. It is a disaster of total proportion, and explains why Winston was on the outs until he was made a last ditch hope against Hitler 25 years later. Turkey expands through the Armenia and a genocide occurs of Holocaust proportions. England establishes a military presence in the Arab lands, but their only hope is to create rearguard action against Turkey. In this inhospitable place, in an age of poor communications, the only way to gain ground is to coalesce with the local Arabs who hate the Turks. Enter T.E. Lawrence, bastard son of an English nobleman, Oxford educated, fluent in Arabic with a natural love and affiliation with these people. He is also an engineer and knows how to blow up bridges and rairoads, the best way to disrupt the Turks.
Lawrence is sent on a wild goose chase into the desert to liaison with King Feisal in what is now Iraq. He organizes tribes into fighting units and does great damage to the Turks, forcing them to deal with this rear action. In a move that rivals MacArthur's Inchon campaign, he leads his tribal army across the Nefu Desert to the port of Aquaba, bluffing the Arabs into believing "there is gold in Aquaba." The Turks have 12-inch guns pointed at the sea, curtailing Naval hopes, and are completely surprised by an infantry attack from the forbidding desert. Aquaba is taken, which now allows the Brits to push on Jerusalem, just down the coast.

This all has two major effects. It is the beginning of the end for Turkey as they begin to lose the war, but it also coalesces the Arabs from tribes to a single political peoples. Lawrence is a publicity-hound and given huge credit for all of it, but subsequent study shows much is P.R. Still, he has genuine love for Arabs. Stories of his derring-do are part of America's entrance into the fight.

Eventually, the war is won and now Britain controls the Middle East. They desire to hand control to the Arabs, but the Arabs simply are not organized or modern enough to handle this new world. The Brits must stay, which of course causes great local consternation. What bungles it more is the Sykes-Picot Treaty, which gives France, who did not fight in the region, much control of the region in a "victor go the spoils" move. They get Lebanon, Syria, are in Algeria, Morocco, and history tells us they screwed up the region so much that they are deserving of the lion's share of blame for what has happened there since.

England stayed for decades but eventually de-colonization before and after WWII gave countries back, often to monarchies. France with their Foreign Legion stays and creates enemies. Revolutions occurred and the monarchies were upended in favor of despots in league with Communists, and after the Cold War they morphed into Islamic Fascism.

Lean seems to want to create the "impression" that British political decisions were not favorable to the Arabs, but he does show that the locals were not prepared to handle this responsibility. In truth, Lawrence was sent to Versailles to prepresent the Arabs and walked out in disgust. Oil and land were simply important to leave to the tribes. The influx of Jews to Palestine in the 1920s and '30s further added to the cauldron.

This film is a very instructive historical piece. It could not be made today, as theatres would sell tickets to part one and part two separately for the four-hour extravaganza. Also, I believe I count only two women in the entire film, a couple of extras at a tribal feast. Today's film execs would scream for a love story and sex.

Peter O'Toole demonstrates a fey Lawrence, leaving the question of homosexuality. He has two fawning assistants, Arab boys who are devoted to him. Who knows? Lawrence's actual sexual identity has never been solved, but it is entirely possibly he was gay.

One thing for sure, he was brilliant and charismatic.

"I'M HERE FOR THE GANGBANG."

This looked like the last movie I would ever get, not being particularly into farces and screwball comedy. But if Vince Vaughn ("Swingers", "Made") is in it, then I probably will give it a look. "Old School" fulfilled Vaughn's comic promise, but it is ensemble and great.
It starts out with just the right touch when Luke Wilson returns home and finds sexy girlfriend Juliette Lewis expecting not him but her "Internet friends," who are coming over "for the gangbang." Makes you want to do a Google search for "single girls looking for group sex." This is an up-dated "Animal House", maybe better. Luke's post-Juliette recovery includes moving into a house next to the college, and when it looks like he cannot stay due to school regulations, they form a fraternity. Luke is a lawyer and his legal skills keep them above the dean's attempts to disband them as part of a childhood revenge.

Vince gives us great lines like, "What do you think, instead of spending time with my wife I'd rather hang out with 19-year old girls?"

USC grad Will Ferrell, who once tried out for the Trojans as a punter, may carry this film through sheer craziness. There is little message, just laughs. It has some mature themes, but despite Juliette's sexual wanderings is basically tame.

In the end, Juliette is still into swinging, when she invites Will to her next sexfest.

"IF THE PRICE IS RIGHT, GRIFF..."

This is one of my all-time favorite films, a scathing, paced look at inside Hollywood that deciphers the netherworld of studio execs, producers, directors, actors and, most importantly, those over-abused prostitutes of the industry, screenwriters. Tim Robbins is Griffin Mill - smarmy, corporate and slick as cat manure on a vinyl floor. Robert Altman brought in an array of big names to lend this film their aura. Everybody was in it. Buck Henry pitches the best film idea that never happened, "The Post-Graduate", which is the sequel to "The Graduate".

Grif is getting poison pen mail and he explores it a little too much, leading him to an art house in Pasadena where he accidentally kills a teed-off scribe, then into the man's ice queen girlfriend. Plot twists and studio politics intersect, and Whoopi Goldberg is insane as the cop who knows Grif got away with murder, which he does.

There is no morality, just cold-hearted realpolitik. Do not miss Altman's interview at the end. Like "Sunset Boulevard", this one captivated and irritated this closed industry which still believes its press releases. Robbins is as good as it gets. This is sex and power, the ultimate aphrodisiac.

The plot twist that ends it is one of the best ever devised, with Grif and his blackmailer suddenly co-producers "if the price is right..."

As Matthew says in the Bible, "what does a man profit if he has the world but loses his soul?"

REINFORCED MY CHRISTIAN FAITH

This is a book that reinforced my Christian faith, although Mitch Albom's approach to spirituality and Heaven is somewhat different from mine. What does ring home is his theme that man needs to make a difference in the world while we are here, and there is something beyond Earthly life to ground us in acts of goodness.

We reap what we sow. If we reach out and give, of ourselves, our possesions, our talents, then we will be rewarded in some manner, whether in life or beyond. If we are selfish and immoral, we may pay for this later. We do not always see how it works, which is part of the mystery that
Mitch exemplifies in this work. Bad things happen to good people, and more remarkably, very good things happen to very bad people. Why? This is a spiritual question to be pondered and not answered on Earth. It will be made known to us in the after-life. Sacrifice in this life, happiness in the next, perhaps? Anyway, Mitch is a terrific writer who has the touch for reaching out and touching people's hearts, an ability I only wish I had.

SHOW BIZ IS NOT BUSINESS

Like Bob Evans' "The Kid Stars In the Picture", "Swimming With Sharks", and Bob Altman's "The Player", Peter Biskind's book is one of the best and most exemplary works describing this crazy "business" called Hollywood.

It is very, very engaging and informative. What the book centers on are two things, mainly, which is the growth of new talent coming out of the four big film schools of the 1960s (USC, UCLA, NYU, Columbia) and the development of the blockbuster, which eventually degraded character development as the staple of winning screen formula.

Descriptions of parties at Margo Kidder's Malibu beach pad are awesome. Here all the young Turks gathered - Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Paul Schraeder, Francis Ford Coppola, Marty Scorsese, etc. These SC, UCLA and NYU minds formulated "The Godfather", "Star Wars", "Apocalypse", "Taxi Driver", "Jaws" and so many others.

While the sex and drugs got out of hand at Margo's, John Milius would repair to the beach and fire his weapon. Considered the best and the brightest of all of them coming out of SC, Milius was the lone conservative, who tried to stay clean. He would write great movies like "Dirty Harry" and "Apocalypse", and direct "Red Dawn" and "The Wind and the Lion". His stuff is just fantastic, but he never went on to the fame of his contemporaries.

Eventually, blockbusters like "Jaws" and "Star Wars" contributed to the so-called "cartoonization" of Hollywood. The comparison of psychology, dialogue, structure and symbolism as seen in "Marathon Man" and "Chinatown" are replaced by graphics, as seen in "Star Wars", or by a giant mechanized shark.

The end of the era is the failure of "Heaven's Gate", which brings down its studio and leads eventually to the rise of independent films.

This book tells the story of the integral American art form in all its glory and ugliness.

"A MAN WHO THINKS HE KNOWS THE MIND OF WOMEN KNOWS NOTHING."

Read the book. Watch the documentary. But above all listen to the audio book on tape. Bob Evans' voice is magic. A few years ago he did ads for the NFL, talking about how "Broadway Joe" Namath popularized the league by beating Baltimore in Super Bowl III. It was one of the best commercials ever. When Evans speaks, there is a richness and storytelling quality to his voice that cannot be taught. It is a combination of God-given talent and years of stories so wild, so crazy that no matter how outrageous they are, one still feels Evans is holding back because the real truth is just beyond the pale.
Evans' life is beyond comprehension. Luck above and beyond all belief, combined with talent and drive. The son of a Jewish New York dentist, Evans was a film buff and teenage stage actor. His older brother Charles started Evans-Piccone, the lucrative clothier, and Bob hitched along for the ride, wealthy in his early 20s and acting a part of his past. He travels to L.A. on business, and a famous actress sees him and decides he is the man to play the role of her ex-husband, Irving Thalberg, in an upcoming film, which he stars in.

Back in New York, he is discovered a second time, this time by Daryl Zanuck, who sees him in a club and says he is the man to play Pedro Romero in "The Sun Also Rises". Pictures of Evans reveal that these discoveries are no accident. The dude was so handsome that words cannot do him justice. Ernie Hemingway was non-plussed by Evans, as were his famous co-stars who conspired against him to get him off the movie. Zanuck arrives, sees Evans play the bullfighter, and says "The kid stays in the picture." The story of his life.

Stardom follows? Not so fast. Old footage reveals that despite his looks his acting talent was, in Evans' words, "half-assed." So now what? Evans decides to become a producer. He buys rights to a book to film with Frank Sinatra in the lead and a promising producing career lies ahead. In 1966-67, he is hired to take over the failing Paramount. This is portrayed as an accident, luck, a fluke, but Evans does not give himself credit. He had brains, creative genius, charisma, looks and all the tools for Hollywood success, so his ascension is less remarkable than it would seem for a guy who is only about 30.

It immediately becomes apparent, though, he was hired to fail. The suits in New York just want a young face to deflect criticism of them as they fold Paramount. But Evans wins them over with a short of the upcoming "Love Story" and "Rosemary's Baby". Reprieve. In the '60s, Evans produces gems. Add to the above "True Grit", "Odd Couple" and other classics. Money rolls in, but Evans does not get super rich and is always on the hot seat.

He marries the beautiful Ali McGraw and has the world by the tail. "The Godfather" is given to him, and he decides Sicilian mob pictures fail because they lack Italian authenticity.

"I want to smell the spaghetti," he says.

Francis Ford Coppola, is the only Italian director at the time. It is tempestuous to the extreme, and when "The Prince" wins the "Patton" screenplay Oscar he cannot be fired. Evans claims he saved the film by making it longer, Coppola scoffs at the notion to this day. Two brilliant minds.

Evans leaves Ali to the charms of Steve McQueen on the set of "The Getaway", and she leaves him.

"A man who thinks he knows the mind of a woman knows nothing," Evans opines.

His pal is Henry Kissinger, who Evans talks into coming to "The Godfather" premiere in the middle of the mining of Haiphong Harbor. Evans goes on to make "Chinatown", "Marathon Man" and most of the important films of Hollywood's greatest era, the 1970s. He squires women who are so beautiful that it makes men drool. In the documentary, a TV host asks about it, and Evans claims to live like a monk with no life, working 24/7. As he says this a montage of models, actresses and beauties on his arm puts the lie to this story.


But with the help of his pal Jack Nicholson, Evans comes back, gets his house back, again makes big pictures, and stays very much in play with the ladies.
The kid stayed in the picture.

**ROCK'S ULTIMATE CAUTIONARY TALE**

Danny Sugarman was a 14-year old kid living in the L.A. suburb of Westchester, near LAX. He was troubled, and did not like his step-father. He read an ad or heard about a rock band in Hollywood that was hiring a teenager to answer mail, so he went for and got the job. The band was The Doors. Getting from Westchester to Hollywood by bus is not all that easy, but he did it just about every day. Jim Morrison befriended him and told him not to let his parents addle his brain with Ritalin, an ironic anti-drug message coming from the Lizard King.

As a teenager, Sugarman accompanied Morrison on sojourns to the Sunset Strip, where despite his minority he was admitted to the rarified air of The Doors, The Byrds, and other classic California bands. His step-father was appalled. Remarkably, despite his lifestyle, Sugarman was good enough at baseball to be offered a scholarship of some kind to play at UCLA, but his commitment to the band tugged at his dedication for the game, so he never went the diamond route.

As Morrison went downhill, so too did Sugarman. Unlike the song "No One Here Gets Out Alive", Sugarman managed, barely, to escape. After Jim's death, Sugarman picked himself up and lived in a house on Wonderland Avenue. It was all set up by Ray Manzarek, the Doors' keyboardist extraordinaire. Manzarek, the "sensible one" among The Doors, wanted to continue the band, or at least his own musical career. Sugarman was hired to be the band's manager, and it was a lucrative life for a guy still in his early 20s. He quickly found himself drawn back into the sordid life of drugs, alcohol, sexual excess, and the like. The Wonderland address did not help, it being a small enclave off of Laurel Canyon, the famed street that connects West Hollywood with the San Fernando Valley. Its narrow canyons and streets are dotted with picturesque homes that embody the California Dream, and are inhabited (especially then) by those artists whose labors have born fruit. The Sharon Tate murders occurred in the general vicinity. Wild, loud parties were so commonplace that neighbors hearing the screams of Charles Manson's victims thought it was just another bash. John Holmes would be involved in a massacre there in the '80s. Later, this would be the area where Heidi Fleiss connected porn with Hollywood money.

Sugarman, who eventually would marry Iran-Contra ingénue Fawn Hall, lived with his gorgeous girlfriend and lived the life. Aside from The Doors, he also managed the unbelievable Iggy Pop. Once at the Beverly Hills Hotel pool, Iggy was sunning himself next to "Gilligan's Island" icon Tina Louise. Iggy plopped his manhood from out of his floppy shorts, showed it to Ms. Louise, and asked sardonically if she would care for a shag of the old English sausage. Tina politely declined.

The book describes one after the other of Sugarman's friends and associates meeting the Grim Reaper, and in the end he lists pages of names - musicians, producers, groupies, enemies, friends, girlfriends, agents, and others - who died of drug overdoses in the pre-AIDS, pre-Cocaine-is-addictive era.

The message of this book is that despite glamour and fun, it is essential to be grounded, and one must do whatever he or she can to find that center.
"ALRIIIGGHHHTTT!!"

This is the best rock movie ever made. Oliver Stone is the most talented filmmaker of all time. This is a film he gets less credit for, but it was very personal to him and brilliantly done. First of all, he nails the life of Jim Morrison, the story of The Doors, and the L.A. Scene (1960s) as perfectly as it can be done. It is beyond nostalgia, it is time travel.

As great as Stone's use of Doors songs, scenery, drug use and beautiful, heavily-decorated '60s California girls is, it is Val Kilmer who does this turn its proudest. Kilmer probably gets to the core of a real person as thoroughly and realistically as any actor who ever portrayed actual folks. Next on the agenda, you have to love Frank Whaley as Robbie Krieger and Kyle McLaughlin as a spot on, irritating Ray Manzarek. To those of us who really studied Morrison and The Doors, everything is flawless. The film also conveys the essence of the bar scene, particularly Morrison urinating at Barney's Beanery, which used to be a real rock hangout before it turned into a cafe. The feeling watching "The Doors" switches between a longing for the romance and excitement of the rock life these people led, and revulsion for the drugs and immorality inherent within it. Love my girl!

**DEVANE'S SCREEN PRESENCE**

This is a flawed but very interesting movie. What strikes me is that it starred Bill DeVane with Tommie Lee Jones in a supporting role. At the time, DeVane was headed, seemingly, for stardom. He had been brilliant as JFK in "The Missiles of October" and even better as a turncoat spy in "Marathon Man". Yet it was Jones, not DeVane, who went on to screen greatness. DeVane is a Vietnam flyboy, shot down, captured by the Communists, held and tortured for seven years. He returns to his family, but is estranged from them. They are killed in a robbery. This is where the film veers somewhat, because it is in the realism of his character that DeVane leaves us wanting. The realism is that DeVane has learned, been programmed, to be dehumanized. It was the only way to survive his Vietnam ordeal. As he reacts to "the world," or rather does not react to it, to his family, his wife who plans to leave him, he has no emotion left. It has all been drained from him. He speaks about "when we were alive," which was the prisoner's code for before capture. He is like a zombie. It is good method acting, but the viewer thirsts for more.

The script tries to take us there by showing DeVane with a blonde "groupie" who tags along while he sojourns into Mexico and El Paso looking for his family's killers. Eventually he teams with Jones and they exact their revenge, which is as much their personal release of violent expression against their captor as it is the killing of the robbers who murdered DeVane's family.

**DRESS REHEARSHAL FOR WWII**

EXCERPTED FROM "GOD'S COUNTRY" BY STEVEN TRAVERS
"For Whom the Bell Tolls" is based upon Hemingway? s support for the anti-Communists fighting in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s. He and many other Americans went over to fight in the war, which some say was a "dress rehearsal" for World War II. It did not materialize into the kind of idealized Spanish government that many had sacrificed for. The fascistic Francisco Franco ended up ruling an isolationist Spain until the 1970s. While the nation is now Democratic, the Franco regime was the final event that took Spain from greatness to mediocrity. Hemingway also wrote a stageplay about the Spanish Civil War called "The Fifth Column".

THE LOST GENERATION: THERE IS THERE THERE

EXCERPTED FROM "GOD'S COUNTRY" BY STEVEN TRAVERS...

The "lost generation" was marked by the work of American writers who journeyed to France to write in the 1920s. They included Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Gertrude Stein, who once said of Oakland, California, "There is no there there."

Hemingway was a reporter for the Kansas City Star, a man? s man of gruff, Midwestern sentiment. He came from a family of some local prominence. Perhaps because he did not face great hardships growing up, he felt the need to test himself. In this regard, Hemingway and Teddy Roosevelt have much in common. Hemingway went looking for his manhood in World War I and found it. The experience formed him. He saw action fighting alongside the Italian allies and sustained wounds. According to his own account, he had a "life-after-death" episode. While recovering, he fell in love with a pretty American nurse. When the war ended the romance did not take, in part because Hemingway had a stubborn streak of jealousy. But he used these events to launch a career of great works, writing in a tone of melancholy wistfulness, imbued with American patriotism and the manly need to face danger, romance and adventure with courage and idealism, tinged by ironic cynicism.

"A Farewell to Arms" was his semi-autobiographical account of World War I, including his lost love with the nurse. Hemingway captured the "lost generation" in "The Sun Also Rises", which detailed American ex-patriates in Europe who were mentally and physically scarred by the Great War. His main character is unable to consummate a relationship with a beautiful woman who pines for him, because he sustained injuries in the war that prevent him from sexual functioning. The woman goes on to a career of carnal conquest with a variety of men, none of whom fulfill her. Amid much drunkenness and debauchery, the book addresses anti-Semitism, a relatively new theme in the 1920s, although Hemingway is not wholly sympathetic to Jews. When the book was made into a film in the 1950s, Daryl F. Zanuck cast a handsome young Jewish man, Robert Evans, as a Spanish bullfighter. When Evans approached "Papa" Hemingway at Yankee Stadium, the old man rebuffed him. He was furious that one of his beloved characters, a Spaniard, be portrayed by an American Jew.

YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN

EXCERPTED FROM "GOD'S COUNTRY" BY STEVEN TRAVERS...
A class of writers stepped up and opposed the kind of bigotry that reared its ugly head in the 1920s. Southern writers became a breed unto themselves. Erskine Caldwell described the hardscrabble life of "Tobacco Road". William Faulkner wrote about violence and sin in the Old South, although his verbiage is very difficult to follow. Thomas Wolfe infuriated Southerners with his rejection of their ways, but ultimately his work in "Look Homeward, Angel" pays ironic homage to his roots. H.L. Mencken, editor of the American Mercury, became a leading voice of crabby intellectual conservatism, ridiculing prejudice and ignorance. Robert Frost wrote poems that put readers in New England autumns.

"IT IS MORE...JUST."

World War I and the Russian Revolution are over. Dr. Zhivago (Omar Sharif) returns to Moscow, where he had a thriving medical practice, a high place in the community, and a luxury apartment. As a member of the old order, Zhivago would have been imprisoned or hung, but he has never been political and his doctor's skills are necessary. He returns to his pad, only to discover that it is teeming with proletariat peasants. The apparatchuk tells him that such a huge apartment was a waste on just one family when it can house many. Sharif looks about, adjust, and says, "It is more...just."

VERY POWERFUL CAUTIONARY TALE

I finally got around to seeing this 1967 film, depicting the French occupation of colonial Algiers in the 1950s, which eventually led to the independence of this Muslim nation. It is well worth watching in order to learn lessons about the Iraq aftermath, although one should not make too many connections. The biggest difference is that the French wanted to stay and maintain the country as a colony, whereas the U.S. cannot wait to get the heck out of Iraq as soon as it is semi-secure. This film is black-and-white with sub-titles. It is very revealing in its descriptions of how terrorists (or freedom fighters) fight guerrilla war, and it is the last straw (after Diem bien Phu) for French militarism. Read Camus to get a perspective on their mindset at the time. The film ends with the French having destroyed the cell responsible for a series of bombings, but in its denoument shows that a few years later an uprising occurred, out of nowhere really, that finally left the French with the conclusion that they did not have the stomach for colonialization. This story should be studied in light of French failures in Syria, Lebanon, its Foreign Legion's wars (plus Belgium's failure in the Congo), and the determination of this study is that the French have contributed mightily to destabilization of the Middle East, a little known fact in today's discourse.

USEFUL IDIOTS

EXCERPTED FROM STEVEN TRAVERS' "GOD'S COUNTRY"
The 1920s were a strange time. John Reed's "Ten Days That Shook the World" reached a large audience in the United States and internationally. Many wanted to know why an entire planet could be thrust into war. In an attempt to address that issue, some decided that nationalism, governmental agendas, realpolitik, racism, class warfare, capitalism, Democracy, and corporations in bed with politicians and militarists were to blame.

Nationalism was part of it. German unification and Balkan nationalism played a role. Governmental agendas and realpolitik always have played a role in conflict. Since Communism addressed the concept of "one world government" and a "world without borders," some concluded that Communism offered the answer to these problems.

Racism was never an original part of the war, but would emerge as an ugly by-product. The Turks unleashed an open can of worms resulting in "ethnic cleansing" and genocide pitting Christians against Muslims, Turks against Arabs, secular vs. religious. In Germany, an easy scapegoat began to emerge: The Jews. Lies began to spread that Jewish banking interests profited from the war. In the American South Jewish influence was an affront to their sensibilities. The Ku Klux Klan rose again after a period of dormancy. The KKK's "mandate" pitted them against a "worldwide Jewish conspiracy" somehow in league with Papal domination. They said Catholics pledge allegiance not to the U.S., but to the Vatican. But few Catholics and fewer Jews lived in the South. Many blacks did. They were becoming a more prominent segment of society. Blacks were emerging as professional athletes in the Negro baseball leagues, and as musicians in the jazz world. As they asserted themselves, this infuriated the white underclass.

But the most pernicious thing that emerged out of World War I were Westerners who believed that the war had occurred because of the failure of capitalism, Democracy, and corporations who were in bed with politicians and militarists. When Reed's book came out, a segment of society allowed themselves to believe that the new political system in Russia should be given a chance. Communism became "the answer" to society's many problems, including racism and poverty.

The failure of Communism, already evident by 1920, was not exposed to the world. Reed either chose not to write about the thousands and thousands of famine victims, the secret police, the crackdowns and forced marches, the banishments, assassinations and disappearances, or he was controlled by the hierarchy, and not allowed to see it. He probably did not want to see it. He had found his story and he was going to stick to it. The great failure of the free press, of governments and political figures, of humanists and truth-seekers, was the failure to pin Russia - Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, and the rest of them - down before they became too powerful. To expose them for what they were.

**PARABLE FOR CORRUPTION**

...EXCERPTED FROM "GOD'S COUNTRY" BY STEVEN TRAVERS

Sinclair Lewis exposed the corruption of Christian ministers in "Elmer Gantry". This work was centered on a flawed evangelical in the Midwest who believes in God but still uses His name to better himself. It might as well be a parable for the corruption of the Vatican until the post-Reformation period, when Catholicism finally recognized its many mistakes and began to make changes.
GET THIS MAN TO A CHURCH

Henry Miller's "Tropic of Cancer" was a biographical novel of his years as an ex-pat in Paris. It includes tremendously creative, wonderful writing, but in the light of retrospection much of it is reduced to gratuitous pornography. When it was written in the 1930s, Miller's graphic sexual content was considered avant-garde, shocking and artistic. It was banned for this reason until 1961. This was the best thing that could have happened to Miller and the book, creating a cause celebre. But reading it in 2004, it is rather incoherent and, if it came out today, it would not hold up to scrutiny the way Hemingway and Thomas Wolfe stand the test of time. Miller's "cancer" appears to be a cancer of the soul. His descriptions of Parisian life in the 1930s - the whore houses, the scum, the thieves, liars and morally corrupt - describe an eating away of goodness, the way real cancer eats away at bone, skin and body. Reading Miller, one wants to shout, "Get this man to a church." Liberals would excoriate this sentiment as judgment, which of course has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that the one thing that could have saved Miller from his moral atrophy is and always will be the Lord Jesus Christ!

LENI RIEFENSTAHL OF THE AMERICAN LEFT

Michael Moore is talented, compelling and successful. He is a propagandist who takes information, mixes in about 15 percent truth with about 70 percent lies and about 15 percent exaggeration, and passes it off as journalism.

"THE LEFT WING"

"The West Wing" (or "The Left Wing" as us conservatrives call it) is a brilliant piece of work, well written and very well acted. For political junkies, it is Manna from Heaven. Aaron Sorkin is a dedicated Democrat, as is the star's show, Martin Sheen. It is a show that attempts to make Democrats look like idealistic, well meaning, courageous, 24/7 workaholics. These people do exist, but in light of the recent death of Ronald Reagan and the new Bill Clinton book, it is instructive to recall that this show, along with "The American President", was an attempt to disuade the public from the realities of the Clinton Presidency. If the Democrats were all like the ones shown in "The West Wing", they would get 90 percent of the vote. Th show does try to stay balanced on occasion, but a comparison between President Bartlett and his wife and Bill and Hillary Clinton provides a dose of reality that is not of help to Clinton apologists.

UP FRONT AND UP-BEAT

What strikes me about the letters written by Ronald Reagan throughout his life is that here is a man with strong opinions, which many agreed with and many did not. But Reagan was not afraid to air his opinions, to put his name and his face on his words. The world is filled with people
who skulk in the shadows, hiding behind a veil of secrecy, spewing criticisms and non-entities under the guise of anonymity or assumed aliases. Reagan dealt with these kinds of low people when he was dealing with Communists in Hollywood. He triumphed over his critics in a manner that all people of goodness, conscience and honesty can learn from. He was proud of his accomplishments, and continually strove to do the right thing despite the bickerings and mutterings of those who were not pimples on his rear end. This is a fine lesson to learn from his letters. He was himself always - upright, proud, never hiding from his purpose but always willing to take full responsibility for himself.

"DON'T LET THE TURKEYS GET YOU DOWN."

When Ronald Reagan left office, he told George H.W. Bush, "Don't let the turkeys get you down." This is sage advice of the highest order, and applies to all people, famous or not. This is the Ronald Reagan that Peggy Noonan writes about. Reagan was excoriated during his time, but he never became petty. The way he handled criticism is a model for the way all good people should handle criticism. The Reagan model is to stay positive and upbeat, no matter what the drumbeat of stupidity is. To follow his example is to stay above the fray, to maintain the Christian principle "forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive those who trespass against me." The lessons that average people can learn from Reagan is that if you are a good and decent person, even if the small people, the various and sundry pizzants of the Dumbellionite Class, the ignoramuses, the people of low moral character, the dregs and the ne'er-do'wells attempt to mock you, to bring you down to their level, to react with jealousy at successes they are unable to achieve, simply continue on a path of honesty and good works. Forgive them and let not your heart be troubled. God bless Ronald Reagan.

GREATEST TV SHOW OF ALL TIME

On the heels of "Saving Private Ryan", Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks co-produced this no-holds-barred HBO TV show that follows a single World War II airborne unit, Easy Company (Company E) from training to D-Day to Operation Market Garden to the Bulge to the kicking-in of the heartbreaking German concentration camps, and finally to the melancholy end of the war and, inevitably, the breaking-up of the unit as they take their first tentative steps towards becoming regular American citizens again. The show does not hold back from showing death and destruction. Characters we are just beginning to care about suddenly die. This recreates the terrible cost of friendship among the soldiers themselves.

Some characters are incredibly brave. Others are cowards or incompetents. The key is to avoid cartoon depictions, and demonstrate the humanity of ordinary people placed in extraordinary circumstances. Along the way, they take to the challenges placed before them and accomplish the greatest victory in history. One is left with the inevitable truth that they have done the greatest thing in 2000 years of modern history, and a world has been saved by their deeds.
GROUNDBREAKING RACIAL BARRIERS ARE SCALED

Back in the "go go" 1980s, during the heady era of Wall Street "greed," I read an article about a black stock broker indicted by the SEC for insider trading. It struck me that, in an odd way, this was indicative of progress for African-Americans. They had to have access to the inside in order to be indicted for it. In the old days, they never would have had those doors opened in the first place.

Which brings me to "Training Day", in which Denzel Washington delivers an astonishingly good performance as a totally corrupt and evil L.A. cop. The fact that an African-American leading man is portrayed as the "bad guy" is truly groundbreaking, and just another reason to look at this film and be in awe of it. In the same strange twist as the stock broker, here we see a black cop who has all the doors of sin open to him. Like the white cops of the Jim Crow South, he takes to corruption in a way that has no skin color. It is the story of humanity, temptation and power.

Blacks on film have for a number of years now been shown either one way or the other. There is no shortage of depictions of black drug dealers, gangbangers and "homies." Hollywood then tries to make up for it by portraying blacks as doctors, lawyers, voices of conscience or reason, and the most frequent stereotype, the "tough but fair police commander."

The negative portrayals of blacks, however, were never played by big name actors. Washington himself has built a career as a guy more or less saving the world in "Crimson Tide" and "Fallen". His flaws in "Ricochet" are brought out only by a vindictive white man (John Lithgow). In "Training Day", Denzel is all on his charismatic own, a product of a world that he is convinced revolves around him. By choosing to pursue this amazing role, Denzel demonstrates the kind of courage that is rare among actors.

Think of Robert Redford, for instance. Redford never let his hair down. He played heroes and fantasy figures. Every so often, however, a superstar will break type. Paul Newman did it in "Hud". So did Robert Duvall in "The Great Santini".

What is even more astonishing in "Training Day" is not just that a black guy is the bad guy, but a white guy (Ethan Hawke) is a clearly marked, unfettered hero, placed in utter contrast and opposition to the villain. "Candy Man", a B movie franchise of the early 1990s, featured the politically explosive portrayal of a black man slicing and dicing his way through white women, but this was hardly big time fare.

"Training Day" takes all the Political Correctness of the past 20 years and explodes it. Hawke not only is innocent and good in contrast with Denzel, but he is a Lancelot-type figure who comes to the aid of a Latino-girl-in-distress, and later faces torture and terror at the hands of a group of Mexican gangbangers. The actors who portray these guys are so good, so real and so terrifying that if you met them on the streets, even knowing they were just acting, you would be a little frightened.

By no means does "Training Day" leave the viewer groping with the uncomfortable notion that "white is right." The performances are too real and too powerful. It is only in retrospect that one realizes this is truly groundbreaking stuff. Denzel Washington is extraordinary. His performance in this film is among the very best ever seen. There are not enough superlatives, not enough words, than can do justice to his edgy power.
"Training Day" leaves the thinking viewer utterly exhausted and left in some kind of daze, grateful only that they do not live in the netherworld shown herein. Look at Ethan's face when he rides the bus after escaping, through pure luck and coincidence, death at the hands of the gangbangers. He is beaten. His actions afterwards are about redemption, a decision to take his life in a new direction in which expediency and innocence are no longer options. He has been transformed into a reluctant avenging angel, forced to face evil and fear because he cannot turn back. It is the story of Original Sin. Ethan represents what the viewer does not have the gumption to be at this point. The viewer wants only to crawl in a hole and forget what (s)he has seen, but Ethan's character is about the confrontation of good vs. evil that must take place if humanity hopes to advance.

AS REAL AS IT GETS IN A SURREAL WORLD

Those of us who are professional sportswriters spend a lot of time in press boxes with other writers who criticize what they see on the field, but either never played the game or never played it well. "The Suitors of Spring" is brilliantly written by Pat Jordan, who did play the game. It also brings to mind some of the best sports books ever. "Ball Four's" Jim Bouton played the game. "North Dallas Forty's" Peter Gent played the game.

Having stood on the mound, facing down a hitter with the bases loaded, the crowd yelling, the opposition hurling insults, your future on the line and the hair standing up on the back of his neck, is an experience known by few. Jordan knows it.

Here he writes about pitchers, his specialty. He writes about superstars like Tom Seaver, playboys like Bo Belinsky, hardthrowing drunks like Steve Dalkowski, 6-6 lefties who never lived up their potential, like Sam McDowell, and prep phenoms from his home state of Connecticut who met the same fate as the author.

Jordan's talent is not one that can be learned in a literary class. He is of the school of hard knoocks, rough hewn, real, human. Bravo, Pat.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

COLLEGE BASEBALL

I suppose if I wanted to think of myself as a high-powered writer and journalist; the author of books about all-time superstars like Barry Bonds, epic novels, columns covering big-time pro and college sports; and op/eds about politics, I cannot be a mere college baseball writer. Well, too bad. I love college baseball.

EL SEGUNDO'S SUPERSTAR DISCOVERS PERILS OF PAC-10 PITCHING

Alberto Concepcion hit 20 home runs at El Segundo High School in 1999, including six in a row, and was considered the nation's top catching prospect. A second round draft choice, he turned down the money and accepted a scholarship to USC, where he was slated to replace All-
American Eric Munson. Education is important to Concepcion, whose mother returned to school at a later age to attain her degree from USC. Had she taken just one more semester to graduate, she would have been a classmate of her son.

"She's been a big influence on me," says Alberto. "Academics is always first with us." Concepcion carries a 3.2 GPA.

Pacific-10 Conference pitching has been a challenge to Concepcion, who has struggled around the .245 mark. He has not nailed down the starting catcher's job, which is held by Beau Craig, and platoons in the outfield.

"Not playing at catcher has not affected me at the plate," he says. "I played the outfield my first three years of high school. I just need at-bats to focus on my game."

Concepcion is not the first highly rated prepster to discover the reality of Division I pitching.

"Pitchers like Justin Wayne, Jason Young, Mark Prior with us," says coach Mike Gillespie, "are Double-A level quality. Look at Troy Glaus, he hit only .265 as a freshman at UCLA. Bill Scott struggled as a freshman there, too." At SC, Bret Boone and Bret Barberie were once top high school players who needed that first year to develop, and Concepcion is well aware of this. He may be frustrated after knowing only success, but he is more concerned with helping the Trojans in post-season play.

"I knew Pac-10 pitching was at a high level," he says. "People say it's like Double-A ball, so I knew what I was getting into. Pitchers just throw harder. In high school I saw mostly 78 mile an hour fastballs, in college it's usually around 88."

Concepcion agrees with Glaus, who recently said that Friday night pitching in the conference is even better than Double-A.

"Those guys are even more pumped up on Friday nights than minor league pitchers," he says, "because they're going on six days rest, and there's such emphasis on winning the first game of a three-game series.

"I had a goal to hit over .300, and went in confident. I'm still adjusting to not playing every day, but I think I'm leaving my freshman year improved."

Concepcion faces a major test this summer, when he will play for Wareham in the Cape Cod League. Only wood bats are used on the Cape, and the 6-1, 210-pounder knows that he will be judged by his production. He has hit with wood before, practicing with them in high school and using them in Bobby Brett's American Legion Tournament in Washington. He lifts weights, but is not focused on getting much bigger; rather, he wants to maintain his current strength.

**AN "AMERICAN TRAGEDY?"**
Marin County, California is one of the most affluent, prosperous places in the world. Not only does it contain some of the richest zip codes and home prices, but its leafy environs symbolize Westernized Ivy League reverence for education and scholarship. Consequently, graduates of Marin's high schools regularly matriculate at the top colleges this nation has to offer, using their advantages and contacts to vault into great success in life.

Out of all the graduating seniors who made up Marin County's Class of 1979, it can be argued that the one most likely to succeed was Mickey Meister, 18 years of age, wearing the cap 'n' gown of the counties' most prestigious school of the era, Redwood High. Among the laundry list of traits that make up "advantages" in the modern world, Mick ran the table.

Mick stood six-feet, five inches tall and weighed 220 pounds. Look up "handsome" in the dictionary, and a picture of Mick in 1979 appears. He had a lion's mien of brown hair and a smile that lit up a room. Girls drooled over him and guys wanted to warm themselves in his sunshine. Everybody loved him. Or envied him.

Mick either had a photographic memory or was just gifted when it came to numbers. Either way, he was a math genius who could compute figures in his mind like Dustin Hoffman in "Rainman".

Mick was an only child. He lived in a mansion in Ross, one of the most exclusive enclaves in one of the most exclusive of locations. Everything he wanted was handed to him. His daily allowance matched the meal money provided to top professional athletes.

Speaking of sports, Mick was named National High School Athlete of the Year in 1979. His competition included John Elway from Granada Hills and Jay Schroeder from Palisades. It was on the baseball field where I knew Mick, and where our friendship developed.

When I got to Redwood, I began to hear stories about Meister's legend from the Central Marin Babe Ruth League and junior high hoops. He was said to be a man among boys. I spotted Mick for the first time playing tennis on the College of Marin courts. He wore a perfectly matched white outfit, had a state-of-the art racquet, and the strokes to go with it. He also could talk "trash" with the best of them.

In those days, Redwood under taskmaster coach Al Endriss was one of the two or three top prep baseball programs in America. Endriss was nothing if not hard-nosed.

"This isn't a Democracy," he told us. "It's a dictatorship."

Every once in a while a skilled sophomore would make the varsity. Mick made the "big club" as a freshman. The tradition was for "rookies" to carry equipment and handle menial tasks. Mick would have none of it. He knew he was destined to be the best pitcher Redwood ever had, and demanded the number 19 jersey that was always worn by the staff ace. Meister never paid Endriss the respect he demanded through fear and intimidation. He was kicked off the team, and his teammates voted to keep him off. Endriss knew he needed him, though, and brought him back. Mick nonchalantly sauntered back, never uttering a whiff of apology or remorse. Mick went through Redwood's female population like Patton's Army in the Low Countries. He drank and did drugs. He seemed impervious to any ill effects. In 1977, despite the fact that our staff included four pitchers who would play professionally (five would earn athletic scholarships) Mick was the main man. The honor of starting the league opener was going to go either to Mick or myself. I learned that it was Mick when I walked in the library and Mick stood up and announced, loudly, that "Super sophomore Mickey Meister will be starting for the Giants today."

He was 11-1, earned all-league honors, and led us not only to a 33-4 record and the North Coast Section title, but the "mythical" National Championship of high school baseball. In his junior
year, Mick was 14-0, made consensus prep All-America, and Redwood again won the NCS (finishing number two in the nation). As a senior, Mick capped the greatest pitching career in Marin history with another All-American season.

The world was at his feet. In my life I have never known a more self-confident egotist than the teenage Mick. Despite his braggadocio, Mick was impossible not to like. He had the copyright on charisma, and as Dizzy Dean once said, "If you can do it, it ain't braggin'."

The Boston Red Sox drafted him, but Mick decided to accept a full-ride to the University of Southern California. I attended USC, too. It was there where I cemented my friendship with him. Mick's ride at this private school was worth about $70,000. It was also at this time that small fissures began to appear in Mick's life.

His father, Jack, had been a minor league pitcher who had built his own insurance business, but he was starting to run into financial problems. His mother, June, had been an aspiring actress who claimed to have dated Marlon Brando before marrying Jack. When Mick pitched in high school, June would sit in her car with a bottle of booze. Her alcoholism was a known "secret." June was a talker. When you called Mick, you had to give yourself 15 minutes because she could talk your head off if she answered the phone. As soon as Mick graduated from Redwood, his folks broke up. June moved into a small apartment in Greenbrae, and Jack moved to Atlanta, where he married a black woman. She was not Tyra Banks. Mick's USC teammates called her "Aunt Jemima". For the first time in his heretofore charmed life, Mick had to hold his tongue.

Still, USC was a blast. In his sophomore year, Mick led the Trojans with a 9-3 record and was incredibly popular with all the beautiful USC coeds. But he partied too hard. He rarely attended class, unless it was something like Film Appreciation and was held at night. Mick was a film buff and an authority on all things rock 'n' roll, especially Mick Jagger and The Rolling Stones. Jagger was his not just his namesake but his role model, which explains much too much.

Mick spent hours playing video games instead of studying. He would find a smart, pretty girl and cheat off of her. He drank every night. He had no work ethic, and it affected his pitching. By his senior year he was out of favor with legendary coach Rod Dedeaux. The L.A. Times, noting that four years earlier he was considered the nation's best high school recruit, called him the "enigma." Instead of putting his math skills to use as an aspiring accountant or engineer, Mick became a card shark. He outsmarted his teammates in poker games, and on trips to Vegas learned how to count cards out of a three-deck shoe. Mick had chutzpa in a big way. If he did not sleep with a girl, he claimed to sleep with them. One of his "conquests" approached Mick when he came to a campus restaurant with his teammates.

"Hi, I'm Leslie," she said. "I thought I should introduce myself, since we've been sleeping with each other." It did not faze Mick in any way. The things that would buckle a normal guy had no affect on him. He was brazen.

Mick never graduated. His standing as a prospect fell precipitously, and Seattle drafted him in the low rounds. In the minor leagues, he drank heavily and took advantage of the small town groupies. After two inauspicious seasons, his once-bright baseball career was over.

Mick ended up in the South Bay Area of Northern California, living in San Jose and eventually Fremont. He always had the touch with women. His girlfriends were always attractive. He always cheated on them. They always deserted him. He always found a replacement. Mick actually found gainful employment, counseling students at Silicon Valley College on their career prospects. It amazed me that he could hold a job like that. It seemed
utterly incongruous that somebody like Mick "counseled" students. He was never in his office when you called him, bragging that he played golf and expensed everything on the company dime. He was always juggling women; the divorcee did not know about the secretary who did not know about the college chick. His friends felt sorry for the girls but kept their mouths shut, even when they would ask them, "How could he lie to me like that?"

Eventually, things started going south in the South Bay. "Mick sightings" described a haggard guy who no longer resembled the sports stud of his youth. His mother passed away, and for all practical purposes Mick lost touch with his old man. He drank at work and was the subject of sexual harassment complaints. He was suspected of everything from absenteeism to embezzlement. Mick became addicted to gambling and owed markers to bookies all over the country. He was fired.

Mick had friends with money. He went to all of them, but over time each of them cut him off. After being evicted, he would stay with friends, but always outstayed his welcome. A constant tobacco chewer, he would leave his dip cups around the house for the wives and kids of his friends to find, and eventually he just spat on the carpet, blaming the children. Mick's friend, Mac, was the last to help him. He tried to direct his credit card number only to motels and restaurants, but when he discovered that the money he lent Mick went to wine, not food and shelter, he had to cut him off and change his phone number.

The last we heard of Mick, he was living in a car - or worse - in Texas. I thought about Mick on Thanksgiving. On the one hand, I know he has nobody to blame but himself, and that if I had been blessed with his gifts I would have used them to the limit. Mick never had any spiritual guidance. He laughed at the idea of religious faith, and seemed to admire people who got away with bad deeds. He loved the way O.J. Simpson had gotten away with murder, and thought Bill Clinton's ability to walk through the raindrops was a textbook for life. On the other hand, I cannot help but feel thankful that I have what I have. My problems are minuscule compared to Mickey Meister's, and while he may not acknowledge God, I pray that he will find peace.

The last of Mick's friends to see him report that as he was being driven to the bus station, he was still bragging about his latest sexual conquest. Then he thought about his situation, and finally it seemed to hit him. Still, the film buff in him was yearning to get out.

"I don't know how this happened to me, but this could be a movie," he said. "What would we call it? An 'American Tragedy'?

MICKEY MEISTER WAS MY FRIEND

Mickey Meister passed away this week. To those who knew what had become of him, this was news we expected since 2003. He was 44 years old. His life is a Shakespearean cautionary tale of wasted talent and excess. He was a man of extraordinary flaw, yet also one of great charisma. It is the fervent hope of this old friend of Mick’s that somehow that charisma, combined with Mick’s spiritual knowledge of death’s impending harvest - and hopeful repentance - impressed God enough to grant salvation to his soul.

Where do I start? Well, for one, Mickey is the greatest high school baseball pitcher in the history of the Marin County Athletic League. He played during the MCAL’s “golden age” – the 1970s. Redwood High School was the best prep program in America. Great pitchers like Gene
Frey, Eddie Andersen, Jeff Lucchesi, Frank Ferroni and Jimmy Jones came out of Al Endriss’ program like so much wheat gracing an Indiana cornfield. Charles Scott of Terra Linda was another superstar. But Mickey’s record was unparalleled. He deserves to be in the Marin Athletic Hall of Fame. The Marin Old-Time Athlete’s meet May 1, and I for one will lobby for Mick at that event.

He played four years of varsity ball. His sophomore year, Mickey was my teammate, the ace of a club that not only won the NCS championship but also was voted “mythical” national champions of prep baseball by Collegiate Baseball magazine and the Easton Bat Co. You can look it up. The Tamalpais Union High School District office still displays a giant photo of that “number one team in the nation.” Mick was 11-1, first team All-MCAL. As a junior he was 14-0, a high school All-American. Redwood won the NCS title again and finished number two in the nation. As a senior, Mick again made All-American, was named by Cal-Hi Sports the state’s best baseball player, and another organization even went so far as to award him the title “National Athlete of the Year.”

Mick turned down the Boston Red Sox to accept a full ride to play for Rod Dedeaux at USC. This is where he and I were again classmates. At USC, he was the Trojans’ ace, going 9-3 his sophomore year. He beat John Elway and Stanford at Sunken Diamond, 2-1 in a classic performance. After USC, he played in the Seattle Mariners organization.

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It can be said that the leafy, affluent suburbs of Marin County may produce the very best and brightest of America’s high school students. In 1979, if one were to survey all of Marin to determine which of that year’s seniors was the “most likely to succeed,” the most obvious choice would have been Mickey Meister. His baseball success was only part of the story.

Mick was 6-5, 225 pounds, and if you looked up “handsome” in Webster’s, his smiling face was to be found there. Girls craved his attention. Guys wanted to bathe in his sunshine.

Mick was also a mathematical genius who could rival Dustin Hoffman’s Rainman when it came to adding up and computing numbers in his head. He was smart, savvy, street-smart, funny, the life of the party. Nothing got past him. He was nobody’s fool. He was a movie buff whose knowledge of Hollywood rivaled Siskel and Ebert’s. Similarly, he knew the history of rock music in like fashion.

Mick grew up in a mansion in Ross. His parents reportedly gave him $100 a day for “expenses.”

So, after Redwood, after USC, and after the Mariners, where did it all go wrong? I was his friend, so I wanted to know that answer. Three years ago, when Mickey became homeless in Texas, I wrote an article that ran nationally for The American Reporter, trying not just to understand his cautionary tale but maybe to help him, if I could.

The article found its way to Texas, where residents of Earl Campbell’s old hometown of Tyler were trying to make sense of the strange, oddly entertaining drifter named Mickey. The article detailed Mick’s success, his failures and his faults. The desired effect was that he would grasp the realities of his life, causing him to right his ship; take stock in himself; stop drinking; find peace through Christ.

I heard through friends that Mick was peeved at the article, especially since it shed light that made it harder to flimflam local Texas women. But he had a strange pride in his faults, causing him to show the article around town, cherry-picking the parts about his sports heroics and, oddly, bragging that “it’s all true.” Even the parts about his childhood affluence were used
to create the image that a trust fund was waiting, that he just needed enough to get by, a loan, an investment in an Internet stock that was a sure thing until his ship came in.

The article hit a nerve. Numerous old Redwood and USC people came across it and contacted me with “Meister stories.” Mick’s circle of friends started getting emails from Tyler, Texas. The typical query went like this: “I have a female friend who has befriended a man named Mickey Meister. She is not very attractive and quite flattered to receive male attention. Each day she meets Mickey at ‘TGIF Friday’s,’ where he spends the day drinking on my friend’s tab until she arrives after work. They drink and eat, she pays the tab, and they go. Mickey has access to her bank account, ATM and 401K. He promises he will pay her back, as he is investing in a big deal. He claims a doctorate from USC, to be a former big league All-Star, and other fantastic fables.”

Mick’s friends, myself included, tried to warn off these “lonely hearts club women,” apparently with some success, but there was always another one. Finally, some months ago, he talked one of them into coming to California with him. She weighed close to 300 pounds and had given Mick access to her savings. Looking back, Mick was coming home to die. He knew his liver could not take the alcohol abuse he put it through. The handsome pitching ace was unrecognizable the last few years.

But, again. . . why? As his friend, Alex Jacobs once said, “Mick’s a complex human being.” To figure out the roots of his demise, one must look to a youth in which his physical, mental and economic gifts were so great that he took them for granted. To those of us who knew him, this was plainly obvious.

As an athlete, he showed up and dominated. Females? Same thing. Money? It seemingly grew on the trees of his Ross surroundings. Academics? His photographic memory meant he did not need to study. His parents doted on him; his friends were more like apostles. Door after door. . . welcome, Mick.

But Mick cheated on girlfriends and stole from his male friends. One good pal had a computer heisted by Mick. He was dishonest. Employment never lasted. He took money from a Marin County bank that employed him as a teller, telling a friend who inquired how he could do such a thing, “It’s really pretty easy once you get past the morality of it.” When caught red-handed stealing, cheating and lying, he just smiled. He was proud of his ability to get away with stuff. He loved Bill Clinton because he was a slickster who never got caught. He used his math skills to cheat at cards.

My personal, humble analysis is that he lacked spiritual guidance. As it says in the Gospel According to Matthew, “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, only to lose his soul?” It was in this verse that I found strange hope for Mick, because in the end he lost the whole world. This was why I wrote about him in 2003, hoping he would realize this, repent and save his soul, for in God’s mystery our Earthly stumbles can be the pathway to Heaven. This remains my hope.

Mick’s friends will gather for memories of him at Marin Joe’s on April 29.

KENTUCKY’S WILSON IS A SURVIVOR
John Wilson's life changed on September 30, 1996, the morning after his eighteenth birthday, when his estranged father, Jack, arrived at their Reseda home to stalk his wife, Cindy. Cindy was not home. She had taken John's 17-year old sister, Wendy, and moved weeks earlier in order to avoid Jack, who arrived that day with a gun in his hand and drugs in his system. John, a freshman at Cal State Northridge at the time, heard his father, ran outside, and found himself facing a pointed gun. Words were exchanged, and Jack fired two blasts through the door, wounding his son in the right arm with the first, and in the chest with the second. John staggered off, bleeding, with torn biceps and a punctured lung.

Northridge coach Mike Batsesole was shocked to see Wilson's condition at the hospital. It was obvious that the barrel of the weapon had been close to him when it was fired. Some remarkable things occurred next.

First, Wilson managed to leave the hospital only two weeks later. The he forgave his father. "I felt it was the first step for me to realize the rest of my dreams," he told Dana Heiss Grodin of Baseball America. "I was going to get on with my life and not feel sorry for myself."

Wilson seems to understand that drugs fueled his father's anger, and he did support his imprisonment after conviction of attempted second-degree murder on July 11, 1997. The sentence was for 10 years. However, John also realizes that Jack taught him how to play baseball, so the former Cleveland High star wrote his father a letter. They have communicated ever since.

Wilson regained 30 pounds, and after sitting out his freshman year as a medical redshirt, he transferred to the University of Kentucky when Northridge announced plans to cut baseball. He told Kentucky coach Keith Madison about what happened, and Madison determined that he wanted this strong-willed kid in his program. Not only that, but he wanted him to make the move to catcher, a position he had not played since little league.

Wilson responded by leading the Southeastern Conference with 23 home runs and 170 total bases, and after struggling defensively, he has made the adjustment.<p>

He has played for the USA National Team, and in 2000 led the Wildcats' in most offensive categories, helping UK post its most successful season since 1991.

THE QUIET MAN

The best managers in Bay Area baseball history? Bill Rigney, Dick Williams, Tony LaRussa, Dusty Baker, Mark Marquess…

Mark Marquess?!

Mark Marquess is "The Quiet Man" of college baseball. Like the John Wayne character in John Ford’s classic of the same name, Marquess does not say much. He does not have to.

Marquess, of course, is not actually a manager like the aforementioned big league skippers. The coach of the Stanford Cardinal is in charge of a program that produces pitchers like iron ore out of the Caucasus. Jack McDowell apprenticed on The Farm. So did Mike Mussina. That was back in 1987-88, when the Cardinal broke out of the pack and emerged as the elite program in the country, winning back-to-back College World Series.
When Marquess, who played on Stanford's 1969 CWS team with catcher Bob Boone, took over in 1977, Southern Cal dominated the scene. Marquess could not be more different than USC's legendary coach of that era, Rod Dedeaux. Where Dedeaux was gregarious, loose, a wiseacre, Marquess is vanilla.

"You have to coach to your personality," says Marquess, "and be who you are. I'm different off the field and when I recruit, so I wear two hats. Our practices are very serious, organized and disciplined. Most of our players aspire to play professionally and want it that way."

That approach works just fine down on The Farm, thank you. The rise of Stanford has coincided with the rise of college baseball as big business. Sunken Diamond is a sweet little "secret," offering high-quality baseball. Hey guys, there is also lot of "talent" down there, and it is not all wearing spikes, if you catch my drift.

"There's a big retirement community down here," explains Marquess, "and they love baseball. Plus, a lot of young families take their kids here. It's safe and grassy, kids can't get lost, and there's plenty of parking."

The Cardinal played their final home series of the year this past weekend against Arizona before a Sunken Diamond-record crowd of 4,458, all of whom stayed afterward to watch a fireworks display. They came in ranked seventh in the country, second in Pacific-10 Conference play, and as usual their strength is pitching. Their ace is 6-1, 195-pound right-hander Jeremy Guthrie. Guthrie started the Friday-night opener, a 6-5 Cardinal win, carrying an 8-4 record with a 2.44 ERA, and 96 strikeouts in as many innings. In the high-octane, aluminum-bat world of the college game, that is fairly microscopic.

The next All-American candidate is 6-4 rightie Jeff Bruksch, who came in to the Arizona series at 8-2 with a 2.87 ERA. He was undrafted out of Beverly Hills High in 1998.

"We have a great track record for pitching," says Marquess, "but Joe Borchard <a first round pick as an outfielder last year> got $5.3 million. Tom Dutton was one of the best pitching coaches in the country, and Tom Kunis has picked up on his philosophy. They're almost identical in their approach, but Dutton set the standard."

Both pitchers started out at other schools - Guthrie at Brigham Young and Bruksch at rival USC – but were drawn to Marquess like the swallows to San Juan Capistrano.

"Both kids wanted to come to Stanford out of high school," says Marquess. "Guthrie went on a Mormon Mission, and he turned out to be a big surprise. He wasn't even going to play baseball as a high school senior. I honestly didn't know how good they are."

Guthrie and Bruksch arrived like Manna from Heaven because, in 25 years, he is 1034-512-5. His one-thousandth victory came early this season. At 53 and the picture of health, Marquess is
capable of putting pressure on the high-falutin’ career victory marks of Texas’ Cliff Gustafson and Dedeaux.

After losing to Arizona Saturday but rebounding to take the rubber match Sunday, 8-2, Stanford is 38-14 heading into the final stretch of the regular season, and will learn today if they have earned the right to host the NCAA Super Regional June 1-3. The NCAA is usually happy to make Stanford a post-season host because they have a proven track record of drawing sellout crowds.

In the mean time, Major League Baseball should pool Marquess’s finders-fee for the players he has found, trained and turned-out ready made for big league stardom.

MAKING HIS OWN LEGEND

Gene Bartow succeeded John Wooden at UCLA After following 11-time National Champion coach Rod Dedeaux at USC, Mike Gillespie knows how Bartow must have felt. In 1998, he coached his first National Championship team, and following a disappointing exit from the hunt for the National Championship in '99, we sat down with the Trojan Skipper to discuss baseball, big bats, and the Beach Boys.

TRAVERS: First question: Did you know The Beach Boys at Hawthorne High?

GILLESPIE: Yes. Brian Wilson and Dennis Jardine were two years ahead of me, and they were pretty good football players. I was acquainted with them, and stayed updated with them through a mutual friend. I remember they just started out, singing at school assemblies.

TRAVERS: Tell me about the 1959 Trojans, considered the "twelfth National Champion," only they were barred from post-season competition because of a football penalty your freshman year at U.S.C.

GILLESPIE: Back then, if you were ineligible in one sport you were banned in all sports. That was an incredible team, 59-6 I think, and even after Oklahoma State won the College World Series, Collegiate Baseball magazine ranked us number one. We had Bill Heath, who played for the Cubs and the Houston Colt .45s. Ken Guffey, Ron Stillwell of the Senators (the father of Kurt Stillwell), Fred Scott, John Werhas (now a respected minister), Don Buford in left. Rex Johnston played for the Pirates and also the Pittsburgh Steelers. Also Len Gabrielson, Bill Thom and Bruce Gardner.

TRAVERS: Is the Bruce Gardner story, how he committed suicide on the mound at Dedeaux Field, a taboo subject around here?

GILLESPIE: It's not really taboo, although when Coach Dedeaux was around it was probably not spoken of much.
TRAVERS: What were your first impressions of Rod Dedeaux?

GILLESPIE: I was in awe of him, mute, a rookie who just "shut up" when I was around him. Back then freshman didn't play, we practiced off-campus, maybe played the varsity in intra-squad games, but the man certainly left a lasting impression. He is brilliant, with unmatched charisma, the sharpest tack in the box. He has incredible speaking skills.

TRAVERS: Before the era of major college baseball, if a young man was a top prospect and entertained any desire to attend college, especially if he grew up in California, he went to U.S.C. and that was it. There are other schools, so what is it that Rod did to separate S.C. from all the rest?

GILLESPIE: Well, that goes back to the question, what came first, the chicken or the egg? S.C. had won the National Championship in 1948, and again in 1958, but we had not yet cornered the market. Pete Beiden at Fresno State, John Scolinos at Pepperdine, Frank Sancet at the University of Arizona had fine programs, although for a kid from L.A. back then, Arizona might as well have been Saudi Arabia. U.S.C. had the tradition, the reputation of being a great university, we had the football team, the track team won the National Championship every year.

TRAVERS: I have followed U.S.C. baseball, and your career, very closely. Quite frankly, I think you have improved as a coach because, in the beginning, you were very intense, highly prepared, but I always got the impression that you pressurized the game. Your teams used to start out very hot, but fade towards the end. Now, your teams come on strong at the end, and dare I say they seem to be having more fun? Have you "loosened up," and if so, is that a reason for your recent, greater success?

GILLESPIE: I don't really know how to answer that. If there is an evolutionary process, I'm not aware of it. I think our recent success is more the product of good players. I have the same philosophy I've always had, and if I carry that through I believe we will always be better at the end than at the beginning. Again, the ability to hang with the competition until the end of the year is a product of better players. I started in 1987, and in '88 we had as good a team of position players as we've ever had here. Pitchers have become good here eventually, but the biggest factor is improvement in the depth of our pitching.

TRAVERS: Okay, Coach, it's the fourth inning, S.C. leads 2-0, your starter walks the lead-off guy, goes 2-0 on the next hitter. Is Mike Gillespie less likely to go to his bullpen in 1999 than he was in 1989?

GILLESPIE: Okay, maybe I've matured. I'm less nuts. Confidence comes with success. The Rod Dedeaux/John Wooden analogy I often make is still a good one. If you have better players who are confident, good things are more likely to happen. In the old days, if U.C.L.A.'s basketball team was in a tight game with two minutes remaining, they always had the edge. Things have changed around here. Bench jockeying was crazy, but we ended that. Now, S.C. just believes the other team will crack. Yeah, I may stick with my starter a little longer. I'm like the State of Missouri; you have to "show me." I'm looking for "red flags," but what you have seen is less a
change in philosophy than the fact that we have better pitching now. I'm more likely to go with a Seth Etherton or a Barry Zito, because they've demonstrated that they can do the job.

TRAVERS: There is no question, based on the players who have played for you—Bret Boone, Aaron Boone, Jeff Cirillo, Mark Smith, Geoff Jenkins, just to name a few—that you are one of the best recruiters in America. My guess is that there are more Trojans in the big leagues than any other school. What is your secret, and how do you differentiate yourself from Dedeaux?

GILLESPIE: Well, Dedeaux was the most dynamic recruiter I've ever seen. It has been a competitive era, and to be honest U.C.L.A. has almost as many names in the Major Leagues as we do. Look, if S.C. calls, you'd better be listening. The University has incredible history and stature, and heritage in baseball specifically. In the '80s, S.C. was still S.C., one of the front two or three names, but we still finished second or third too often. Cirillo is an incredible story. He was not highly recruited. Our success was good but not overwhelming, our numbers in the '90s. Nobody pays attention through the years to the polls anymore, everybody has 40 wins a year. Now, we have the recruits' attention. John Savage is really running recruiting now, doing most of the work, and he's incredible at it.

TRAVERS: You mention that U.S.C. has always been competitive, but winning the 1998 National Championship has revived the program and put you back on top. Honestly, you must have blown a big sigh of relief.

GILLESPIE: No doubt, winning was a tremendous sense of accomplishment. Of course, I'd be crazy not to say that it was a relief. If Rod had not won all those titles, would I feel differently? I don't know. I didn't dwell on the old days. I always did understand what's going on, but Rod has always been a big supporter, he wanted us to win. He's been in our corner, and if he hadn't then maybe things would have been different. Let's face it, there've been some hearts broken around here. We were in the '91 Regional driver's seat. This team this year, even, was capable. Coach's have lots of goals, and the drive to win. I like to compete, like any typical coach.

TRAVERS: When you were at College of the Canyons, did you ever dare dream that you might be the baseball coach at the University of Southern California?

GILLESPIE: I never really allowed myself to think that. I was a California schoolteacher, locked in to a certain salary structure. After 20 years, you might not be all that well-paid, but I had benefits. I was not in a flexible situation, I had three kids and a house.

TRAVERS: When did you first start to think about your future?

GILLESPIE: I had no grand plan. My strongest influences were always teachers and coaches, I chose P.E. as a major, which we no longer offer, and made myself a candidate for a teaching position.

TRAVERS: What would you be today if you were not a coach?
GILLESPIE: I don't know how to answer that. I sometimes look with envy at some of my friends who have gone into business and made 10 times the money I make. I like money, but I have no regrets.

TRAVERS: May I suggest that some of those same friends may occasionally look with envy upon you?

GILLESPIE: I hadn't thought of that.

TRAVERS: What is the role of a coach as a role model and teacher?

GILLESPIE: I suppose, like any profession, some are better than others. Not all who coach are successful at accomplishing all the roles of a coach. Obviously, it's incumbent upon me to teach the game, and the ones that do it best do it with some style and class. I'm bound to have an impact on my players beyond just teaching how to turn the double play. Teaching and coaching, I think, are interchangeable. I have good rapport with my former players, but I'm not so dumb to think that there aren't some that had a less-than-positive experience. I try to be fair, but I make mistakes.

TRAVERS: Have you ever considered the relative anonymity of college coaching, and regretted not taking the path of professional baseball, the way somebody like Jim Leyland has: scouting, minor league manager, then maybe the Majors, where the big money and notoriety is?

GILLESPIE: No. I never really had the opportunity, aside from a chance to be a non-bonus player. Pro baseball offers a great deal of instability.

TRAVERS: Bob Hamelin retired today. How do you explain players like he and Joe Charboneau, who have terrific rookie years and then quickly fade from the scene?

GILLESPIE: The longer we are at it, the more strategy figures into the equation, plus psychological factors. Baseball, as much as any activity, is one in which, if you are not confident you do not succeed. We have learned that you have to be able to relax. I see that with Chad Kreuter, my son-in-law (with the Kansas City Royals). Sometimes a better guy comes along. Sometimes a player is limited, he runs his string out. Pitchers figure out how to pitch him. There are many factors, all of which add up to the fact that any player is stupid not to go to college.

TRAVERS: It is my opinion that today's athlete is not just bigger and stronger than in the past, but better prepared, better coached through the youth leagues. What is your take?

GILLESPIE: Bigger, stronger and faster means better. They are the product of improved strength and conditioning, supplements, more of everything. There are more outstanding coaches, more clinics, TV, conventions, even the Internet. We rarely play a team that isn't prepared; the coaches have their teams ready to play. Execution of proper fundamentals is not unique to Southern California, cold-weather teams come out here and they are ready. I find no difference in the
approach of players to the game in 1966 than in 1996. The good ones want to practice and improve. Today’s players are no more or less difficult to deal with.

TRAVERS: College baseball has become big business in some parts of the country. Give me your take on the evolution of the game at your level.

GILLESPIE: I think there's been a domino effect. Skip Bergman was Ron Fraser’s pitching coach at Miami. Fraser built a better mouse trap. Bergman moved to L.S.U. and copied it down there. Auburn saw what L.S.U. was doing and said, “We'll build a state-of-the-art stadium, market the game, and make money.” Athletic directors began realizing that they should support baseball, and now 50 schools make money in baseball. The accomplishment of winning the national title is even more awesome in light of these developments. The facts say that to pass up college is the move of a fool. Guys are turning down one million, $1.5 million to play in college, and I can go into families’ home and demonstrate how all the odds favor the college player.

**COACH OF THE CENTURY**

A few years ago I wanted to write a book about USC baseball coach Rod Dedeaux. Below is the proposed sample chapter to a publisher. The book project never came about, although it might some day.

"…But the greatest farm club in the history of the Major Leagues…and the most consistent supplier of Major League talent the past 10 years is a franchise maintained at no cost to baseball. It finds and signs its own prospects, suits them up, develops them, refines them, weeds them out--and then turns them over to the big leagues fully polished and ready for the World Series.

"The University of Southern California baseball team is to the Majors what the Mesabi range is to steel or the forest is to Weyerhauser--a seemingly limitless supply of basic ore or timber.

"…Rod Dedeaux went to bat only four times in the big leagues. Nevertheless he probably should go to the Hall of Fame as a man who has done as much for the great game in his own way as Babe Ruth."

--Jim Murray, legendary syndicated columnist

*Los Angeles Times*, 1976

The Hall of Fame!

Jim Murray said it 24 years ago, but now, 14 years after retiring as USC’s coach, Rod Dedeaux should be nominated for his rightful place in Cooperstown.

He is to amateur baseball what John Wooden is to basketball, or Bill Gates to computers.
An institution. An icon. Larger than life!

To those who have never met him, he is a towering figure worthy of the greatest respect that can be accorded a baseball man.

To those lucky enough to have known him, especially to have played for him, Rod Dedeaux evokes just as much respect, but it comes along with laughter. He smiles. He jokes. He is a gregarious prankster who still likes to have a good time.

He is still, as current USC baseball coach Mike Gillespie says, "The sharpest tack in the box."

Big-time college baseball has changed over the years, and now it is a high-stakes endeavor, filled with alumni pressure to win-it-all-now. Top players use their collegiate experiences as introductions to agents like Scott Boras, who get the best of the best of them multi-million dollar bonuses…at the expense of their innocence.

Rod Dedeaux coached some of the greatest baseball stars of the Twentieth Century, yet his program always felt more like a family than a baseball factory.

Towards the end, critics said that, like his contemporary, Ronald Reagan, age was working against him, he no longer had the edge to swim in shark infested waters.

Today, like Reagan, time has smoothed the rough edges of criticism, and he remains a highly beloved figure, an elder statesmen of the college game.

Age notwithstanding, he still remains the sharpest tack in the box.

"He has to be one of the smartest guys I know," says former Trojan lefty Bill "Spaceman" Lee. "He never looked like a ballplayer, but he seemed to have eyes in the back of his head. As the game wore on, he knew everything about every player out there. He anticipated situations better than any manager I ever played for. On top of that, this is a guy who, in his spare time, built a trucking empire and became one of the most successful businessmen in this country. How can you not admire somebody like that?"

In his spare time. It is true. Dedeaux built Dart Transportation, with his college classmate and friend Justin Dart, into the top transportation company in the United States. He did it all working part-time, giving of himself to his alma maters' baseball program in the afternoons.

Hard-worker, to be sure. He must have enjoyed having two incomes, right?

Not so fast. Dedeaux became a multi-millionaire in the trucking industry, but his salary coaching at USC?

$1 a year.
Talk about "for the love of the game." For 45 years, he devoted himself to Trojan baseball for free. Anybody who has ever been involved in college sports can testify what sort of a commitment this is: Recruiting, planning, organization, practicing, strategizing, the late nights, early mornings, long days, the travel, often with frustration and disappointment dogging at your heels.

While Dedeaux is the man most responsible for turning Southern Cal into the top college powerhouse in the nation, his legacy extends far beyond the ivy-covered University Park campus in South-Central Los Angeles.

Dedeaux is virtually the "father of international baseball." After World War II, he promoted goodwill trips to Japan, where the game had been popular in the 1930s, and exported America's National Pastime all over the Orient and into Latin America.

He is the man behind the Olympic baseball movement, a natural progression of his foreign adventures. He pushed and pushed until baseball was accepted in conjunction with the 1964 Tokyo Olympics; coached a team led by Mark McGwire and Will Clark that competed as a "demonstration sport" at the 1984 Los Angeles Games; and kept it up until it became the full-fledged event that it is today.

He contributed to the popularity of baseball in such places as Italy, Sweden and The Netherlands.

Dedeaux was a driving force in the collegiate summer leagues'. First, he worked with Fairbanks, Alaska Mayor Red Boucher to create the Alaska Goldpanners and the formation of the prestigious Alaskan Collegiate Summer League, then the Jayhawk, Cape Cod, and many other leagues in the United States and Canada.

He helped build enthusiasm for the game in Hawaii when he brought his vaunted Trojans to play in the islands.

It is said that Southern California, and Los Angeles in particular, is the Baseball Capitol of the World. This is in no small way the work of coach Rod Dedeaux.

It is not mere coincidence that great dynasties in college sports happen in some places and not others. The difference is in the coaches.

Knute Rockne turned a tiny Midwestern Catholic school into the Vatican of college football.

With all due respect to Adolph Rupp and Kentucky, the Roman Empire of college basketball was built upon the work of Wooden at UCLA.

Like his cross-town hoops colleague, Dedeaux was the right man in the right place, building upon the post-war suburban growth of sunny California which has produced so many talented players. However, other schools have enjoyed similar advantages.
It was USC under Dedeaux, not UCLA (which in theory had the same built-in attributes of weather and population) that emerged as the dominant power.

Schools in Texas and Florida had weather and plenty of good athletes to choose from, but languished in Dedeaux' vapor trail.

The Coach of the Century is not unlike the region of the country his school represents. He was born of French Cajun ancestry in New Orleans, but moved with his family (like so much of America) to California. He was an All-City infielder at fabled Hollywood High when Betty Gable went there, a few years before Marilyn Monroe. Dedeaux started three years at shortstop for USC, and was captain of the team his senior year, before his short-lived career playing for Casey Stengel and the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Still, Casey became his mentor and friend, advising Rod and forging a relationship that led to regular spring exhibition games between the Mickey Mantle Yankees that Stengel managed in the 1950s, and Dedeaux' USC teams. Stengel, a resident of the LA suburb of Glendale, was also Rod's neighbor and frequent visitor to Trojan games after his retirement.

Rod returned to Los Angeles when his professional career failed to materialize much beyond his four-game stint with the Daffy Dodgers, but the game was in his blood.

Sam Barry coached baseball and basketball at USC. He was a legendary disciplinarian, and an innovator in basketball who is credited by none other than 1948 USC graduate Tex Winter with teaching him the Triangle Offense (which Winter installed as the cornerstone of multiple Bull and Laker World Championships). Dedeaux came on board to assist his old coach, and in 1942 took over after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, when Barry entered the Navy.

Dedeaux coached the Trojans' for five years, his best team going 27-7-3 in 1943, but when the war ended Barry returned. From 1946 to 1950, Barry and Dedeaux formed a unique relationship: Co-head coaches.

In this capacity, they elevated the Trojans' above the post-war pack in college baseball at a time when the game was taking some important steps.

"The men who returned from war to college campuses were very special," says Dedeaux. "You hardly needed to coach or motivate them. They were tough and had guts, and are the best generation this country has ever produced."

The first College World Series was held in Kalamazoo, Michigan and the University of California, under coach Clint Evans, won it with an 8-7 win over a Yale team that featured a war hero-turned-first baseman named George Herbert Walker Bush.

In 1948, USC went to Kalamazoo, and squared off against Yale and the future President, whose Skull and Bones affiliation served him no better than it had against Cal in '47. The Trojans' 9-2 victory gave them the first of their 12 National Championships.
Barry passed away in the fall of 1950, leaving the program in Rod's capable hands. A number of top college programs also emerged in the '50s. Bib Falk led Texas to two National Championships, Dick Siebert's Minnesota Golden Gophers would capture the CWS four times between 1956 and '64, and another title was won in Berkeley when George Wolfman and Cal captured it in 1957.

Dedeaux won his first National Championship on his own in 1958 in Omaha, which by this time had become the CWS' permanent home. His 1959 squad, which went 59-6, was considered the best team not to win a National Championship. Recruiting scandals dogged Pacific Coast Conference schools during this era, and NCAA sanctions against the football program came down, unfairly, on other sports. Despite being banned from post-season play, the Trojans' still finished number one according to Collegiate Baseball magazine.

It was during this period that a tragic figure emerged. Bruce Gardner was a star left-handed pitcher at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles, and upon graduation professional teams came calling with big bonus money.

Gardner was Jewish, and his single mother was a stickler for education. She could not see where baseball would take her son. She wanted him to pursue the law or medicine.

Dedeaux recruited Gardner hard, but the young man was not socially sure of himself, fearing that in this age of the "Gentleman's Agreement," a rich fraternity school like SC would not be friendly to a Jew.

His mother was convinced that Dedeaux would watch out for her son, that the campus, only a few miles from their home, would be the stepping stone to a better life.

Gardner wanted to sign and play baseball, but he was a "mama's boy," like the Laurence Harvey character in "The Manchurian Candidate". In the end he had no chance, and Deeaux had himself a southpaw starter.

Gardner was everything he had been billed as, earning All-American honors, being named College Player of the Year, and winning 40 games, a record that has stood at SC until now (although Rik Currier is in range of it in 2001).

Four years of steady college work took its toll by his senior year, however. Gardner's velocity began to tail off, and when the scouts came around in the spring of 1960, the big bonus offers were not forthcoming. Gardner signed for a modest bonus with the Chicago White Sox and was shuffled off to the minor leagues', no longer a hot prospect.

Pitching in bush league towns that were not friendly to a Jewish kid, he became lonely and homesick. His arm, which had started to pain him at SC, began to throb, and he pitched ineffectively.
On top of that, this was the middle of the Cold War and the draft was in place. No longer protected by a college exemption, Gardner found himself in the Army. One day at Ft. Ord, near Monterey, California, he sustained further arm injury when he was thrown from a truck during a minor traffic accident. His diminished skills receded further, and soon he was released, his baseball career over.

For some years, Gardner tried unsuccessfully to make use of his hometown hero status, selling insurance and failing in other business ventures. Eventually, he started to drink.

In 1974, he got drunk, drove out to the brand new Dedeaux Field on the SC campus, made his way to the pitcher's mound and surrounded it with his All-American plaques, trophies, awards, and college degree. He produced a gun and shot himself in the head.

A groundskeeper discovered him, thinking him a student sleeping off a hangover, until he saw the blood and a suicide note, addressed to his mother and Rod Dedeaux.

It read, "This is what I think of your college degree."

In the years following that incident, Bruce Gardner became a taboo subject around Dedeaux.

One of Gardner's teammates fared better, however. Ron Fairly came to USC from Long Beach, California and, after making All-America, went on to an All-Star career with the Los Angeles Dodgers, among other teams in a long, distinguished career.

In 1963, Dedeaux' Trojans' won their third National Championship. A journeyman outfielder on that team was a young man who had gone to Hawthorne High School with the Beach Boys. Mike Gillespie has been Troys' coach since 1987, and led the team to victory in Omaha in 1998.

The mid-1960s were years in which some interesting players came under Dedeaux' tutelage, but success was elusive. Siebert led Minnesota to the National Championship in 1964, followed by Bobby Winkles at Arizona State (1965, 1967) and Ohio State (1966).

The '65 Arizona State Sun Devils are regarded as one of the best teams in college history. They featured outfielders Rick Monday and Reggie Jackson, third baseman Sal Bando and pitcher Gary Gentry.

Monday had somehow eluded Dedeaux' grasp coming out of Santa Monica High School.

"'Tiger, tiger,'" says Mo, imitating Dedeaux' favorite expression. Dedeaux came to be known for calling virtually everybody "Tiger", like Babe Ruth referring to all in his path as "Kid."

"He could turn on the charm," continues Monday, now a popular part of the Dodgers' broadcasting team, along with Vin Scully and Ross Porter. "But my mother was really taken with Winkles. She was a single mom, and she saw Winkles as a father figure to me."
Monday became the first player ever selected in the first Major League draft, when the then-Kansas City A's chose him number one in '65.

The Devils were almost a farm club of what would later be the Oakland A's dynasty of the early 1970s. Monday, Jackson and Bando would play together at Modesto of the Class A California League, move up through the minor leagues', and then star in Oakland.

Jackson was a proud, talented, sensitive black athlete who played football for Frank Kush, as well as baseball, in Tempe. In 1966, the New York Mets' made Steve Chilcott the first pick in the draft, so Oakland selected Jackson, who would star for the A's AA farm club in Birmingham, Alabama. It was at Birmingham where Jackson met legendary Alabama football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant.

Bryant was friends with Oakland owner and Birmingham native Charles O. Finley, who introduced Jackson to him in the Barons' clubhouse. Bryant sized up the ex-football star and said, "Now here's just the kinda nigger we could use in our football program."

Reggie took it as a compliment, which in a roundabout way it was meant to be. It was also a harbinger of future events, which would be pushed along by the currents of history. In 1970, two years after Martin Luther King's assassination, USC strolled into Birmingham led by a black fullback from Santa Barbara, California named Sam "Bam" Cunningham. Cunningham ran for four touchdowns against the all-white Crimson Tide, and after the game Bryant asked coach John McKay if he could "borrow" Cunningham.

Cunningham was brought into the silent Alabama locker room, but this time Bryant did not drop any "N-bombs." Instead, he announced to his team that "This here's a football player."

Shortly thereafter, Southern football became an integrated affair.

Dedeaux had grown up alongside blacks in multi-cultural Los Angeles, and a number have played for him over the years. One of the first was Don Buford, who like Jackson was a football/baseball star for the Trojans' in the 1950s. Later, Buford would be on Dedeaux' coaching staff, and his son, Damon, would play at SC before embarking on a big league career.

In the mid-1960s, Dedeaux' teams included the likes of Tom Seaver, Mike Garrett, Tom Selleck and Bill "Spaceman" Lee.

Seaver, who Dedeaux referred to as my "Phee-nom from San Joaquin," was an unrecruited pitcher at Fresno High School who grew into his body in the Marine Corp. After a stint at Fresno City College and the Alaska Goldpanners, Seaver had matured into a prospect, so Dedeaux gave him a scholarship. He was 10-2 with a 2.51 ERA in 1965, but inexplicably the Trojans' were last in the conference!

"Seaver was happy-go-lucky back then," recalls Bill Lee, "not the corporate asshole he is now. He seemed hittable at first, but then got on the weights and developed that fastball with a hop on
it. Eventually, he had the best fastball in baseball. That's the difference between us, him smoking a big cigar in a limo and me in the back of beer truck."

Seaver was drafted that June by the team he had grown up rooting for, the Dodgers. His family had season tickets to Dodger Stadium, and whenever Sandy Koufax pitched he was there. Dodger scout Tom Lasorda drove out to Seaver's house in Fresno to sign the young Trojan, and offered the future Hall of Famer all of $2,000.

"I didn't negotiate with him," Lasorda says now, but the record shows differently. Seaver was begging to be a Dodger, but he knew he was worth more than two grand. Lasorda thought the kid should be kissing his ring instead of holding out for some money, so the talks ended and Seaver returned to school.

Six months later, in January of 1966, the Milwaukee Braves chose him in the Winter phase of the draft, signing him for $50,000. SC had played a game against the Camp Pendleton Marines, however, officially starting their season, so the signing violated baseball's rules. The NCAA viewed Seaver as a pro, so the Commissioner created a lottery, and the Mets' name appeared. The rest is history.

Seaver's roommate at SC was still another black football/baseball star. Mike Garrett of LA's Roosevelt High School would win the 1965 Heisman Trophy, play in two Super Bowl's for the Kansas City Chiefs (along with a brief minor league baseball stint), and now he is trying to restore Troy to greatness as its athletic director.

"Tom was just so strong," recalls Garrett of Seaver, "and he worked hard on the weights, improving all the time."

Another athlete who played a little baseball, a little basketball and a little volleyball at the University of Southern California during this time was a handsome, 6-5 frat boy from Grant High School in Van Nuys, named Tom Selleck.

"He was a Greek geek," was Lee's assessment of Selleck, who would go on to become a noted Republican in left-leaning Hollywood. "I was a Communist liberal in a conservative university," one Lee's grandfather, Norman Rockwell Hunt, had helped found, by the way. Lee had wry commentary for USC's Hollywood connections, which are many.

"Selleck was making `Myra Breckenridge'," Lee went on. "I hated all the elitism at the school. Alan Ladd, Jr. snaked my girlfriend away from me, because he drove a Ferrari."

Lee, who had grown up in the San Fernando Valley before attending Terra Linda High School, in the San Francisco suburb of Marin County, originally came to SC on an athletic scholarship, but after his freshman year his "ERA of 1.93 was higher than my grade point average."

He righted the academic ship, however, but always found time for a little fun. He also was rudely introduced to the less-than-plush neighborhood surrounding the SC campus.
"My friend, Orrin Freeman, had a Corvette convertible," remembers Lee. "He parked it near campus, but when we got back all the seats were stolen. That night, we cruised Sunset Strip sitting on orange crates."

Lee once emerged before his teammates from an airport baggage chute. In Hawaii, he did push-ups during a rain delay wearing only socks and a jock strap. In Santa Barbara, he forgot his sanitary socks, so he disappeared looking for a sporting goods store, not realizing the equipment manager had a ready supply of reserves. He re-appeared minutes before the game, and with virtually no warm-up went out and beat the Gauchos' anyway.

His senior year, 1968, Lee decided to "hold out," telling Rod he would only pitch weekend conference games if he could pitch and play first base in the mid-week non-conference games. Dedeaux placated him by letting him take batting practice, and in that All-American season Lee was 12-3 with a 1.82 earned run average. The Trojans' won the College World Series, and in later years Lee would tell Curry Kirkpatrick of Sports Illustrated that "the best baseball team I've ever seen was either the 1975 Reds, the 1968 USC Trojans, or any Taiwan little league team."

They do not call him Spaceman for nothing.

From 1970-74, Troy had the greatest run in college baseball history, winning five consecutive National Championships. In 1970, Dave Kingman was the Mark McGwire of his era—a former pitcher who realized his offensive skills in leading the Trojans' to victory in Omaha.

Fred Lynn was an All-American on the 1973 team. He came to SC on a football scholarship "but after trying to tackle Sam 'Bam' Cunningham a few times," John McKay mercifully turned his scholarship over to Dedeaux. A mere two years after leading USC to a National Championship, Lynn was the American League Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player for the 1975 AL Champion Boston Red Sox.

Steve Kemp hit .435 for the '74 National Champs, but in 1975 Augie Garrido and the upstart Cal State Fullerton Titans upset USC in the NCAA West Regional.

USC returned to Omaha in 1978, and their 54-9 team, led by Bill Bordley, is considered by many to be the greatest team in college history.

After that, the NCAA imposed scholarship limits which Dedeaux has steadfastly blamed for the decline in his programs, but others observed that age began to take its toll on Rod in the early 1980s.

Still, he landed some recruiting prizes. Randy Johnson was a 6-10 left-hander who threw gas, but was wild as a March hare. He pitched with limited success at USC from 1983-85, and after a Sandy Koufax-like journey through the minors and his early years in The Show, has emerged as baseball's dominant southpaw.
Mark McGwire came to SC as a pitcher, but after leading the Alaskan Summer League with a .403 batting average in 1982, Dedeaux turned him into a full-time first baseman. He was a two-time All-American and set the NCAA single-season home run record, and was the College Player of the Year and a 1984 Olympian before Oakland signed him, and he is now the top home run hitter of all-time.

Dedeaux coached the 1984 U.S. Olympic baseball team, which included McGwire, Will Clark, Rafael Palmeiro, and a host of other stars who would go on to Major League success.

Dedeaux retired at the end of the 1986 season, and his successor, Mike Gillespie, has experienced tough sledding replacing the legend. Finally, by winning the 1998 CWS, Gillespie established himself as his own man at Troy.

Dedeaux laid the foundation for college baseball's popularity. Today, many teams play in state-of-the-art facilities, drawing large crowds and turning healthy profits. ESPN televises the popular College World Series, with the championship game played on network TV. College games are a weekend staple on many cable stations.

Dedeaux could have enjoyed the fame and notoriety of managing in the Major Leagues, but instead has labored--for free--strictly for the love of his game and his school. He deserves to honored in Cooperstown, and perhaps a book detailing his accomplishments will open some people's eyes towards elevating him to that level of prominence.

“HELLO, THIS IS DARRELL ROYAL”

The publisher then thought a book about Deedeaux was too narrow, so they wanted me to write chapters on 10 or so of the greatest college baseball coaches of all time. Here is my chapter on Cliff Gustafson of Texas.

The Call came at the end of the 1967 season.

“Hello, this is Darrell Royal.”

You have to understand a few things, about time and place and history…and about Texas.

1967 was, well, a different time. The Summer of Love. Vietnam. Why, one of Texas’ own, Lyndon Baines Johnson, who had once taught school and later represented a Congressional district in a place known as the Hill Country, was in the White House prosecuting that war.

Hippies made love in the park. Students protested in the streets. Kids dropped acid while Jimi Hendrix went electric.
The thing of it is, though, this kind of thing might have been happening in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park, or on L.A.’s Sunset Strip. Texas remained…Texas. In Texas, Darrell Royal was god. Maybe not God, but god.

This was the guy who engineered the UT Longhorns football team of 1963, with the great linebacker Tommy Nobis, to the National Championship. He was the athletic director at Texas, a place where men were still men and women were damned glad for it.

As they are fond of saying, in Texas the two favorite sports are football and spring football. Not that they do not play other sports in Texas, and play ‘em well. Bibb Falk had been the baseball coach in Austin for 25 years, and in his little universe, he too was a legend.

Falk won a pair of College World Series titles, 20 Southwest Conference championships, 478 victories against only 176 losses (a .730 winning percentage), and an even more impressive 278-84 (.768) mark in the SWC.

From 1946-54, Falk’s team’s won the Southwest Conference every season, capturing an incredible 111 conference wins against 19 defeats.

Falk was a character, too, a guy who after playing at Texas had replaced the legendary “Shoeless Joe” Jackson with the Chicago White Sox, after Jackson had been kicked out of baseball for supposedly “throwing” the 1919 World Series.

Falk would go on to induction in the College Baseball Coaches Hall of Honor.

Texas baseball had a long and distinguished tradition that went back even before Falk. William J. “Uncle Billy” Disch guided the Longhorns to 513 victories against 180 losses in 29 years, including 20 SWC titles. He was known as the “Connie Mack of college baseball,” in part because of his physical resemblance to his contemporary, the stately Philadelphia A’s owner/manager, and also as a reflection of his longevity and calm composure, a Mack trademark.

Royal was a prescient sort, though. While he ruled his unchallenged fiefdom, he could see beyond the city limits of Austin, out past the miles of Texas cattle country, and what he saw was a changing world.

It might take a while, but the changes that were sweeping America and the world would eventually find their way to Texas, and it would be better to be prepared when they came rather than be caught off guard.

Some coaches would handle change gracefully. Others would not.

Down South—the Deep South—one of Royal’s contemporaries could see these changes coming, too.
Paul “Bear” Bryant, who may have been even bigger in Alabama than Royal was in Texas, took his cues from the game of baseball.

First of all, Bryant, like everybody else in the Jim Crow South, knew what had happened in Brooklyn when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier. Baseball was America’s National Pastime, and breaking that sport’s color barrier was more significant than doing the same thing in football or basketball.

After Robinson, the floodgates had opened up, and great black athletes were dominating all the professional sports. There was Willie Mays and Hank Aaron in baseball, Jim Brown in pro football, the Bill Russell-Wilt Chamberlain match-ups in pro basketball.

Many in the South, and Texas was definitely still the South, pretended that these events would not affect their lives.

When USC came to Austin play Texas in football in the mid-1950s, a black Trojan running back named C.R. Roberts rushed for 257 yards in the first half.

Texas’ answer to that was not to schedule games with team’s that had black players that could beat them. A real “ostrich with its head in the sand” attitude.

So the great black athletes of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi—and Texas—went to traditional black colleges, or to schools in the North or out West. Bubba Smith of Tennessee, for instance, ended up at Michigan State.

Reggie Jackson was not from the South. He had grown up living with his father near Philadelphia, and later had moved in with his Mom in Baltimore, where he honed his baseball skills playing for the legendary Mama Leones’ semi-pro team.

Jackson was a great football player, too, and when it was time to choose a college, the Southern schools were out of the question, and the East had no appeal to his sense of free expression. The weather was cold, the neighborhoods still roiling with ethnic tensions.

Jackson chose the wide open spaces of Arizona, where he could play football for a guy who treated blacks and whites the same way. Frank Kush punished all his players like dogs.

However, Reggie’s favorite and best sport was baseball, and when he was finished doing purgatory for Kush, he found playing baseball for Bobby Winkles to be pure joy.

So it came together that summer evening, when Bryant and Finely visited the Birmingham clubhouse and were met by the bare-chested gladiator Jackson, and Bryant made his remark about Reggie being the kind of you-know-what who could break the segregationist color barrier in football.
Out in California, Rod Dedeaux knew that change was brewing Down South, but his world had already changed. Maybe not into a melting pot, but a place where blacks were a lot more welcome than in Austin, or Birmingham, or Knoxville.

Darrell Royal knew that change was brewing, too. He would have to face up to it soon enough. He also had a decision to make.

Royal needed to hire a new baseball coach to replace Falk. There were plenty of experienced Texans to choose from, guys with pro, college, and junior college experience.

But Royal also knew that from now on, coaches in all sports would be faced with a new set of social circumstances. Maybe not in 1968. Maybe not in 1969. But if you were going to survive in Texas you had to adapt. So, for this reason, Royal wanted a younger man, a man who could be light on his feet as the ’60s became the 1970s, and all that the coming decade would entail.

He knew of one man who could fit the bill. A high school coach in San Antonio named Cliff Gustafson.

So it was that the phone rang in Gustafson’s home, and the voice on the other end said, “Hello, this is Darrell Royal.”

Being a high school baseball coach in San Antonio, Gustafson knew that the great, the legendary, the god-like Darell Royal would not be calling him.

“Oh yeah,” he replied. “This is Roy Rogers.”

Royal explained that he really was Darrell Royal, and Gustafson went on to tell him that he was actually Roy Rogers. With that settled, Gustafson was signed on as the new baseball at Texas.

A funny thing happened along the way. Black kids started playing sports at Texas, and Gustafson kept winning just like Falk and Disch had. Eventually, Dedeaux retired at Southern Cal, and Gustafson kept piling up victories. Eventually, remarkably, after 29 years culminating in the 1996 campaign, Gustafson retired with more NCAA Division I wins than Dedeaux.

Just to put that in perspective, Gustafson did in 29 years what it took Dedeaux 46 years to achieve.

Texas won the Southwest Conference championship 22 times, 17 times a Gustafson-coached squad went to Omaha, and twice (1975 and 1983) the Longhorns won the National Championship.

The Major Leagues are filled with players who earned their stripes in his program. His 1983 team included Roger Clemens, Spike Owens, Keith Moreland and Calvin Schiraldi, and is certainly worthy of consideration when discussing the greatest college teams ever assembled.
Gustafson will tell you, however, that he is just as proud of the doctors, lawyer and business executives who played for him as if of the multi-million-dollar players who were Longhorns at one time.

Of course, even though he was “only” a high school coach at the time of his appointment to the job, Gustafson had plenty of pedigree going for him in Austin. He had been a middle infielder under Falk in the mid-1950s, hitting a respectable .308. The low minor leagues were as far as he got after college, though, but he quickly found his niche in coaching.

He started out as the basketball coach at South San Antonio ISD, but quickly was elevated to head baseball coach at the local high school in 1955.

12 district titles in 13 years followed. This included seven state crowns, a 344-85-5 record, and in 1967, his team was…get this…39-0.

Now one gets a better understanding as to why Darrell Royal picked up the phone to call Gustafson that day.

Heck, the team had six wins to close out the 1966 season, so the real streak was 45 games. That is a lot of consecutive wins in baseball.

27 years later, in 1994, Gustafson won his one thousand three hundred thirty-third game, breaking Dedeaux’ record at SC. When he retired at the end of the 1996 campaign, he had compiled a record of 1,427 career wins in college.

It seems hard to imagine that any one could ever come along and break this record. What is even more amazing is that Coach Gus only lost 373 games, a .792 mark that is the third highest of all-time, but considering the longevity behind the mark is almost mind-boggling.

Gustafson followed Disch and Falk into the American Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame, and in 1983 was inducted into the Longhorn Hall of Fame.

Inducted into the Texas Hall of Fame in 1994, he won the James Kewller Sportsmanship Award in 1999, and was twice the National Coach of the Year (182 and ’83). Coach Gus was SWC Coach of the Year too many times to list here.

Gustafson also recalls a moment in the 1950s when he played for Falk, and noticed the coach speaking to a wheelchair-bound “Uncle Billy” Disch on the field. In a moment of confluence, the three men who guided Texas baseball for more than 80 years all shared the field at the same time!
That field today is called Disch-Falk Field. Some day, sooner or later, Longhorn baseball will be played at Gustafson Stadium.

Coach Gus was an enigmatic sort, a quiet type.

“I never had any idea what kind of coach he might be,” Falk once said of his protege.

Gustafson is certainly a man of consistency. Take a look at his daily lunch diet.

“Peanut butter, honey, potato chips, iced tea,” said Gustafson of his perennial culinary fare. “I’m kind of a creature of habit.”

Gustafson and his assistant coaches often ate there peanut butter sitting in his stadium office. For years, some second-place trophies occupied a spot on a towel in a cubbyhole in the office, a symbol of Gustafson’s priorities, perhaps.

He coached to win. Second-place trophies deserved no better than a cubbyhole.

Texas’ baseball teams might not have won as many National Championships as USC, but the program was far more successful than the Trojans’ in another area: Attendance.

Remember, this is football country, where spring football is second in popularity only to the real thing in the fall. Gustafson was the first to make college ball popular, and just as importantly, profitable.

UT regularly sold 2600 season tickets to 6,000-seat Disch-Falk Field, and by the 1980s the cost of one season ticket was up to $75. This gave Gustafson leverage within the athletic department. Most baseball programs exist on the largesse of the school, like some hybrid sports version of the New Deal. Not so in Austin, where the ’horns pay for themselves, thank you.

This in-the-black popularity landed Coach Gus an unprecedented five-year contract in 1986.

“If you took the best parts of all coaches, you’d get Gus,” was the assessment of athletic director DeLoss Dodds.
Gustafson, you see, outlasted Royal.

Gustafson was a stickler for statistics, a college version of Tony LaRussa, and his players were always thoroughly drilled in the execution of fundamental play.

“Nobody questions what he does,” said former pitcher Wade Phillips. “Sometimes it doesn’t work, but he knows the game. We know he’ll never blow a game for us.”

Gustafson’s son, Deron, played for him at UT, and once had the temerity to question the old man.

“We were playing Houston and trying clinch the conference title,” recalls Deron. “We had a chance to pull it out in the ninth inning, and there were no pinch-hitters left except me and a guy who hadn’t played all year. I was hitting over .300 but he pinch-hit the other guy, who hit into a double play to end the game. I was pretty mad. I felt I could have done something to contribute, and I felt if I hadn’t been his son, he would have used me. I waited until we were home, and then I asked him about it.

“He said he used the other player, Johnny Sutton, because Sutton had hit against the Houston pitcher a lot in a summer league with success.”

Gustafson was just a guy who always did his homework. If a player had shown a tendency to hit to the right side playing a softball league three years earlier, he would use that information to move his second baseman over a step and a half.

As it turned out, Sutton responded to his coach’s faith in him even further, when he was voted MVP of the regional tournament.

“When I was was Texas A&M,” says former Texas assistant Clint Thomas, “I was impressed by how fundamentally sound his players were. When I came to Texas, I came to appreciate how hard he works. He works on baseball at home, but he truly enjoys it. He’s up on everything.”

Texas’ alumni contributed a $20,000 gift of Coach Gus’s choice after the Longhorns captured the 1983 National Championship. Gustafson built a swimming pool at his home.
“I had a big ‘UT’ in burnt-orange tile laid right in the middle of the pool,” he says, “and it looked great when they finished. But when they filled the pool with water, that ‘UT’ turned maroon.”

The Gustafson family learned to live with the colors, even if they did provide a disturbing similarity to Texas A&M’s. Cliff and Janie Gustafson built 11 acres in southwest Austin, where they raised Deron and his sisters, Jill and Jan.

It was at that home where Janie collapsed with a cerebral hemorrhage on December 29, 1980, a near-tragedy that turned into a story of triumph for the close-knit family. Despite long odds, Janie twice survived corrective surgery and eventually returned home to a normal life.

“Now, every day is special to us,” says Gustafson. “That makes you think about things you take for granted.”

“Besides his family,” says son Deron, “all he thinks about is baseball. That’s why he’s so good at it. It’s not a job to him. He loves it.

“Texas always has won and I think Texas always will win. There are a lot of factors—tradition, facilities, players—but a great coach tops it off.”

Former Rice coach David Hall, who played on Gustafson’s first Texas teams and later served there as an assistant, sees his former coach as a master of the game, and a communicator.

“His work ethic rubs off on you,” Hall says. “He is the first at the park and the last to leave. He always has the right thing to say, and it comes across.

“Coach Gus gives you that symbol of stability and confidence. It’s good to look down at the third-base (coaching) box and see him. You know there certain things he expects in certain situations. There is no better strategist.”

Hall recalls an NCAA regional tournament game at Arlington. Texas had a runner in scoring position, and Hall noticed that the next batter, Mickey Reichenback, had not moved into the on-deck circle. Instead, Gustafson had sent out a player whom Hall knew would certainly not be allowed to bat.
“Said Hall: ‘I asked him, `Why do you have that guy out there?’ He told me, ‘Because he’s faster than Mickey. He can get to the plate quicker and tell the runner what to do.’”

Consequently, Longhorn player, thoroughly drilled and aware that Gustafson constantly studies on what each of them does in every game and practice, are always ready.

“Nobody questions what he does because of what he has done,” says former pitcher Wade Phillips. “Sometimes it doesn’t work, but he knows the game.”

Gustafson’s team’s even have a style, and it is called Gusball.

“It's taking advantage of every opportunity,” says the coach.

Former assistants Bill Bethea and Thomas know exactly what Gusball is all about.

Bethea, an All-American shortstop under Falk in the early ‘60s who became Gustafson’s first assistant in 1969, says, “He has a consistent way of doing things. He plays the percentages and constantly studies statistics. He’s very systematic, but he’s not adverse to change.

Gustafson is a simple man who has never campaigned for special recognition. He says it never bothered him that he received no bonus after winning the National Championship in 1975, one year after Texas A&M alumni rewarded coach Tom Chandler handsomely for winning a conference title.

“I don’t think you need to pay a coach extra for a winning season,” he says. “He really needs that bonus when he has a losing season.”

Gustafson has never made at Texas what he could have made had he ventured into the professional ranks, although he has supplemented his income with successful summer baseball camps.

He is a man who was comfortable at what he did for a long time. He treasures his family, his sport and his school. He enjoyed playing dominoes with his staff during road trips, and in the summer is a daily golfer. He drives not a fancy car but a pickup truck, and strums a guitar, a skill he picked up in college. He also grins at the memory of how Falk, the ultimate Major Leaguer, eated when he brought it on road trips.
“A lot of us sat in the back of the bus and sang,” he says. “Bibb sat on the front row and smoked his cigar. After a while, he looked back and said, ‘We may have the lousiest damn team in the league, but we have the best (bleeping) choir.’”

Gustafson I baseball man through and through. Always, always will be…

But wait.

“I really loved basketball. Still do,” he says in a drawl that is slower than the honey he purs on his bread at lunchtime. “I thought my opportunities for coaching basketball were much greater. I never had a goal or ambition or dream to be a college baseball coach. That never crossed my mind.”

50-win seasons. 50 ways to win a game. Taking pitches. Balk plays, double steals, five-run innings on only one hit. Great comebacks. All the hallmarks of Gusball, but in the beginning, when his pro career with the Plainview Ponies ended any dreams of becoming the next Pee Wee Reese had ended, and he decided to enter high school baseball coaching, the superintendent of the South San Antonio school district told him he should chuck his baseball ambitions and become a junior high track coach. Then, when the South San Antonio basketball coach was fired, his protégé, the baseball coach, resigned in protest.

Gus wanted the basketball job, figuring it would lead to greater opportunity. He did not get. Instead, the district gave him the baseball job as a consolation prize.

13 years, 344 wins and seven state championships later—that 39-0 record in 1967 capped a 45-game winning streak, too—Gus got The Call.

Even after taking the baseball job at South San Antonio, Gustafson still pursued basketball, but he was turned down for jobs at Brenham and Suguin.

“He’s too short and can’t jump,” mocked Augie Garrido, Cal State Fullerton’s long-time coach, a close friend of Gustafson who took over the UT program when Gustafson retired. “He’s got no future in basketball.”
So Clifford Lincoln Gustafson—the middle name resulting in his being born on Honest Abe’s birthday—had to settle for being a baseball coach. 40 years later, he broke Rod Dedax’s all-time collegiate record for victories.

In fact, he has won more college games than any coach in any sport.

“The only special meaning is,” said Gustafson as he was approaching the record, “I want to get it over with so we can stop talking about it.”

Gustafson viewed the talk as a distraction from his goal of winning more baseball games.

Rival coaches were jealous of Gustafson. Umpires respected him. A former player calls him a god (now we are getting Darrell Royal territory here).

“I never thought I’d get this far,” Gustafson said of his career. “When I reached the 1,000-win plateau, that was a big thing. But I never thought I would just coach until I reached a certain level.

“I never thought in those terms. I didn’t really have those ambitions or goals.”

Maybe Gustafson’s low-key approach can be traced to his upbringing. He was born a farm just outside Kenedy, Texas. His family were sharecroppers. His dad died when he was five and an uncle started spending more time with Gustafson and his older brother, Marvin. That uncle taught him baseball.

He and his family left the fields for good when Gus turned 12. He graduated from Harlandale High School and traveled north to play for Falk.

Playing at old Clark Field, Gustafson’s big league dreams hit a real set-back when he broke his leg in the 1952 season opener against Oklahoma.

Gustafson was only 37 when Royal called him. It was Darrell’s only phone call.

“I had not asked anybody to put in a word for me or anything,” Gustafson recalled. “I felt, first of all, it was a long shot for a high school coach to get the job. And if Coach Royal knew about
me, I didn’t need to call him. And if he didn’t know about me, he wasn’t going to hire me based on what I could tell him.”

Royal knew about him, all right. Gustafson accepted the job.

“All I did in those days was tell Gus what his budget was, how many scholarships he had, and to obey the rules,” recalled Royal. “He was perfect, and he won.”

Tommy Harmon, who would go onto become a Texas assistant, was a freshman during Gustafson’s first year, 1968.

“We were both rookies that year,” Harmon said. “He was pretty easygoing back then, as long as you did what you were supposed to.”

Gustafson later discovered that Emory Bellard, Royal’s backfield coach and a former successful high school coach, had helped sell him to Royal. Gustafson had been making $11,500 at South San, and feared that UT might not want to match that exorbitant amount. He told Royal he would accept $11,000. By the end, he was making $100,000.

“I heard Bibb wasn’t making but $12,000,” Gustafson said. “And he’d been there 25 years. I didn’t want to shoot myself out of contention. If Royal hadn’t called and offered me the job, within three years I probably would have taken an elementary principalship at South San.”

Over the years, Gustafson was approached many times with job offers.

None, he said, ever became serious, but he did receive feelers from Philadelphia, the Cubs and Texas Rangers to manage.

In 1979, Dallas Green was scouting at Disch-Falk Field as farm director of the Phillies. He liked the way Gustafson used pitcher Keith Creel and that night asked if the UT coach would be interested in managing the Phils.

“I said I didn’t think so,” Gustafson said. “What’s so funny is when the other guy <Danny Ozark> quit, Dallas went down on the field.

Gustafson loves it on the field so much he was never in a hurry to leave.
“The thing he has been able to do that no one else has come close to is his unbelievable consistency,” the late Arizona State coach, Jim Broc, once said of him. “He has a good or great club every year. A lot of us could do that when we had the market cornered <before NCAA cutbacks>. He’s still been able to do it, and that’s absolutely amazing.”

“I think it was Oliver Wendell Holmes who said, `It’s not whether you win or lose, it’s how you play the game,’” Gus said of his desire to win. I say, to hell with Oliver Wendell Holmes.”

“the most consistent thing about him is his consistency,” said Harmon. “He’s never changed. He’s never changed his signs or his philosophy. He is a salt-of-the-Earth type guy who doesn’t want for much. He’s happy if he’s got a ball game, peanut butter, iced tea, a TV and a set of golf clubs.”

Still, Gus boiled at even the slightest mistakes, and was prone to lecturing his team even after a lopsided win. Off the field, he is no frills. He traded in his yellow suitcase for a newer model to store his peanut butter, honey, sweet rolls and chips for those rare road trips. He played almost all his non-conference games in Austin.

“He expects the best out of us and nothing less than intensity and hustle for nine innings,” said outfielder Jeff Conway. “He’s the same kind of legend like Nolan Ryan and Roger Staubach.”

His reputation as a tightwad is legendary. When he arrived at Texas in 1968, he was still driving his cream-colored ’59 Chevy. He chose to house his team in less-expensive hotels, and would sew baseballs back together with fishing line. His austere ways go back to his youth in a sharecropping family, his father dying when he was five, Gus in the fields at age six. His peanut butter diet began in his school days when his late mother, Wenda, used to pack him sandwiches with roast beef, ham, spam or peanut butter and syrup. Because she worked at junior high, her youngest son wanted to make it easier on her and told her to give him peanut butter every day.

Asked if he ever traded his sandwiches at lunch, he once quipped, “Who am I going to trade a peanut butter sandwich? What kind of classmates did you think I had?”

He would sleep in two- or thre-hour intervals every night and update baseball statistics in between. He used the same yellow plastic spit cup for his unbreakable tobacco habit for 20 years. He jogged two miles every two of three days in the same discolored wool cap and frayed warm-up suit, and would take 16 minutes to cover the distance.
Some call him “ruthless,” others as the “nicest guy you’d ever meet. Both are considered compliments.

“Records are just kind of an after-thought,” Deron Gustafson used to say. “That never has driven him. The only thing that drives him is today’s game.”

Plus yesterday’s friends.

“I think his success on the baseball field reflects only a small portion of his greatness,” Garrido said of him. “His true greatness is in who he is as an individual and a person.”

“It came very, very early—I guess I was 10 or 11,” Gustafson said of his passion. “I was introduced to baseball when my Uncle Lewis used to talk about it. I remember hearing the World Series on the radio in 1941. Joe DiMaggio was my hero, and the Yankees were my team.

“I used to act out games with a tennis ball. I was always the pitcher, because it was pretty hard to hit by yourself. And I was always pitching for the Yankees against the Red Sox. Money was always a problem. When I think about my dad’s death, the thing that always comes to mind is the fact that he had been able to borrow enough money from the bank to buy a tractor just before he died. Life could have been so much easier for him if he had lived to use that tractor instead of plowing with that team of mules.”

Mrs. Gustafson tried to keep the farm going, and each kid was told there would be little time to play. Gus and his brother, Marvin, picked the whole family crop, 2 bales, when Cliff was 10. Eventually, the family moved to Kenedy, just outside San Antonio, so Mrs. Gustafson could take a job at the school.

His days throwing that tennis ball got him satarted, and by the time he was at Harlandale High, he was good enough to attract Falk’s attention.

Gustafson’s first season at UT was rocky at first. The team lost their first three conference games, and after the third, a loss to Southern Methodist, Gustafson gathered the team in center field at the old Clark Field for the first of what would become known as “the centerfield meeting.”

“I just remember I was scared to death,” recalled Harmon.
“I just told them I felt it was time for me to emphasize who was going to be running the show, who was calling the shots,” recalled Gustafson. “And I told them I was not convinced that the squad had given me their dedication over those three conference games.

One player quit the team, but Gustafson had a young club with only two seniors in the starting lineup, and they responded with 12 of 13 league wins to acclaim the first of his many SEC crowns.

The centerfield meeting has become a staple at UT, and the Texas tradition has never been entrusted to the weak.

As the national media placed more attention on college baseball, Gustafson as much as anybody, including Dedeaux, became synonymous with the sport, and especially the College World Series.

24 times under his tutelage the team has made an NCAA appearance. Disch-Falk Field opened in 1975, and season ticket sales have grown to over 3,000 per season. The Longhorns’ consistently lead the nation in attendance.

Consistency at home is another Gustafson trademark. He has been married for over 50 years. They have always lived on 15 acres of homestead in southwest Austin since 1967. Daughters Jill and Jan are married now and have families who live nearby. Deron was his assistant for a number of years.

Wife Janie once joked that Gliff would miss her last rites for a baseball game, but when she struggled through a life-threatening cerebral hemmorage, her husband was at her side through all of it.

Gustafson won the Harvey Penick award toward the end of his career, as one of Austin’s leading figures.

COACH OF THE ‘90s

Here is my chapter on LSU’s Skip Bertman.
In its January 19, 1997 issue, *Baseball America* magazine named Louisiana State the “Team of the ‘90s.” *Baseball America* listed the top 100 college baseball programs based upon a formula which encompasses the following categories: Winning percentage, NCAA regional appearances, College World Series appearances, National Championships, All-American players, players who have been drafted, Major League players and total attendance. LSU, which won four National Championships (1991, 1993, 1996, 1997) in the ‘90s, was number one in the survey with 308 total points, easily outdistancing second place Florida State with 257 points. Arizona State was third (247), followed by Texas, Cal State Fullerton, Miami, Wichita State, Clemson, Stanford and Oklahoma State.

LSU claimed its fourth NCAA title in 1997 by overwhelming fellow Southeastern Conference foe Alabama, 13-6. They became the first school to win back-to-back National Championships since Stanford in 1987-88. The Tigers completed the year with a 57-13 mark, setting the Southeastern Conference record for most single-season victories. The Tigers also established the NCAA record for single-season home runs, as LSU unloaded a remarkable 188 round-trippers en route to the National Championship. LSU joined Southern California (six titles in the 1970s) as the only schools to win four CWS crowns in one decade.

LSU claimed its third National Championship of the decade in 1996 when second baseman Warren Morris belted a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning to lift the Tigers to a thrilling 9-8 College World Series title game win over Miami. The ‘96 Tigers were one of the most prolific offensive teams in SEC history, establishing league records for home runs (131), runs scored (648), RBIs (549), and total bases (1,331).

In 1993, LSU claimed its second NCAA title in three years with an 8-0 victory over Wichita State in the CWS final. The 1993 Tigers also captured the SEC title, as they became the first SEC school to win the league championship in four consecutive seasons (1990-93).

In 1991, LSU captured its first national title with a record-setting performance in Omaha. The Tigers defeated Wichita State, 6-3, in the title game, establishing Series marks for homers, runs per game, slugging percentage and fielding percentage.


In January, 1999, in a poll released by Baseball America, Betman was voted the second-greatest college baseball coach of the Twentieth Century, trailing only the legendary Rod Dedeaux. Under Bertman, LSU has finished no worse than seventh in the national polls in 11 of 14 seasons.

Bertman is one of only two coaches to have won four CWS titles in the 53-year history of the event (Dedeaux’s Trojans won 10, but he did it in the 1940s, ’50s, ’60s and ’70s). Bertman has the fifth-highest total of CWS victories (25) and the sixth-highest CWS winning percentage (25-13, .658). He has the third-highest all-time winning percentage among active NCAA Division I coaches.

Bertman’s record in SEC games is 291-137-1 (.687). Under Bertman, LSU has dominated the SEC over the past 11 seasons (1989-99), registering a 558-196-1 record (.739), which averages nearly 51 victories a season. Including during this remarkable span are four National Championships, eight CWS appearances, six conference titles, and seven 50-win seasons.

To put this in perspective, consider that the six seasons prior to Bertman’s arrival in Baton Rouge, LSU was 146-149 (.495). Bertman came to Louisiana State from Miami, where he learned from another legend, Ron Fraser. Bertman was an assistant at Miami for eight seasons.

He is driven to succeed by a tremendous work ethic, accompanied by phenomenal organizational skills. At this point, winning is not just an LSU tradition, it is the LSU Way.

At Atlanta in ’96, Bertman led the young U.S. squad to a Bronze medal. Leading USA Baseball in 1995 and ’6, Bertman guided the United States to an incredible 71-11 record (.866), culminating in tenure with a victory over Nicaragua for the 1996 Olympic Bronze. In 1995, Bertman led the United States to an unprecedented four-game sweep of Cuba, the reigning World and Olympic champion at that time, and the squad ended the summer with a 21-game winning streak. The ’96 U.S. team added to the streak by winning its first 18 games before dropping a 5-1 decision to Cuba on June 29. In the fall of ’96, USA Baseball awarded Bertman with its annual Achievement Award, which is given to an individual who has participated in amateur baseball and has gone on to excel in his professional endeavors.
LSU second baseman Warren Morris and shortstop Jason Williams were two of the '96 Olympic team’s brightest stars as the starting middle infielders. Morris was the Americans’ leading hitter in the Olympics, batting .409 in nine games with five homers, one double, 11 RBIs and 10 runs. Williams batted .367 in the Olympics with three homers, nine RBIs and 10 runs.

LSU has established an outstanding reputation internationally with representatives on the Olympic teams in 1988, 1992, and 1996. Bertman serve as the pitching coach of the ’88 U.S. Olympic team which captured a Gold medal in Seoul. The ’88 squad featured LSU pitcher Ben McDonald, who won two games in the Olympics. LSU pitcher Rick Grene was a member of the 1992 Olympic team which competed in Barcelona without winning a medal.

LSU is one of only four schools to win four national titles in the 53-year history of the CWS. Aside from USC and LSU, Arizona State has won five and Texas four. LSU is the most successful currently, their four having come in the past nine seasons.

USC has won once in the past 21 years. Aruizona State hasgone 18 seasons without capturing it all. Texas’ last CWS crown came in 1983.

LSU is one of three schools to make the trip to Omaha seven times in the 1990s. Miami an Florida State also did it seven times. LSU is one of only 11 teams to go to the CWS 10 times in its history. All 10 have occurred under Bertman since 1986. Their .658 CWS mark, based on a 25-13 record, is second only to SC’s .766, 72-22).

Under Bertman, LSU has the highest all-time NCAA Tournament percentage. Including Regionals and CWS play, the Tigers are 77-28 for a .733 percentage.

Remarkably, the Tigers are 17-1 in championship games in Regional and College World Series play. hey have never lost in four tries in the CWS title game, and only once in 14 games in Regionals.

**STOLEN MOMENTS WITH COACH GILLESPIE**

Caught up with Mike Gillespie while the Trojans' were taking infield practice prior to their March 7 6-5 win over UC Santa Barbara, which improved his fifth-ranked club to 12-3.

"Mark Prior is everything we expected him to be," said Gillespie, who said the transfer from Vanderbilt is ready for every game from the first inning on.
"We don't have as much power as in past years," he observed. Lefties fare best because of the wind currents at Dedeaux Field. Gillespie said UCLA's early-season fall from the Top 20 is attributed to injuries, and he expects his team's chief rival to be there, but Stanford obviously is the club that scares him the most.

The Trojans' were named "Greatest Program of the 20th Century" in the February issue of Baseball America.

ONES TO WATCH:

Seth Davidson was named to Baseball America's 2000 All-America Third Team. SC's shortstop broke up the Trojans' February 15 game with Cal State Fullerton when he singled with the bases loaded, giving Troy a 7-6 victory. Seth has gotten off to a slower start than he would like at the plate, but he plays great defense and promises to live up to his Freshman All-American status from 1998…Third baseman Justin Gemoll is hitting at a .400 clip with power and run production, has not made an error in 25 chances, and has four multiple-hit games…Rik Currier, one of the stars of the 1998 CWS, is off to a terrific start with a strikeout an inning thus far. He was a disappointment as a soph but the kid can throw…Alberto Concepcion is still getting used to Division I play, but the prep catching sensation from El Segundo is destined to replace the great Eric Munson.

Anthony Lunetta is a rarity. He plays second base, but he has power. He started off 2000 at a .463 clip, was 3-for-5 vs. Texas Tech, 3-for-5 vs. Long Beach State, and 5-for-5 in his collegiate debut January 29 against Pepperdine. Wow! You have to love this baseball program.

THIS VANDY DANDY IS NOW A TROJAN

San Diego natives transferring in is becoming a good habit at Troy.

Mark Prior was better at San Diego's University High than Barry Zito. Zito played there ahead of him, was a freshman All-American at U.C.-Santa Barbara, transferred to U.S.C., and was Oakland's top draft choice last year. Prior was 10-5 with a 0.93 earned run average as a senior, earning All-American and All-State honors, while slugging 15 home runs at the plate. The Yankees made the San Diego County Player of the Year their first round draft choice, but Mark declined to become an instant millionaire in favor of college.

Mark will not admit that his father Jerry playing football at Vanderbilt influenced his decision to play for the Commodores. After a Freshman All-American season, he pitched in front of 10,000 fans--a moment he lists as his greatest thrill--for the USA National Team. Prior transferred to Southern Cal, and is a 2000 pre-season All-American. Mark "established himself in the Southeastern Conference " says coach Mike Gillespie. "He is a superlative athlete."

"I learned how to lead playing for Coach Serrano at Uni High," says the mature Prior. "I watched Zito when I was a sophomore, and we had <U.S.C.'s> Seth Davidson, but we didn't win the
C.I.F. <San Diego Section>. The talent level down there is great, with guys like Eric Munson and Eric Chavez." Both those players were first round picks.

"I developed physically and mentally as a baseball player when I decided not to play basketball my senior year" he continues. "That gave me a chance to train year round, and work on my hitting. I got stronger, my overall body strength, my abs and back. I was around 200, 205, now I weigh in at 220 pounds. As a senior I threw about 86-89 miles per hour. Now I clock in over 90, right around 90-93."

A supplemental "sandwich" pick by the Yankees (forty-third overall), Prior had to be pretty determined to get a college education in order to turn down George Steinbrenner's money.

"I was focused on the college experience," he explains. "My Dad played football at Vanderbilt. I was recruited by Stanford, S.C., Miami, Tulane--I'm not a big fan of Stanford. Vanderbilt fit me as a person, it was my choice. I loved the Vandy community, don't get me wrong. It just didn't work out from the baseball and coaching point of view. I just outgrew the baseball program at Vanderbilt. It was a tough situation, I just had a different opinion about how a program should be run.

"I like Coach Savage and Coach Gillespie. Gillespie offers discipline and organization, and I just needed to be in a situation where guys' get pushed and challenged more. I felt my physical and mental skills were the same at the end of the year at Vanderbilt as they had been at the beginning."

What is his take on Gillespie, who is notorious for his tight reign handling pitchers in game situations?

"What I know, from talking to Barry, is that he wants perfection, and he wants it right away," says Prior. "He's carried on the S.C. tradition, and I think he'll help me. I also worked with some alumni, like Tom House, who helped me to understand that I have to prove myself every time I pitch. I know the expectations for me are great."

What about the fear factor? Does that push Mark to constantly be on his toes?

"That's very true," is his answer. "I got asked 'what are you thinking?' about turning down the money. At Vandy I felt pressure to throw a perfect game every time out in the S.E.C., to prove I am what they say I am."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

IT'S ALL ABOUT ME

This chapter includes articles about me, letters to me, letters by me, and things about me.
STEVEN TRAVERS: THE EXAMINER'S NEW SPORTS COLUMNIST

The Examiner's new sports columnist, STEVEN TRAVERS, was previously a columnist for StreetZebra Magazine and wrote for the Los Angeles Times. This fifth-generation Californian was born in San Francisco and raised in Marin County. He played on Redwood High School's National Championship baseball team as a senior, attended college on an athletic scholarship, and was all-conference before pitching for the St. Louis Cardinals and Oakland A's.

“I was at USC with Randy Johnson of the Diamondbacks and Mark McGwire of the Cardinals,” says our newest scribe. “Jack del Rio, who would play football for the Vikings, was a catcher. Rod Dedeaux, the coach, called everybody 'Tiger.' In college I beat Mark Langston twice. My claim to fame in pro ball was striking out the side for Oakland against San Francisco. Bill King announced it to the Bay Area. With Johnson City, Tennessee, a St. Louis farm club, I set an Appalachian League record by striking out 15 Kingsport Mets, including Kevin Mitchell four times. I’ve played ball with Jose Canseco, Buddy Biancalana, and Danny Cox. I hurt my arm the night Max Patkin, the baseball clown in ‘Bull Durham’, came to do his act. Those were the best times of my life, but just like in Bruce Springsteen’s song, ‘Glory Days’, it seems like it ended ‘in the wink of a young girl’s eye.’”

Steve studied in the University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television, earned a Bachelor's degree in communications, and attended the UCLA Writers' Program. “My experience has been similar to that of Ron Shelton, who directed ‘Bull Durham,’” he says. “I spoke to Shelton once and found him to be arrogant, like he thought he was Alfred Hitchcock or something.”

The 6-6, 225-pound Travers has punched a lot of tickets, and brings his many and varied experiences to the literate coverage of sports.

"Sports deserves to be written about with a pathos that rises above the run-of-the-mill," says Travers, a man who brings the unique perspective of an educated athlete whose "writing heroes range from Shakespeare to Hemingway to Jim Murray." Steve is the proud Dad of a teenage daughter, Elizabeth. His father, Donald, coached track at Lowell and Balboa before entering the practice of law. His mother, Ingeborg, is a successful artist, and his uncle, Col. Charles Travers, was a prominent San Francisco businessman. Travers served in the U.S. Army, coached a baseball team in Europe, attended law school, and was a sports agent before embarking on a Hollywood screenwriting career. A number of his scripts have been sold, optioned or "written for hire."

"News journalism allows for more immediate gratification than screenwriting," he says. "I love sports, history, film and politics. I will use metaphors that may compare a team to Napoleon's Italian Campaign or Hannibal crossing the Alps. I also analyze with the practiced eye of a coach." Travers was an assistant baseball coach at the University of California-Berkeley when the Golden Bears advanced to the NCAA Regionals. "Five players from that 1991 team have played in the Major Leagues, and I take full credit," he says, tongue in cheek. He has resided in various regions of the United States, traveling and living all the world, so do not expect
provincialism from our newest columnist, who returns to his hometown after living in Los Angeles for years. Steve now resides in Marin.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

What’s in a name? I began thinking of my name – Travers – because on Thursday, May 24, the Examiner ran a piece, written by Dave Kindred of The Sporting News, that references events of May 18, 1912. Those events have personal resonance with me because of my name. Read on.

Earlier in that 1912 season, Detroit’s Hall of Fame outfielder Ty Cobb, a man with a hair-trigger temper, went into the stands at the Polo Grounds to attack a heckler. The heckler, it turns out, had no hands.

“I don’t care if he had no feet,” was Cobb’s response when asked about it. Nice, but an aside. American League President Ban Johnson decided to suspend Cobb. The part that always befuddled me about this is that his teammates decided to protest the suspension by not playing in the May 18 game at Philadelphia. Cobb was hated by his teammates, but he was on his way to a .410 average in 1912, so his value to the club must have overridden emotions about his behavior.

Detroit manager Hughie Jennings, rather than forfeit the game to Connie Mack’s A’s, signed the baseball team from a Philadelphia seminary school to play that single contest. Their pitcher was a future clergyman named Aloysius Joseph Travers. They used to call people Aloysius in those days, but you can call him Al. I call him Travers. Same spelling as my last name, but no relation. I think.

Big Al went the distance against a line-up that included the “$100,000 Infield” of Stuffy McInnis at first, Eddie Collins at second, Jack Barry at short, and Frank “Home Run” Baker at third. Predictably, Travers lost. He gave up 24 runs, the modern Major League record.

Hopefully, he was a better pastor than he was a pitcher.

Cobb was re-instated, the seminarians went back to the seminary, and the rest of the season was played out in formal fashion.

In 1974, the second and only other guy named Travers ever to play in the big leagues came along. His name is Bill Travers, and if my Internet family tree search is correct, he is related to me.

Travers was a pretty fair pitcher, really. I took note of him because of the family name, and darned if he did not make the 1976 American League All-Star team for Milwaukee.

The next year he had an elbow injury and slumped. His season hit its nadir on the dog day of August 14 at Cleveland’s luxurious “Mistake by the Lake”, Memorial Stadium. In what one can
only imagine to have been the most desultory of baseball games, the going-nowhere Indians beat the going-nowhere Brewers, 14-5. The Brew Crew was low on pitchers, there bull pen depleted. Travers was allowed to stay in the game and give up all 14 runs! This means that, since 1900, the two pitchers who gave up the most runs in a single game, in order, were the only two pitchers in baseball history named Travers.

At the time, I was a youth pitcher named Travers growing up in Marin County. The August 15, 1977 Independent Journal, despite rumors, did have a sports section in those days. This was the height of the free sex hot tub era (like I ever saw any of this fabrication). Their headline said, “If your name is Travers, don’t try pitching.”

Now you know the rest of the story.

Eventually, I did sign with the St. Louis Cardinals and play a couple years in the minors, including a stint with Oakland. I never did match my namesakes in runs-allowed in any game. I also never did get to The Show. In Aloysius’ case, he was a circumstance, but Bill deserves credit. He pitched nine years and was a legitimate Major League pitcher, although at 6-4, 187 pounds I suspect he could shower in the barrel of a .22.

Aloysius died in 1968, but Bill still lives in Foxboro, Massachusetts, where I suspect the residents cannot drive to and from their homes a day before or after Patriots games due to the bad road planning in and around Foxboro Stadium. I attempted to contact him, but “cousin Bill” apparently wants to be like Greta Garbo and be left alone.

I suppose being part of the greatest one-two same-name run-allowing combo in history is enough publicity for anyone. I wish I coulda made it a trio thing, but you know what they say: “Two’s company, three’s a crowd.”

I'M MAD AS HELL AND I'M NOT GONNA TAKE IT ANYMORE!

You know, I am not a radical. I am not a protester. You will not find me chaining myself to trees, spiking Redwoods, or throwing bags of feces at the cops. I am pretty Establishment, from the sports teams I root for, to the schools I attended, the politics I support and the way I feel about my country.

Not too long ago, my editor, Dave Burgin, sat me down and said, “Every once in a while, write about something other than sports.” You see, I am a sports columnist. Most sports columnists (Hunter Thompson aside) are not radical by nature.

I thought about Burgin’s directive. What could I write about? The post-election fall-out? The West Bank? Who is at fault when the power goes out and I lose unsaved pearls in my computer?

I had a screenwriting teacher once who said, “Write what you know.” So I am.
I do not like being lied to. I do not like being played. I do not like being the “little guy vs. the system,” because the world is not a Frank Capra movie.

A few years ago, it came to my attention that there was a cancer drug called Krebiozen that saved thousands of lives in the 1950s, but the drug never got FDA approval because the pharmaceutical companies squashed it. Their reason for doing this was because the ampoule, costing $9.95, was too inexpensive to allow for profits. The doctors who held the patent would not sell it because they wanted it to be affordable, so they were blacklisted. The whole thing made me mad, and if you lost a loved one prematurely to cancer, it should horrify you.

Another thing that does me dirty is suburban cops hiding behind bushes in quiet neighborhoods. I always thought police should do like fire departments, who send there people out to “hot spots” when an inferno gets out of control. Instead of letting their men in blue hang out looking for “Hollywood stoppers,” send ‘em to Oakland or someplace where real crime, drug dealing, shootings and the like make life miserable for citizens trying to live decent lives. Why is it that, if a person works hard enough to afford to live in a nice place like San Anselmo or Novato, that should increase their chances of getting tickets for stopping one and a half feet past a stop sign at 11:30 AM when nobody is around? That frosts me.

“No scalping” gets me, too. I am not talking about the guy who sells tickets outside the parking lot for twice its value for a “living.” I am talking about the guy with an extra ducat because his buddy’s wife told him he had to spend quality time with her, so the fellow wants his money back instead of eating the thing.

I do not like price gouging. It bugs me that Radio Shack quoted me $230 to install a sound card, when H I Q Computers did it for $76. It really gets me when I make a calling card call from a pay phone to another number a few miles away, get voicemail, leave a message, and later get charged $8 for that one-minute call. I am all for de-regulation, but consumers will get decent rates when they vote with their feet. I have not seen anybody write about this, so hopefully shedding light on this subject will have a disinfecting effect.

San Rafael Ford sent me a notice. There was a recall on my diagnostic system, and they would fix it for free. Except that once there they said I needed a new radiator. I bought it, gullible me. $500, the man said. That figure magically became $689 when I went to pick it up. I showed him my note that said “500” on it, and explained it had nothing to do with Barry Bonds’ latest home run. “500” did not appear on that piece of paper out of thin air. Worse yet, when I went to the one honest auto mechanic I have known in my life, a guy named George in Redondo Beach, he told me I never needed a new radiator, that the whole thing could have been handled with plugs.

The last straw was at CompUSA in San Rafael. I bought a laptop, and the salesman sold me $500 worth of service warranties guaranteeing that the company would fix any glitches in the laptop for three years. I brought it home and it did not work. I came back and asked for an exchange. They said they did not have that model, but would sell me another one for $500 more. I told the man, “What the meaning of is is that I have spent my last dollar at CompUSA. I will give you the laptop and you will refund my money. I will go to your competition, buy another laptop there,
and do all future computer-related business with your competitor.” My daughter was embarrassed, but my point was made.

He said, “I’ll be right back.” Upon his return, he said he “just found out” that the manufacturer had posted an up-date stating the problem had been discovered. Just found out, huh? Over the next month, I brought that laptop back about six times. Instead of honoring the service agreement to repair all the little problems, they offered do-it-yourself advice: Go to Windows up-dates, run system recovery, blah blah blah.

I finally brought it back because it still was not up to snuff, and I wanted them to make it up to snuff precisely and, to pure crystalline effect because, that is what I bought the service agreement for!

They refused, saying the simple adjustments I needed were not covered in the service agreement.

Hey, consumers, here are some tips. Small claims courts are there for you. Every District Attorney’s office has a Consumer Affairs department. The DMV investigates stuff like what San Rafael Ford did. The Better Business wants to hear from you.

Did you know that small print on contracts is not necessarily enforceable? It is called “boiler plate” language, and high court decisions have formulated the contract law taught at all law schools, which is that for a contract to be valid, it has to offer “the benefit of the bargain” to both parties.

Unilateral small print rarely does that, so do not be intimidated by it. I am not.

I’M MAD AS HELL AND I’M NOT GONNA TAKE IT ANYMORE

One of the duties of consumers in the free market is to rage against the machine every so often, so here goes. I have a cell phone but I leave it in my car because it can get lost or stolen in crowded bars and restaurants. I have had the same home phone number for over 20 years. That number came with a calling card, which is the number plus a four-digit code. I have used it a million times. There was always a small surplus for the convenience. A 55-cent call from Marin to San Francisco might be 75 cents. Fair enough. Lately, I have noticed amazing charges on pay phones, and I cannot believe this is not sticking in the craws of a lot of people besides me. A one-minute call from a pay phone near Lake Tahoe to Reno, about 40 miles away, cost $24. Twenty-four DOLLARS. Recently, I had to call a cab after being separated from my car (and my cell phone). Out of change, I used a pay phone on 4th Street in San Rafael to call a cab company in San Rafael. The phone book was missing, so I had to use my calling card to call information (about a 20-second call rounded to a minute), followed by the call to the cab (another 30 seconds rounded to a minute). The call to 411 was $9.50, the call to the cab was $8.50. I had reason to use pay phones more than usual last month, and I charged seven or eight calls to the calling card. A couple of the calls were from pay phones south of 4th Street in San Rafael to numbers north of 4th Street that, honestly, I could have shouted to the location and been heard. I got answering
machines, left messages, and the whole call was about 20 seconds (rounded to a minute). The cost: $8.45. As Slim Pickens once said, "What in the wide, wide world of sports is goin' on here?"

So I called the toll free number on the SBC bill. I found myself speaking to a person in Texas who told me she was not SUPPOSED to help me. Not that the calls were legal, she could not help me, she did not want to help me, or that she enjoyed my predicament. Rather, she was not SUPPOSED to help me. As if there was some law, some rule, a case, judicial mandate or a pronouncement from Gawd that made it ILLEGAL for her to provide me the first iota of customer satisfaction. She told me to call my phone company. How stupid of me to think the phone number on the bill sent to me by my phone company was the phone number of my phone company. She did not know who my phone company was, where they were located or what their name was (apparently the bill coming from SBC does not mean it comes from SBC). It was my distinct impression that she was hired highly, precisely and to quintessential effect due to her ability to sound very pleased that customers were mad and that it was her duty to tell them they had zero recourse.

I called the Marin D.A.’s consumer protection division. They had helped me before when CompUSA tried to rip me off. The friendly man there said he was aware of the situation but had no answer other than to buy pre-paid calling cards from the grocery store, and never to use the calling card that was first issued to me by Pacific Bell in 1982. He told me that pay phones were "private property" and that they had to have a phone number on them that one could call to find out how much a call will cost ahead of time. I have to differ with his assessment slightly. Pay phones are what are known as "quasi-public property." They invite the public to use them for commercial purposes. Like, for instance, a shopping center, a "quasi-public property" is different from a personal house or a private piece of ranch land in, say, Montana. Therefore, they are subject to different laws regarding discrimination and other public issues.

The phone number on the pay phone does not, in my view, make it proper for these phones to gouge unsuspecting customers. Courts have found, for instance, that long contracts with small print that nobody reads for daily purchases are not as enforceable as more private contracts for a one-on-one agreement like, for instance, a deal reached between Barry Bonds and the San Francisco Giants, which is gone over with a fine tooth comb by lawyers for both sides. I would argue the number on the pay phone, which could be scratched out, graffitied-over or too dark to read, falls under the "boiler-plate" language of semi-unenforceable contracts. Furthermore, it offers no choice. The phone call may be necessary, perhaps even an emergency. Even if one takes the time to call the number on the front of the pay phone to find out a one-minute call half a mile away in the same area code will cost $10, the consumer still may have no other choice. It is not like there are five pay phones lined up and the caller can sample each of them to determine the lowest cost. Free markets are fine, and pay phones provide a service that is often indispensable. There are fewer of them now due to cell phones and vandalism, but the blindside costs of getting hammered for 10 bucks seems to be something that consumer laws in this country, somewhere, somehow, are meant to prevent.
I am of course well aware of the "options," which are to use cell phones, pre-paid calling cards or keep change, but the simple fact is there are times when those options are either unavailable or highly inconvenient, and use of the calling card at a pay phone is the only choice. For now, think of this as a cry in the wilderness and, for what it is worth, the identification and exposition of SBC as being the company that charged these rates (although they are not the only ones). Let the call go forth to a new generation of Americans that we are not gonna take it anymore.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

BASKETBALL

"JUST LIKE ANY OTHER 7-FOOT BLACK MILLIONAIRE WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR"

Wilt Chamberlain was never what people thought he should be.

The title of Wilt Chamberlain's autobiography, which came out in the 1960s, says it all. He was never predictable, never fell in line with the expectations of others, and usually created controversy.

In the early 1990s, Chamberlain wrote another book, claiming to have slept with 20,000 women in his lifetime. At the time, that averaged out to something like 1.4 girls per day from his fifteenth birthday to date of publication.

"Was he exaggerating?" The rhetorical question is asked by Chamberlains' attorney and friend of 40 years, Seymour Goldberg. "Sure. Was he with a huge number of women? Sure. I remember one trip to Las Vegas watching women come up to him and he would line them up, one for 10 o'clock, one for 11 o'clock and one for 12."

Lost in the ridicule Chamberlain endured for revealing his John Holmes-like lifestyle just as the world was grasping the horrible news that Magic Johnson had AIDS was the message he was trying to convey. Chamberlain attempted to tell a cautionary tale, that it is better to be with one woman 1,000 times, rather than with 1,000 women once. Nobody heard that.

Chamberlain's friendship with the Jewish Goldberg is an example of the dichotomy of this Goliath of a man. So was his support of Richard Nixon in 1968. Like Jackie Robinson, Wilt walked to the beat of a different drummer. Nobody told him what to do, or with whom he could do it with.

"Wilt was the greatest offensive player I have ever seen," said Boston Celtic Hall of Famer Bill Russell. "I've seen none better."

This reporter feels a sense of melancholy over Chamberlain's passing. I was waiting to hear back from him, to get some quotes on a Distant Replay column I am writing about the 1971-72 Lakers. Perhaps if he had returned the call, mine would have been the last interview he ever granted!
The statistics and the women are well chronicled. What should be made clear is that Chamberlain was a complex man who once responded to the question, "What would you have been if you were six feet tall?" by saying, "Maybe John Stockton. Maybe a miniature Jerry West, or maybe the President of the United States."

Chamberlain was a black man who refused to participate in racial politics. Some black people felt that by not acknowledging victims' status, he "sold out" African-Americans. Chamberlain was highly intelligent, but he said things that he would have been better off keeping to himself. If he regretted his comments, nobody heard him admit it. His love of history, and willingness to demonstrate to all who would listen how much he knew about Napoleon, the 100 Years War, and the like, were sometimes construed as an attempt to separate himself from his ethnic identity.

The bottom line is that Chamberlain was a kindly man with the heart of a lion (irony intended). He meant well, exuded love and wanted it in return. He was one of the greatest athletes of all time, but wanted to be Number One, and felt frustration when others gave others that accolade. He was unlike anybody else, before or since.

THE ENGLISH TEACHER

My all-time favorite interview. I went to John Wooden's house and spoke with him for two unhurried hours. I would have stayed there a week if I could have.

*Vin Scully is one. John Wooden is the only other. That rarest of commodities: True role models in sports.*

When I was prepping for my interview with former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden, I consulted *Los Angeles Times* sports editor Bill Dwyre. He wrote a fabulous piece on the Wizard of Westwood for the *L.A Times Magazine* last year.

"Ask him about his father," Dwyre told me. Sure enough, Wooden broke from his friendly yet stern visage into a big smile at the mention of Hugh Wooden.

"He was one of the finest men who ever lived," Wooden says of his father. To understand just how fine a man Hugh Wooden must have been to illicit that kind of praise from John Wooden, one must be able to separate himself (if only for a while) from the tattered standards of society. Wooden lives by different rules than the rest of us. He is the real deal, and if he says his father was one of the finest men who ever lived, then you can believe it. You can believe it because John Wooden lives by a code of honesty that very few people measure up to.

Current UCLA basketball coach Steve Lavin (who makes upwards of half a million dollars a year; Wooden made $32,500 in his last season), had some further anecdotal advice.

"Let me tell you a story," Lavin, who is a storyteller, intones. "I once made the mistake of saying to somebody, in front of Coach Wooden, that my father is "just an English teacher." \`JUST AN ENGLISH TEACHER!" he repeated. He never let me forget that. To this day he sends me notes
Wooden was an English teacher at South Bend Central High School in his home state of Indiana. This may seem hard to believe, but the fact is that he would have been perfectly satisfied to have remained at South Bend Central, teaching basketball and erudition. He was always just an English teacher. By a simple twist of fate, he also happened to be the greatest college basketball coach this nation has ever seen.

Lavin warned me that to converse with Coach Wooden would be to discuss Shakespeare, Lincoln and Gandhi. Being a historian myself, and a fan of The Bard, I entered his modest Encino condominium armed with some Shakespearean quotations, designed to impress the old man. I kept trying to work them in, but in the end I was worried that I might get it wrong, or speak out of context. Coach Wooden has that effect on you. He makes you think about what you say, and get it right when you do.

Lavin was on the mark. Shakespeare stayed on the bench, Gandhi was referenced only in passing, but a sampling of Wooden's interests did include Jesus of Nazareth, Mother Teresa, Abraham Lincoln, F.D.R., Winston Churchill, my daughter, the fleeting nature of sports fame, Sidney Wicks' positioning himself in front of Artis Gilmore, the Holy Roman Empire, Mark Twain, technological advancements of the Twentieth Century, and the artistic talents of his grandchildren. Mention of family, his or mine, made John Wooden smile.

If I had my druthers, I would have paid him rent and stayed the month, soaking up knowledge and wisdom, and carrying on the kinds of philosophical discussion of sports, history, politics and religion that make me feel most alive. So truthful and good is this man that ever since meeting him, I have found myself checking for impurities. A little road rage during an L.A. traffic jam? Coach Wooden would be patient. A curse word uttered under my breath? John Wooden does not swear. His father never swore. Check yourself. Lascivious thoughts about sex? "The difference between sex and love," says the Wizard, "is that love lasts." Pull a fast one on somebody? John Wooden would never do that, so do not even think about it.

The only other sports figure I know who comes close to having that effect on me is Vin Scully. If I am doing anything that is less than wholesome, and Vin's dulcet tones can be heard on the radio, I ask, "Would Vin be doing this?" Naturally, Scully is one of Wooden's favorites.

"Oh yes, I admire Vin Scully," says Wooden. Scully would no doubt agree that this is as high an honor as there is, and he is a Hall of Famer.

John Robert Wooden was born 89 years ago in Martinsville, Indiana. His family struggled during the Great Depression, but Hugh Wooden "never criticized another person. He never complained." He was a kind, gentle, strong man. Animals have the ability to sense these traits in humans, and Wooden related stories of how fractious horses would somehow become calm in his
father's presence. They had a typical father/son relationship, and young John did not always see eye to eye with his dad, but he uses Mark Twain to make a point.

"He said that his father was ignorant," Wooden said, "until Twain became older. Then his father got smarter."

Hugh Wooden insisted that his sons be given better opportunities than were afforded him, and the best chance for that to happen was through education. All four graduated from college after majoring in English, and became teachers. Teaching is a theme that has remained close to John Wooden's heart all his life.

I asked Wooden "what was in the water in Martinsville?" It was a rhetorical question, not a literal one, aimed at finding out what kind of Midwestern values are instilled in a young man that allows him to be so fair and understanding that he could bridge the 1960s Generation Gap. I think the coach knew the spirit with which the question was phrased, but to answer it the way I asked would require a little bragging. He chose to answer it straight. It turns out there really is something in the water in Martinsville.

"It's known as the Artesian City," he explains, "and that's because of the Artesian Wells. At that time, I think there were seven sanatoriums."

He was the best prep basketball player in the state, a three-time All-American under the legendary Piggy Lambert at Purdue, and the captain of the Boilermakers 1932 National Championship squad. Lambert was a father figure to Wooden, and in keeping with his smile-at-the-mention-of-family theme, Wooden grins when asked about him.

Indiana is perhaps the most basketball-crazy state in this country. Figuring I would try again, I asked the coach why that was. He said that it was the first area in the country that made it prominent. This is the closest you will ever come to getting John Wooden to obfuscate, by asking him a question in which the answer is self-serving. So, I will say it for him. Indiana is basketball-crazy because of Wooden. Long before leading UCLA to 10 National Championships in 12 years, he thrilled crowds as a high school and college star.

My literary manager, Lloyd Robinson, told me he heard that Coach Wooden expects interviewers to be prepared before they engage him, so I thought I could impress him with my knowledge of his less-publicized early career. I consulted my father, Don Travers, a successful California high school coach in the 1950s, and a contemporary of Wooden. Things were going pretty well as we talked about former Cal coach Nibs Price; a couple of ex-Trojans, Mike Leskau and Kenny Flower; my father's mentor, Bennie Nehf, his star player, Don Bragg; and U.S.F. coaching legends Phil Woolpert and Pete Newell.

"My father saw you play for the Wichita Henrys at Kezar Pavilion in San Francisco, in 1936," I told Wooden. How many young whippersnappers have even heard of the Wichita Henrys? Wooden will credit my knowledge of this obscure fact, for sure.
"I must inform you that your father is mistaken," Wooden told me. "I never played for the Wichita Henrys, and I was never on the Coast until I took the UCLA job." Crestfallen, I briefly considered memory lapse, but John Wooden is the sharpest tack in the box. My father has told me that story since I was a kid, but I must face the fact that either his memory is faulty, or a simple identity mistake, over time, became a fact in his mind.

John Wooden is a generous man who allowed me to recover gracefully, like when I asked him who he thought *Time's* "Person of the Century" should be.

"Mother Teresa," was his two-word answer. Pregnant pause. Wooden saw I was momentarily tongue-tied, so he then added, "Politically, Franklin Roosevelt was probably the most important person this century."

I almost went to Shakespeare at this point, as in "There are more things on Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than can be imagined in your philosophy," but backed off and just asked it straight out. "Other than Jesus of Nazareth, if you could go back in time and meet any historical figure, who would that be?"

"I don't have to go back in time," said Wooden. "Mother Teresa lived in my lifetime."

John Wooden's choice of Mother Theresa as the most important and interesting historical figure of all times speaks volumes about the man. He is humble and simple, and values those traits in others. That is not to say that he is not very interested in political history. "Mr. Lincoln" is his favorite American.

Again I put my foot in my mouth by remarking how Lincoln wrote the Gettysburg Address in the train on the way there only after an aide said it would be appropriate for him to prepare "a few remarks."

"Well, it was a short speech, but he didn't just write it on the train," John Wooden told me, and if that is what he says, that is the way it was!

There have been sexier and more openly passionate people, but one of the sweetest, endearing love stories of the 20th Century is the tale of John and Nell Wooden. It is said that behind every great man is a great woman. The women's libbers and the gay pride folks might take exception, but it is an expression that is more true than untrue. In order for a man to become great enough to attract a great woman, he first must have a great father. Hugh Wooden helped inspire in his son the maxim that the best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.

"I was a shy guy," Wooden recalls, "and she was a `city girl' from a town of 4,000. I had a chance to go to West Point, but Nell told me she wouldn't wait for me, she'd enter a convent."

Wow. An ultimatum put to John Wooden. So what did he do?
"I married her. When things got tough working my way through Purdue, she never permitted me to quit."

(As if John Wooden would ever have quit!)

Wooden never became the next Omar Bradley, but he did enlist in the Navy after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor.

"I enlisted in the service without telling Nell," he says. "I thought it was the right thing to do. She was mad at me, but of course we made up." As fate would have it, after being commissioned and waiting to ship out on the USS Franklin, Wooden suffered a ruptured appendix. A friend from Purdue replaced him, quarterback Freddie Stalcup. A kamikaze pilot killed Stalcup.

It is easy to picture a woman supporting her husband while he is successful, on magazine covers, and being named Father of the Year (as Wooden was in 1964). However, the early days were a struggle.

"When we were in Kentucky we didn't have a dime," Wooden recalls of an early career stop. Even U.C.L.A. was no bed of roses in the beginning. After making a name for himself at Indiana State, Wooden was approached to take over at Minnesota and UCLA He would have preferred to go to the Big 10 school, but a freak snow storm knocked out the phone lines so the Gophers could not get hold of Wooden with their offer. In the mean time, UCLA got through, and Wooden accepted the offer to replace Wilber Johns.

Because of an accounting malfunction, Wooden unknowingly received no retirement pay for years. But he agreed to come, and he agreed to stay. How important was it to have Nell's support during these years?

"We never thought about it," says Wooden. He and Nell both had the same philosophy, which is never whine, and never complain.

"In order to make ends meet," he continues, "I worked part-time at the Edgemar Dairy here in the Valley. I got to school every day at noon, taking Sepulveda before the 405 was built."

"I think Rick Pitino had a similar deal when he first got to Kentucky," I deadpanned.

A slight smile from the old man, who goes on to say that he considered leaving UCLA, but while moonlighting in the valley he saw the amazing growth of Los Angeles. He quickly deduced that while basketball was not yet a big sport in California, all those families moving to the suburbs would produce a bumper crop of talented athletes. He decided to stay.

"We were led to believe," he adds, "that within three years of my arrival, we would have better facilities." Three years became 17. Before Pauley Pavilion was built, the Bruins played and practiced at Santa Monica City College, SaMoHi, or whatever gym they could find.
"We won two National Championships under those conditions," he points out.

Oh yes, the National Championships. How many college basketball coaches have lived such rich, full lives that this many words could be written about them before getting into their on-court accomplishments?

"Through hard work and recruiting," Wooden explains, as if any one could have done it, "we reached a certain talent level. Then, I saw to it that we were in the best physical condition possible. Many coaches with talent still lose, so the question was, could I get the players to accept the team philosophy? As time went by, it was my experience that they could."

Talk about your understatements! First, the talent level included two of the greatest big men in the history of basketball, Lew Alcindor (later Kareem Abdul-Jabbar) and Bill Walton. The team philosophy manifested itself in an 88-game winning streak that lasted from 1971 to 1974.

In the 1970 NCAA championship game, Jacksonville jumped out to an early lead. 6-8 Sidney Wicks was charged with guarding 7-2 Dolphins center Artis Gilmore. Gilmore dominated the smaller man until Wooden suggested that Wicks place himself in front of him and box him out. Naturally, Wooden recalls it as Wicks' idea, but you know how that is! Anyway, Wicks responded by blocking five Gilmore shots en route to UCLA's 80-69 victory. Just place Wicks in front of Gilmore. Sure. Like anybody would have thought to do that!

How did Wooden, a man from a different time and place, handle Big Lew when he converted from Catholicism to being a Black Muslim?

"We don't have to be disagreeable just because we disagree," he said. That is easy to say in light of 20/20 hindsight, but try to imagine Adolph Rupp being so sanguine.

Naturally, we discussed the loss to Elvin Hayes and Houston at the Astrodome in 1968; the Notre Dame defeat that ended the winning streak in 1974; and that same year, losing in overtime to North Carolina State after eight straight national titles.

"Every reporter who ever talks to me," Wooden says matter-of-factly, but not complaining, "wants to talk about those three losses." I was going to bring up the game against Austin Carr and Notre Dame in 1971, but figured at that point discretion was the better part of valor.

So what is Coach Wooden most proud of? His All-American playing career? The first National Championship? The Wooden Classic being named after him?

"Look at this painting," he says. John Wooden is more proud of a pretty picture that his granddaughter painted, which hangs on his wall, than any plaque, award or honor. This, of course, gave me the chance to show him a copy a magazine, in which my own daughter wrote an article about fishing with my Dad. Naturally, this too brings a smile to his face.
Nell passed away in 1985, but John Wooden has two children, seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren to keep him company. All of them live within 55 miles of him, and while he treats them all the same, one has a special place in his heart. His great-grandson, Cameron Trapani, is six years old, but suffered a stroke while in his mother's womb. He was not supposed to survive, but no doubt many prayers were spoken on his behalf. Today, he is severely disabled, but also very loved.

To spend time in John Wooden's home is truly an honor. I am an ex-professional baseball player who has worked in politics. As a sports reporter, and a Hollywood screenwriter, I have known and had access to some of the major American celebrities of the second half of this century; people of great wealth, fame and power. None of them begins to compare in stature to this short, elderly man living in a modest valley condo, who made thirty-two five at the height of his career.

I feel like there are still so many unanswered questions. Does he think America is the greatest country in the history of the world? Were the Founding Fathers divinely inspired when they wrote the Constitution? Does he agree that it is actually easier to be kind, because hatred and bigotry require more time and effort? Does he believe if one person is good and goes to Heaven, but a person loved by that individual does not make it, can the person in Heaven really be in Heaven? I have been to the mountaintop and met the wise man. I hope I made the most of the two hours I had.

For me, the lasting effect of the man they call Coach is that I shall endeavor to go forth and be a better father, to cherish my girlfriend, to love my daughter and honor my parents, and try to spread some kindness in a cynical world. We are all human, subject to human foibles and extravagance, but I can say this for sure: I am better for having known John Robert Wooden!

**UCLA HOOPS IS KILLER JOB**

“To be, or not to be? That is the question. Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.”

If Hamlet thought fifteenth century Danish politics was tough, he should have tried coaching basketball at UCLA. Pleasant enough place, conveniently located between Santa Monica Beach and the Bel Air gate. Nice weather, good pay, great facilities. Recruiting? C’mon. NBA GMs know that a couple years in Westwood is resume enough for a multi-million dollar bonus, so the blue chippers just sign on the dotted line. As if that was their real motivation. Some kid from the gritty streets of South Philly takes a look at those phee-nom coeds, and Villanova just lost out on the local power forward.

Steve Lavin, Sir Francis Drake High ’82, son of San Francisco, not to mention the son of former USF captain and Hall of Famer Cappy Lavin, has adapted to being the seventh successor to the Wizard and dealing with the “Media Mecca” of L.A. Lavin spoke last week at the Olympic Club’s annual basketball dinner. The club has one of the best recreational leagues in the country,
filled with ex-pros and college stars, and Lavin entertained them with some hard-hitting
discussion. He understands that UCLA is not like others schools.

“Ben Braun does a great job at Cal,” Lavin says of the Bears’ coach, “but he can go to the NIT,
have a losing year, and keep his job long-term. I’m in a high-risk, high-reward job where I
recruit pampered, spoiled, high-maintenance stars, but if I don’t get that kind of guy I’m out of a
job, lop-chop. If Cal keeps getting guys like Jamal Sampson and Sean Lampley, though, they’ll
be good. It’s win big or your out at Westwood.”

Lavin is fond of saying that he handles the pressure because he “has great parents, and it’s not
life or death.”

To be, or not to be? Lavin has been forced to contemplate his existence more lately than he
would like. It turns out that it might just be life or death. He has had to deal with death threats
and extortion from not one but two crazed UCLA “fans.”

“I just figured it was some kook,” says Lavin, “until the death threats started to involve my Dad.
That’s when I hired a lawyer to look into it. He was saying things like, ‘Bump off Steve, then
Cap,’ and ‘Cap Lavin’s not welcome in Pauley Pavilion.’ He was a stalker, too. Somebody else
said I’d die if I didn’t quit within five years.”

The web site was www.earljones.com. There used to be another one called www.fireelavin.com.

Apparently, the identity of one of the Internet terrorists became known when law enforcement,
including the FBI, went into the LA Times’ archive of email letters (most of which are never
printed). They traced vociferous email demands for Lavin’s firing, linking the emails to the chat
room person. He turned out to be a Pasadena resident.

“It’s the New Frontier of sports media,” says Lavin. “Chat rooms. Talk radio. You have to
understand the ‘King Lear’ nature of Tinsel Town sports. Print journalism is now ‘gotcha
journalism.’ Everybody feels entitled to anything and everything. It’s Machiavellian stuff.”

Lavin talks like this because he was raised by a Renaissance Man. Cap taught English at Drake
for 43 years. Sports should not be like a Shakespearean tragedy, however. Sometimes, though,
real life does interfere with the fun and games.

Bernard Malamud’s “The Natural” was based on Philadelphia first baseman Eddie Waitkus, who
was shot on the field by a female “admirer.” All-time slugging great Henry Aaron endured death
threats while chasing Babe Ruth’s record. Reggie Jackson did some of his best World Series
work while the FBI kept their eye on the stands because of a letter threatening to kill him.

Nice.

“Two guys are behind bars for 12 months,” says Lavin, “but I can’t give out actual names
because there’s an ongoing lawsuit. <UCLA Athletic Director> Peter Dalis said that what was
happening was ‘clearly extortion,’ and the guy then came back at us with a defamation of
character suit, claiming that he was called an extortionist.”

Is this akin to Gray Davis suing because somebody called him a politician? Right now, the best
advice for Lavin is the one Cappy has told him since childhood: “Keep praying, don’t stop
rowing.”

WARRIORS, COME OUT AND PLAY!

This reminds me of the same clown assistant editor. He told me he knew a lot about the
NBA draft and when I was ready to write this article I should ask for his help. Happy to be
part of a team, I did just that. Then he complained to the editor that I was taking up his
time asking for help. The newspaper buisness!

Okay, Mozart wrote his best work at 14. Alexander the Great was a conquering hero at 13. I do
not even wanna know how many Egyptians Cleopatra had seduced by that age. That said, I have
a message for the Golden State Warriors: No preps. No teenage prodigies. No millionaire man-
children, with the emphasis on children.

No Tyson Chandler.

I went to see Chandler play at The Pond in Long Beach last year. He came. He saw. He did not
conquer. Artesia High boxed him out and held him to nine points and about the same number of
rebounds. For a high school kid to be ready for the NBA, he had better dictate and dominate like
a Chamberlain, an Alcindor, a Walton.

Chandler, the All-Everything center out of Dominguez High in Compton, is over seven feet tall.
Steve Lavin gave up recruiting him before his junior year because he knew he was coming out.
The guy has basically been a pro since sixth grade.

Chandler is a long, long way from being ready for the NBA.

Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar) was probably the greatest high school player ever at New
Yorks Power Memorial Academy. He played four years at UCLA, as did Bill Walton. Alcindor
was man-handled the first time he faced Wilt Chamberlain in 1969, and Walton was far from
being a force his first year in Portland.

The Los Angeles Lakers are the NBAs dominant force, largely because they Kobe Bryant a few
years ago. In the copycat world of pro sports, the message was to draft high school kids. What a
mistake.

This is not about whether preps should go pro. This is America, the land of the free to do what
you wanna do, go where you wanna go.
This is about Garry St. Jean being under a lot of pressure to make this a good draft. St. Jean is an affable, mediocre basketball man. He accomplished nothing in Sacramento. He has presided over the steep decline of the Warriors. He needs to orchestrate a turnaround similar to what Pat Riley did in New York a few years ago, but the odds are against him. He definitely cannot afford a high school kid. The Warriors, who need like a welfare mother, could have used Duke’s Jason Williams, but the Blue Devil web site is celebrating his decision to stay in school with a catchy poem aimed at pundits who said he would turn pro: "It looks like J-Will did not go, Would you like to eat some crow?" Not exactly Frost, but the point is made.

The Warriors should eschew the first pick, even if they land the number one choice in the lottery, in favor of a trade to pick up a first class point guard like Jason Kidd or Mike Bibby.

This team, with a mixed draft history (Chris Washburn, bad; Chris Webber, good) should forget about getting a center. Great centers are few and far between. They probably will hold on to core guys like Antawn Jamison and Larry Hughes. They should dump Erick Dampier, and "go small." A lot of guys could do what he does for a lot less.

The Warriors need a center, but it is doubtful that any big men who can make a fast impact are out there. Everybody is talking about 6-11, 285-pound Eddy Curry, a prep center from Illinois. Forget him. The bluff is that his 285 pounds will let him bump up and down the court with Shaq ONeill, but what is not understood is the mental pounding he will take. This kind of player is four or five years away, and that is only if he does not become the basketball version of Todd Van Poppel.

Next is Eddie Griffin, but this 205-pound center out of Seton Hall is still only a year removed from high school himself.

Two other players should be viewed with caution. Dukes Shane Battier is a fine player, but when great college talent surrounds a guy, the task of coming in to a struggling franchise is daunting. The same for Stanfords Jason Collins, who is overrated anyway, and will be especially vulnerable without the kind of support he had in school.

The Warriors need to look for a veteran, and try for a jewel in the lower rounds. My dark horse pick is USC's Jeff Trepagnier, a fine athlete, experienced, mature, a good shooter, and one of the best jumpers in the nation.

2008 LAKERS-CELTICS BATTLE IS FOR HISTORY, NOT JUST ONE SEASON

With all due respect for the San Antonio Spurs, the NBA is breathing a happy sigh because the Finals feature the Los Angeles Lakers and the Boston Celtics. The Spurs from the late 1990s to date are one of the greatest teams in pro hoops annals, but have not resonated beyond the most ardent of fans and pundits. The Lakers and Celtics, on the other hand, are the stuff of historical legend. Not only are they the two best teams of the 2007-08 season, but they are the two best teams in the game's storied history.
Kobe Bryant, Pau Gasol and coach Phil Jackson vs. the green-clad likes of Ray Allen and the L.A. native, Paul Pierce, represent the greatest collection of star power and teamwork in the game today. Boston was the best team in the regular season, but Los Angeles has looked stronger in the play-offs. They were the hottest team at the end of the year and carried that through. Most experts feel the Western Conference is the strongest, so being their representative gives Los Angeles an edge. Historically, however, Boston might appear to have the real edge. This series is more than just a title bout for this season, but rather it is about something that goes back to Bill Russell and Jerry West.

These kinds of things have a tendency to sneak up on people. In college football, for instance, it has been considered an undisputed notion that Notre Dame is the king of the hill. That is, until Marin's Pete Carroll led USC to their 11th national title and seventh Heisman Trophy, both tying the Irish for the most and giving Troy the modern edge. Boston still has the bragging rights of 16 NBA championships to the Lakers' 14, but if L.A. gets number 15 then a re-assessment is in order. Boston was utterly dominant in the late 1950s and the 1960s, then rebounded in the 1970s and were L.A.'s great rival of the Larry Bird-Magic Johnson "Showtime" '80s. However, the Minneapolis Lakers of George Mikan were great before Bill Russell came along. Many L.A. teams of the 1960s seemingly were as talented but managed to lose to Boston, often owing to huge home court advantages at Boston Garden. The two teams traded punches fairly equally in the 1970s and '80s, but like USC leaving the Irish in their tail fumes, L.A. has been far superior since Jackson, Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal teamed up at Staples Center.

Los Angeles has a better all-time regular season and play-off won-loss record and more Hall of Fame superstars. They have played in more exciting surrounding amid Hollywood glamour. Boston is the better "team." There is no "answer," really. The two teams generate the most ardent arguments for and against. Just recall the verbal sparring between Edward Norton and a black prison inmate in *American History X* on the merits of the two teams. For the record, the call from this bar stool is: L.A. in six!

**HOW THREE DRAKE HIGH KIDS TOOK OVER THE NATION'S ELITE BASKETBALL PROGRAM**

*If hard work is a factor, UCLA is in very good hands with Lavin, Saia and Spencer.*

Coach Pete Hayward used to get up in the middle of the night so he could be at Sir Francis Drake High School, in the Marin County town of San Anselmo, by four o'clock in the morning.

"He wasn't planning a PE class," says Steve Spencer. "He was figuring a better way to get me an open jump shot." Hayward's nocturnal habits were nothing new to Spencer. "My Dad used to get up at two a.m. He busted his butt his whole life for his family, *and* he was still there to coach us after work."

Marin County is well known as a place of liberal affluence--hot tubs, sexual freedom and California kookiness. Marin is not known to be a gold mine of prep sports talent, like its gritty across-the-bay neighbor, Oakland. Nobody ever accused UCLA basketball coaches Steve Lavin,
Jim Saia and Spencer of coming from poor neighborhoods, but the image of spoiled rich kids from Marin has no bearing on the reality of their lives.

"My father was an English teacher," recalls Lavin. "He worked his butt off for 43 years, too." The man he refers to is former University of San Francisco basketball great Cappy Lavin. The elder Lavin taught English at Drake High, and all three coaches were students of his at one time.

Saia was a shy Catholic kid from the next town over, Fairfax. He grew up rooting for Notre Dame while attending St. Rita's School. At Drake he and Lavin quickly formed a close bond based on a mutual source of fear: Pete Hayward.

"We talked about this when we were 18," says Saia, referring to the fact that Lavin is the head coach, while he is a member of his staff.

"They made a pact," recalls Hayward, "that if one of them ever became a head coach, he would hire the other as his assistant."

Blue collar traits like a willingness to work hard in order to make up for limited physical skills, were instilled in these three men by their parents and father-figure Hayward. They had family values before the Republicans made it a campaign slogan, and long before they met a man named John Robert Wooden. Because of Wooden, huge things are expected of UCLA basketball. Lavin is under the microscope of L.A. media and alumni scrutiny.

"...a privilege just to put on the uniform."

Life is filled with ironies. One is that three Bay Area kids who rooted against Los Angeles sports teams (Saia blasphemously cheered for the Irish when they ended the Bruins 88-game winning streak!) are now enthusiastically carrying on a great L.A. tradition. While the three are zealous adherents of the Wooden Way--family, work, honesty--they are still handsome men in their 30s. Our interview takes place in Santa Monica's happening 3rd Street Promenade, where the steady torrent of young lovelies is a Southern California tradition that does not escape their attention.

"There's so much talent down here," remarks Lavin, not talking about big men and power forwards. He is always on the job, though. "It really helps with recruiting."

**Gym rats at Drake High**

"Coach Hayward gave us his most valuable asset: His time," recalls Spencer. "He opened the gym early in the morning, kept it open at night." Drake became a place where great pick-up games could be found, even on the outdoor courts, and players from the East Bay found their way to San Anselmo to participate. The reason for this was Hayward.

"By the time you got to the varsity," continues Spencer, "it was a privilege just to put on the uniform."

In 1982, the team's 34-0 mark broke the state record set by Bill Walton's San Diego Helix High School. They won the C.I.F. Division II title, and this school of predominantly slow white kids developed into one of the nation's top hoop powers in the '80s. Lavin and Saia were integral members of these teams, but not stars.

**Bolinas Avenue**

Ross, California is everything that people think of when they imagine the opulence of Marin County. Bolinas Avenue is the last street in Ross before turning into San Anselmo. It is a
pleasant, tree-lined boulevard, but not as tony as the mansions in the nearby Mt. Tamalpais foothills.

Three big families lived next door to each other on Bolinas. The Cole's were a large brood of competitive boys being raised by a strict disciplinarian Catholic father. The Chavez's consisted of a hutch of athletically talented males, and their father was a teacher. The Lavin's were cut out of the same cloth. The Town of Ross should have re-named Bolinas Testosterone Alley. The wide, round street that runs next to the San Francisco Theological Seminary was converted into a baseball/football field. The kids passed their time with sports, and other pursuits. Steve was the runt of the litter. "By the time I got older," Lavin recalls, "our parents had gotten together and figured out what kids could not hang out together."

Public school and Catholic school

Spencer was raised in San Anselmo and went to Red Hill Junior High, but was a "hired gun" for the St. Anselm's CYO team. The Catholic Youth Organization is big in Marin County. The Catholic schools--St. Rita's and St. Anselm's--bring in the better public school kids to pump up their basketball teams. They are tolerated by the students and parents of the school, but never quite made to feel at home. Spencer was one of those kids. Not big, talented but not a superstar, he was the perfect Pete Hayward player. Nobody outworked him. This was an attitude he developed from his nose-to-the-grindstone father, Jim. A few miles away, Saia disdained the social scene of girls and parties that is very much a rite of passage at St. Rita's. He preferred the solitude of the basketball court.

"These two guys aren't the bobsy twins from Marin County."

"It's important," says Lavin of Saia's hiring, "for people to know that yes, I recommended Jim to Coach Harrick, but it was Coach Harrick who hired him, not me. There was a lot of heat surrounding my hiring. There was resentment when I brought in Steve and Jim. These two guys aren't the bobsy twins from Marin County. They are experienced college basketball coaches, and they have paid their dues over many years."

It is understandable that a man who considers John Wooden his mentor intertwines religion with his coaching philosophy, best exemplified in the words Cappy Lavin spoke to him: "Keep praying, don't stop rowing."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ICE HOCKEY

THE MIRACLE ON MANCHESTER

Ice hockey, being a cold weather sport, experienced slow going in California. Remember Charlie Finley’s Seals up in Oakland? That franchise did not just move, they disintegrated.
The Los Angeles Kings had a few things going for them. Their owner, Jack Kent Cooke was a Canadian with a passion for the game, and he built a beautiful arena, the Forum, for his two teams (the Lakers being the other) to play in. There are a lot of transplanted Canadians living in Southern California, and it was these people who kept the team going during lean times.

Still, the champions of the sport were the Montreal Canadians, the New York Islanders, and then along came Wayne Gretzky and the Edmonton Oilers. The Islander dynasty of the late 1970s had ended, and in 1982 Edmonton, led by the Great One, was ready to embark on a new era.

A small bump on the Oilers’ path to their first Stanley Cup came in the form of the purple-and-gold clad Kings. Nobody really took them seriously. Oh sure, LA was a great stop on the NHL’s cold weather circuit, a chance to soak up some sun, check out hot babes at good night clubs, maybe see some stars.

Dr. Jerry Buss owned the team in 1982. Charlie Simmer had even snagged \textit{Playboy} Playmate of the Year Teri Welles as his new bride, and she was a regular in and around the Forum Club, a major attraction. If you were a top player, though, you really did not want to play here, you would not get the recognition, and you would not play for a champion. It was an outpost. A glamorous outpost, but still an outpost.

So it was on April 10, 1982. Los Angeles sported a 24-41-15 record. The fact that they snuck a Smythe Division play-off berth out of a mark like that is fodder for editorial on another day, but they did.

Edmonton had Gretzky (212 points in 80 games), Mark Messier, Jari Kurri, Paul Coffey, Grant Fuhr and Glenn Anderson—young superstars, a dynasty in the making.

Edmonton had the league’s best record. It was an upset that LA had even avoided a sweep. The team’s came to the Forum locked at a game apiece.

For two periods, Edmonton dominated play and led 5-0.

“They were very confident,” remarked Simmer, “up 5-0, having a great season, and they were in the driver’s seat. A few players were having a chuckle about our players.”

“The Oilers were arrogant, laughing, their coach was just looking at us with a smirk on his face,” recalls legendary Kings broadcaster Bob Miller.

The Kings scored a couple goals, but the crowd was already starting to thin out. Then, Simmer scored to make it 5-3 at 14:38.

“The crowd became a big factor at 5-3,” recalls Jim Fox, a forward on that team who is now part of the team’s broadcasting crew.
Mark Hardy made one from 45 feet out with less than five minutes remaining, making the score 5-4.

“Jerry Buss was with Cathy Crosby,” recalls Miller. “He left with her for Palm Springs. The chauffeur asked if he wanted to turn back, and he said he’d just jinx the team, so he missed it.”

Cars leaving the parking lot, however, were parking every which way, and people were re-entering the Forum.

What happened in the last minute, however, defies logic.

Gretzky, the greatest stick-handler in the game, had the puck. All he needed to do was get it to the blue line. There were 10 seconds left to play. Re-enter Fox.

“I’d like to say it was me, it was going after Gretzky,” says Fox, “but in that game, thinking back I would say it was all emotion, it was a freak.”

Fox managed to check Gretzky, steal the puck, and shoot. Steve Bozek picked up the rebound and banged a goal to send the game into overtime.

“Now it’s bedlam,” recalls Miller. “Roaring, screaming. The Zamboni’s going and it’s still absolute bedlam. I’ve never heard an arena that loud, anywhere, people going around the concourse screaming, hollering.”

Unknown rookie Daryl Evans slapped one through to win it in overtime. That was amazing.

What took the cake was the rest of the series. The Oilers won the next game, but LA came back to take it, three games to two.

“They were incredible, so talented,” says Fox, “but the mental aspect of the game—they learned from that series to finish teams off, and in the long run that’s what made them the champions they became.”

The Miracle On Manchester did help popularize hockey in Los Angeles. Eventually, Gretzky agreed to a trade to the Kings, and this led in part to the building of STAPLES Center.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

TENNIS

MR. SMITH GOES TO BUCHAREST
In 1972, a mild-mannered young man from Pasadena High and U.S.C. faced a Cold War Dracula on his Rumanian turf. Good vs. evil ensued. Good won.

The American gentleman

The U.S. was mired in Southeast Asia in 1972, and the Communists' were feeling pretty good about themselves.

Stan Smith was a typical Southern Californian. Tall, handsome and blonde, he was a good basketball player at Pasadena High School before spearheading U.S.C.'s tennis team to National Championships in 1966, '67 and '68.

"Stan was the kind of guy who'd play hurt," recalled legendary U.S.C. tennis coach George Toley, "That's the kind of guy he was. I never had a problem with him."

Smith did some Army duty, went on to win Wimbledon, and attain a world number one ranking.

"thieving linesmen...from...the local eye bank..."

The Americans were used to playing it straight, fair and square, on the up and up, because...because that is the way Americans do things. For the most part. The East Bloc, on the other hand, had learned that lying, cheating and propaganda was good business. The Rumanians, however, were led by two of the best players in the world at that time: Transylvania's Ion "Dracula" Tiriac, and the recent winner of the U.S. Open, Ilie "Nasty" Nastase.

Some left-wing apologists have tried to say that there was Communism, and then there was real Communism. Western journalists were duped into calling Bucharest a "Balkanized Paris" featuring the works of Oscar Wilde and Ernest Hemingway. The horrors of the Ceausescu Regime were not yet fully revealed.

Unsmiling secret police "translators" accompanied the Americans' everywhere, toting heavy weapons. The atmosphere at the Progresul Sports Club was less than congenial.

In the October 23, 1972 edition of Sports Illustrated, Curry Kirkpatrick wrote "the Rumanians, lying in wait on their home grounds with a bunch of thieving linesmen they must have recruited from the donor list at the local eye bank," were waiting for the Americans'. Like the Soviet paratrooper unit that kidnaps Larry Harvey and Frank Sinatra in "The Manchurian Candidate". What ensued was a lion's den, a snake pit, mob mentality.

John Frankenheimer should have directed it.

"The red clay surface was not to our advantage," said Smith. "We were hard court guys. What really made it tough was the Rumanians watered down the clay to slow us down. The balls got heavy."

"We should be 10-1 favorite," Nastase said.
"The U.S. players not like the soft stuff," said Tiriac. "Wait till they see ours. Godzilla <Smith>, he feel like he serving on the beach."

"The Davis Cup Committee forfeited the site of the finals to Romania for money," recalls Toley. "Stan would throw the ball up and the crowd would yell 'fault.' Nastase and Tiriac would egg the people on like crazy, and if the ball hit anywhere close to the line the call went against Stan. The line judges were all for the Rumanians. Stan felt that Nastase and Tiriac did all they could to cheat."

SoCal Stan was more comfortable at the "beach" than Tiriac may have thought. After Smith crushed Nastase in the opening singles, Nasty fell apart in the crucial doubles against former Trojan Eric Van Dillen and Smith (Captain Dennis Ralston had also played at S.C.). Smith dispatched Tiriac on the final day.

Tiriac stalled, glared at umpires, sat down, refused to play, laughed, rested, fumed, delayed, and even played some marvelous tennis. He was a master of guile and deceit, playing the crowd like Hitler at Nuremberg while they chanted "TIR-I-AC," "TIR-I-AC," all the while hurling epithets at the referee. Tiriac tossed four-letter bombs at him, too. At one point he grabbed and pushed him. He was, as he loved to say of himself, "Dracula--ready to bite."

Bud Collins wrote that what was needed to defeat him was "a cross, not a racket." Only the phalanx of "translators" prevented the "fans" from attacking the Americans' when they taunted Tiriac for his antics.

Smith and Van Dillen refused to be rattled. At one point, Nasty walked to the stands to confront an American who loudly applauded Rumanian errors.

"Bitch," Nastase called him. "I pay you five dollars. You get out." By the end of the Americans' three-set victory, Nastase refused to wait for Tiriac as the teams' changed courts.

Smith defeated Tiriac (4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 2-6, 6-0), despite being stripped clean of four different points by the line judges.

"Tiriac was the issue," said Smith. "I beat Nastase pretty easily in the first match. Against Tiriac, the referee said he wouldn't change calls. It was an alarming atmosphere, the referee was totally intimidated, not so much by the crowd but by Tiriac stoking them on, and by the soldiers' lining the court.

"I don't know how I persevered. I knew I just had to gut it out, and as the match went on the crowd made me mad, and then I was determined to win. It was a great challenge."

Good vs. evil always is.
MS. KING WAS THE QUEEN OF TENNIS

In September, 1973, two Southern Californians participated in a Domed Sex Spectacular, and they even played a little tennis.

It really could have been a flirtatious weekend match at the LA Tennis Club, or on some public courts in Long Beach. Bragging rights at stake, maybe a few bucks or some drinks at a bar around the corner.

A tennis match between an older man and a younger woman, their ages serving to even things out. A couple of Southern Californians getting into the spirit of competition, a little pride and male ego on the line.

Bobby Riggs, 55, of Franklin High School in Los Angeles, the CIF-Southern Section singles champion in 1935, vs. Billy Jean King, 29, of Poly High School in Long Beach and Los Angeles State College.

Only the match was not played at the club or on public courts. It was held in front of the largest crowd ever to watch a tennis match--30,472--in the gaudiest venue then available--the Houston Astrodome. It was a TV ratings bonanza.

Riggs had enjoyed a successful career during the age of Don Budge and Jack Kramer. A natural-born hustler, he evolved into a regular Minnesota Fats of his sport. He looked like an older version of Sonny Bono, and he would chip away with a collection of moon lobs, drop shots and deft cutters. Riggs decided to draw some attention to himself, so he spouted off about how an older man who possessed skills could beat any woman in the world. Australia's Margaret Smith Court, a former Wimbledon champion and still a formidable player, took him up on his challenge, but in May, 1973, Riggs destroyed her in the Mother's Day Massacre.

The call went out for a Joan of Arc to step up and slay this Male Sexist Pig.

Billie Jean was the perfect Joan of Arc. She had a chip on her shoulder.

Growing up in Long Beach, she was miffed because her younger brother (Randy Moffitt, who would pitch for the 1970s Giants) had more opportunities playing baseball than she did playing softball, so she switched to tennis. At age 18, she beat Smith Court at Wimbledon, but when she returned to LA State (now Cal State LA), the most famous athlete on the campus, she could not get a scholarship because of her gender. As she developed into the top female athlete in the world, she became an outspoken advocate for women on the tour, pointing out that their draw in attendance and on TV was comparable to the men, but the pay was not.

When she accepted the Riggs' challenge, a war of words ensued some for show and some for real. The media went ballistic throughout that Watergate summer, a time of change for minorities, gays and women. They called it the Battle of the Sexes.
It was promoted as a cross between a Super Bowl and a circus, complete with a band, dancing girls, hardhats and hippies, libbers and lobbers, chauvinists and charlatans, nubile maidens, tuxedo-clad "aliens," and flow-in celebrities. Riggs showed up with what appeared to be his harem. Fellini should have directed it.

King trained hard. She took her game seriously and was not about to go down for the count, like Smith. Riggs appeared out of shape, claiming he did not need to practice much to beat a girl.

Women's leaders tried to downplay the importance of the match on the Movement, but everybody knew it would be huge if Billie Jean could win.

When they finally started the thing, Billie Jean appeared to be so tight you could not pull a pin out of her butt with a tractor, struggling with Riggs' lobs and soft shots. She stayed within her game, though, rushing the net and commanding the territory by whipping stunning volleys off her backhand and rifling the overheads passed the stunned old-timer.

The first set was close, but Billie Jean was the better of the two, 6-4. That was all the confidence boost she needed. Loosening up, King reducing the cocky, clowning, noisy huckster into a beaten man. The crowd was with her all the way in a convincing, shocking (to some) 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 victory.

"I think it was essential to that time," is Billy Jean's historical assessment of the match. "I know that woke people up. For some people it did change their hearts and minds. The match, the Title IX legislation...women really did ask for raises the next day. I had someone tell me they'd wanted a raise for eight years and never had the courage to ask. I must have had 100 women tell me this, at least."

Title IX, Federal legislation mandating equal funding for girl's sports at public schools, has had an enormous effect on the growth of women's athletics over the past 25 years.

It may not have been as bloody as Joan of Arc leading the French to victory over the Brits at Orlean, but its effects are just as lasting.

**PAST AND FUTURE PLAY WINNING TENNIS AT MERCEDES**

_UCLA's Gimelstob helps SC's Leach make last year a winning one._

A bit of the past teamed with a bit of the future when former UCLA tennis star Justin Gimelstob teamed with ex-USC National Champion Rick Leach to defeat some local talent (Zach Fleischman/John Fruttero) in a first round doubles match at the Mercedes-Benz Cup on Tuesday, July 25 at UCLA's Los Angeles Tennis Center, 6-4, 6-4.

The match was a homecoming for both players. Gimelstob has previously been quoted as saying that the Tennis Center was "his house," a reference to his home court during his UCLA days.
"I wish I could retract that," he says. "I meant just to say that I'm determined to do my best when I play here."

Justin also played down the significance of an ex-Bruin playing with an ex-Trojan. "That stuff's far removed from where we are now," he remarked. "I'm just honored to play with Rick because he's got so much experience. I know he has a steady partner, but last year I approached him and said that if he ever needed someone, I'd love to play with him, and to learn from him."

The 6-6 Gimelstobs' father was a college basketball player, and Justin had success in hoops growing up in New Jersey and Florida. "What I get from basketball, it's difficult to really compare," he says, "but the sacrifice and pressure of all sports is related. Actually, tennis is different, being an individual sport, but doubles does lend itself to the team concept a little more. It's interesting to observe your partner and make suggestions."

As for the team of Fleischman and Fruttero, Justin remarked, "They're good young players."

Looking back (it is only a couple years, but tennis pros morph into "grizzled vets" pretty fast), Gimelstob said he chose UCLA because he wanted to stay with a coach who was associated with the program, and "I just loved playing for Billy," a reference to long-time coach Billy Martin.

The southpaw Leach is a very mature player with an attacking style that is tailored to his doubles game, which is one of the best in the world. Rick grew up with Street Zebra.com executive producer John Simerson, who claimed to have taught him all his "bad habits" off the court. Leachie was more than willing to pin the blame on Big John, but he could not defend his decision not to choose Simerson as his doubles partner despite their 4-0 record together in the amateur ranks.

All kidding aside, Rick recalled that "His <Simerson's> parents were nice enough to let me stay in his house when I was traveling on the California Junior Davis Cup circuit, and we've been friends ever since," which includes their time playing together under Leach's father, Dick, the head coach at USC.

"Every time I come here it brings back memories," Leach said of playing at UCLA, which was constructed for the 1984 Olympics and became the Bruins' court during his SC career. "We used to play at the old sunset courts, but after they built this place the rivalry was hot, and we'd fill the stadium. It's never been a mean rivalry, not a hatred kind of thing."

Leach is one of the most consistent players on the tour, having won a major tournament championship in each of the past 14 seasons. In January, he and regular partner Ellis Ferreira won the Australian Open doubles title, but Ferreira did not want to travel so much in between Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, which left Leach looking for a partner in Los Angeles.

The Mercedes-Benz is a big deal to a guy who grew up in Arcadia and Laguna, then played for his dad at SC. It was a homecoming for both players, and the crowd was sprinkled with friends and supporters.

"Ferreira's my normal partner," said Leach, "but he wanted another week to rest his back, which has been hurting him. The rest of the summer's gonna be pretty heated, right on up to the U.S. Open. I've known Justin since he joined the pro tour, and I've had some intense battles with him. He offered to be my partner, and I'm excited to be here. As for the SC-UCLA rivalry, I gave him a hard time, asking if he'd be parking in the handicapped zone, but it's all in good fun."
(For those who were not in LA a year ago, UCLA's football team ran into trouble when it was discovered many of their players were illegally issued handicapped parking stickers.)

"All my shots are geared to rushing the net," Leach says of his aggressive style. "Volleying is my biggest asset, it's how I've made a living, and with Justin and myself, we're both tall and feel we control the net. I don't think I've lost my quickness at the net, and in doubles the game is won or lost there."

The rumor mill has swirled with word that Leach is retiring at the end of this season to succeed his dad as SC's coach, but Leach adamantly insists that, while he will be assisting his father on a full-time paid basis, it is strictly that: Assisting. Still, with his background and credentials, Leach will likely be considered for the top job when the time comes.

"I'll be there every day," he says of the upcoming challenge. "I just hope I've learned from my dad--his demeanor is quiet and patient, since he was a player himself and understands the pressure. My dad sees us <SC> in the top 15 next season, but our goal is to get back to beating Stanford again. I just hope to share my knowledge with the kids, who can use the college experience as a stepping stone."

The Trojans' lost a number of key players to injury or the pro ranks before the 2000 season, and most of their losses were 4-3, so they obviously are close to the top. What motivated Leach to retire?

"I'm married, and I want to spend more time with my family," he says. "This season I've been to Europe four times, we travel all the time, and I'm just tired of living out of a suitcase. I want to be able to sleep in my own bed every night."

I spoke to Rick about the legendary George Toley, who coached Stan Smith and USC to three National Championships in the 1960s, before Dick Leach took over.

"I had the privilege of knowing Coach Toley since I was a kid," he says of the man who was inducted into the Tennis hall of Fame this year.

Leach is still excited about having won the Australian doubles championship early this year.

"It was totally unexpected," he says. "We played the last set to 18-16. I just don't think it's good to play a tiebreaker in the fifth set of a grand slam event."

This makes sense for Leach to have this attitude, since years ago his father played the longest match of all time, which Rick states was the motivating factor in the creation of the tie-breaker.

The aches and pains of the pro tour have taken their toll on Leach, who ices his aching knee after matches.

"I just wish we could play on more soft courts in the U.S.," he says, but with the exception of the South, clay courts are rare here.

Leach has had a successful career, and made his friends and family proud. No doubt, his contributions at his alma mater will continue to keep him in the spotlight of the LA tennis scene for a long time to come.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN
OLYMPICS

OLYMPIC DESTINY

_Volleyball duo of Johnson-Jordan and Buckner-Davis emerge from nowhere, will strut stuff in Sydney._

For women's U.S. Olympic beach volleyball player Jennifer Johnson-Jordan, the Sydney Olympics will be a rite of passage. Her father, Rafer Johnson (see DISTANT REPLAY) also made his Olympic debut in Australia (1956) before winning the decathlon Gold medal at Rome (1960). Johnson-Jordan, who is married to former UCLA wide receiver Kevin Jordan, carries on in the tradition of a man who is a symbol to many.

The Greek philosopher Aeschyleus was quoted often by Robert Kennedy, who died almost in Johnson's arms after being shot at The Ambassador Hotel in 1968, and Johnson became not unlike the tragic, mythic men of Aeschylus' writings--a symbol, and in Los Angeles, an icon.

Jennifer just knew him as Dad until she was 11, and her father carried the torch that lit the 1984 LA Games at the Coliseum. After that, the Olympics became her destiny.

Despite her athletic pedigree, sports did not dominate her upbringing in Sherman Oaks, which included concentration on academics at tiny Windward School. She walked on to the volleyball team at her father's alma mater, UCLA, where her natural talents combined with hard work earned her All-American honors as an outside hitter in 1995.

This summer, she and her brother, Josh, were on a quest to make the Olympic team. Josh, the 1997 Pacific-10 javelin champion at UCLA, did not make the cut. Johnson-Jordan teamed with Annett Buckner-Davis to upset more well known players to earn a volleyball berth.

Buckner-Davis, also a Southern Californian, is the wife of swimmer Byron Davis, whose own Olympic hopes were dashed by injury, so in many ways these two will be competing for others as much as for themselves.

Family destiny aside, the pair has done it the old-fashioned way: They _earned_ it! Americans Misty May and Holly McPeak may be the better known pair, and challengers Liz Masakayan and Elaine Youngs garnered attention with their performance at the French Open, but it was the Jordan-Davis team that prevailed in hard-fought matches in Marseille.

A loss forced the team into the contenders' bracket, but they reacted well to adversity, forging a 15-9 victory over Americans Lisa Arce and Barbara Fontana, then moving to the final with a 15-6 triumph over Brazil's Monica Rodrigues and Ana Paula Connelly. They had never beaten Brazil's formidable Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede, but their 15-11 victory increased the pair's FIVB Olympic qualification points total to 2,672, locking up the berth.
"We have a coach, Ana Collier, who was traveling with us this year," emailed Jennifer and Annett from Espinho, where they were competing in the Portugal Open. "On our off days when we're not competing, she trains us on the beach for about an hour and a half to two hours, depending on the day. Before matches or the night before, we get the video camera, and we hook it up to the computer, and we watch the team that we're playing next."

After Portugal, the duo was scheduled to travel to Japan and China, followed by tour events in Long Beach and San Diego with Beach Volleyball America.

"Then, before the Olympics," the email went on, "we'll just pretty much train until then."

What seems to favor the Jordan-Davis team is the fact that they are healthy and peaking at just the right time. If they win at Sydney, they will be the first American women to win in beach volleyball.

"The beginning of the season, we started off on a roll," says Buckner-Davis. "Every tournament we got better and better and better. Right now, we're still the number one U.S. team and we just have to keep that spot."

Since they are not considered the established aces of beach volleyball, it would be easy to say that simply medaling would be a victory, but their competitive fires burn bright.

"I was at my mom's house after we lost <the NCAA championships>," explains Buckner-Davis. "I was upset because we got second and they're telling me, 'Oh, you played great. You guys played well. You should be proud. You had a great season.' One time, we were undefeated the whole season and then we lost in the final and it was really hard, hard for me."

"When you're competing, you don't want to say that number two is OK," says Johnson-Jordan. "Everybody wants to be number one."

Like her father, however, Jennifer is a committed Christian who recognizes that "if that's all you focus on in your life and all that you try to attain, you're gonna be disappointed a lot."

Jennifer, who told the <ital>Los Angeles Times</end ital> that she was "crying" when she saw her father carry the '84 flame, has the kind of perspective other athletes need to attain. For her, it is about "preparing myself mentally and physically and spiritually to bring all those three things together so that I could be the best athlete that I can be."

A family trait.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

BOXING
PLAYBACK: BUSTER DOUGLAS BEATS MIKE TYSON

10 years ago, an unknown knocked out the invincible Mike Tyson in one of boxings greatest upsets.

Buster Douglas was a 43-1 longshot when he went up against "Iron Mike" Tyson 10 years ago in Tokyo, Japan. Tyson was 23 years old with 33 knockouts. He had 17 first-round knockouts, and was 10-0 in championship fights. He was viewed by many not only as the greatest fighter in the world, but possibly the best ever.

James "Buster" Douglas had no business being in the same arena with him. Douglas had reportedly "quit" in a bout just three years prior. Broadcaster Jim Lampley foreshadowed the result when he observed that Tyson was not training seriously for the fight. Anybody who has ever stepped into a ring can confirm that, no matter how good a boxer you are, being in good physical condition is essential--especially if the other guy is. Tyson had actually admitted in an interview weeks before the fight that he was unprepared. He simply never took the fight seriously. He was out of shape, and had to lose 25 pounds in the month just before the bout, which drained him of strength.

Douglas, a 6-4 former basketball player, was 29 years old and trained like Rocky Balboa. His mother had died unexpectedly a few days before the bout, and he somehow managed to use her memory to spur himself on. He stoically trained and focused on beating Tyson, trying "to show my mom she raised a strong young man."

"At that point I'd trained fighters for 20 years and I never had a fighter train as hard as Buster did that for one," said his trainer, John Russell. Douglas was a trim 231 on fight day. Tyson expended all his energy trying to knock Douglas out in the first two rounds, but Douglas withstood the onslaught. In the third round Douglas' vaunted left jab started to connect on the fatigued Tyson, and by the fifth he was punishing him. Tyson's eye started to close, and he began to lose his will to fight back. Tyson's cornermen were inept, seemingly unable to deal with his bruises. In the eighth, ahead on points, Douglas started to hurt Tyson on the ropes. Tyson was desperate at this point. He connected on Douglas, and it could have been a miracle comeback, but Douglas was not to be denied. He was stunned, but held on. Directed to a neutral corner, however, Tyson could barely walk.

Douglas finally ended Tyson in the tenth. Reporters were all over him, but in the weeks, months and years following the fight, Douglas lost all desire to train. His career completely disintegrated, but he had big money, which he invested wisely. A few years later, Sports Illustrated did a piece on him, focusing on his enormous "Big Boy" girth. The story was titled "Get A Load Of Me."

CHAPTER TWENTY
HOLLYWOOD

PRINCE RICHARD COULD SNAP THE CURVA BALL

He grew up next to Steve Lavin in Marin, has worked the craft of acting all over the world, and now he is a heartthrob to millions of TV fans.

Bradley Cole, who grew up in Marin County and attended Redwood High School, recently won an award at the annual Soap Opera Awards in Universal City. He has found success in the wildly popular role of Prince Richard on CBS' "A Guiding Light".

"an overnight success after 17 years..."

"I find it ironic," said Cole, "that I was nominated for Best Newcomer in 1999, which means, I suppose, that I'm an overnight success after 17 years as a professional actor." Before he was an actor, however, Cole was almost a professional baseball player. This will come as a surprise to those who watch the show, because Cole plays "an English nobleman, of the island Colonial variety." His accent, honed from years living in Europe, is impeccably upper crust British, so the average fan might think his sport of choice is cricket or polo. It is all, literally, an act.

Cole lived in the town of Ross, north of San Francisco, where he and his rambunctious brothers, Jeff and Darren, lived next to another house full of high-strung, sports-crazy boys. The youngest of the next-door neighbors was Steve Lavin, now the head basketball coach at UCLA.

"By the time I got older," recalls Lavin, "our parents had gotten together and figured out who to keep away from whom."

"Whenever I ran away from home," recalls Brad's older brother, Jeff, now an Orange County businessman, "I'd sleep in the Lavin's backyard."

Brad played baseball for legendary Redwood High School Coach Al Endriss, who steered the Giants' to the 1977 National Championship, and was a member of Pepperdine's 1979 College World Series team.

“We were a bunch of cowboys,” Brad recalls of the Pepperdine club. “Everybody had a three-day growth, chewed tobacco, and played the game the way it was meant to be played. We would have won the National Championship, I think, but we blew a seventh inning lead in the semi-finals. Pepperdine is a Christian school. Girls there are innocent, everybody is conservative. The baseball players were heavy partiers, we took advantage of the rules, but we were tolerated because we put the school on the map.

"My best pitch was the curve ball."
"the actor in the family."

Brad's younger brother, Darren, is a natural actor who starred in Redwood's production of "Our Town" and studied drama at USC. Brad, the jock, found his pro baseball hopes dashed by an arm injury, so in 1981 he landed the role of McMurphy in Pepperdine's production of the Ken Kesey classic "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest".

"I had a crush on a girl who was a student actress," recalls Brad, "and I had time on my hands because I was through with baseball, so I went for the role." He memorized the baseball scene that Jack Nicholson made famous, which was actually based on the 1963 Dodgers-Yankees World Series, landed the role, and a star was born.

Shortly thereafter, Darren abruptly left Los Angeles for New York City. Why?

"Ever heard of sibling rivalry?" asks Brad. "Up until then, Darren had always been the actor in the family. I don't know whether New York is big enough for the both of us."

Brad graduated from Pepperdine with a business degree, then re-located to Paris, France, where he worked as a model while writing a stageplay and raising funds for a production in the English theatre. Stage work became television and film work in France, England, Africa, America, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and other exotic locales. Brad maintained residences in Paris and London, had agents in those two cities, and was a popular actor on The Continent for the better part of 10 years. He studied Shakespeare in London, and after starring in a German production of "Killer Joe" in 1996, Cole finally decided to come Hollywood.

"Nobody wanted to hear about it."

Cole moved into an oceanfront pad in Manhattan Beach, found an acting class in Hollywood, and waited for the kind of break that he was accustomed to in Europe.

"Nobody wanted to hear about it," he says of his two years in LA. Two years in which he got virtually no work. He studied his craft, worked on his music (he is a singer and guitar player with decent European CD sales), and ate humble pie.

In 1998 he landed a role with French legend Jean-Paul Belmondo in a Parisian play. When he moved back there, he and his friends thought he would never come back, and the joke was that somebody would have to go to France on a special mission called "Saving Private Cole", to paraphrase the hit movie of that summer.

All his life, through hard work and smarts, Cole has put himself in the right place to succeed when opportunity comes his way. Just as the Belmondo play was shutting down, Brad's LA agent landed him an audition for the new Prince Richard role on "A Guiding Light". He got it, and was an immediate hit. Fans line up for his autograph now, they talk to him on Internet chat rooms, and go to the various web sites that feature him and the show.
Cole is living large in New York City—he is single and loving it. When I caught up with him in Universal City he was being *feted* about town in limo style, publicist in tow, to Spago and various other points in the Hollywood night.

Brad's brother, Darren, is also doing very well. He produced "Killer Joe", the play Brad starred in. Darren's successful New York run featured Scott Glenn and Amanda Plummer, and in 2000 he opened the play with Chicago's famed Steppenwolf theatre group, where David Mamet got his start. Still, Darren never did cast Brad, even though Brad was the first "Killer Joe". Sibling rivalry?

"Baja California"
For somebody with the looks and screen presence of Brad Cole, feature films would seem a natural. Hollywood is funny about TV actors making the transition, especially soap stars, but there are far too many exceptions to call it a rule. A terrific screenplay actually has been written specifically for Cole. It is called "Baja California", and it is the dark, edgy story of a jaded California businessman who goes to Mexico and has a religious experience. Take the tux off him, remove the gel from his hair, give him a three-day growth and a pair of cowboy boots, and Cole is transformed into the kind of hardened anti-hero that Mickey Rourke used to be.

In “A Guiding Light”, he is the British monarch of an island colony who has lost his son when his ex-wife became an amnesiac. Now he has found the lady, who is re-married, but his struggle is to see to it that his son is allowed his place as heir within the royal family. His love interest now is a beautiful blonde named Cassie who seems to always be in danger.

Brad is big now, but the prediction here is that he will get a lot bigger.

**ON THE HOLLYWOOD TRAIL WITH "DALE THE SNAIL"**

*The cautionary tale of how a normally smart guy ignored his best instincts in search of screenwriting glory, only to be taken advantage of by a so-called "producer."*

Dale Crase.

That is his name, Dale Crase. The cause of more knots in my stomach, and more sleepless nights, than anything I have ever experienced, or anyone I have ever known. This includes my ex-wife and a former business partner who cheated me out of over $50,000.

Don't get me wrong, I blame myself. Dale is just doing his job, whatever that is. I have to take responsibility for my actions. I am an adult. An intelligent, well-educated, responsible adult, at that. I am a graduate of the University of Southern California, and I even attended law school for a year, so I cannot blame my tale of woe on youthful ignorance. Still, I had starry-eyed expectations. To quote Eric Burden, "It's been the ruin of many a poor boy, and God, I know, I'm one." While I warn you, gentle reader, not to "do what I have done," I know damn well many of you will, despite knowing better. That is Hollywood, baby.

Embarrassing as it is, I will start out at the top and tell that I paid Dale $13,000 for the
privilege of my writing two screenplays, which he now owns.

After you stop laughing and pull yourself off the floor, let me go back to the beginning. Read carefully, because this can happen to you.

It was June of 1995. I was hanging out at some bar on a hot night with my buddy, Mac, who spotted a mutual friend of ours, Gary. Mac went on about Gary's brief appearance in Fatal Instinct (one of the cops interrogating Sharon Stone during the infamous leg cross-over scene). I had no idea Gary had film experience of any kind, and being a fledgling screenwriter with one bad script under Travers my belt, I asked if he had any contacts.

"Dale Crase," said Gary. I think they knew each other in some kind of banking capacity, as Gary was in that business, and he went on to say that Dale was partners with Frank Capra, Jr. Cards were exchanged, phone calls made, a treatment mailed to Dale at his request through Gary, and eventually Dale called and left a number.

I called and before a single ring a woman's recorded voice told me I had reached "Dale Crase Productions." I left a message, days passed, no return call. I started calling again, and always no ring, then that same recording.

It was voicemail. I could call that number until hell freezes over and no human would ever answer it. Today, three years and about a thousand calls later, it is the same annoying, unchanged recording.

Finally, Dale returned my call, and we set up a meeting. At his office? No, at the Peppermill. It was the day after Cal Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's consecutive games played streak. I will always remember that. I arrived on time, as is my custom. After cooling my heels for 45 minutes, some waitress found me and I was told Dale would be there in half an hour. 45 minutes later he arrived. A trend was set that would continue for three years.

I had a screenplay called Pitching and Wooing. To make a long story short, I had once been a sports agent, and in that capacity I met a former Los Angeles Angels baseball pitcher named Bo Belinsky. He told me about "Hollywood producers" who wanted to make a film about his life as a Jersey pool shark who throws a no-hitter and becomes the greatest playboy in baseball history, hangin' out with Frank Sinatra, Walter Winchell and Hugh Hefner, set in the swinging '60s.

As soon as Bo started talking about this, I felt an incredible urge to write the screenplay. I had read Maury Allen's biography of Bo several times when I was a kid, and I his life backwards and forwards. I had attended the U.S.C. School of Cinema-Television in the early 1980s, and I had experience writing speeches and articles from my days in politics. However, I had veered from filmmaking, concentrating on my professional baseball career, marriage and fatherhood, then a "regular job." We bought a house in the Orange County suburbs, I did my law school gig, a stint in the Army Reserves, and spent seven years in the legal profession.

Divorce ensued, and with it a re-examination of who I was and wanted to be. I sold the house, lived in Europe for a year, then started a sports management company with a boyhood friend. He turned out to be a liar who breached his contract with, costing me all told about $53,000. When I sued the slippery s.o.b., I was informed that he had filed for bankruptcy and I found myself in line with 143 other creditors. The dude had been de-frauding a whole host of Americans for a good, long time!

So, I wrote the screenplay. Maury Allen gave me a three-year free option on his book. In debt from my sports agent fiasco and working odd jobs, I spent a year trying to sell Pitching and Wooing, attempting to land an agent, and lifting weights at Gold's Gym. I also got a really
Desperate for any kind of break, I looked upon Dale as my personal saviour. He looked like a producer, in his 50s I would guess, resembling the sportscaster Curt Gowdy, a smooth talking hale fellow well met, and we hit it off immediately. I asked him the usual questions. Credits? Something about Firestarter, Play It Again, Sam, and six other films he produced, he said. He was partners with Frank Capra, Jr., son of the famed director. He also worked closely with Frank's son, Frank Capra III, known as Frankie. He told me about a project with Glenn Ford in Mexico, but later when I inquired more, he was not forthcoming. Then there was some deal he had worked out with a studio that paid him fifty or $100,000, something like that. No verification on that, either. He took my screenplay, which was really just a series of anecdotal incidents—badly written, poorly formatted, too-long, too-talkative, and too much exposition through dialogue. When he called me with some question that night, I told myself he must be interested, so my hopes went up.

Funny thing. In the year prior to that, Pitching and Wooing was panned and turned down by every agent, producer, reader, and script doctor who read it. Well, almost everybody. There was the guy, I think he played Rerun on the old sitcom "What's Happenin?'", who said he could clean it up for $10,000. This guy sent me some lame "coverage" in which he spelled my main character's name Beau Balinsky, supposedly after reading it and telling me how good it was.

Oh yeah, then there was the guy who said he used to be Tom Hanks' agent at William Morris. He, too, liked it, and would be my agent—also for $10,000. There was another former agent who said he was now a producer, who would take Pitching and Wooing all the way. All he needed was, I cannot remember, maybe only $5,000.

Other than these paragons of virtue, the Belinsky story had as much chance of getting sold as a one legged man in a butt-kicking contest.

Dale liked it!

It took a while. Quite a while. I remember the second meeting. Dale wanted to see Seven, so we arranged to meet at 4:20 outside the theatre for the 4:30 p.m. show. At 4:45 I was checking my messages when he strolled up. He bought his ticket, I bought mine, we went in, and saw Kevin Spacey virtually hammering Brad Pitt, then after a few more minutes Morgan Freeman looked sick when he saw something in a box, causing Pitt to be distressed and kill Spacey. Roll end credits.

We had walked into the wrong theatre, the one showing at 3:15 instead of 4:30. We found the right theatre, just in time to see the crime scene for the second killing. All in all, we missed the first 45 minutes, and saw the last half hour first. Great film experience. Dale did dress down the theatre manager and received vouchers to a future show, though.

Afterwards we found a coffee shop to discuss the film, where Dale managed to sneak a free meal because he had a coupon. I paid for mine.

I checked up on Dale, but I was not going to let a little thing like finding out next to zero about the guy stop me from believing he was a legitimate producer who thought I had talent. He gave me a post office box for an address, and told me he lived in one place, but the prefix on his fax machine at his house was for another city. He had no card, no resume, no list of credits. He gave me no phone number, just voicemail. Later, I would discover what I believe is his address and home number, both not in the city he said he lived in. I have never been to his home.

Information about his family was not forthcoming. Kids? Who knows? A mother in Sacramento, I think. I believe he is, like me, a native Californian. College: University of San

I could not find Dale, Capra, Jr. or Frankie in the Hollywood Creative Directory. Dale was not to be found in the Producer's Guild, or at the U.S.C. Cinema-T.V. library, which keeps lists of people in the biz. Nothing in Los Angeles information. I did find an address and the voicemail number for Dale Crase Productions in San Francisco. He told me that he once maintained offices with Capra, Jr. in Hollywood (possibly on Formosa in North Hollywood) and San Francisco, and including secretary was doling out $8,000 a month, but decided to save that expense and work at home, instead.

I sure never saw any of that $8,000-a-month savings.

I think I found Capra, Jr. through the Producers Guild, and discovered he indeed had a credit on Firestarter, and a few other pictures, but Dale was No-Where Man. Frankie was doing well, however. He had producer's credits and worked as Rob Reiner's assistant director on A Few Good Men, The Ghosts of Missippi and An American President, as well as with Taylor Hackford on The Devil's Advocate and as a producer on Warren Beatty's Bulworth. Dale did give me a tape of the American Film Institute's tribute to Frank Capra, claiming that he attended and his date had been Morgan Fairchild. I did not see Dale or Ms. Fairchild on the tape. He said he had appeared in Liz Smith's column. When I called Ms. Smith in New York, her assistant had never heard of him.

Anyway, just before Thanksgiving, Dale told me I had a deal. I had arrived. My first screenplay had sold, to a producer whose partner was Frank Capra's son. We met. In front of the post office. Dale gave me an envelope, saying something about a "firm offer," but he seemed nervous and wanted out of there before I opened the envelope. We parted ways, I got in my car, opened it up, and was immediately dazzled by various numbers—$50,000 for one. Whoopee!

Not so fast, Travers. On closer examination I saw that the contract offered zero dollars up front, and $2,000 in option renewals, to be paid each year thereafter...until my young daughter graduates from college. The $50,000 would be paid to me at the time of principal photography. How long does that take? You don't wanna know. As far as Dale was concerned, this was strictly O.P.M. Other People's Money. A free option. I had read about these. Young producers fresh out of film school got writers to give them free options. This guy could not stop talking about Frank Capra this and Frank Capra that, a legendary name in Hollywood, and he was offering a free option. Lord.

I held out one month, trying to pry a few bucks out of this character, but he treats nickels like manhole covers (remember the free meal coupon?). He had discussed this with Frank, he said, who he said felt if I did not want to do their deal, it would not be worth their while. I suppose all those residuals from It's A Wonderful Life must not have been as lucrative as I imagined.

I inquired a bit more about Capra, Jr., and was told unequivocally that sometimes properties were owned by Crase, and sometimes by Crase and Capra, but that at all times Capra would be involved in producing the projects.

On the shortest day of 1995, I inked my first option deal with Dale Crase. Now we had to deal with the legalities of making a film about a living person. Dale told me he wished we could have spent December working on this issue, so we could start marketing the project fresh with the new year. Industry executives, he said, never make decisions from Thanksgiving to New Year's.
I guess *Spartacus*, *Dr. Zhivago*, *The Godfather I* and *II*, *Wall Street* or any other film was never presented to any studio exec during the holiday lull.

Dale asked me if I would have a problem getting Bo to ink his life story rights with me. For some reason, he did not want Bo to know who he was or anything about him. I felt that if we were fair with Bo he would be happy to give us his story rights. Oddly, I never felt, and do not to this day, that we needed Bo's life story rights. An attorney I consulted agreed with me. For one thing, I had the book rights from Maury Allen. For another, the man was a public figure and my whole script was based on facts that are easily available to anybody who can read.

Dale decided to help me out by giving me a life story rights contract, which he said his lawyer had drafted for him at great expense (read: Beverly Hills attorney). Later, I discovered the contract's boilerplate language almost word-for-word in Brooke Wharton's "The Writer Got Screwed (but didn't have to)", a tome I should have taken to heart.

(I am telling you, those of you who aspire to succeed in Hollywood, you will hear my warnings and plunder on, only to learn from your own personal, dismal mistakes.)

I read that contract a couple times, not quite believing my eyes. Dale wanted Bo to sign it for nothing. He was willing to have Bo receive $40,000 from the studio, but not out of Dale's pocket, only when the film went to principal photography. O.P.M. Now, correct me if I am wrong, but is it not the producer's job to pay the living person for that person's life story rights? I even offered to pay Bo out of my pocket, but all I could scrape together was about $11,000. Bo turned it down. He wanted about $35,000. I believe Dale made a very distinct mental note when he heard I was willing to part with my own dough in order to jumpstart my writing career.

Finally, I trekked to Las Vegas in a desperate attempt to get Bo to sign, out of some kind of goodwill gesture to a fellow ex-pitcher. It was embarrassing, and the only good thing about that trip was that my sexy ex-girlfriend from U.S.C. agreed to accompany my friend Bruno and I on the excursion. That is another story, but Bo was a no-go.

We still could have gone forward, of course. Any studio that really wanted to make the film would have paid Bo his $35,000 in a New York minute, but Dale was stuck on that and the project was d.o.a. as far he was concerned. When the option came up for renewal, he did not have any coupons to cover the option amount.

By now it is Spring, 1996. I am working odd jobs, falling further and further into debt, and the Belinsky project that I had been pinning all my hopes and dreams on for the past year and a half is up in smoke. My future is bleak. I had managed to write two other scripts. *Rock'n'Roll Heaven* is a musical fantasy best described as *Field of Dreams* meets *The Doors*. *A Murderous Campaign*, gleaned from headlines of the day about Bill Clinton's drug smuggling operation in Mena, Arkansas, is the story of a porn star who learns her Southern Senator boyfriend is running for President and plans to assassinate a rival, and must hide out when she herself becomes a target.

I also had started to take classes in the U.C.L.A. Writers' Program and the Hollywood Film Institute; to attend seminars and to read every book on screenwriting I could get my hands on, and to re-write each of my scripts so that they would look professional and adhere to the industry-approved three-act structure. I decided to be serious about my writing career, and instead of spending my time trying to get an agent and sending out unsolicited material, I embarked on the process of learning my craft. I started to read Shakespeare, and the great works of Hemingway and Dickens, and to respect writing instead of using it as a tool. Eventually,
Pitching and Wooing, now Once He Was An Angel, would be good enough to make it to the semi-finals of a screenplay contest, and I am proud of the quality of my other work, too.

No sooner had I returned from Vegas (a trip that required a little recovery time), than Dale called me and said he had a marvelous opportunity for me that would cheer me up after my "failure" to get Belinsky's life story rights. We met at one of his various "offices," this time a waterfront bakery at the crack of dawn (the only time Dale was not late was when we met early in the morning).

Dale owned a screenplay called The Big Player, written several years before by a writer named Jimmy Huston. Dale said he paid Huston $12,000. Huston also wrote another script for Dale, Express. Player was the story of Ken Uston, the world's greatest blackjack player. Dale claims to own Uston's life story rights, even though Uston passed away in 1987. Apparently Dale renewed them with Uston's daughter. Player had made the rounds in Hollywood. Capra, Jr. had been in on the project, but it never went anywhere. It was an exciting concept, though, and Dale gave me a bunch of demographics about gambling in America.

The screenplay needed a re-write, however, and coincidentally Dale knew a writer who wanted the chance to work with this fabulous material, and was so excited about it that he had written Dale a letter outlining a plan whereby the writer was offering $5,000 to re-write it, and in return would receive some points from Dale's producer's fee.

Dale showed me the type-written letter. Unfortunately, I did not write down nor make a mental note of the writer's name or address. My bad.

I told Dale I had to think about it, and left to go to my part-time job quite convinced this was not for me. My instincts told me no, do not give money to a "producer." The first thing you ever read in any "breaking into show business" book is never, ever give money to these people. There are charlatans and con men at every turn. I had already had those three other people try to pry money out of my pocket.

I got home late that night, and my parents were there, waiting for me. Dale had called them, and he had told them about this marvelous opportunity that was bound to be the difference in my making a writing career or being one of the many failed people who never succeed.

My parents are elderly, they have some disposable income, and they want to help me. They had seen me go through a divorce and the wrenching experience of being separated from my daughter. They knew how much I wanted to succeed at writing, the first thing I really loved to do since baseball. They understood that I am a free spirit, not one to be confined to a corporate-type job. I am an entrepreneur, I work for myself.

Dale had given them the whole Frank Capra spiel, wowing them with stories of the legendary Frank, Sr. and Dale's "experiences" with Glenn Ford and various studio chiefs. My aging parents, neither of whom know anything about Hollywood, were sold.

Oh yes, one more thing. Dale had called a couple times, because the other "writer" kept upping his offer to him, and the $5,000 had magically become $8,000 in the time it took me to go to work and come home. Wow. That is what I call a bull market.

Furthermore, time was of the essence and Dale needed an answer and the money by the following morning, because, well, because this project was moving fast--"It happens that way in Hollywood," said Dale--and this was Steve's chance to break into the business and meet influential entertainment players like the Capras. He assured us Frank, Jr. would be co-producing the project, which was being re-named "21", and that he would help me get an agent.

You know, gentle reader, I knew it was b.s. Lyndon Johnson once said a good politician
could make chicken shit taste like chicken salad, and Dale Crase is a terrific politician. Every instinct I had told me to say no, but I was tired and desperate, and my parents had been sold, and they insisted that they would pay the money and I could pay them back when I got on my feet. Lord help me, I acquiesced. It is interesting to note a couple things, considering that Dale arrived at my house early the next morning. For one thing, he was actually on time, a rarity for him. Coincidentally, his "offer" to have me re-write "21" if I paid him came on the heels of his finding out about my desperate offer to pay Belinsky out of my pocket. Lastly, the man was in a hurry to get that check, which I find to be of some interest because this guy moves slowwww.

I had already taken to calling him "Dale the Snail." Actually, credit my friend Mac with that moniker. Mac always got a kick out of my telling woeful Dale Crase stories, like how he would take two months to read a script, only to have changed a comma here, a misspelled word there.

I tried to make the point that I would write "21" for the same $12,000 amount that he paid Huston, but Dale said he had another offer from this "other writer," and my parents urged me not to miss out on this opportunity.

I signed the contract, which guarantees me some points I will never see and a writing fee a little more than the W.G.A. minimum, to be paid at the time of principal photography with--you guessed it--Other People's Money! Then my parents wrote a check to me, and I in turn wrote a check to Dale Crase for $8,000. God, that was painful. What kind of son am I, to allow my elderly parents to be dragged into this kind of thing? If you do not think I am haunted by this set of circumstances, you would be mistaken. I did it, though. I take responsibility. I cannot say "the devil made me do it." I did it out of desperation, fear and starry-eyed hope. I did it out of greed. I allowed myself to use my parents. Instead of saying no is no, instead of going out and finding a real job, I used my parents as complicit partners in my scheme to convince myself that I was now a full-time writer, who really had too much responsibility to dally with the kind of penny-ante employment concerns of normal people.

I had a credit line and could live rent free. I was on my way, and my blazing success would lead to enough money to pay off those debts, and then some. I was now living full time in my own personal "House of the Rising Sun."

Basically, I wrote "21" from March 11 to April 11, about a month. I met with Dale, and after waiting the usual extra 45 minutes he showed up, took the script, a month or so passed, and he handed it back to me with with red markings to indicate such important things as a misspelling, a computer typo usually, or tiny things that never had anything significant to do with the story.

In three years I dealt with him on five screenplays. He never, ever orchestrated any changes to the three-act structure, improved character development or arc, or even changed scenes from one place to another. He made one suggestion one time that was helpful, although I forget what that was. However, he always moved at a snail's pace, allowing huge chunks of time to pass in which nothing happened whatsoever. Nothing.

Therefore, while "21" was pretty much ready to go by mid-April, it was not until Labor Day that the man began to...do whatever it is he did. I still do not really know what the hell he ever has done to promote the screenplay into a film deal.

Meanwhile, Dale realized he had something rare and wonderful on his hands. Here I was, a fairly talented, very hard-working, honest screenwriter who not only worked for free, but
was a source of money for the guy. Not surprisingly, he decided to tap into the well again.

Ever since I had known Dale he kept telling me about a project he owned that was going to be the hottest, newest thing to ever hit Hollywood, but he would not tell me about it, and he kept hinting that he had a stable of "A+" writers at his disposal who wanted in on it.

Finally, in May of 1996 we met at one of his offices, a restaurant he claimed was frequented by George Lucas (who I have no doubt has not the first nor foggiest notion who in God's name Dale Crase is). "The K Conspiracy" is the true story of Krebiozen, an effective anti-cancer drug documented to have saved thousands of lives in the 1950s and early '60s. The government had never allowed "K", as it was called, to be tested, much less made available, and the story was about a man (John Desgrey) who supposedly had signed over his life story rights to Dale. Desgrey's father had contracted cancer nine years after "K" had faded from the public consciousness, and Desgrey had gotten ahold of the aging doctor who still had the stuff, and smuggled some of it from Illinois to California. His father recovered, but Federal agents came to his father's house in the middle of the night and confiscated it, saying it was an illegal substance that had been transported across state lines. Desgrey's father, denied the drug, had died.

I had doubts about the story, but it looked interesting enough to pursue, and my God, if it was true and I uncovered it, I would be in Woodward and Bernstein territory. Dale then told me he had other writers, but he wanted me to write it.

"Great, for how much?" I asked.

"$5,000," he replied.

$5,000 did not sound like much to me, but what the heck, beggars cannot be choosers. The only hitch was, he wanted the $5,000 to be what I paid him.

Again.

I was assured that I should feel honored to be offered this opportunity to be involved in a project that he virtually guaranteed he could quickly get a deal on. He had investors in New York, and his Hollywood people were chomping at the bit to get this done. My $5,000 would guarantee me some percentage of his producer's points, plus a fabulous $40,000 writer's fee (paid of course by Other People, upon principal photography).

I said no.

Hooray, you say. Travers is finally standing up for himself, taking some pride in his actions.

That lasted about a week.

In the meantime, Dale Crase actually solicited the money from some young friends of mine I introduced him to from the gym.

These fellas, nice guys but not genius types, concluded in a New York second that Dale was a charlatan and, after their request for a list of his credits was denied (a subject that always seemed to raise the hair on the back of Dale's neck), they flat told the man no.

Dale then came back to me. I suppose Robert Towne and William Goldman or whoever his "A+" writers were had not thought much about his "investment" opportunity. He upped the "offer" by adding some meaningless language about assuring me that I would be paid my $5,000 back as soon as possible.

I decided to increase my background check on Dale, however. I did not want to turn down an opportunity and later have the thing win the Academy Award. I gave his license number to an L.A.P.D. friend of mine, who ran a check but came up with nothing. A private investigator discovered no lawsuits or criminal court records.
An attorney I consulted with told me that our agreements might not be enforceable, since none of them met the contract law doctrine of a "bargained-for exchange," otherwise known as the "betterment of the bargain." Furthermore, depending on Dale's motives, the possibility existed that Dale was committing criminal fraud against my parents and me.

I did get ahold of Frankie by calling the *The Ghosts of Mississippi* set, and he confirmed that Dale and his father had a long-standing relationship. I did not tell him that Dale had solicited money from me and my parents.

My calls to Frank Capra, Jr. went unreturned, but I did have an enlightening conversation with Jimmy Huston. Dale had told me that he was instrumental in Huston getting representation by I.C.M. Huston told me that was not true. Dale told me that he had been responsible for Huston receiving a $135,000 fee from Universal for his re-write of *Express*. I never confirmed that, but Huston did tell me that while he felt Dale was not capable of getting a film made; and Dale's Hollywood friends were not capable of getting films made; and although he knew a lot of people and took meetings, nothing ever happened of substance in them, he did tell me that Dale got Universal all the way to "green light" status, but the deal fell through because Dale wanted too much slice of the producer's fee.

Some people see the glass half empty. I chose to see it half full. Despite all the evidence telling me to steer as clear from Dale as I possibly could, and gentle reader, I know you have concluded I am some kind of dunderhead (and you are probably right), I chose to view the fact that Dale once got *Express* to the verge of a green light as a sign that he was a player who, this time around, would get "The K Conspiracy" made. I signed the contract, and cash advanced $5,000 off my Providian Bank credit card, straight into the hands of Dale "The Snail" Crase.

I suppose it was more than just faking myself into believing Dale was a player. I was convincing myself that in some way I was following the paths of people like Kevin Smith, who reportedly had run up $27,000 in credit card debt to make *Clerks*, ultimately leading to his success as a director. Perhaps this was my way of Travers entering the independent film community, which thanks to Quentin Tarantino is loosely based in the South Bay, where I live.

I was looking for something that would keep reality from barking at my door, reality being a return to work in the legal profession, which I had found unfulfilling, and more frightening, work in the humdrum 9-to-5 way that most courageous people conduct their lives. In the end, I must admit to myself that I was scared of being normal and average. I suppose I am left being a cautionary tale--"don't let that happen to you." I continue to hope that my singular desire not to be ordinary, to rise above the masses in a creative, artistic fashion, will someday put me in the world I so hope to live in. We shall see.

"It's been the ruin of many a poor boy, and God, I know, I'm one."

I then wrote a letter to my parents at their Lake Tahoe Summer home, informing them that Dale had paid me to write "K". Why? Because I was too embarrassed and ashamed to admit the truth. Almost nobody to this day knows we gave money to that man. I have never wanted anybody to know what a damn fool I am. Why did I do it? Hope, maybe. Dreams. More than that, to justify myself to my parents. Can you believe that? I was 37 years old, a divorced, single father, no job, no income, high debts, and a pipe dream that I could make a living writing. If they thought I was getting paid, albeit a tiny sum (although large from the standpoint of coming out of my credit line), then they might believe maybe I was on the right track. I could buy myself a few more months without getting pressured to get some job. My parents, probably justifiably, think I would be better off working at Thrifty's 40 hours a week at
$4.95 an hour. I have always hated the idea of working at Thrifty's, and avoided such a scenario like the plague. That, in a nutshell, was my motivation for doing what I did. There, I said it.

God bless Dale, do you know he actually had promised me he would never ask me for money again if I came through just this last time? What a sweetheart of a guy.

I spent much of the Summer of 1996 with my daughter at Lake Tahoe, researching Krebiozen. That August, I asked Dale about his progress getting "21" sold, and he told me nothing ever happens in August in Hollywood. I suppose the public is fortunate that The Graduate, Patton and Dr. Strangelove are among projects not marketed in August.

When I returned, I had a meeting with Dale (at the food court of a shopping mall, where he actually showed up on time). He had finally read "21", which I had completed five months earlier. He liked it, and now he was fresh off a trip to Los Angeles. In three years, I have known him to come to L.A. (I live with my girlfriend in Hermosa Beach) only a handful of times.

Last I heard, L.A. was the Film Capitol of the World.

A guy he knew named John Bennett, who Dale said was a former agent, now a producer (also not found in the Hollywood Creative Guide or any of the usual places), a fellow who is "tough on scripts," had read it but was too busy with other projects to get involved.

Funny about Bennett and all those other projects. In the two years since that conversation, I have yet to see a single project bearing his name.

Anyway, as for Frank Capra, Jr., Dale had good news and bad news. The bad news was that Capra had decided against co-producing "21" because it had "too many coffee stains," whatever that means. Interesting, this was some kind of history being made here, because jeez, remember Dale saying that Frank always helps him produce his projects, whether it is a Crase vehicle or a Capra-Crase vehicle? Hmmm.

The good news was that Crase loved Dale's Krebiozen pitch and wanted to co-produce it. Terrific, I thought, only I have not written "The K Conspiracy" yet, I had written "21", and it was "21" which I wanted to get made as soon as possible so I could get paid! Oh yeah, the other good thing was that Capra, Jr. was about to become the head of a film studio.

Holy cow, the head of a film studio! You have got to be kidding. We are in. We are players. Yeah, right.

About every two months for the next year or so I asked Dale about Capra and that studio head job, and Dale always leaped through hoops to avoid answering it. In my research, I found out that Capra, Jr. was represented by Phil Gersch, he had at one time been involved in a company called Bon Jo Productions, and eventually I discovered the studio he was heading was the Screen Gem Studio, in that bastion of inside Hollywood wheeling and dealing that is...North Carolina. I also found out that he had been partners with Dale on a venture capital deal, which makes me wonder if their relationship is really based on a business separate from making films, which would mean that Dale's association with him is not all that beneficial to my screenwriting career, after all.

Do ya think?

Getting back to "21", my hopes went up when Dale informed me that Brian Dennehy wanted to play Ken Uston. Dennehy is represented by the Susan Smith Agency, and Dale told me that one day the agents were gathered around talking about potential Dennehy projects. One of them said such and such sounds good, when Dennehy walked in, tossed "21" on the table in front of them, and said, "If you think that is good, read this!"
Over the next couple years, I periodically asked Dale what ever happened to Dennehy attaching himself to the project, and his answers vary every time. If you ask him now, he will tell you that it was not "21" Dennehy was talking about. Put yourself in my shoes. If you are a struggling screenwriter, and you hear that kind of affirmation about what you wrote, are you going to forget the details? Later, I called the Susan Smith Agency, and was told that they do not represent writers (anymore), they never heard of Dale Crase, and have no knowledge of Brian Dennehy wanting to do a film called "21". So there.

Then there was the former Warner Brothers or M.G.M. executive (Dale rarely uses actual names), who read and liked "21" and was going to recommend it to Alec Baldwin. That scenario ended up in the same black hole as most everything else.

Anyway, in the Indian Summer and Fall of 1996, I wrote "The K Conspiracy". On November 6, I finished it, but Dale told me he could not read it because he was sick. God help me I swear, that man was sick from November 6 to January 15. Zero occurred whatsoever (of course that does not matter, since this included the "Christmas lull").

Finally, in mid-January we met (Dale was half an hour late) at a barbecue restaurant, where Dale spilled butter and sauce on my master copy. In the two and a half months that had passed, Dale had managed to pick out a few typos, change a comma here and there, and make a few totally minor, virtually insignificant changes. I asked if he could start trying to pitch "K" in Hollywood, and he said he wanted the script finished first. Of course, based on his "changes," that would take me about half a day. How about then?

It is interesting to note that Dale made no attempt to market "K" prior to my finishing the script to his satisfaction. Considering that what I had written in November was pretty much what he considered to be to his satisfaction in May, he wasted six months that could have been spent trying to get a deal, especially considering that he eventually decided against using the script to drum up interest (which may be why he never drummed up interest). For the most part, he always sent out a package of documentary-type material instead of my screenplay.

Anyway, I went back to my computer, made the changes, and half a day later got the revision back to him. He got his "changes" back to me some time in March. A sentence here. A typo there. You get the picture. This went on, as I say, until May. Late May.

Look up "frustration" in Webster's and you will find my picture there. Dale did dangle a carrot in front of me by telling me about some gal named Millie he knew in New York City, who was friends of friends of Manhattan socialites like Jackie Onassis. Millie was his "point woman" on the fundraising scene, and she loved the "K" story, and was in the process of raising enough money to independently jumpstart production of the film. I would, of course, be the first to see a return on my investment.

In the mean time, Dale, realizing he had a pure nugget on his hands, approached me about writing another script, this time the pilot for a proposed television series called Bandit. Bandit is the story of Richard "Bandit" Bandettini, who somehow got talked into signing his story rights over to Dale. I have never seen that contract.

Bandit was California's number one parole officer, who once talked his way out of being held hostage by using techniques that are now taught to every law enforcement officer in the state.

Silly me, I actually asked for the Writers Guild Minimum (approximately $30,000 for t.v. movies). Dale started to laugh, quickly feigned seriousness, and came back with an offer of zero, to which I replied that I was no longer going to work for free (or, in my case, free minus what I
paid him). He came back with $500. I almost walked out on him, until he calmed me down
by stating that this project was far along with a couple networks, and several big name actors
wanted in on the role (which is actually a great man's man role), and this and that. He had so
much information I would hardly have to research anything, the script would write itself.

Incredibly, I actually got the man, this big time producer who has all the backing and
power of the legendary Capra film dynasty behind him, to give me a grand up front, and $500
upon completion. Can you believe it? Dale actually wrote me a check. Not from his "company
account." Not something traceable, oh no.

A cashier's check.

Of course, after paying me $1,500, this meant that he still owed me $11,500 before
saying he could say he had paid me zero dollars, before expenses and taxes. Oh boy.

I wrote Bandit in the Spring of 1997. I met Dale in front of a yogurt shop at the Northgate
Mall in San Rafael to collect my $1,000 check. I was in a hurry to get back to Los Angeles.
Before giving me the check, Dale shoved a "contract" in front of my face, which stated that I
would get a $10,000 bonus (to be paid with Other People's Money), when "The K Conspiracy"
grew into production, but one proviso was that I not show the screenplay to anybody in the
business. That did not seem like a good idea to me, especially since I wanted to use this as my
best writing sample in order to lure agent's. Dale assured me that he would release me of that
proviso, in writing, by the end of June, 1997, as soon as he had shown "K" to "my people."

Being in a hurry to make it back to L.A., as I was not spending any more time in Marin,
and based on his assurance that the "no show" proviso on "K" would last just a month and a half
(plus I needed that stupid $1,000 right now), I signed. Do you know, Dale acted like he was
handing me a check for $100,000, not $1,000. He said something about how this was the first of
many more, which for some reason made me laugh coming from him.

When I completed the script, back to Marin I went, only Dale was in San Francisco
across the bay, and he had that last $500 check, but he asked that I come by one of the major
hotels at Union Square to pick it up--if that was not too much bother.

Do you know what a pain in the ass it is to drive into Union Square and find parking (at
about $9 an hour). "No problem," I gritted through my teeth. What a bother. The cost of
coming to San Francisco alone was eating up a fair amount of that lousy $500. I did it,
convincing myself this was the last time I would work for this dude.

Back in L.A., I managed to get one of the actors from Amistad to pay me a few bucks to
write (on spec) The Hunter's Dream, the story of an African hunter whose dream of becoming
king of his village comes true. I also wrote Baja California, a dark, quirky, edgy road movie, set
in Mexico, on spec for my buddy Tim Silano, an aspiring director whose editing credits include
the Oscar-winning Apollo 13.

Then I applied for a writing job with Lombard Films, a production company that was
developing the story of a Russian dissident who had survived the Soviet gulags when he saw
visions of the Virgin Mary, and against all odds had developed a tremendous following of
religious believers in the darkest days of Communism. Virginia Lombard liked my work, but
she had another writer with produced credits, and she wanted to read "The K Conspiracy",
which I had told her would be available shortly and was my best work.

This was mid-Summer, 1997. July 1 was the date Dale had promised me he would
release "K" so I could let people read it, but when I asked him, he said if I showed it around it
could hurt our "deal," and to stop asking him.
He never let Virginia read it, and Virginia hired the other writer, instead.

It was around that time that Dale left me a message that he might have some money available for me. I immediately called (remember, I can only leave messages on voicemail), and told him I would be happy to accept money for the work I did for him. Weeks passed, I left more messages, but the issue disappeared. I even wrote him a letter, included my bank deposit slip, and said that if it made it any easier, I would be happy to have him make the deposit himself. No reply. Eventually, when we met again (at Denny's; Dale was half an hour late), I asked about the "available money," and was told that his investors were just ready to help finance "K", but, wouldn't you know it, at the very last minute there was a blip in the stock market and the money had to be used for something else.

Uh-huh.

In August, 1997 I attended a public showing of Frank Capra's films showing at the NuArt in Santa Monica, where I introduced myself to Capra, Jr. and told him I worked with Dale Crase and had written "The K Conspiracy". The conversation lasted about 15 seconds, but Capra, Jr. did have a funny look on his face when he said, "Oh yeah, he's still trying to get that made." This from a guy Dale had told me was so excited about the project. Not to mention, his son was supposedly working on it, plus remember Dale's assurance that while he might own some projects on his own, Capra, Jr. always helped him.

I guess I just happened to get involved when circumstances changed.

Dale always talks about the money he spends. The $8,000 per month on office space. Rights fees for Uston, Desgrey and Bandettini. The $12,000 for Jimmy Huston. Travel expenses.

I never saw any office (but a lot of restaurants and coffee shops). I never saw any money (the $1,500 being $11,500 short of zero). I never saw any of his life story rights agreements. When it was his responsibility to pay for life story rights for Belinsky, he chose not to spend a dime. I have not seen him travel to Los Angeles in almost a year.

When I asked about Capra being the head of a studio, I received no response. I never met John Desgrey or Ken Uston's family. I actually met Bandettini once in passing.

As Summer began to turn into Fall, Dale informed me about something very exciting. Frank Capra III was extremely interested in "The K Conspiracy" and wanted to co-produce it. There was never much explanation about how his father had pretty much faded from the scene, but hey, Capra III is a guy who, as far as I can tell, is an up-and-comer in Hollywood.

Without really knowing all the facts, I nevertheless got a pretty good impression that Frank, Jr. is not filled with drive, although he did co-produce his father's retrospective, and landed a deal on A.M.C. Frankie has paid his dues, works hard, and has a good reputation. I know a few movie people who have worked with him and, although it is felt that by now he might be a little more prominent on the scene, he is a legitimate player.

With this in mind, Dale started filling my head with stories about how Frankie was working night and day on getting "K" made. Then Dale let it slip that two major companies wanted to do a deal. First, he said that Imagine Entertainment wanted to develop the material, but that he had turned it down because they were interested in it for H.B.O.

Later, I met some Imagine creative execs, none of whom had ever heard of "K" or Dale Crase.

Then, there was Castle Rock Entertainment, Frankie's "home." Dale said Frankie had personally walked a packet of "K" material in to Rob Reiner himself, and when Reiner looked at
it he was amazed and wanted to know if the story was really true. Reiner, according to Dale, was working on a project with William Goldman and did not have time to direct the film himself, but the company might very well finance it, if Taylor Hackford (Delores Caliborne) would agree to direct it. According to Dale, two studios were willing to make "K" if Hackford would direct, but he was apparently not the only "A" director they went after.

This was in 1997, when Dale told me Reiner would do it, but only in "1998-99." As of this writing it is June, 1998, and Dale has no deal with anybody. That 1998-99 timeframe sounds pretty good to me.

Later, I kept seeing stories about Reiner in the L.A. Times, about how he was spending the lion's share of his time raising money for pre-school education and was contemplating his next film venture. No mention of William Goldman.

Dale further told me about an unnamed Castle Rock vice president of production who had felt the Krebiozen story was not credible, but when Frankie told him Imagine wanted to do the deal had changed his tune and told him not to sign anything without checking with him first.

Later, I met some Castle Rock creative execs. None of 'em ever heard of "K" or Dale Crase, and none of them knew of Frankie shopping it around, either.

According to Dale, the assignment of getting Taylor Hackford on board fell on Frankie's shoulders. Frankie was called to Florida in the Fall, where Hackford apparently was having a desperate time getting The Devil's Advocate in the can, and Frankie was brought in to save the day. The word is that while Hackford can be hard to work with, he and Frankie are thick as thieves. Based on the final version of the film, Frankie must have been worth whatever Hackford paid him, and the story I got was that Travers--On The Hollywood Trail--Page 17

Hackford told him he would be happy to look at whatever he had when they got back to L.A.

The word from Dale was that Frankie called Hackford to arrange a meeting. I guess neither of 'em have cell phones, because I was told that over several weeks they kept leaving messages for each other but could not hook up. Hackford is married to an actress and I believe lives some of the time in Europe. Frustrated, Frankie mailed a packet of "K" material to him. I never heard another word about Taylor Hackford, except for a blurb in the Hollywood Reporter months later stating that he had switched agencies, from C.A.A. to I.C.M., and was available.

Then, according to Dale, Frankie's grandmother got sick, and since Frankie was very close to her, he began devoting all his free time to caring for her. This lasted the rest of the Fall of 1997. I never heard how she did.

Frankie, of course, was unable to work on "K" because of his grandmother, and then, according to Dale, because he had been working too hard, and not taking care of himself, Frankie got sick.

Week after week, Dale told me Frankie was too sick to work in any capacity. Frankie's illness lasted, according to Dale, from November to March.

At one point, Dale and Frankie had discussed taking the project to Arnold Kopelson, but ultimately decided against it because Kopelson wants too much of a slice of the producer's fees.

Hello. The man puts his own money on the line, and is a first class executive producer who can shepher a project from premise to premiere. He gets movies made. But no, Dale "Spielberg" Crase, which by now Dale had the chutzpah to call himself, will not work with him.

Also, Dale said he had top agents at Morris and I.C.M. reading it, and they all liked it. Funny, none of 'em called and told me that.
Let's not forget Bandit. Like Once He Was An Angel, Bandit was a semi-finalist of a screenplay contest. Throughout late 1997 and early 1998, according to Dale, Bandit was going out to actors such as Anthony La Paglia, Kevin Pollak, Denis Farina, Tom Selleck, Sam Elliott, Jimmy Smits, and many more. He told me it was getting a terrific response from actors, and that C.B.S. wanted to put it in their line-up. As of now, as far as I know, Bandit is a black hole some place.

There was Jake Blum, a big-time entertainment attorney who Dale said wanted to help us make "K". Dale never took that anywhere. Jake, if you are out there, I would love to hear from you.

Zero actually occurred as far as I could tell, and my attempts to find out anything were rebuffed. Dale did inform me that Castle Rock looked out because they were losing "Seinfeld" from their television division and were not funding film projects anymore.

Once a month or so since then I notice a new film opening under the Castle Rock banner.

I called I.C.M. to inquire about Hackford, and was informed by Patty Detroit, one of his agents, that Hackford had never been approached by Castle Rock, that when she called Castle Rock they knew nothing of this, and that she had never heard of "The K Conspiracy".

I met Michael Pritchard through Dale. Mike is a former parole officer who lives in Marin County. Dale met him at some retreat. Mike was the voice of Jaba the Hut in The Empire Strikes Back, was a stand-up comic who is friends with Robin Williams, and has some kind of relationship with George Lucas. We met at Max's Opera Cafe in January, 1998, and it was the first time I had met or spoken to any of Dale's contacts.

It was around this time that Dale told me he realized he was secretive, and displayed the framed photo of a woman he said was his wife.

As Clint Eastwood (playing Harry Callahan) would say, "Yeahhh."

Anyway, Mike and Dale wanted me to write a screenplay called The Lost Battalion, based on the true story of three World War I Congressional Medal of Honor winners. It is a fantastic story--think of The Longest Day meets Zulu--and of course I was offered zero dollars up front, some points I will never see, and a couple thousand bucks more than W.G.A. minimum, to be paid with O.P.M. at the time of principal photography.

My kind of deal. I had just finished a spec script I wrote with Tim Silano called Wicked, the story of a New York cop who goes undercover to nab a serial killer operating in the world of gonzo sex clubs, only to become seduced by his environment. I took Dale and Mike's deal. When I asked if Dale could help me secure an agent, which was part of his pitch to get my money in the first place, he said that Mike knew a lot of agents and would help me get an agent when I completed the screenplay, if he liked my work.

I submitted Battalion a month later, and shortly thereafter received a phone call from Mike Pritchard, who positively gushed over it, saying I was "the man," and this was one of the best scripts he had ever read, and he would not "change a thing," and on and on. Very flattering.

He had been involved with Dale on Bandit, and was familiar with my work. He had already told me how impressed he was with my writing on Bandit. I certainly had the confirmation I needed that Mike liked my work.

With this in mind, in March I submitted another draft, along with a letter requesting Dale and Mike to help me get an agent, per Dale's assurances in January, based on Mike's high praise of my work. Dale wrote back and told me that Mike wanted me to "back off and relax," and Dale told me not to rush them until the script had been completed to his "satisfaction." Of course
it was not until May that Dale had changed a word here and a comma there and we called the thing a final draft.

Mike and Dale asked me to write another script for free, but I finally had had enough. Congratulate me, I said no. Finally. Now watch the damn thing become the next Goodfellas.

In the meantime, realizing that I was getting the runaround from Dale (gee, do ya think?), I began a full-scale effort to get an agent. I had been writing for four years. I had tried too hard to sell my first screenplay, and hoped to land an agent before I was ready. Now, 11 scripts in hand, I was wiser and more sure of myself. It was time to find representation.

I researched K Callans "The Script is Finished, Now What Do I Do?", and the "Spec Sales Screenplay Directory". I called some of my friends in the biz asking for advice and references, then embarked on a query letter-writing campaign.

I wrote a pretty fair query letter, and actually got about 10 positive responses. I started sending out screenplays. Four agents responded and wanted to know more about me, and whether I had any deals in the works.

Get ready for a sad story, friends, because I began to tell them about Dale. I tried to hide the facts, but these people get right to the point. The questions included, "How much did he pay you?" Well, nothing. More questions, and a few of them actually discerned the truth, which was that I had paid Crase instead of the other way around.

These people all laughed at me for being such a fool. No writer ever pays a producer, I was told, didn't I know that? Of course I know that, I would sheepishly respond. I tried to put the best face on it that I could, but it was no use.

The agents asked who Dale was. None of them knew who he is. The fact is that of all the people I have ever spoken to, of all the hundreds of phone calls, letters and acquaintances I have made in the film industry, I have yet to find one single, solitary individual who has heard of Dale "Spielberg" Crase.

Anyway, a couple agents asked me to find out a little more about him. I responded that I had met Mike Pritchard.

"Who is Mike Pritchard?"

"He is a stand-up comic," I said. "He is friends with Robins Williams, the voice of Jaba the Hut..."

"Do you know this for sure?"

"Well, I heard him do imitations, and he says he knows..."

The bottom line is, I was told to find out who these people were I was dealing with before bringing my projects to these agents.

My next phone call was to Industrial Light and Magic. I asked for a reference on Pritchard. I called a friend of mine who writes entertainment articles for the Marin Independent-Journal. I received glowing reports of Mike in every way, from his community activism to his background in comedy and on screen. He checked out.

I wish Dale Crase would check out like that.

Next, I received a letter from Dale, who informed me that Mike was "furious" because I.L.M. had called him and told him I had been calling them about him. Dale told me Mike no longer wanted to help me, and no longer wanted to hear from me by phone, fax or mail.

I never heard any of this from Mike, just Dale. Hmmm.

I learned the name of an attorney at The William Morris Agency who knew Dale, but when I approached Dale to ask if he could have this guy help me get representation, Crase
reacted like a caged lion, writing a blistering, threatening letter to me, telling me in no uncertain terms not to make myself known to any of his important industry contacts.

When I submitted my final draft of *The Lost Battalion*, I again asked Dale and Mike to help me. Dale responded that Mike, in view of the I.L.M. incident, was still no longer willing to help me. Again, I got this information not from Mike, but from Dale.

Then Dale came up with another excellent excuse not to help me himself. It turns out that he and Mike (who already has an agent), need agents in order to send out *Bandit*, "*The K Conspiracy*" (somehow or other Mike is involved in that, too), and *The Lost Battalion*, and so he must concentrate his efforts on finding representation for himself. Things have changed, he said, and he no longer can help me.

Surprise, surprise.

I ask you, gentle reader, does this sound like the credible actions of a legitimate producer with nothing to hide?

You want to know something? Despite all this, I actually got an agent. Her name is Wanda Moore, and she is with The Gage Group. She agreed to be my agent. Would you believe it? Wait, there is a catch. Didn't you just know there would be a catch, and didn't you just know it would involve Dale?

Wanda, before embarking on turning me into Alan Sorkin, wanted copies of all my contracts with Dale.

Gulp. With great trepidation, I faxed them off. She called a few minutes later, still laughing at me.

"Did you actually pay money to Dale Crase?" she asked.

Lord, is this getting old? You know, as Paul Harvey would say, "the rest of the story." Wanda concluded that Dale is a charlatan, told me she would not represent me as long as I was associated with such a disreputable character, and said what I needed was not an agent but an attorney to disengage me from my contracts with him because none of them accorded me a "bargained for exchange," and also to handle the criminal fraud case my parents and I no doubt had against him.

Because I am associated with Dale, I cannot get an agent.

Recently I figured out the minimum amount of money he owes me.

It breaks down like this:

1. **Once He Was An Angel**: $5,000 (reasonable cost of a first-time option); $5,000 (reasonable cost of the first option payment). Total: $10,000.
2. "21": $33,000 (W.G.A. minimum); $8,000 (my parents "investment). Total: $41,000.
3. "*The K Conspiracy*": $33,000 (W.G.A. minimum); $5,000 (my "investment). Total: $38,000.
4. **Bandit** $30,000 (W.G.A. t.v. minimum).
5. **The Lost Battalion**: $33,000 (W.G.A. minimum).

**TOTAL**: $152,000.

Dear and gentle reader, that is my situation today. Before I sign off, and before I tell you to please learn from my errors, I have one more thing to say, and this will no doubt convince you even more that I am an idiot. I still, despite everything, have this strange, non-sensical feeling that I am somehow going to succeed as a screenwriter. Call it crazy, call it **wanderlust**, call it whatever you will, but I believe.

Furthermore, and this will really startle you, I need to say that I would love to eat my
words. I would so very much love to discover that Dale actually delivers on some of his promises and gets a deal, on at least one of the four projects I have with him. If Dale could do that, and say to me, "See, I told you so," man I would do cartwheels.

As I write this, I am informed by Dale that he actually has important meetings in L.A. this week regarding Bandit, "21", and that a "a major player" is being presented with "The K Conspiracy". Oh, he did not tell me their names.

He tells me Frank Capra III is still working on it. Maybe he is. Hopefully, he is. Maybe I am just paranoid, or impatient. Maybe he really will live up to calling himself Dale "Spielberg".

Maybe Mike Pritchard's claim that he will set up a meeting for The Lost Battalion for "all three of us" with Clint Eastwood and at I.C.M. will come true.

I know I should not hold my breath, but one can always dream, as Don Quixote said, "the impossible dream."

**YANKEES/MOB PITCH**

What if…?

In 1920, the New York Yankees became controlled by the Mafia? Ex-Congressman Jacob Rupert became the “front man” owner. Red Sox owner Harry Frazee is forced to sell Babe Ruth to the Yankees because the Mob gave him “an offer he couldn’t refuse.” Over the years, organized crime controls baseball and the Yankees, fixing the league year in and year out so that the Bronx Bombers would win. They become the single most successful of all Mob-run operations. Done in a tongue-in-cheek manner, this could be a real hit!

**NOTRE DAME: SATAN’S TEAM**

Or, how about the concept that in 1913, Knute Rockne made a deal with the devil to beat Army. George Gipp was really Satan’s messenger. Over the years, True Evil controls the destiny of “America’s Team.” Hey, if you are an Irish football fan, it’s all in good fun. If you are not an Irish football fan, you’ll really love this. If you’re an S.C. football fan, this is the Movie of the Century for you!

**THE SPORTS MOVIE CHANNEL**

An idea whose time has arrived.

In the 1950s, film producer Edgar Scherick watched television and he saw the future. A big New York sports fan, he created the Wide World of Sports and the baseball Game of the Week for the American Broadcasting Company. Despite giving Howard Cosell his start in broadcasting, Sherick’s idea turned out to be a pretty good one.
In 1979, Stuart Evey had an idea. 24-hour, seven-day-per-week all-sports programming. Crazy. His little venture in Bristol, Connecticut is now called ESPN.

A few years ago, Los Angeles screenwriter and sportswriter Steven Travers interviewed Evey and got the scoop on how ESPN was created. Just this year, Travers entered into a screenwriting deal with Scherick and actor James Woods. Scherick and Travers hit it off because they are both sports fanatics, and Shericks’ description of how he formed Wide World of Sports and the Game of the Week reminded him of Evey.

A few weeks later, Travers went to Anaheim in pursuit of a story. It seems that former Trojan and Raider quarterback Todd Marinovich is making a comeback in Canada, and his agent, Len Shulman of Spectrum Sports Group LLC, wanted to publicize it. Over lunch at Edison Field’s Diamond Club, Travers discussed Marinovich and other subjects with Shulman and his partners, Jim Bastian and Richard Marshak. Their law firm had branched into sports representation, and these guys turned out to be go-getters, the kind of young lions who can turn ideas into reality.

Evey and Scherick were discussed, and Travers had a brainstorm: The Sports Movie Channel. Bruce Springsteen sang about a New Millennium with 500 cable television stations serving a global marketplace hungry for news, sports and 24/7 entertainment. We have ESPN, MTV, CNN, TNT, VH-1, and countless other stations. Next is SMC.

“I knew I had a great idea,” says Travers. “I also knew I had to act on it. Fast. This is something that is bound to happen. As Bobby Kennedy once said, `If not us, who? If not now, when?’”

Plans were made to discuss the project further. Then Travers went to work. It turns out that he is the ideal person to blend the worlds of sports and entertainment. A product of USC’s School of Cinema-Televison, he has written more than a dozen screenplays, most in various stages of development. His credits include “The Lost Battalion”, “Wicked” and “Blackjack”. A former professional baseball player with the Cardinals and A’s, Travers attended law school, was a sports agent and a political consultant. His resume also includes sportswriting for the L.A. Times, StreetZebra Los Angeles magazine, and the Daily News Los Angeles.

“I have a lot of experience,” explains Travers, “and I know a lot of people. I have put coalitions together in politics, and I am comfortable treading in differing worlds.”

Travers’ first call was to an old friend he played collegiate summer baseball with in Canada. Former utility outfielder Todd McFarlane, it turns out, had created the “Spawn” comic book series, a film of the same name (starring Martin Sheen), and is now a multi-millionaire with an H.B.O. deal and Mark McGwire’s seventieth home run ball, purchased for $3.7 million.

“Todd is just right for this kind of project,” says Travers. “He is a sports nut with a lot of money and connections in Hollywood. People return his phone calls.”
Travers then called sports agents Leigh Steinberg and Rick Thurmond. “Steinberg’s office was interested immediately,” he said. “Especially when they heard I am shopping around to other agents. I worked in the business for two years and know how these people think. It’s just like Hollywood. If something is offered, they won’t show interest. Find out your competitor is looking at it, and you just have to get on the joyride.”

Steinberg is the well known “quarterback’s agent,” loosely portrayed by Tom Cruise in Jerry Maguire. Thurmond is a former Pepperdine baseball player who, like Travers, did a stint in the pros.

“I met Rick at an agent’s conference,” Travers recalled. “He and an old S.C. buddy of mine, Brian Cohen, helped Dennis Gilbert form the Beverly Hills Sports Council into the number one agency in baseball. Gilbert retired, and I called for Brian, but he has gone on to other things. Rick is kind of running the show now, and when he heard my idea my phone was ringing.”

Rhonda Richards runs the Bobby Ball Agency. A Hollywood modeling and casting firm, they recently incorporated Sports Unlimited Athletic Agency, Inc., a Portland-based company that has done a lot of work with Nike.

“‘We need to talk about this,’” was her first response, according to Travers. “These are just the first people I have talked to. I plan to approach Mike Ray, a billionaire real estate developer who has hired me for writing assignments, and his partner Jeff Cole. I am going to go back to Evey, and at the very least Edgar Sherick will have advice for me. I am talking to the (David) Wolper (Presents) people about a film project of mine, and I think they will want to hear more about the Sports Movie Channel. Andy Solomon of Sports Celebrity Network is a natural, too.”

The beauty part is that the project could yield a quick profit. Travers envisions sports movies ranging from “Pride of the Yankees” to “Field of Dreams” playing night and day, but filler time will include interviews and behind-the-scenes news that blends sports and Hollywood. His manager, Lloyd Robinson of Suite A Management, thinks it is one of the best ideas has has ever heard.

“Steve has hit a long ball, and it could reach the fences,” explains Robinson, a man who never met a metaphor he did not use. “S.M.C. can eventually produce sports films in-house. Steve has written a couple, and we will be looking for new material. But the best part is that we can make one-hour biographies of famous sports legends, past and present. I have experience pre-selling videos to Blockbuster and cable stations—including sports cable stations—and we can start out doing this until the whole operation is up and running.”

“I had a business partner once who paid me the ultimate compliment,” says the 6-6, 220-pound Travers, who is not afraid of self-promotion. “He said I was ‘relentless.’ He called me ‘Bud Fox.’ You know, the Charlie Sheen character in ‘Wall Street’.”

Of course, Bud Fox ended up in jail, but right now the only crime Travers is guilty of is of being passionately enthusiastic. Whether his idea pans out, well, many are called and few are lucky.
In order to find out more about the Sports Movie Channel, Travers can be reached through Suite A Management (310-278-0801) or by e-mail at STWRITES@aol.com.

“I don’t rely on luck,” he says. “As Branch Rickey once said, ‘Luck is the residue of design.’”

MAKE IT CLEAR, AND IF THERE’S A QUESTION…ASK

How many times do you hear about famous rock’n’roll bands that break up, full of ill feelings, and years pass without the members speaking to each other? Credence Clearwater Revival and The Guess Who are examples of creative geniuses who collaborated on great music, only to disband in a blizzard of lawsuits and accusations over copyright, ownership and money. Jim Morrison almost broke up The Doors when he found that they sold the words to “Light My Fire” for a car commercial, but Robby Krieger had written the lyrics, owned the song, and could legally do with it what he pleased.

The same thing applies to screenwriting. Like musicians, unknown writers often start as casual friends, throwing ideas around, and writing them down. At some point, friendship becomes a business partnership. When this happens, friendship goes out the window. No matter how casual the relationship is in the beginning, always get an agreement in writing and spell out the terms clearly. I have learned about this through painful experience.

When I was breaking into the business, I read an article in my local Hermosa Beach, California news weekly about Dennis Jarvis, a surf shop owner who had produced an unreleased flick called “The Last Days of Danny Pelvic and the Thrusters”. Figuring it could not hurt, I contacted him, and he told me about a snowboard idea that he thought was hot. He gave me a sequential outline of plot points, probably thinking he would never see me again, but instead I cranked out a screenplay called On the Edge. Jarvis liked it so much that he paid me $5,000 and signed me to a contract in which I would receive 33 percent of the script’s sale. Upon the sale I owe the five grand back.

Jarvis and his buddy, Donaldson Miele, came over to my house almost every night for the next month, and the three of us turned my first draft into a good screenplay. When it was done, I asked Jarvis to register it with the Writers Guild, so that the three of us would be protected as credited writers. I had a funny feeling, and asked him a couple times to show me the registration number for my records, but he never did. I called the guild and asked for a listing of all my credits. They sent me all my previous registered work, but On the Edge was not on there. I then registered and copywrote the work, indicating Jarvis, Miele and myself as the writers.

Jarvis, obviously impressed with my talent and work ethic, then hired me for $5,000 (to be deducted from the 33 percent I would receive when the script sells) to write a “back-to-the-future” surfing screenplay, The Way It Was. I asked for the money up-front. Dennis asked me to up-grade my computer (from my old DOS system to Windows95), which I did, but he only came up with $2,500 up-front, the rest upon completion.
When I acquired my new computer, I needed help getting up to speed, and in transferring my old files into workable Windows format. Jarvis’ friend, Alan Miyata, as a favor to Dennis, put a lot of time into upgrading my computer. I then wrote the first draft of The Way It Was, a.k.a. Summer of ’62. I submitted the first draft to him. At this point, I was hoping that Jarvis and Miele would work with me on the next draft(s).

In the mean time, Jarvis had submitted On the Edge to producer Morrie Eisenman and some other production companies. The feedback was that it was not dark enough, so Jarvis decided to write a new screenplay, Burning Snow, an R-rated murder mystery. This meant putting The Way It Was on the backburner. He asked me to help write Burning Snow. I agreed because I wanted to be a team player. Since this meant I would not be working on Way for awhile, it also meant I would not be getting my $2,500 soon. I asked Jarvis for the money ahead of schedule. He refused.

While this was going on, I got Edge into the hands of producer Dan Lux of Vin da Bona Productions. Lux in turn pitched it to Showtime, and over a period of months the screenplay went through all the layers of readers and creative execs in New York until Jerry Offsay killed it by saying he “didn’t want to do any (expletive) snowboard movies!”

The three of us cranked out three or four drafts of Burning Snow. I co-wrote it for free and without contract. My only protection is that I registered each draft with the W.G.A. and the register of Copyrights. Jarvis assembled an amateur crew to film a trailer of highlights at Big Bear Lake. Lux then called me and said he knew a producer (Yoram Barzalai) interested in On the Edge, and I was put in touch with a manager named Lloyd Robinson. Robinson, familiar with my work, invited me in when he learned I had no representation. I brought Jarvis and Miele along, and Robinson signed me as a client, but Jarvis and Miele decided to stay on their own, thinking they could cut a deal without anybody’s help. When Jarvis went to Eisenman, October Films, Tapestry Films, and the other companies he thought would do business with him, he was rejected.

I then went to Jarvis in an effort to revive The Way It Was. He told me I would be paid and that he never said to stop writing. I can only surmise that because he had been rejected, Jarvis was having second thoughts about even being in show biz. By this time, I was landing other work, and had been elevated to a higher status as a writer. Jarvis wanted to shelve the project, and since I was on to bigger things as a screenwriter and sportswriter, he probably felt I would not finish it, and thus I would not care about the remaining money. I still had a contractual obligation to complete it, however, and $2,500 is still $2,500.

I completed the second draft of the screenplay and submitted it to Jarvis, who responded that he was no longer interested in the project and would not pay me. I then made some more revisions and submitted a third draft to him, along with an invoice for $2,500. When he failed to respond by the due date I had given him, I called and he told me he never received it, even though I had physically placed it in his house. I gave him another copy of the screenplay, and another deadline for payment. When that came and went, I contacted him again, at which time he told me I had a letter detailing what needed to be done. He made reference to a letter that had been
included with the screenplay he never said he had received, so I concluded he was evading payment. When I did not receive his letter, I sued him in small claims court for the money.

When I did that, Jarvis finally provided me feedback and notes. I made substantial revisions based on the notes, and made my fourth submission.

Jarvis contended that a long list of changes needed to be made before the screenplay can be considered “complete.” My argument is that a screenplay is “fungible,” a living document that is never complete until the film is made, but in terms of determining when a producer owes a writer for his work, there must be some closure point. Otherwise, the producer can put off paying the writer, in theory, for perpetuity. I saw this this developing in our situation.

While all of this was going on, certain events came to light. I learned Jarvis had registered On the Edge after all, only he sent in his name only. He copyrighted it under his name as sole author, too. He also did not deny that when he sent Edge and Burning Snow to producers, he was replacing the title page with our three names on it, using just his name. Whether Miele knew this or cared I cannot say, but I sure care.

When confronted, Jarvis referred to the two contracts I had signed with him. Essentially, they say I am to receive $5,000 as an advance against 33 percent of the sale of the screenplays, and no further compensation. That means no additional promise of payment, but Jarvis tried to argue that it meant I would not get credit when the film’s get produced. Compensation, of course, is separate from credit, and I was glad I had protected myself with the W.G.A. and the register of Copyrights. It is important to note that “boiler plate” language on contracts is often not enforceable; the parties must have a “meeting of the minds” that effectuates a “bargained-for” exchange. I certainly never agreed to forego credit, and never would do that. Jarvis had attempted to pull one over on me.

Jarvis tried to charge me for the computer work that his friend had done as a favor to him, but of course that was never bargained for in advance, either, thus rendering it unenforceable. He also tried to say that I needed to provide the screenplay on a disk in Mac form, written on Final Draft software. Getting my Windows95 disk converted to Mac is not a problem, but none of this was ever agreed to before hand, orally or in writing. He did get another $500 to me, but then held me up on the Final Draft issue. This would mean I would have to re-write every word, plus pay the money for the software. As of this writing, I am waiting to go to small claims court, hoping that at the last minute the man will pay what he owes me.

Always see things through ahead of time. Every battle is won before it is fought, so if you plan to pick one, make darned sure the facts and the law are on your side. Next, ask yourself whether victory is worth it. What will be lost in a Pyrrhic Victory? The problem with confrontation is that when a person does not have the facts on his side, it is human nature to still defend his position. When that position is indefensible, it is inevitable that as they are broken down, their obfuscation’s exposed one by one, they will respond with emotion. That is when things get personal, which is why friendship should not be mixed with business. It is also why every little issue—schedule of payment, how much and when, credit, how many drafts, ownership, software
programs, and any of a dozen other things that seem unimportant in the beginning, can derail the writing train down the road.

Register every single draft of the screenplay throughout the writing process. It is each writer’s responsibility to cover his or herself. Do not count on the other guy. Some day down the road, it can mean millions of dollars.

Whenever possible, get it in writing. This reminds me of still another incident. *StreetZebra Los Angeles*, a monthly sports publication, decided to hire me as a sportswriter. We negotiated, came to a fair deal, and the president/C.E.O. of the company himself verbally made the offer. I accepted, we shook on it, and that was that. I was hired, the parameters of my new job were clearly spelled out, and my salary determined. I was told that I was being groomed to be the managing editor.

My good friend Brad Cole, an actor in New York, was visiting me, and the first thing he asked when I told him the good news was, “Did you get it in writing?” Yes, I lied, too ashamed to admit that I had failed to do just that. Surely, I thought, this company is not going to give me the short end of the stick. Think again.

I began work, quite amped and pleased with myself. A short time later, the president/C.E.O. called me in, and told me some such thing about investors he was counting on who had not come through, etc., etc. The bottom line is that the offer of employment, which I accepted and from which I had begun work, was nullified. I was reduced to freelance status, which pays considerably less than the position, carrying less responsibility and importance, a lot more uncertainty, and about the same amount of work.

While a verbal contract is binding, I had no witnesses, and enforcing my rights under the circumstances would be a long shot. Get it in writing!

**SOUTHBAY PRODUCT, PEPPERDINE BALLPLAYER NOW A SOAP OPERA STAR**

The newest soap opera heart throb, Bradley Cole of CBS’ “A Guiding Light”, was born in Torrance, and grew up in a typical, big, suburban California household. Sports dominated life for Brad and his three brothers. Sister Jenna and mother Joan tolerated the ruffians.

His younger brother, Darren, loved sports but was not as good playing them as Brad, Jeff and Colin. Darren drifted into the arts, and by his sophomore year in high school was a legitimate stage presence. Darren went on to study theatre at the University of Southern California, the school that graduated his parents and older brother.

Brad starred as a left-handed pitcher in high school and for one year in junior college. Scouts started paying attention. He was ready to go to USC, but coach Rod Dedeaux already had a stack of scholarship guys standing in his way. Pepperdine was building a major baseball program, and coach Mike Zuber needed southpaws, so it was off to Malibu for Cole.
Brad was a member of Pepperdine’s 1979 club that finished third in the College World Series. “We were a bunch of cowboys,” Brad recalls. “Everybody had a three-day growth, chewed tobacco, and played the game the way it was meant to be played.”

The club included catcher Chuck Fick, second baseman Mike Gates, and pitcher Ted Pallas. They played superb defense, broke up double plays and pitched high and tight.

“We would have won the National Championship, I think,” recalls Cole, “but we blew a seventh inning lead in the semi-finals.” Another Torrance product, Dave Weatherman, pitched the Cal State, Fullerton Titans to a 2-1 victory over Arkansas in the title game.

“Pepperdine is a Christian school,” says Cole. “Girls there are innocent, everybody is conservative. The baseball players were heavy partiers, we took advantage of the rules, but we were tolerated because we put the school on the map.”

Cole needed an extra semester to graduate in the fall of 1981. He was infatuated with a beautiful student actress. With time on his hands, he figured one way to be around the girl was to try out for a role in the school production of Ken Kesey’s “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”. His audition was the famous “baseball scene” that won Jack Nicholson the 1975 Oscar. Cole won the role, and a star was born. Sort of.

Brad starred on stage, screen and television from 1984 to 1996—in Europe. “I was pretty big over there,” he says, “but when I came back to Hollywood, my home town, nobody wanted to hear about it.”

Cole lived in Manhattan Beach from 1997-98, worked on his music, took acting classes, and ate humble pie. He returned to Europe to perform a role in a Parisian stageplay with the legendary Jean-Paul Belmondo, but in May, 1999 he landed the role of Prince Richard on the popular daytime drama “A Guiding Light”.

He moved to New York, and now his role has developed some interesting twists. He is the British monarch of an island colony who has lost his son when his ex-wife became an amnesiac. Now he has found the lady, who is re-married, but his struggle is to see to it that his son is allowed his place as heir within the royal family.

The brother who drifted into the arts? Darren Cole has been in New York since the early 1980s, and last year struck it rich when he produced the hit off-Broadway play “Killer Joe”, starring Scott Glenn and Amanda Plummer.

“I don’t know,” muses Brad, “whether New York is big enough for the both of us.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE
THE BIG BOY BLOWS

29 years ago, Arnold Palmer embodied the frustration of his sport for millions

The Big Boy
The Big Boy--Arnold Palmer--was fresh from setting an all-time money winning record and enjoying a brilliant season in 1961. Palmer, with his boyish smile topping powerful shoulders, had captured the American public's imagination during 1960 as few golf stars ever had. Now he was here, at little ol' Rancho, on Pico Boulevard, on the ninth tee, driving in the first round of the event.

"It <L.A. Open> is a tournament I like to do well in," recalls Palmer. "I've won it three times. I came up to the hole some two strokes under par. To wind up with a 69, I needed only get a par five on this hole. But I wanted to do better--I was thinking of getting a birdie or, if possible, an eagle."

"He doesn't play a golf course," L.A. Times writer Jim Murray once said of him, "he tries to obliterate it." Never was that a more accurate statement than on this date at Rancho.

"Arnold's as strong as a blacksmith," says longtime L.A. golf figure Walter Keller. "You gotta understand somethin'. Arnie don't back off from nothin'."

The Big Boy pulled a 3-wood from his bag after an accurate 270-yard monster shot. He was going down the funnel, over the traps and straight for the pin from a distance of more than an eighth of a mile.

Palmer swung at his ball. It zoomed off his clubface on a line--over the screen fence out of bounds to the right into the driving range.

"I hit a good shot--but it went wrong," is Arnie's explanation.

"He could hit any kind of shot," said Keller. "He just made a mistake, that's all. He said he made a decision to play left or right and just opened up a shade too much. He never backed off from nothin', ya see, that's the way he plays."

The crowd gasped. This was not what they had waited to see. They could make such a shot themselves; indeed, many had on this public course! It had cost two strokes under the rules of the day.

"The only thing I could do was take a penalty stroke and go back to my original lie in the fairway," said Palmer.
Palmer dropped another ball over his shoulder. Again he swung. Again his ball flew into the driving range. The crowd's oohs and ahs, punctuated by little feminine screams, were plainly audible this time.

The Big Boy's face did not change so much as a muscle twitch. He dropped a third ball over his shoulder, obviously correcting his stance addressing it. The crowd leaned forward. Now it would see a real King Palmer shot.

Crack! Away the ball sailed to Palmer's left, out of bounds over the grandstand onto Patricia Street. That did it. Roars and screams burst from 3,500 throats. Palmer had belted three balls out of bounds with three consecutive shots. It simply was not possible, yet they had witnessed it with their own eyes.

Palmer dropped a fourth ball, hit it.

All restraint left the spectators. They stood and howled, roared with laughter, gleefully and hysterically waved to the lonely figure far down the fairway that this one, too, had gone where the woodbine twineeth, clear out of the lot onto Patricia Street!

"The important thing was confidence," remembers Palmer. "Or stubbornness."

Murray again: "He doesn't play a course. He collides with it."

This was admiration
Palmer mumbled to his caddy, dropped the fifth ball he had put into play on the hole. He swung at it.

The crowd roared again but the tone was far different. This was admiration. Here was a true Palmer shot, straight for the green to roll to the back edge. The Big Boy, after all his woes, had been the first man to hit a second shot past the ninth pin that day.

Palmer cupped his ball with two putts. As he walked off the green marking his card with a "12" for the hole he sighed and said, "That's a nice round number." His only explanation, the explanation of a real champion, was "I hit four bad shots."

The golfer of the year did not survive the 36-hole cut of the first event of 1961. Arnie, in his usual fashion, quipped, "If I could have sunk that putt, I'd have gotten down in 11." Palmer was unfazed by his momentary lapse, and came back to win the Open in 1963.

"Rancho's a good course," says Keller, "and Palmer did more for golf than anyone who ever played."
The L.A. Junior Chamber of Commerce, sponsors of the classic, decided to offer moral encouragement for all the weekend players who play Rancho. They put in a stone plaque on the eighteenth tee, which diagrams the Palmer disaster there in 1961.

Asked what he thought the plaque should say, Palmer quipped, "Like 'Arnold Palmer wept here.' They had a neat idea: To memorialize a colossal failure. The kind of failure that might comfort--if not enlighten--the regular clientele."

Check it out.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

TRACK AND FIELD

THE HEIR APPARENT TO FLO JO

If the University of Southern California were a country, they would have finished fourth behind the USSR, USA and East Germany at the 1976 Montreal Olympics. The Trojans' have dominated track and field in a way few colleges have dominated any sport, winning no fewer than 26 National Championships. Since their last one was in 1976 under then-coach Vern Wolfe, and the football team's last number one finish was in '78, however, critics have taken to calling SC Yesterday U.

One cannot vouch for the gridders', but SC track is back. Leading the way is a delightful 5-2 sophomore named Angela Williams. Okay, Angela was singled out by Florence Griffith Joyner when she was 12, anointed as Flo Jo's "heir apparent." Sure, she lived up to that accolade at Chino High School, where she was the nation's fastest female track athlete in history. Of course, when she won the NCAA 100-meter championship as a freshman, it just fulfilled her destiny, and when she comes home from the Sydney Olympics draped in gold, you will just say, "I heard it first in StreetZebra." All these things are true, and more.

That being said, what is most wonderful about Angela is her character, her personality, and her sense of duty. Read on.

"The drive I get from sports, I apply to my education," says Angela. "My focus is on pediatrics. I want to work with kids, maybe in physical therapy. I'm also interested in the law and sociology. What I'd really like would be to organize a boys and girls home, an orphanage for kids who are 16 and over. Then I want to organize a group of homes."

How many 20-year olds think about things like that? Not many.
"I mean, I want to be set financially," she continues, "but my parents taught me that I have to do what makes me happy."

What also makes her happy is dancing, watching music videos, swimming and hanging out with her friends.

Angela and her coaches are actually more focused on the Olympics' than on the early part of the collegiate track season.

"My coaches brought it to the forefront," she says. "My training is focused on the summer. Lately, I'm only running 400s, but I'll be ready to sprint when the NCAAs come around. If I have a chance to compete in the Olympics, I'll be ready and just ask the Lord for guidance."

On the subject of the "lonely path" of choosing track, Angela says, "I can't rely on others. I want to be a mentor who brings others into the sport. It's important to have others to look up to, but when you are alone you must be positive, because people are looking for you to fall."

As for her place in track history, Angela's philosophy is to "strive for records, and make my own history. My main focus is for people to know me as a good person with character. I mean, of all the great runners, Wilma Rudolph is remembered because she stands out as a loving person of character."

What is so impressive about Angela is that she understands the unique gifts God has blessed her with, and she genuinely wants to use those gifts to influence people.

"I just want to stay focused," says Angela, as if there was any chance she would stray from her purpose. "My parents taught me not to rest on my laurels and stay on level ground."

As long as the ground is level, Angela will be breaking records.

Kareem Kelly, Darrell Rideaux, Sultan McCullough and Miguel Fletcher

Spring football gets early start...at Cromwell Field

Three years ago, Long Beach Poly High sprinters Kareem Kelly and Darrell Rideaux almost came to blows with Muir High sprinter Sultan McCullough at the Simplot Indoor Games in Boise, Idaho.

Now, the taunting has turned into teamwork.

Now, the three speedsters combine with Miguel Fletcher to run the 400-meter relay for the USC track team.

"We didn't get along back in high school," says Rideaux. "We were bitter rivals. But we get along great now and are glad to be teammates."
Kelly won the state 100-meter title in 1999 (he also won the 200 in 1998 and '99). Rideaux won the 100 in 1998. McCullough had injuries, but was a key element in Muir capturing two national track titles in his career.

Aside from track, all four were prep football All-Americans, Kelly and Rideaux at receiver and cornerback, respectively (Poly was ranked number one in the state), McCullough and Fletcher (Alemany) at tailback.

After running together on the Alameda Contra Costa Track Club in 1998, they warmed to the idea of being teammates. Mutual respect replaced fierce dislike.

"Sultan and I were lining up for a race one time," recalled Rideaux. "Suddenly he turned to me and said, 'You're cool, Rideaux. You're a good runner.' It was an odd thing to say, considering the circumstances, but ever since then, we've gotten along."

It was their track potential which was the deciding factor in the four attending USC on football scholarships.

"We knew we would be faster than anyone on the track if we all joined forces," said Rideaux.

Football coach Paul Hackett has benefited from the influx of speed on his team. Last season, Kelly set USC and Pac-10 freshman receiving records, and was the conference Freshman of the Year. McCullough showed signs of brilliance backing up Chad Morton, while Rideaux and Fletcher saw considerable playing time.

McCullough was the 1999 Pac-10 100-meter champion (as well as the fastest under-20 sprinter in the world). Fletcher garnered track All-American honors last year, while Kelly, whose best 100 times in at 10.37 seconds, anchors the relay team.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

VOLLEYBALL

THEY CALL HIM SINJIN

*The Grand Old Man of Volleyball trains hard for Sydney.*

He is one of the all-time greatest players in history, a 43-year old legendary groundbreaker, the Babe Ruth of beach volleyball. But more than just a talent, he represents the face of his game. Watching Sinjin Smith play, whether it be a grueling practice session in Manhattan Beach, or competing for high stakes in an international competition, one is struck by the experience he
brings to the sand. At 6-3, he is considered short next to the buffed, 6-8 monsters he plays against. Time has eroded his quickness and power. A good analogy, though, would be to compare Sinjin with a one-time 20-year old baseball flame-thrower who brought 96-mile per hour heat, but is now a veteran who throws 86 MPH, succeeding with control, placement and strategy.

"That's a very valid analogy," says Sinjin, whose real name is Christopher St. John Smith. Sinjin is the old English pronunciation of St. John.

Smith reached the $1 million mark in prize money back in 1992, has won eight FIVB International Championships of Beach Volleyball, three World Championships, two Tournament of Champions, and two King of the Beach Invitationals. He was voted AVP "Best Defensive Player" three times, and tied the record for most wins in a season (16) with ex-partner Randy Stoklos in 1987.

A conversation with him is part history lesson, part philosophy, and part volleyball's State of the Sport.

"International and Olympic competition is looking pretty good," says Sinjin, "but the American tour is going downhill, it's not where it was five, 10 years ago. In the U.S."

On a glorious spring day in LA's South Bay, Sinjin looks out at the blue Pacific behind him, then at the procession of bikini-clad lovelies rollerblading along the Strand, and he smiles when asked if there is any better way to make a living.

"No, absolutely not," he says. "This is my office. Usually the sun shines. Playing is the easy part. I practice two, three hours, that's the real work. Plus, we travel to the best beaches in the world, and get paid. As fun as it may look, it's difficult to do what we do in the sand, but I wouldn't trade it for anything."

**VERT training**

Smith is in remarkable physical condition, and part of that is because of his workout regimen at Santa Monica's VERT training facility.

"At my age, I have to keep up with guys 20 years younger," he explains. "I need the best possible program to help me. I can lift weights anywhere, but I don't really know how much it helps me. With the VERT machine system, they can identify my weaknesses, and determine what range of motion I need to work on."

**A last shot at Olympic glory**

Sinjin feels that he has as good a shot at making it to the Sydney, Australia Olympics as any American. Right now, his partner, Carl Henkel, is injured, but he should be recovered in time to make a strong run. Smith, an All-American at UCLA who is a member of their Athletic Hall of Fame, participated in the 1996 Atlanta Games, the year beach volleyball was introduced. For years, his partner was another American legend from the Los Angeles beaches, Karch Kiraly.
Like Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, who feuded in the 1960s, Sinjin said he "doesn't have a relationship" with Kiraly, stemming from negative comments Kiraly made about him prior to the last Olympics. He does feel that for the game to prosper, top people like Kiraly and himself should communicate. Like Nicklaus and Palmer, who eventually made up, perhaps there will be a burying of the hatchet in the future. Smith certainly does not have a problem with that.

In 1990 Sinjin made an appearance in the volleyball film "Sideout", starring C. Thomas Howell, and while acting might seem to be a natural for someone with his looks, charisma and natural athleticism, he is not compelled to put the effort into it that he does for volleyball.

_California dreamin'_
Sinjin enjoyed talking about his early influences.

"Growing up in Santa Monica," he recalls, "my heroes were beach volleyball players who were unknown on the outside, but were superstars within the sport's community. That left a big impression on me."

Sinjin, who won his first Open tournament with Mike Norman at the 1977 Rosecrans Open, played a major role first in expanding the sport, then in making beach volleyball an Olympic competition.

"Before the 1980s, the sport was confined to California," he says. "We helped sponsors to see the excitement, from there we brought the game to the Great Lakes and everywhere, and through TV and radio interviews we promoted it to the people. We showed them that it was a game of true athletes with great skills.

"I also played a substantial role with the IOC, lobbying for beach volleyball, talking to <IOC President> Juan Antonio Samaranch," he says.

In the volleyball world, when Sinjin Smith talks, people listen.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THE SCREENPLAYS OF STEVEN TRAVERS

ONCE HE WE WAS AN ANGEL

a treatment of the screenplay

_When Bo Belinsky, a playboy baseball player, bon vivant and man about town, rises to great fame in 1960s Hollywood, he is unable to handle success, fails in his career and marriage, then_...
It is May 4, 1962, and 25-year old Bo Belinsky, a rookie lefthanded pitcher for the Los Angeles Angels, enters the Whiskey-A-Go-Go, a swinging bar on the Sunset Strip. At six-feet, two inches tall, 185 pounds, Bo is handsome in the style of a Valentino. He has terrific charisma, and sports a sexy scar on his left cheek, just under the eye, right where Central Casting would have wanted it. Bo drinks whiskey, a cigarette dangles loosely out of the side of his mouth. He wears a sports coat with an open-necked shirt. The bar is wild. Pretty girls are everywhere. Loud rock music pounds.

Everybody in the bar seems to know him, since he is an emerging sports celebrity in L.A. The attractive women at the Whiskey all want him to pay attention to them, but Bo is nothing if not cool. This is not a desperate guy.

He sees a tall, beautiful, young brunette and decides she is the one. At first she plays hard to get. Bo’s easygoing charm, cool and unhurried way, his winning smile and seductive bedroom eyes are a combination too hard to resist. After a brief conversation, they go to her nearby pad for a night of wild sex. Afterward, he invites her to Dodger Stadium for a game he is scheduled to pitch, but she cannot make it. He asks her for another date, and she assures him they will hook up again, probably at the Whiskey. When asked her name, she tells Bo to simply think of her as his Lucky Charm.

That night, Belinsky throws a no-hit game for the Angels against the Baltimore Orioles, an event that immortalizes the young lady forever in his mind as his Lucky Charm.

“I never did find my Lucky Charm,” he tells a sportswriter years later.

The interview takes place in bizarre surroundings. It is the morning after a big party in a Hollywood Hills mansion. Bo is wearing cream-colored swim trunks with the initials “BB” on them, has put on about 10 pounds and his hair is longer, shaggy, in the hippy style of the day. He remains darkly handsome and the added flesh, the lines and tiny stubble of beard somehow make him look better than he did in 1962. He looks truer, more substantial, as if the lines and the added pounds had forced upon him dimensions and substance he did not have then. He no longer possesses that pampered, self-satisfied look that gave one the impression that if you grabbed hold of him, your hands would slip off from the grease.

The room is occupied by eight people in various states of leisure, all quiet, as if thee room were a Universe and each was a separate planet. A definite contrast exists between the men and the women in the room. A painter in overalls is brushing a wall next to a window, which overlooks a pool. He appears completely distanced from his work and his gaze is instead upon two incredibly gorgeous, tanned, topless young girls sunning themselves next to the pool below the window. Aside from Bo, the other men in the room are distinguishable by the fact they are all the kind of middle aged men who have long hair to try to cover up bald spots, muttonchop sideburns, hungover expression and garish clothes.

Aside from the sunbathing beauties, there are two other women in the room. Linda is thirtyish and fleshy but sexy as hell in her bikini. She has red hair and large, mouth-watering breasts. Bonnie is 18, wearing a flowered bikini, tall and slender and beautiful, a stray pick-up from the night before when Bo and his party toured the Sunzet Strip and ended up at the mansion of Bo’s old friend Hugh Hefner.
Now, it is morning. “Beautiful Loser” by Bob Seger gently plays, and Bo ruminates about the loss of his Lucky Charm as a metaphor for his failed career. “Maybe if I’d found her, thing would have been different.”

Belinsky’s no-hitter had propelled him to dizzying heights if fame, and made him the darling of the Los Angeles sporting press. Despite all the hoopla surrounding his performance on and off the field, Belinsky remains ambivalent about his notoriety.

“What was I thinking then?” he says. “I was thinking, man, a no-hitter, that’s nice! I wonder what happens next.”

Bo Belinsky was a pool hustler from Trenton, New Jersey who never played high school ball. He played sandlot ball for kicks, and when the cops were turning up the heat on racketeering in his neighborhood, Bo decided to lay low for awhile, taking an offer from the Pittsburgh Pirates to play on their lowest minor league team.

From 1956-61, Belinsky played in a lot of bush league towns, infuriating every manager he had along the way. He also became notorious for his womanizing, his wild ways, his devil-may-care attitude. All the while, he displayed ability as a pitcher, which proved frustrating to the team’s he played for, because he never took the game seriously.

When Bo is accused by an underage girl of statutory rape, he is shipped off to Aberdeen, South Dakota to pitch for Earl Weaver.

In Spring Training in Miami, 1961, Bo gets in trouble when his next door neighbor turns out to be the reigning Miss World. His teammates drill holes in the wall to “peep” at the beauty, and of course Belinsky gets blamed.

In Little Rock, Arkansas, Bo has a whirlwind romance with the woman he claims to be the widow of a wealthy industrialist. They live high on the hog, until she disappears. She turns out to be the wife of a jilted Army general who meets Bo by chance in a bar. Bo, ever the slick talker, charms his way out of trouble.

In Mexico he is slipped a Mickey Finn and goes on a one-week drunk. His team went one way, he went the other/

“It was always like that with me,” he recalls, sipping his vodka and puffing on the cigarette. “I don’t feel sorry for myself. I knew sooner or later I’d have to pay the piper. You can’t beat the piper, babe; I never thought I could. But I’ll tell you who I do feel sorry for – all those guys who never heard the music.”

In 1962, Belinsky is on the roster of the expansion Angels. On a slow news day, L.A. Herald-Express sportswriter Bud Furillo hears about this unknown rookie holding out for an extra thousand bucks, so he calls him in Trenton and asks what he is doing.

“I’m shooting a lot of pool and laying a lot of broads,” Bo tells him.

The next days’ headline: “Angels find a devil.”

Belinsky keeps holding out, and the press picks up on the quote and the story. By the time he reports to Palm Springs, he is national news, and the Angels must hold a special poolside press conference, complete with cocktails and bikini-clad local talent, to accommodate the press.

Bo is given little chance to make the squad, but in an effort to attract (mostly) female fans, they bring him to L.A. to begin the season, and when given the chance, he pitches well. Then, he pitches a no-hitter. A star is born.

Belinsky is befriended by Walter Winchell, Frank Sinatra, and J. Edhgar Hoover.

He dates Ann-Margert, Connie Stevens and Mamie Van Doren.
Every move is chronicled in the press, courtesy of Winchell. He purchases a “lipstick red” Cadillac convertible and moves into a bachelor pad in the Hollywood Hills, but his off-field antics are too much for his manager, Bill Rigney. They are too much for Bo, whose effectiveness on the mound eventually decreases. He is arrested on Sunset Boulevard at 5 AM when he tries to push a too-amorous female admirer out of his car.

Belinsky is the most publicized athlete in America from 1962-64, a period in which Willie Mays, Johnny Unitas, Mickey Mantle and other stars grace the scene. He becomes engaged to Mamie Van Doren, and in 1964 pitches well enough to be considered for the All-Star Game.

In Boston, Bo misses curfew but is caught only because his team’s hotel burns down. “Boys,” he tells the writers, “you know you’re going good when you beat a bed check and your hotel burns down.”

Shortly thereafter, it all comes crashing down when he slugs elderly L.A. Times sportswriter Braven Dyer in a Washington, D.C. hotel room.

“It’s no fun knowing that in every home in America your birthday is celebrated as a day of infamy,” Belinsky exaggerates to the writer, years later.

Still, Belinsky made one last hurrah. Towards the end of his career, he married Playboy Playmate of the Year Jo Collins, and the nuptials made enormous headlines. However, Jo’s involvement with Hefner and the magazine caused terrible jealousy, and after a car accident and a dangerous night of Russian roulette, the bottom finally has fallen out for Bo Belinsky’s marriage and career.

“Baseball’s a beautiful thing,” he reminisces to the writer. “It’s clean. It stays the same. It’s an equalizer. It moves slowly around us when everything is rushing like mad…I just never knew how to express myself, that’s all. I loved the game, but I loved it my way, not the way people told me to love it. It kept me straight. Who knows what I might have been without it? Baseball was the one big thing in my life – if my life contained any big thing…I don’t like to see people hurt. When I sense things are falling apart – I have this radar – I snap alert, and I’m gone. I hate it, this way I am. But who chooses to be what he is, huh? It’s in the stars, babe, in the stars. You can shave all the fur off a leopard, but afterward its still got all its spots, right?

“The age of chivalry is dead, babe. There are no more heroes.”

Linda pours Bo some more Vodka.

“This conversation’s getting a little heavy. Too heavy.”

Bo “retired” from baseball in 1970. He lives with living with a hooker in Malibu, and gets heavily into drugs and alcohol. At one point he is virtually homeless.

He moves to Hawaii to be a suf bum, and only the largesse of women and “friends” keeps him going.

One day, Bo sees an attractive young woman struggling in the surf. He wades into the choppy water, the swift-moving tode pulling his tired body, but the old athlete still has the strength to pull the girl to safety.

She turns out to be Jane Weyerhauser, heiress to the Weyerhauser aluminum fortune. They get married. But the relationship has little chance of surviving Bo’s substance abuse problem.

Finally, two things save Bo Belinsky: Jesus Christ and Alcoholics Anonymous.

On an airplane, Bo meets a troubled young man, and he holds the young man and his father spellbound with stories of his own troubles.
Later, when the man and his son return home and begin the road to resolving their differences, the man writes Bo a thank you letter, telling him that he has helped make a difference.

Bo is like that. He will tell you about his life if you ask him, and he has the ability to make a difference.

“Let me tell you a story of a guy who had everything, man,” he will begin. “Do you have a few minutes?”

THE "K" CONSPIRACY

A treatment

BLACKNESS. SILENCE. A rainy night. Somebody is knocking on the door in the early morning hours. F.D.A. AGENTS have come to the home of CHARLES and DORIS DESGREY to confiscate drugs the Desgrey's have in their possession.

YUGOSLAVIA, 1948. Black-and-white. Tito's troops rule in this sterile world. Post-World War II Communism. A police state. Dr. STEVAN DUROVIC extracts hormonal secretions from a horse. He tests the secretions in a lab. Whatever it is, it is remarkable. He checks the window, locks the door. A soldier is patrolling the street. Later, Dr. Durovic, an animated, flamboyant man, is describing to his more businesslike brother MARKO and Marko's worried wife that he has discovered a remarkable anti-cancer agent. He must take his discovery to America. The drug is called KREBIOZEN.

CHICAGO, 1949. Color. A university setting. Fraternity parties. Pretty girls. Freedom. The American Dream. Dr. ANDREW IVY is distinguished, a pillar of the U.S. medical community, America's representative to discuss the role of medical ethics in war at the Nuremberg trials, described by the A.M.A. as the "greatest living physiologist" of his time.

Dr. Durovic has brought Krebiozen to Dr. Ivy. Dr. Ivy has done research on this kind of hormone. They agree, a cancer "cure," or anticancer "agent," will come not from that which kills (radiation, chemotherapy), but from that which gives life (reproductive cells, hormones).

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA, 1975. Charles Desgrey is having a retirement physical. He is a friendly, gregarious, former executive with a Fortune 100 firm who looks forward to fishing, golfing and playing with his grandchildren. DR. ANDERSON gives him a clean bill of health. Charles' nagging cough is nothing to worry about.

At home with his loving wife Doris, we meet his son JOHN. Strong, corporate, conservative, a family man. John tells Charles he is taking flying lessons. His pretty and supportive wife, ADELAIDE and children, RUSTY and MARCIA are enjoying a visit with Charles and Doris. Later, shopping for a fishing pole, John expresses concern over his dad's cough. He insists that Charles be examined at a mobile health testing unit in the shopping center. The test results are forwarded to Dr. Anderson, who informs Charles he has lung cancer, but it has been caught in time.
There is something suspicious about Dr. Anderson, but Charles accepts the good news along with the bad news.

John is not so sure. His father is coughing up blood. He goes to Dr. Anderson, demands to see his father's medical records, and gets his way when he refuses to take no for an answer. The doctor flips the records to John, then lords over him while he scans the information.

ANGLE-ON the records: "...metastasis to the brain." "My father is dying, and you have to tell him," John tells Dr. Anderson.

"Are you a doctor?" asks Dr. Anderson.

"No, but I'm an educated man," says John. "I know that when cancer spreads to the brain it means certain death."

Taken aback, Dr. Anderson still refuses to tell Charles, claiming it is for his own good, Doris could not take the news, and as his doctor, he knows best. John goes home, breaks the news to Doris, but not Charles. He vows to find help for his father.

If you or a family member are one of the 1,359,150 Americans that will contract cancer this year, you will not have the one drug available to you that has proven to be the most effective in the treatment of cancer. That drug is Krebiozen. Since being declared illegal in 1963, over 35 million people have died of cancer. 59 percent of Americans expect to get cancer in their lifetimes. Every 30 seconds an American is diagnosed with cancer. Every 55 seconds an American dies of cancer. Since 1971 there has been a 40 percent increase in the incidence of cancer and a 60 percent increase in the incidence of breast cancer.

From 1949-51, Doctors Ivy and Durovic researched and tested Krebiozen. Because of A.M.A. and F.D.A. restrictions and medical liability law, they were allowed to test "K" only on hopelessly dying terminal cancer sufferers, those given no hope of recovery through conventional medicine. Remarkably, a significant percentage of the patients recovered. It was found that recovery, rather than cure, had occurred, since these patients needed "K" in order to hold the cancer off. In other cases the patients were so close to death that they could not be saved, but their pain and suffering was reduced tremendously. The overall psychological effects of "K" proved to be as helpful as the actual healing powers, since reduction of pain, and the subsequent relief of stress, allowed patients the opportunity to recover without the nerve-wracking, never-ending ravages of cancer and chemotherapy.

PRESS CONFERENCE. Doctors Ivy and Durovic present their findings to the media. The next days headlines proclaim a cure for cancer. The two doctors never called "K" a cure, but this phrase will come back to haunt them.

Dr. J.J. MOORE, manipulative, cigar-smoking, shifty mastermind of "The 'K' Conspiracy." Treasurer of the American Medical Association. A powerful, influential man. A schemer. His brother, ED, less resourceful, a follower in his brothers shadow who, because of his brothers
A position has been placed in an authoritative job with a large pharmaceutical company. KEN BRAINARD, the pharmaceutical executive in league with Dr. Moore. HUMBERTO LORETANI worked for Dr. Durovic. What he really did was spy for Dr. Moore. He informs Dr. Moore that this Krebiozen is the real deal.

1951. The three men court Dr. Durovic for one year. Wine him and dine him. Try to influence him. Finally, they spring an offer on him. $1.5 million to Dr. Durovic if he will relinquish the patent and marketing rights to Dr. Moore and his brothers pharmaceutical company. A tempting offer. Dr. Durovic is a foreigner. His English is not very good. He comes from a Communist country during the heart of the McCarthy era. He is far from rich. He also smells a rat. Dr. Moore wants to sell "K" at $35 per ampule. Dr. Durovic argues that it only should cost $9.50 per ampule, that "K" should be available to everybody, not just the rich or those with good health care, and that besides, it needs further testing, so thanks but no thanks. After beating around the bush for awhile, frustrated that this Yugoslavian won't give in after underestimating him, Dr. Moore gets mad and tells Dr. Durovic that unless he gives up the patent, he and the "Christ-like" Dr. Ivy will be destroyed, and so will "K."

Threats. Letters. Pressure. Dr. Ivy is warned by his close colleagues, acting on behalf of the A.M.A., that unless he distances himself from "K" and renounces the drug, he will suffer dire consequences. He and Dr. Durovic dismiss the threats as idle, naively believing that truth will triumph over lies, good defeats evil - they are not able to understand the psychology behind blackmail and extortion in the medical community. They have underestimated their "enemies."

1951-54. Battle lines are drawn. Dr. Moore uses his power as A.M.A. Treasurer to discredit "K," by refusing to print articles in the Journal of the A.M.A. extolling its virtues; threatening doctors who try it with license revocation, and threats to end funding, and bad publicity; A.M.A.-sponsored newspaper editorials savage "K"; pharmaceutical companies, research labs, universities interested in testing "K" are told they won't have A.M.A. backing; media considering publicizing "K" are threatened with A.M.A. and pharmaceutical advertising being pulled. Doctors who use "K" see their surgery schedules reduced. Still, hundreds of courageous doctors administer "K" to thousands of terminal patients, with incredible results.

Dr. Moore conspires with his brother and Brainard to discredit "K" and the two doctors, then change the name, market it and make millions of dollars.

1954. THE STAKES ARE UPPED. The A.M.A. succeeds in getting the University of Illinois to hold hearings on Dr. Ivy's position as vice president of the systems' Chicago medical school. Doctors testify on behalf of Ivy and "K." Ivy and Durovic refuse to "sell out" in order to "save themselves." Dr. Ivy has everything to lose, yet fights grimly on.

Commodore ALBERTO BARREIRA of Argentina, without telling Doctors Ivy or Durovic, "befriends" Dr. Moore and surreptitiously tapes their conversations.

"Of course Krebiozen is effective against cancer," Dr. Moore is taped saying. "Whaddaya think, I'd go through the trouble of ruining a great doctor if millions of dollars weren't at stake?"
The A.M.A. presents evidence that 11 patients given "K" had died, or were dying. Dr. Moore is called to testify but takes the Fifth Amendment. The A.M.A. begins to "distance themselves" from him. Dr. Ivy's attorney, JOHN SEMBOWER, addresses the legislative hearing.

"I would like to call as witnesses at this time the 11 `dead and dying' patients referred to in the A.M.A. report," says Sembower. The door opens and 11 ordinary, healthy people enter the room, amid gasps from the audience.

Faced with overwhelming evidence that "K" is what Doctors Ivy and Durovic say it is, and with the Chicago newspapers publicizing the events daily, Dr. Ivy is exonerated by the Legislature and allowed to keep his position. However, the A.M.A. does succeed in their overall objective. They narrow the scope of the hearings to the question of Dr. Ivy's position, not whether or not "K" deserves the "double-blind" test that is the one surefire way medical science can prove it is a natural, hormonal-based anti-cancer agent that works against all forms of the deadly disease. While many call for the "double-blind" test, the A.M.A. and the F.D.A. still control the testing, and they will not allow "K" to get the "double-blind."

HERB BAILEY. Medical writer. He makes his living writing articles for the A.M.A. He decides to investigate "K." He is told to write about how the great Dr. Ivy was suckered by Dr. Durovic and then "went off the deep end." Bailey decides to dig a little deeper than that, and discovers "K" is a miracle drug. He "turns" on the A.M.A. and writes a book extolling Krebiozen's medical value.

SAN FRANCISCO, 1975. John Desgrey is looking for miracle. Anywhere he can find one. His AUNT FLO is on the phone.

"Dad has lung cancer," he tells her. Aunt Flo then tells John a remarkable story. John's grandfather had cancer once, but he was a "test subject" for a drug called Krebiozen, and darned if he didn't go into remission. In fact, he lived a long time until finally dying of a heart attack instead. A guy named Bailey wrote a book about it. A Matter of Life or Death. The doctors name was Ivy. Chicago, she thinks. John has found his miracle, except - no, it can't be - he is skeptical. If "K" worked he would have heard of it, it would be available. John is a believer in medical science and the medical profession. He believes the A.M.A. to be a true and honest organization, his government to be on his side. No, this is a dead end, bound only to end in heartache and disappointment if he dares to hope. He hangs up the phone.

John stares at the phone. He picks it up. "Chicago. Dr. Andrew Ivy," he tells long-distance information.

CHICAGO, 1975. The Krebiozen Research Foundation is a dilapidated place in an old building in a bad part of town. Here, an older, less polished, yet-still-going-strong Dr. Andrew Ivy continues the crusade. The man once called the "greatest living physiologist," America's premier oncologist, the U.S. medical representative at Nuremberg, a man with everything to lose, has stuck with Krebiozen against all odds. He has lost his money, his prestige, his position. He is forgotten, yet his mind is sound, his ideals are intact.
"Were you followed," Dr. Ivy asks John. John looks at the old man like he is crazy. "You probably were."

Dr. Ivy runs down the history of Krebiozen to John. John is unimpressed with the surroundings (although that picture of Dr. Ivy addressing the Nuremberg trials is interesting, as are all those plaques, awards, diplomas, honors, memberships in prestigious organizations and pictures with political bigshots - ah, come on, he must have wigged out somewhere down the line, this can't be - still...), and is ready to leave. Dr. Ivy has never been a salesman. He is a plainspoken Midwesterner and if you buy what he's sellin' fine, if not that's okay, too. This time, though, just as John is about to give up and leave, Dr. Ivy finds himself telling John that "Krebiozen might just be the miracle you're looking for, to save your dad's life."

Dr. Ivy explains to John "K" is illegal to transport across state lines. No nurse or doctor will risk administering the drug to his father, so he teaches John how to do it. John goes back to the hotel. He is followed. We have seen the two men tailing him. They are the F.D.A. Agents we saw in the beginning.

1956. The Chicago newspapers have shed the light of truth on "K." The jig is up. Bailey's book is selling well. Drew Pearson and Mike Wallace support "K." A man named David Kasson writes a moving story about how he was "brought back from the dead." The actress Gloria Swanson jumps on the Krebiozen bandwagon. Thousands of patients have recovered, thanks to "K." Many doctors laud the drug. Congressman Libonati and others demand a "double-blind" test once and for all. The Catholic Church awards Dr. Ivy its humanitarian award. Still, the A.M.A. and the F.D.A. evade the "double-blind" test, swaying public opinion with just enough doubt, the result of their ban on "K" articles in their Journal and related publications. Doctors, despite everything, are still made to suffer if they become pro-"K." Krebiozen patients begin to organize and rally.

NEW CONSEQUENCES. Dr. Moore, Ed Moore and Brainard are discussing the conspiracy. Durovic could not be bought off. Ivy could not be swayed. This surprises these men, who are the kind of people who think "all men got a price." The original plan is not working. Maybe they should admit "K" works after all. Dr. Moore lays out a harsh dose of reality to his partners. It has been five years since they found out that "K" is an effective anti-cancer agent; every year over a million U.S. citizens die of cancer - from 1951-56 that is roughly five, five and half million people. Add to that the costs, the suffering of cancer on all involved. They knew it worked. They are responsible. Culpable. Along with them, both witting and unwitting promoters of the agenda they set in motion include the A.M.A., the F.D.A., the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute...five years, five and a half million dead - those are Holocaust numbers!

CLASS ACTION LAWSUITS. REPARATIONS. SCANDAL. LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS.

The government. The A.M.A. Medical integrity.

No, this must never be made public. Nobody can ever admit Krebiozen works. NEVER.
So, the die was cast. Maybe if "K" had been "admitted" to be effective early on things could have worked themselves out, but when, after a few short years the number of dead started to approach Hitlerian figures, it became too late to turn back.

So, one thinks, surely this secret cannot be passed to generations of A.M.A. leaders. Somebody must want the truth. But think about it. If new leadership takes over the A.M.A. and the F.D.A. - if they are confronted with evidence that Krebiozen works - if they decide to "expose" the truth in the name of justice and goodness and the Hippocratic oath - then the lawyers and the bean counters and the Machiavellian "advisers" come forward with reality. Now it is 1996, and the cancer dead outnumber the German concentration camps, the Soviet collectivization, the Armenian genocide, the Cultural Revolution, the Khmer Rouge "killing fields," tobacco - need I go on?

Is there enough money in the U.S. Treasury to pay off all the victims?

LA JOLLA, 1975. John is skeptical until, incredibly, his injections of Krebiozen result in his fathers recovery. Charles gains consciousness. He gains weight. He starts to eat, and read, and care about life - and baseball - and Dr. Anderson cannot believe his eyes, and agrees to arrange for a nurse to give the injections despite the legalities because, well, because "seeing is believing." Now John can return home to his job in San Francisco.

A RAINY NIGHT. The same rainy night we opened with. F.D.A. Agents confiscate Krebiozen from Charles and Doris.

SAN FRANCISCO. A corporate setting. John at work. F.D.A. Agents enter to arrest John in front of his boss and associates. The charge is "possession and transportation of illegal drugs." That is all anybody knows. John gets fired. John goes to Dr. Anderson. He won't cooperate. He's been "gotten to" by somebody.

"Maybe your father was misdiagnosed in the first place," he has the chutzpah to tell John with a straight face.

NEW YORK, 1975. John learns more about the politics of Krebiozen from Herb Bailey. The reality of what he is up against finally sinks in.

CHICAGO. John is desperate for Krebiozen. His father has lapsed again. Fearing tapped phone lines he has not called Dr. Ivy ahead of time, and now pays for the communication breakdown when he arrives at Ivy's office, only to find locked doors. Undaunted, he breaks in and steals Krebiozen.

Upon leaving the building, the F.D.A. Agents who have become his shadow try to arrest him, but John runs. The chase is on.

John takes a taxi. The Fed's tail him. The Chicago Loop is a traffic mess. The driver sees the chaser's are Fed's.
"Those are G-men, sonny," he says. John throws him out of the taxi, drives it down a one-way street, the Fed's still tailing, they narrowly escape a big rig, he keeps going until he hits another traffic jam. On the radio, the announcer is saying, "Today was decision time on Capital Hill."

DISSOLVE TO:

CAPITAL HILL, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1963. U.S. Senator PAUL DOUGLAS is a man of integrity. He also is a Ph.D. with a medical background. As a young man he studied under a doctor who had been a "Listerite" in the Civil War. As he explains to the Senate, Lister had discovered in Scotland that physicians were causing patients to die of bacteria because of failure to wash their hands. As simple as it now seems to understand, Lister's theory was vilified. The Civil War doctor ran into the same prejudices when he advocated doctors doing battlefield surgery only after washing their hands. Senator Douglas runs down a list of medical revolutionaries who were considered "crackpots" by the pundits of their day - Pasteur and others. Douglas is arguing on behalf of Krebiozen. Somehow, despite publicity, despite widespread shedding of light on the conspiracy, the "double-blind" test has never been done and now, darn it, he is going to put the pressure of the U.S. Senate on the F.D.A. to do the test.

The F.D.A. says they did the test. They say it proved that Krebiozen was Creatine, a substance available at health food stores with no value against cancer. Senator Douglas points out that he appointed an independent investigator to find out about this Krebiozen/Creatine connection, and what he found out was that the F.D.A. had taken the spectrographs of "K" and Creatine, rigged the overlays, and created the false impression that the two substances were one and the same!

Senators McGovern and Irvin join with Douglas. Senator Douglas goes on to say that the F.D.A. has been "stonewalling" him, and he is frustrated to discover that, when it comes to the American Medical Association, a U.S. Senator does not seem to have as much power and influence as he would otherwise.

SMASH CUT:

THE TRAIN. John is running after the back of a train, the taxi left in congested traffic behind him. He barely makes it, climbing on board, the Federal boys left in his dust. A non-plussed passenger observes him.

CUT TO:

More information becomes available. A woman breaks into a building trying to get "K." A mother is harassed by the F.D.A. when she tries to give her dying son Krebiozen. Patients given up for dead 12 years prior picket in Washington. Many A.M.A. members are shown to be major shareholders in pharmaceutical stocks, and only major pharmaceutical companies are ever allowed to market new drugs.

SMASH CUT:
BACK TO THE TRAIN. John moves through the train. It is in the Chicago suburbs. He looks out the window. Helicoptors. Cop cars. "Last stop," yells the conductor.

CUT TO:

FEDERAL COURTHOUSE, 1966. Doctors Durovic and Ivy are indicted on a laundry lists of charges, centered on making, distributing, transporting and administering the illegal drug called Krebiozen. Bail is held at half a million dollars. Walter Winchell attacks "K."

More information is given. Cancer has become a "cottage industry." If a $9.50 per-ampule drug could virtually "cure" cancer, or at least relieve symptoms, who would need the Mayo Clinic, Sloan/Kettering, the cancer research centers, the radiation business, and how many doctors would lose jobs, income, funding.

Do we really want to find a cure for cancer.

SMASH CUT:

THE AIRPORT. John has exited the plane, and chased by the long arm of Federal law as if he is John Dillinger, he sees a small airport with small planes. He runs to a plane, gets in, fumbles around, gets the plane going, and amid much jerking and stopping and swerving and swearing, gets the bird aloft.

DISSOLVE TO:

BACK TO THE FEDERAL COURTHOUSE. Again, Dr. Ivy's attorney calls for witnesses. Again, he has a list of people the prosecution says died years ago. Ivy's attorney calls for them.

THE DOOR OPENS and a single line of healthy people walk in. A GASP goes up in the courtroom.

JUMP CUT:

"Not guilty," says the jury foreman.

Celebrations ensue. A call for a "double-blind" test, once and for all. Vindication.

DISSOLVE TO:

WE FLASHFORWARD to 1975. Dr. Ivy is telling John Desgrey that, after the not guilty verdict, the A.M.A. held a press conference the next day and announced that under no circumstances would they administer a "double-blind" test. He tells John that he continues to try to help patients, while Dr. Durovic was hounded by the I.R.S. after the 1966 trial, finally giving up on this country and fleeing to Switzerland, where he continues "K" research.
GRAVEYARD. A casket is lowered into the ground. WE PULLBACK TO REVEAL that the mourners are the Desgrey family, and we see that John is handcuffed and Federal Marshalls are guarding.

A NARRATOR informs us about cancer statistics, and states that perhaps if Krebiozen had been given a "double-blind" test, Doctors Ivy and Durovic would have won the Nobel Prize instead of eventually dying in obscurity. We are shown modern news footage of DR. BURZYNSKI, a Houston cancer physician who has had great results using a new experimental drug, and faces a Federal trial for his efforts.

The issue of Krebiozen has receded into memory, but it is up to the American public to demand the "double-blind" test so that cancer patients are given a chance - TO LIVE!

THE "K" CONSPIRACY

For the past 47 years, a proven, natural, hormonal-based anti-cancer agent has been denied, by conspiracy, to the general public. Each year, 1,350,000 Americans contract cancer. 500,000 Americans die from cancer annually.

When, in 1951 A.M.A. Treasurer Dr. J.J. Moore and two of his associates from the pharmaceutical industry tried to secure the patent and marketing rights to the remarkable anti-cancer agent, Krebiozen, the doctors who discovered it, Stevan Durovic and Andrew Ivy are unwilling to relinquish control of the drug because they want to keep it affordable and feel it needs further testing, thus leading Dr. Moore and his co-conspirators to discredit them, and the drug, in a savage blackball campaign. Dr. Moore and his co-conspirators planned to market Krebiozen under another name, but were denied because of the courage and selflessness of two great humanitarians, Doctors Ivy and Durovic.

A substantial number of doctors, using "K", help to save thousands of patients from the ravages of cancer over a period of many years. When John Desgreys' father is found to be dying of lung cancer, Desgrey learns of Krebiozen and thus becomes embroiled in the deadly politics revolving around this controversial "miracle drug."

Despite strong endorsements from the Illinois Legislature and the U.S. Senate, and despite widespread publicity not only about the drugs' effectiveness as well as the backroom conspiracy to discredit it, Krebiozen is denied the all-important "double-blind" test by the A.M.A. and the F.D.A. - the one surefire test that would prove once and for all that it is a true, natural, hormonal-based substance that combats all forms of deadly cancer.
Desgrey obtains "K" from Dr. Ivy, his father makes a remarkable recovery, but the F.D.A. confiscates the "K" from his parents in an early morning raid, and threaten John with Federal interstate drug trafficking.

From Dr. Ivy and medical author Herbert Bailey, John learns what he has gotten involved in, and realizes that the A.M.A., the F.D.A., the trillion-dollar pharmaceutical industry, as well as those who were initially involved in denying "K" to the public, have created a Big Lie. They realize that if the public discovered that they had knowingly prohibited a drug that could have prevented millions of deaths, the class action lawsuits and demand for reparations would dwarf the fallout of the Holocaust, the Cultural Revolution, and the present tobacco industry conspiracy - combined!

Desperately, Desgrey fights to get more Krebiozen, all the while tailed by F.D.A. agents. In a cross-country chase, desperately and ingeniously employing all his resources against the leviathan of the U.S. medical bureaucracy, John is able to stay one step ahead of the Fed's and thus, keep his father alive. His one-man crusade finally ends when the government men confiscate the last of the Krebiozen. John's father, denied the life-saving Krebiozen, dies, but the story of this man, and millions like him, must be brought to light so the American public has the chance to force its government to tell the truth about this alternative medicine and give future cancer patients a chance - to live!

Krebiozen is not now, nor has it ever been, offered by its supporters to be a cure for cancer. It has shown to be a tremendous anti-cancer agent! The question is not whether it works. The medical industry has always denied the opportunity to answer that question. A simple double-blind test, can answer the question regarding Krebiozens' effectiveness, and it is the double-blind test that the public must demand.

The question surrounding the A.M.A.'s decision never to institute the double-blind test centers on whether the "Cancer Mafia" really seek a true cure to this dreaded disease. The "cottage industry" that has evolved over the years into a multi-billion dollar enterprise would be obsolete if a simple, $9.50-per-ampule drug that effectively battles all forms of cancer were to be introduced to a worldwide mass market. Sloan-Kettering, the Mayo Clinic, the chemotherapy industry, the research wing of medical academia - all are potentially threatened by Krebiozen.

In this post-Watergate era, it is up to the American public to realize that they are responsible for demanding their rights.

THE "K" CONSPIRACY

a premise

When A.M.A. Treasurer Dr. J.J. Moore is unsuccessful in his attempt to secure the patent of a remarkable anti-cancer agent, Krebiozen, for $1.5 million in 1951, he and his partners conspire to destroy the reputation of the drug's discoverer, Dr. Stevan Durovic, and it's main sponsor, prominent
oncologist Dr. Andrew Ivy, in order to force Durovic and Ivy to accept the offer and turn over marketing rights.

In 1975, Charles Desgrey is dying of cancer. His son, John Desgrey, discovers Krebiozen, or "K," obtains it from Dr. Ivy, and administers it to Charles, who father, who recovers. F.D.A. Agents confiscate "K" and arrest John for illegal interstate drug transportation.

From 1951-54 Dr. Moore uses his powerful position with the A.M.A. to discredit the drug and the two doctors. Despite this, hundreds of doctors give "K" to thousands of patients, with incredibly good results. The Illinois Legislature concludes in favor of "K" and Dr. Ivy, but the A.M.A. and the F.D.A. refuse to administer the "double-blind" test, which could prove "K" effective. By 1956 Dr. Moore and his conspirators realize that they could have prevented millions of cancer dead and the truth must be hidden at all costs. Thousands learn the truth about the "K" conspiracy, but the all-important "double-blind" test is avoided. Thousands of cancer patients continue to benefit. The F.D.A. says "K" is Creatine, but in 1963, U.S. Senator Paul Douglas advocates for the "double-blind" test and the Senate's independent medical investigator discovers that the F.D.A.'s spectrograph saying "K" is Creatine has been falsely overlaid. The F.D.A. is able to stall Senator Douglas on the "double-blind" test. In 1966 Doctors Durovic and Ivy are acquitted in a Federal drug trafficking and manufacturing trial, but the "double-blind" test is again not administered by the F.D.A.

In 1975, John Desgrey desperately obtains more "K" to save his father, relapsed without "K." Federal agents attempt to arrest him, he escapes and a chase ensues in cars, a train, by foot, in helicopters and a plane. John is unable to overcome the odds against him, and his father dies. The "double-blind" test was never administered, and a narrator informs us that the issue faded into memory and that any new leadership in the A.M.A. and F.D.A. would be dissuaded from revealing the truth because the preventable cancer dead since 1951, when they first learned of "K's" effectiveness, is a figure far greater than the Holocaust - a scandal deemed too great for the World to handle or the court's to award reparations on.

In 1954, his position as dean of the University of Illinois-Chicago Medical School comes under scrutiny, and in hearings that look more like a trial, evidence supports his position that Krebiozen is an effective cancer treatment. Still, the F.D.A. refuses to allow the “double-blind” test necessary to make the drug widely available. Why? Because the government knew as early as 1951 that “K” could save lives, yet they acted to deny it to the public. Since millions had died of cancer since the time they knew it to be effective, the legal ramifications are obvious. A gauntlet is thrown down, a Rubicon crossed, one from which the medical powers in America have never been able to back down from, because to do so would open a legal hornet’s nest that makes the tobacco controversy pale in comparison. Told through the story of the Desgery family, “The K Conspiracy” details in chilling detail how blackmail escalated into a large-scale conspiracy, explaining how agencies like the A.M.A., the National Cancer Institute and the Federal Drug Administration were painted into a corner in which they were forced to carry on the Big Lie, or face monumental legal recriminations.
In 1975, John Desgrey discovers “K”, gives it to his father dying of cancer, and when his father recovers he tries to get more. Instead, Federal agents confiscate it from him, charging him with interstate drug trafficking. Denied “K”, John’s father dies, symbolic of the millions who could have lived had they been given access to this drug. Despite every attempt to squelch it, “K” still saved thousands of Americans in the 1950s and 1960s. Is the drug available today? What happened to the doctors? Yes, the drug is still available. The doctors, after continuing research in Europe, died in obscurity instead of winning the Nobel Prizes they deserve.

SEQUENTIAL OUTLINE

1. AGENTS INTRUDE IN THE NIGHT; DUROVIC MAKES DISCOVERY; IVY IS ESTEEMED.

F.D.A. agents confiscate drugs from the Desgrey's in the middle of the night (1975)...Dr. Durovic makes remarkable discovery in Communist Yugoslavia, explains it is a cancer-fighting drug to brother Marko and Marko's wife (1948)...Dr. Ivy is introduced at A.M.A. convention as "our greatest living physiologist."

2. DUROVIC, IVY COLLABORATE; KREBIOZEN BENEFITS CANCER PATIENTS.

Durovic brings "K" to Ivy, they discuss its great potential as "anti-cancer agent" (1949)..."K" is tried on terminal cancer patients with incredibly good results.

3. JOHN'S DAD CALLED HEALTHY, RETIRES, CASHES POLICY, LUNG CANCER THEN FOUND, JOHN FINDS TRUTH BUT DR. WON'T TELL DAD.

"A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH" (1975)...John Desgrey's father gets a check-up, given clean bill of health, decides to retire, cash insurance policy and travel...John takes flying lessons...John, concerned about father cough, has him checked at mobile health unit, and he's found to have lung cancer...John's fathers' doctor says cancer caught in time, but John is skeptical so he forces doctor to show him records showing cancer spread to his father's brain...Doctor refuses to tell John's father or mother, so John tells his mother.

4. PRESS REPORTS "K" IS CANCER "CURE"; CONSPIRATORS TRY TO GET PATENT; PRESSURE PUT ON IVY; THE BIG LIE STARTS.

Ivy, Durovic introduce "K" to press, which inaccurately reports it as "cure"...Dr. J.J. Moore of A.M.A., his brother Ed and Ken Brainard "wine and dine" Durovic for "K" patent, but Durovic refuses - says it's not tested enough to market, wants it kept affordable; Dr. Moore threatens Durovic...Dr. Bing of A.M.A. pressures Ivy to stop endorsing "K" (1951).

5. THREATS TO IVY CARRIED OUT; CONSPIRATORS STRATEGIZE; IVY, DUROVIC WON'T "SELL OUT"; BARREIRA TAPES MOORE.
A.M.A. pressures University of Illinois to hold hearings on Ivy's position, he's suspended as v.p....Moore brothers and Brainard plan to pressure Durovic, Ivy for patent, change name ("K" has been discredited) and make millions...Ivy, Durovic heroically refuse lucrative offers, their motives are humanitarian..."K" patients improve, sides are taken and more threats made to Ivy...Commodore Barreirra tapes Moore saying "K" is effective against cancer.

6. BAILEY INVESTIGATES; MORE THREATS; LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS; PUBLICITY HEATS UP; A.M.A. NARROWS SCOPE OF HEARINGS.

Medical writer Herb Bailey begins investigation of "K" conspiracy...A.M.A. doctors distort "K's" stats/results...A.M.A. threatens Dr. Pick's ("K" supporter) surgery schedule to be cut...Dr. Stoddard, on behalf of A.M.A., urges Illinois Legislature to fire Ivy from university...Chicago newspaper publicity heats up...A.M.A. narrows scope of hearings to Ivy's tenure, not "K's" effectiveness...Courageous doctors testify to benefits of "K" (mid-1950s).

7. JOHN FINDS OUT ABOUT "K"; (INTERCUT LATER SCENES) "K" NEVER TESTED; IVY, DUROVIC VIRTUALLY RUINED; JOHN GETS DRUG.

John calls Aunt Flo about father's cancer, she tells him her late husband was "saved" by drug called Krebiozen (eventually he died of heart attack instead), tells John about Bailey's A Matter of Life Or Death, and about Ivy...John gets in touch with Ivy, who recounts story of "K" - despite not guilty trial result result, F.D.A. and A.M.A. held press conference next day stating drug had no value, never would deserve test, despite pressure test never done and issue eventually faded away...Ivy lost everything, continues treatments and research...Durovic suffered stress-related heart attacks, I.R.S. audited him (case dropped), moved to Switzerland a broken man (although he still does "L" research in Europe)...John arrives in Chicago, meets Ivy at dilapidated Krebiozen Research Foundation, Ivy asks if he was followed, explains "K" is considered illegal, gives him "K" and teaches John how to inject his father.

(SOME OF #7 TO BE INTERSPERCED LATER AS APPROPRIATE)

8. A.M.A. DAMAGE CONTROL; "DEAD" PATIENTS ARE WITNESSES, RALLY; HEARINGS END; IVY SILENCED, TEST CALLED FOR; NEW CONSEQUENCES.

A.M.A. goes onto offense (damage control) to discredit Ivy, Durovic, "K"...11 healthy patients A.M.A. said "died" are called as witnesses at hearings...Hearings end of attrition...Four Senators with cancer benefit from "K", Rep. Libonati calls for Federal hearings...Catholic Church awards Ivy with humanitarian award..."K" patients rally...Ivy's articles denied publication by A.M.A....Conspirators realize they must never let "K" be proven an effective drug because by now five years have passed and class action lawsuits, ramifications are unimaginable (1956).

(SWITCH #9 WITH #10)

9. BAILEY'S BOOK PUBLISHED; KASSON TELLS HOW "K" SAVED HIS LIFE; PRESS INVESTIGATES TRUTH.
Herb Bailey's first book published, telling truth of "K's" value, conspiracy to discredit it...Gloria Swanson endorses "K"...Library pressured by A.M.A. not to carry Bailey's book...Ivy asked to resign from boards...A.M.A. doctors say "K" has no value against cancer, A.M.A. assaults "K" in press...David Kasson tells story how he was hopelessly terminal cancer victim until "K" brought him back from dead, relates story of how most historically great medical discoverers were vilified by pundits of their day...10 "dead" patients greet Ivy on t.v. show...Mike Wallace and Drew Pearson investigate, push for fair test of "K" to prove its value once and for all (late 1950s).

10. JOHN FOLLOWED; GIVES FATHER "K", HE GETS WELL; AGENTS CONFISCATE DRUG, ARREST JOHN.

John is followed by F.D.A. agents after obtaining "K" in Chicago...John injects father with "K" and remarkably he recovers...His fathers' doctors can't believe positive results, agree to provide nurse to give John's father injections so John can return home to San Francisco...Flashback to opening scene as agents appear at John's parents' house to confiscate illegal "K"...Agents arrest John at his corporate workplace in front of colleagues explaining only that it is for "illegal drugs"...John's fathers' doctor won't cooperate despite John's desperate plea (it appears he has been "gotten to" by A.M.A.)....John goes to New York and learns about politics of Krebiozen from Bailey.

(USE SEQUENCE WITH BREAKS IN ABOVE AND OTHER SCENES)

JOHN BREAKS BAIL, TRIES TO GET "K" FROM IVY, DED'S TRY TO ARREST HIM, HE ESCAPES - BREAK - CAR CHASE - BREAK - TRAIN CHASE - BREAK - PLANE CHASE - BREAK.

11. SENATOR DOUGLAS HOLDS HEARINGS; A.M.A. SAYS "K" IS CREATINE BUT IS PROVEN FALSE.

U.S. Senator Paul Douglas begins Federal investigation, support gathers in Senate, calls for "double-blind" test (surefire way to determine "K's" anti-cancer qualities), which A.M.A. has always evaded (1963)...A.M.A. fakes test, saying "K" is Creatine, but Federal investigator exposes how rigged overlays were used to falsify results...F.D.A. (in league with A.M.A.) stonewalls Douglas investigation...Senator Douglas recounts his work with Dr. Keen, a "Listerite," and gives example of how Dr. Lister, like other great medical revolutionaries, were shunned by medical establishment until their findings were proven true.

12. "DEAD" PATIENTS ALIVE, DENIED "K", PROTEST; A.M.A./PHARMACEUTICAL LINK; T.V. DOCUMENTARY ON "K"; FED'S PROBE IVY, DUROVIC.

Senator Douglas continues to call for "double-blind" test...Woman breaks into building, desperate for "K", a mother harassed by F.D.A. for having "K" for sick child, patients given up for dead alive and well 12 years later picket on "K's" behalf...A.M.A. members are stockholders in large pharmaceuticals - it is shown A.M.A. approves only drugs produced by major drug
companies...T.V. documentary on "K" (1963)...Fed's begin investigation of Ivy, Durovic for illegal drug trafficking, related "crimes."

13. TRIAL HELD; CANCER "INDUSTRY"; IVY, DUROVIC NOT GUILTY.

(USE #7 ABOVE)

Ivy, Durovic indicted, bail held at $1/2 million...Walter Winchell attacks "K"...Cancer victims picket courthouse...Cancer "cottage industry" exposed - if "cure" found thousands would lose jobs, funding at Mayo Clinic, Sloan/Kettering, "cancer fighting" drugs, chemotherapy, research, etc....If public discovered anti-cancer "K" could have prevented and reduced deaths, pain, cost of cancer from 1951-66, demand for reparations would exceed greatest crimes against humanity of 20th century...A.M.A. continues damage control along with F.D.A., H.E.W., related government, quasi-governmental agencies - while truth is known or suspected by millions, as long as "double-blind" test denied (procedure controlled by them), conspiracy survives because truth can never be 100% proven...10 more "dead" patients testify on Ivy's behalf...Ivy, Durovic not guilty...Fair test called for (1966).

14. JOHN'S DAD DIES; ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE STILL DENIED TODAY.

John's father passes away...We are told that Ivy and Durovic, rather than dying in obscurity, should have been Nobel Prize winners, and that modern "alternative medicine" practitioners are still harassed. i.e., Dr. Burzynski facing Federal prosecution similar to Ivy, Durovic...It is up to public to force issue back into spotlight.

THE END

LOGLINES OF SCREENPLAYS

BY

STEVEN R. TRAVERS

“THE K CONSPIRACY”
True story. Very Important Film!! Pharmaceutical executives' failed blackmailing of two doctors to give them patent to 1950s cancer drug Krebiozen goes bad, escalating into 30-year government conspiracy to protect Cancer Industry, denying drug's curative powers to public, as seen through eyes of single family.

ROCK 'N' ROLL HEAVEN
Field of Dreams meets The Doors. 1960s hippie, now jaded sober professor, helps woman overcome alcoholism. When "haunted" by deceased rock stars/historical figures, fantasy, reality collide, testing his sobriety, teaching him meaning of his youth and of life. Awesome soundtrack. Romance blossoms. Tour de force arc for star.

"21"

True story. World's greatest blackjack player, banned from casinos worldwide, uses disguises and card-counting team to pull huge payday on mob operation. Tour de force for lead. Girl working against star becomes love interest. Suave, likable nemesis orchestrates surprise twist. Hollywood ending like The Sting leaves room for sequel.

BANDIT
(teleplay)


BAJA CALIFORNIA

Corrupt American businessman sees murder in Mexico, is chased by drug lord's who did it, experiences series of dark, quirky, Castaneda experiences, saves village girl from rape, she helps him find religious redemption. Returns to California to undo past wrongs, resulting in surprise twist. Surreal, great character arc, ensemble cast.

ONCE HE WAS AN ANGEL

True cautionary tale. Bo Belinsky can't handle quick fame, abuses alcohol, destroying marriage, career. Through sobriety finds personal redemption. Fast music, fast cars, faster women. Nostalgic look at 1960s Sunset Strip, baseball when it was a game. Great role, character transformation, ensemble cast. Competition finalist.

A MURDEROUS CAMPAIGN

Jaded porn star discovers politician lover plans assassination of rival and a Presidential bid. She becomes target, goes underground with journalist to save themselves, prevent assassination.

THE COOL OF THE EVENING
(stageplay)

friendship tested by different societal experiences, exacerbated by 1992 riots. Serious look at important subject matter.

**THE HUNTER'S DREAM**

Young African dreams he will be village King, but first must overcome evil jungle spirit to rescue Princess. Old world magic converges with modern sensibilities; surrealistic, beautiful setting. Hunter must choose between attractive Western woman and duties to his people. Strong portrayal of a charismatic African.

**WICKED**

Undercover cop with past chases demonic killer in flamboyant, disturbing New York sex club world, drawn to killer's use of pain, sex as art form. Plot twists (*The Usual Suspects* meets *Tightrope*) -- Cop's been targeted from beginning by his lover (killer's disciple), both of whom previously killed his wife.

**THE LOST BATTALION**


**ON THE EDGE**

*The Karate Kid* meets *The Lost Boys* in snow. Gen X skateboard prodigy "fish out of water" in Colorado. Confronted by hardcore snowboarders, falls for charismatic nemesis' girlfriend, saves Mom's job when she's framed for embezzlement, becomes a snowboard champion. Radical X Games action, will create teen heartthrob.

**SUMMER OF ‘62**

Gen X shortboard pro surfers, so wrapped up in making money on the tour that they forget how much they love the sport, are transported to 1962, where they join a longboard surf club and learn lessons about life—why they love surfing, and what love and friendship really mean.

**BLACKJACK**

When professional gambler Ray Stockton gets too good for Vegas, nobody will let him stay, but he gets his revenge in the end when *Rounders* meets *The Sting*. 
**BURNING SNOW**

A city kid follows his father’s footsteps, becomes a snowboarding champion, makes enemies with a dangerous rival, and is mentored by two mountain men—and everybody is a suspect—in action-packed who-dunnit? Colorado murder mystery.

**BROKEN WINGS**

(treatment)

Vietnam fighter pilot Don Crowe crashes, the doctor’s decide to amputate his legs, but nobody—not Don, not his wife, not his commander—will authorize it, so when the m.d. decides to cut him anyway, Don wills himself not to let the anesthesia render him unconscious, in a miraculous story of love, faith and courage that ends when he recovers to fly again.

**SYNOPSIS OF STEVEN TRAVERS’ SCREENPLAYS**

**WICKED**

Jack Welch is a handsome, flamboyant, wise-cracking New York undercover cop with a past. He has made enemies on the streets and on the force, but he might be his own worst enemy. Dipping into the drugs offered him while working dangerous assignments are symptoms of a habit he battles to control on a daily basis. When a gorgeous supermodel is found dead in a gruesome killing, Jack is assigned the case. The suspect: A sex club owner operating a hot underground club, where the city’s most Beautiful People get together in a disturbing, erotic orgy of flesh.

Jack’s boss, Captain Sturm, is a grizzled ex-Marine who has a soft spot in his heart for the fearless Welch, despite his faults. Sturm must go to bat for Jack when a rival cop feels that he is too much of a loose cannon to be given such a risky assignment. Each scene is wrought with tension and confrontation as Jack moves closer and closer to the truth, only the truth is something he must learn about himself. Jack falls for a gorgeous model with a taste for kinky sex and pain. This is an area of great conflict for Jack. He lived a dangerous life of sexual fantasy with his wife, but mysteriously she died in strange circumstances that cast some suspicion upon Jack. Now, he finds himself both drawn and repulsed by this world. Jack also has a gay friend who specializes in performing at sex parties, and Jack utilizes him for information about his suspect, a rich, almost-unknown sex club owner known as “The Night Lord”. When Jack’s friend is killed in a gruesome way, Welch finds that the case has become a personal vendetta, but he also discovers that the sex and drugs have become too intoxicating. Jack indulges in coke again. When his rival is assigned the case after Jack’s slip-up, the man is out of his depth, and gets his head handed to him—literally. Jack’s love interest is kidnapped, and Jack is the only person who knows how to get to “The Night Lord”. Sturm finds him in a seedy Queens hotel, and after getting him on his feet, Jack is told the situation and sent back into battle.
The sexy femme fatale has led Jack into this netherworld of danger. Each plot twist thickens until Jack discovers his wife had been killed by the club owner and Jack’s new “girlfriend,” and he was chosen to be the special target of the killer’s use of sex and pain as an art form because of his kinky ability to withstand pain, which allows him to defeat “The Night Lord” in a final duel of wills.

THE LOST BATTALION

Charles Whittlesey is a laconic, pacifist Harvard lawyer who is disturbed by America’s entrance into World War I. He watches with increasing apprehension while the Kaiser’s forces battle to a stalemate against the Allies on the battlefields of France. When Woodrow Wilson enters the U.S. into the war in 1917, Whittlesey feels it is his duty to serve. He is not enthusiastic about war; quite the opposite. Whittlesey thinks that too many gung-ho American officers will order their troops into mindless killing zones, just as the German, British and French have been doing since 1914. Whittlesey believes that sensible officers such as himself must watch after the enlisted personnel. As fate would have it, he finds himself promoted over two gung-ho types, Nelson Holderman and the more experienced Charles McMurtry, who epitomize what Whittlesey disdains. Both men resent him for it.

October, 1918 finds the war to be a stalemate. As long as the Germans hold the Argonne Forest, the two sides will never resolve the issue. The British are too worn out from four years of fighting to mount a major offensive. The French do not have the gumption for such a task. So it is left to the fresh U.S. troops to do the impossible. General “Black Jack” Pershing orders Whittlesey’s battalion into the Argonne, and surprisingly they make some headway. Instead of ordering the battalion to wait for reinforcements, Pershing orders them on a “suicide mission” further into the Argonne, and soon the battalion is lost and surrounded.

For five days, with no food, no water, no supplies and no help, they desperately fight off wave after wave of German attacks in the true story of three Congressional Medal of Honor winners—Whittlesey, Holderman and McMurtry-- who did more to win World War I than any soldiers in the entire Army. The politics of war are exposed, and the heroic image of Pershing is shown to be a public relations creation. A young Chicagoan, Abe Krotoshinsky, who learned to run and evade detection when Irish kids picked on him because he was a Jew, utilizes his skills to break through the German lines and tell headquarters where the Lost Battalion is. By the time American troops arrive, the Lost Battalion is at the end of their rope, but they have fought and survived with honor. Upon return to the U.S., Whittlesey is accorded hero status, but he is conflicted about his aggressive role in the war, and over the fact that so many men died under his command. In a last, symbolic act, he commits suicide.

BLACKJACK
Jack Stockton is a Vegas high-roller, treated to the best of everything by the Las Vegas casinos he frequents. That is, until he starts to win too much. When he keeps winning, Jack is banned from playing, first in Nevada, then Atlantic City, and even in Europe. His nemesis is a suave French security expert, who shadows and foils him at every turn. When a beautiful girl offers to help Jack evade Jacques, Jack is suspicious. Eventually, he sees that he has no choice and takes her on.

Donning wild disguises, traveling to exotic locations, Jack and his gorgeous partner duel Jacques in a battle of wits, until Jack carries out a bold yet brilliant plan, using a card-counting team to pull a million-dollar sting on a Mob-run casino. Jack leads his disparate group to a dangerous off-shore casino, owned by a well-known capo regime. His girlfriend orchestrates the group’s winnings from a computer in her hotel room.

Back in Las Vegas, the Mob boss fumes when he hears that his casino is in the process of losing more than $1 million. He suspects that Jack is behind it, but Jack, who dons wild disguises, is always just one step ahead of his enemies. Just when the thugs are about to take Jack on a ride he will not return from, he completes the sting, escaping the bad guys by the skin of his teeth with the money, the girl and his card-counters intact. This of course leaves the capo fuming to exact a revenge on Jack that no doubt will be the plot of the sequel!

**BROKEN WINGS**

Vietnam fighter pilot Don Crowe was a poster boy Marine, full of piss and vinegar, a real swashbuckling ladies man who kept his commanding officers on edge all the time. When he married and settled down, it looked like his “crash and burn” philosophy of life had come to an end. Not so.

Don flew numerous dangerous missions in the skies above Southeast Asia, and his wife Marylin never knew from day to day whether she would ever see her husband again. In 1968, Don had stateside duty, and Marylin privately harbored the opinion that they had done their part; let some younger pilots pick up the slack. On April 15, 1968, Marylin had a premonition. There was something wrong with the war, with the country, and maybe with Don Crowe’s plane. Martin Luther King had been assassinated a few days before. Riots had taken to the streets. The January Tet Offensive was a military failure, but had ignited the student protest movement. Bobby Kennedy's life would soon be over, and Marylin felt a bad fate would befall her beloved husband. Naturally, she says nothing, but on that tax day Don’s A6 Intruder ran into foul weather during a routine hop over a Kansas cornfield. Forced to eject, he almost severed both legs during his fall to the ground. When the Navy doctor in charge decided to amputate both his legs, Don refused to give him permission. The doctor called his wife, Marylin, who refused so
long as Don said no. Don’s commander also said the same thing, so the doctor decides to make a medical decision. He will amputate Don’s legs in order to save his life.

When he orders the nurse to put Don down with anesthesia, Don, by sheer force of will, refuses to be rendered unconscious. His legs are not amputated. In this true story of courage and love, Don fights his way all the way back, to dance with Marylin, to fly again, and to become whole.

**BURNING SNOW**

A city kid, Jake, follows his father’s footsteps to the mountains, where he reluctantly moves in with his uncle and D.J., a rough-hewn mountain man. When D.J. is accused of murder, Jake’s uncle informs him that D.J. is his long-lost brother.

Spurred on to make his dysfunctional family whole again, Jake helps his uncle uncover the evidence needed to exonerate D.J., all the while adapting to a new environment that includes snowboarding, hunting with crossbows, and falling for a pretty mountain girl.

The plot twists thicken at every turn, and tension fills every conflict-filled scene as the light shines on one murder suspect after another until Jake can not only pin the killing on a deputy sheriff, but orchestrate a daring rescue of his uncle and girlfriend.

**SUMMER OF ’62**

Two Gen X shortboard pro surfers are so wrapped up in making money on the tour that they have forgotten why they loved the sport in the first place. Best friends since childhood, Luke and Kelly have drifted apart. Luke is a heavy partier who cannot stand his father any more. Kelly is a straight-arrow type, but when his girlfriend informs him that she is pregnant he is not pleased. Surfing off Malibu in preparation for an big contest, they are swept up by a wave and transported to 1962, where they join a longboard surf club and learn lessons about life—why they love surfing, and what love and friendship really mean.

**ON THE EDGE**

Gen X skateboard prodigy Ryan must move from L.A. to Colorado with his Mom when she gets a job there. A “fish out of water,” he is confronted by a hardcore group of snowboarders, and falls for the girlfriend of the snowboarders’ leader, Dax. In order to fit in, he learns to snowboard and becomes great at it. When his Mom is accused of embezzling funds from the company she works for, Ryan smells a rat, and with the help of Dax’s old girlfriend, Nikki, who
is now his sweetheart, he discovers that his Mom was framed. After saving his Mom, Ryan enters the big snowboard contest, and in a tremendous upset, defeats Dax in a thrilling finale.

THE HUNTER’S DREAM

A young African Hunter dreams that he shall be a village King, but first he must overcome an evil spirit in order to rescue a beautiful Princess. Old world magic converges with modern sensibilities in a surrealistic, beautiful setting.

The Hunter must choose between an attractive Western woman who teaches at the mission, and his duties to his people. In this strong portrayal of a charismatic African, Hunter is riven with self-doubt and fear when confronted by a spirit that thrives on his weaknesses.

Overcoming the blinding lies used by the spirit to detour Hunter from his goals, he discovers that his own powerful spirit is what he needs not only to defeat evil, but to make the right decisions for himself and his people, which leads him to become a good and just King.

THE COOL OF THE EVENING

White U.S.C. students and South Central Los Angeles blacks form easy friendships in an off-campus L.A. bar, told in three acts in this stageplay set during the 1980s and early 1990s. In Act I (1983), Horace and his white college buddies are the life of the party, drinking, partying and amusing everybody at the 502 Club with their antics and cockeyed views of life. When the television reports that the Soviets have shot down a Korean airliner, Harry Lumpe tells Horace that the U.S. can win the Cold War by outspending the Communists.

In Act II (1989), Horace is still a party animal, but life has thrown a few twists and turns his way. He has fallen for a beautiful-yet-slutty bargirl named Rebecca, who seems bent on giving herself to every man who asks, and Horace’s laments are met by the sympathetic ear of his black friend, Eric.

The t.v. reveals that Harry’s Cold War prediction was right: The Berlin Wall comes crashing down. Act III (1992) is all about reality hitting everybody square in the face. Rebecca has died from alcoholism, Horace is now a man with a chip on his shoulder, and the L.A. riots going on down the street has brought out Eric’s deep-seated resentment of white people. Horace and Eric argue about race, threatening their friendship in a symbolic reflection of what is happening outside their doors, and when they are all forced to evacuate the premises, the audience is left to wonder: Can we all get along?
A MURDEROUS CAMPAIGN

Michele Woodward is a jaded porn star who was once a U.S.C. freshman drama major with dreams of Hollywood, but when her father loses his job and cannot afford the high tuition, Michele decides to stay in L.A. and earn the money herself. Her noble intentions go astray when stripping and prostitution are portrayed to her as the only way to make that kind of money fast. Cosmetic enhancements ensue, and when Michele becomes a top adult film star, she finds herself working as a “fantasy girl” for an escort service specializing in adult film stars. “Affairs” with powerful, famous men follow, including one with Louisiana Governor Jim Stinson that escalates into a hot relationship. Michele overhears the Governor plan a bid for the Presidency that includes the assassination of a political rival, he finds out that she heard him, and he orders her killed. After an attempt on her life fails, Michele escapes and receives a mysterious phone call from a man who says he works for the Governor, advising her to contact a crusty Washington, D.C. reporter who has the dirt on Stinson.

Michele hooks up with the reporter, and they go underground in an effort to avoid the Governor’s death squad, and to uncover the truth about this man. They discover a byzantine organization, responsible for the mysterious deaths of anybody who ever stood in Stinson’s way. Michele uses sex to gain valuable information about the Governor’s operation. Michele finds out that the assassination target is the Governor of New Jersey, and again she must use her feminine charms to gain access to a rally held at the Statue of Liberty. She bravely exposes the killer, allowing the Governor’s life to be spared at the last possible second.

The “truth” becomes exposed. She and the reporter are hailed as heroes, while the Governor is excoriated by the press. Then, utilizing “spin control” in a manner eerily similar to recent headlines, the Governor’s people perform brilliant damage control, painting a picture of a porn star who cannot be believed, a reporter with an axe to grind, and a candidate facing a campaign of unproven allegations. As if in a nightmare, the Governor re-emerges as the Presidential frontrunner. Michele and the reporter go back to Louisiana and find the father of the Governor’s chief of staff, a man who “knows where the bodies are buried.” After appealing to his sense of patriotism and conscience, the old man leads them to a landing strip where all the evidence needed to corroborate their story comes together in a shocking conclusion.

ROCK ‘N’ ROLL HEAVEN

Jason Crown is a jaded former hippie who has seen life pass him by. Once, he was a 1960s idealist who participated in the Free Speech movement at Berkeley, and smoked a little too much pot. Now he is a history professor at a small Catholic college in the Midwest. He has sobered up, never been married, and forgotten what the ‘60s were all about—except for the music. He still digs The Doors. Jason’s bachelor status is still a disadvantage in this conservative, tightknit
community. While he is popular with his students, the rest of the faculty reserve judgment of him because of his radical past. He is tolerated because he is a competent professor of history, but considered just this side of being an oddball.

Jason meets an attractive woman his age, Natalie, through Alcoholics Anonymous. Then, a twister destroys the barn next to his house where he housed his classic music collection. When he tries to re-build the barn, the bank will not grant him the loan because it is not a business. The insurance company calls it an “act of God” and will not pay on his claim. When he re-builds the music room anyway, using his life savings, fantasy and reality collide in the form of Jim Morrison and other rock ‘n’ roll ghosts. Soon, Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and a host of deceased legends turn his musical barn into a concert hall. Major dead world figures make their way inside to enjoy the atmosphere, all the while discussing politics and history with the professor.

Jason re-lives a little too much of his youth, partying with dead icons in a personal “heaven” only he can see, but with the help of John and Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln, he re-captures the 1960s spirit, while learning the meaning of life. With Natalie’s help, he becomes sober again, which allows him to impart his re-born wisdom on his students. The spirit of the old song “John, Robert and Martin” lives in the form of a re-kindling of the meaning of those times through a story that allows us to learn the lessons of the 1960s while not falling prey to its excesses.

**BAJA CALIFORNIA**

Troy West is a corrupt American businessman who has it all: Money, prestige, a beautiful fiancee, a drug habit and lots of women on the side. Once, there was a time when he had ideals and morals, but he has no clue where those are now. A little too much alcohol and coke fuels his performance at a fancy dinner party hosted by his girlfriend and her wealthy, influential father for all their tony friends. After Troy is discovered screwing a woman in the bathroom, a scene ensues in which Troy makes a complete ass of himself.

He decides to lay low for awhile in Baja California. At first, Troy treats exico with the same contempt he treats everything else, and his luck with the ladies continues when he meets a gorgeous blonde whose father was a Nazi war criminal. She explains how she and the others at a mysterious, out-of-the-way resort called the Baja California have reconciled with their pasts, but just as Troy begins to think about doing the same, the girl is killed by drug lord’s over an old grudge involving her father. When the drug lord’s see that Troy was an eyewitness, he becomes a target, and is forced to go on the run.
Troy hides in Baja, all the while experiencing a number of bizarre twists of fate. When he rescues a beautiful young village girl from rape, he is offered tranquility by the natives, and when he leaves, the girl accompanies him. Quietly, through simple wisdom beyond her years, the girl helps Troy re-acquaint himself with his Catholic roots, until he has a mystical religious experience that drives him back to the U.S. in order to make amends. In a shocking conclusion, the now-content Troy is killed “for his sins” by the drug dealer’s who have tracked him all the way home to Newport Beach.

**ONCE HE WAS AN ANGEL**

The true story of Bo Belinsky, a pool shark from Trenton, New Jersey who was blessed with extraordinary pitching ability. Trying professional baseball as a lark in order to avoid the cops, Bo has a series of colorful minor league exploits on (and mostly off) the field. When he holds out of Spring Training in 1962 with the Los Angeles Angels for $6,000, Bo attains instant notoriety when he regales the L.A. press with wild stories of girls, billiards and gambling. On a slow news day, *L.A. Herald* sportswriter Bud “Steamer” Furillo calls Bo in Trenton, wondering why an unknown rookie would have the gall to hold out. Bo tells Furillo that he is “playing a lot of pool and layin’ a lot of broads.” Furillo cleans the quotes up just enough for a family newspaper, but the point is up made. Furthermore, Furillo invents a story whereby Bo is winning big-money pool tournaments, so much so that he does not need baseball. The Angels, competing with the Dodgers for press attention, build up the Belinsky story, and then the wire services take him national. By the time Bo arrives at a poolside Palm Springs press conference, he has been elevated to legendary status.

After surprisingly making the club, Bo garners headlines by pitching a no-hit game. Suddenly, he is the most recognized person in Hollywood, dating starlets and mingling with the Beautiful People. He is arrested on Wilshire Boulevard at 5:00 a.m. trying to disengage himself from an overeager showgirl. He dates Mamie Van Doren, but when Furillo, a “shit disturber” to rival “Othello’s” Iago, asks about marriage, Bo and Mamie tell him they are engaged just to get him off their back. The press builds it up, Bo buys the rock, but the marriage never happens. “Mamie has a little class,” Bo says of the sexy b-movie starlet. “Very little.” Bo eventually marries *Playboy* Playmate of the Year Jo Collins. Love blooms in Hawaii, but jealousy in L.A. dooms the nuptials.

From 1962-64, Bo is the most publicized athlete in the world during a time in which Cassius Clay, Willie Mays, Johnny Unitas and Mickey Mantle were in their primes. Bo cannot handle the fame and the pressures that go with it, and in a classic cautionary tale, his career, marriage and almost his life are lost in a haze of alcohol, drugs and self-pity. When Bo finds sobriety, he discovers peace, which allows him to help others headed down the path of destruction.

**BANDIT**
The true story of Richard Bandettini. Bandit, as he is called, is stung when the prison guard father of his childhood best friend is killed in a botched San Quentin prison breakout attempt. From that point on, Bandit decides that he wants to devote his life to hunting down criminals.

An old-fashioned San Francisco parole officer, he uses unorthodox methods to catch his prey. Part psychologist, part father confessor, and part cop, Bandit’s role in the criminal justice system is much more involved than the average policeman. He is part of the rehabilitation of career criminals, and he sees up close what can happen when cons get out of jail. He does not get along with his partners much better than the criminals he is in charge of. Bandit experiences a variety of dangerous, bizarre and often amusing events. He faces modern times when he is assigned a pretty, young partner, but over a period of months she teaches him the patience he needs when he finds himself held hostage by a gun-toting parolee.

In a chilling, tense, life-or-death confrontation of wits, Bandit talks his way out of the crisis, causing the hostage-taker to surrender, using techniques that are now taught to every law enforcement officer in California. The hostage scenes weave in and out of scenes highlighting Bandit’s colorful career in law enforcement, and teach us that the real heroes are often those unsung fellows who walk among us in obscurity every day.

“21”

The true story of Ken Uston, a young corporate executive with a gift for math, who devises a winning blackjack system. When Ken’s theory proves to be a winning formula, he chucks his repressive job for the gambler’s life. The comped suites and v.i.p. treatment end when he becomes too good, winning millions from the casinos, and he is banned in Vegas, Reno, and eventually every gambling city in the U.S. and abroad. His nemesis is a suave French security expert, Jacques Dupree, who along with his beautiful assistant, Lisa, shadows and foils him at every turn. When Lisa and Jacques have a falling out, she offers her expertise to Ken. Suspicious, Ken initially refuses the help, but eventually sees he has no choice if he is to ply his trade.

Donning wild disguises, traveling to exotic locations, Ken and Jacques duel each other in a battle of wills, until Ken carries out a bold yet brilliant plan, using a card-counting team to pull a million-dollar sting on a Mob-run casino. Made out to be the on-the-lamb financier Robert Vesco, Ken leads his disparate group to a dangerous casino in the Bahamas, owned by capo regime Carlos Santucci. At first the casino people cater to “Vesco,” since he “has more money than God,” but eventually they begin to suspect that a ruse is in the works. Lisa orchestrates the group’s winnings from a computer in her hotel room, while the group uses hand signals to identify “hot” tables.
Back in Las Vegas, Santucci fumes when he hears that his casino is in the process of losing more than $1 million. He suspects Uston is behind it, and just as he becomes sure of it, a rival mob boss intercedes on Ken’s behalf. It turns out that Dupree realizes that he has been the wrong side of the moral equation working for Santucci, and he is owed a big favor by the rival mobster. Just when Santucci's thugs are about to take "Vesco" for a ride he will not return from, bogus “Federal agents” enter the casino to “arrest” Vesco. A final chase ensues, but a last-second plane switch foils the mobsters, who watch in frustration as Ken and his team fly out of the country with their money. Naturally, revenge will be on Santucci’s mind in the sequel!

“THE K CONSPIRACY”

In 1947 a Yugoslavian doctor named Stephan Durovic discovered Krebiozen, the greatest cancer drug of all time. After smuggling “K” from the Communists, he brought it to Dr. Andrew Ivy, America’s leading oncologist. Soon, terminally ill patients were recovering. However, when Durovic and Ivy refused to grant greedy pharmaceutical executives the patent, the executives used their power with the A.M.A. to discredit “K.” Articles about Krebiozen’s effectiveness are not published. Doctors who endorse and use it are taken off surgical schedules. Ivy, once so well-respected that he was the A.M.A.’s representative testifying about medical ethics at Nuremberg, has the most to lose, yet he stands by “K.”

ON THE EDGE

treatment by Dennis Jarvis, Donaldson Miele and Steven Travers

Ryan, a champion skateboarder from L.A., is despondent because he must leave his stomping grounds for the wide-open spaces of rustic Colorado, where his pretty, thirty something mom, Barbara, has taken a career-advancing accounting job.

Ryan's skateboards into the new town, where he encounters the Black Ice Snowboards team and pierced, tattooed leader, pro rider Dax. Ryan pulls a technical skateboard move off a handrail, but slams into stunning teen beauty Nikki as she rounds the corner. Dax is on him like stink on shit. The gracious Nikki flashes the embarrassed Ryan a look that says, "You have potential." Local snowboarder D.J. observes the confrontation and tells Ryan not to sweat Dax, who's a "legend in his own mind."

Ryan’s frustrations grow when he is run off the road by the Black Ice team, and Dax smugly laughs at Ryan while stealing his skater.

D.J. bonds with Ryan. They discover a vintage Winterstik model, considered a classic by snowboarders with respect for the roots of the sport.

At a pizza joint, Mom has a collision similar to the one Ryan had with Nikki, only it is with Steve Christian, a good-looking guy about her age, who gives her his card while insisting on paying her cleaning bill. There is chemistry. He is a land developer and a town councilman. Ryan sees Nikki, who works in the restaurant. D.J. tells him that if you wanna be a local in this town, you gotta ride, and that means a snowboard and a season pass.
Ryan rides alone, barely controlling his old-school Winterstik, when a red-beanied boarder machs past him, causing him to take doughnuts and break his binding. Red Beanie pops a 180 turn, shouts a quick "Sorry Gotta Go!", and speeds away down the hill, leaving Ryan to trudge down with his board. As the Black Ice team's truck speeds away, reveal the red-beanie to be Nikki's angelic face.

Ryan progresses quickly as a snowboarder. He is athletic and has potential, Nikki gives him pointers. Over the passage of time Ryan's steady progress at snowboarding is noticed by Dax, who approaches him in the lift line, revealing to Ryan that outsiders must go through a ritual hazing before being accepted by the locals and he has unknowingly passed the "tests."

That night Ryan and D.J. dress up in thrift store disco gear and join the throngs of partygoers at a disco rave. Ryan runs into Nikki and mentions Dax's party, but she seems puzzled by this news.

Ryan goes only to get his skateboard. Dax's party is a drugged-out, dark and sordid scene with couples paired off for sex, the tunes turned low. Nikki arrives and disgusted by the scene. They argue and Nikki walks out, dumping Dax. Ryan, disgusted with the whole coke-whore groupie scene, splits, grabbing his skateboard on the way out the door.

Nikki sees Ryan’s compassionate side. A bond is formed when Ryan tells Nikki he never does drugs, having learned of their evils when his father was killed in a car crash caused by an acidhead.

Steve asks Ryan's mom on a date. Ryan cleans up his act by cutting his hair and losing his grunge look. Steve kisses Ryan's mom good night, and Nikki does the same with Ryan. It turns out Steve is Nikki’s foster uncle.

A personal metamorphosis is happening. Nikki teaches Ryan the new-school approach to technical riding while Steve teaches Ryan the “soul” aspect of the mountain and the sport.

Ryan disregards Nikki's objections and his own intuitive distrust of Dax when he is invited on a radical heliboarding trip deep into the backcountry. Ryan's pride won't let him back down from an obvious challenge from his nemesis. Predictably, Ryan is injured when Dax cuts in front of him on a steep and rocky descent.

Christmas at Steve's cabin: Nikki, Ryan, Barbara, and Steve are the picture of a happy "family" as Ryan gets his new snowboard. Intercut this with the sinister image of flashlights and black-hooded figures breaking into Barbara and Ryan's home.

Dax knocks D.J. off-course during a ride. Ryan is about to beat Dax to a pulp when Nikki intercedes, saying that Dax is not worth it, and the infuriated Ryan backs off. Dax tells Ryan that they will finish this later, as D.J. is taken away by an ambulance.

Barbara is framed for embezzling money. Ryan discovers that illegal Methamphetamines are being shipped worldwide by the Black Ice Company. Steve calls a friend with the FBI, who orchestrates the arrest of the Black Ice boss, Ran D. Stoeffell, and his mom's exoneration.

Steve gives Ryan a wild-card entry for the snowboard contest, telling him that he has learned to respect the mountain, and this respect, combined with his radical athletic instincts, is what makes a great, and safe, snowboarder. Ryan enters the contest and wins the day after a battle with Dax. Dax confronts Ryan and a brawl ensues, in which Ryan kicks Dax's ass.
ROUGHING IT

A synopsis by

Manuel “Dusty” Rodriguez grew up poor and Mexican in Salinas, California, but learned to golf because he caddied at nearby Pebble Beach. He had a chip on his shoulder, though, and did not pursue the game because he was peeved at the perceived insults he had endured because of his race and financial background.

Despite being a promising junior, Dusty settled in to life in Salinas, hanging out at bars and running with a rough crowd. He played occasionally, usually on the sly, and did not let his friends know that he still played the “white man’s game.” One of those friends is Pedro Hernandez, a troubled fellow who has been in and out of jail all his life. Pedro and Dusty have history, though, and Dusty remains loyal to his old friend.

One day, playing at a public course, Dusty runs into a local celebrity, Clive Westhead, a great actor, one-time Mayor, and at 6-6 the tallest man on the course. Westhead, a man of the people, likes playing the public course because he tires of the pretentiousness at Pebble, and he remembers Dusty from his Pebble days. He joins up with him, they recall the old days, and Clive is amazed at how good Dusty still is. He invites Dusty to play in an upcoming pro/am, and Dusty agrees.

Dusty runs into resistance from his homeboy friends. He and Pedro have a falling out, but Dusty decides to follow his talent. Along the way, he meets Alicia Davidez, a beautiful local sportscaster. They hit it off.

Dusty does well in the pro/am, and improves every match after that. He hits the tour and is a celeb, a big story because of who he is and where he comes from. He gets too big for his britches, and Alicia reminds him that he is not the same guy he was. Alicia tells him that she will not be with him anymore, but to call her if he ever finds the “real Dusty.”

The tour offers many inducements, though, and Dusty makes himself available to the many young lovelies. Finally, a big match is on the horizon, and Dusty is favored. He and another young phenom, Bear Forrest, are the two hottest players in golf.

Just before the big match, Dusty is approached by gamblers, who tell him that they are holding Pedro, who has gotten in deep trouble with the Mob. They tell him he had better beat Bear, or Pedro is dead. At first, Dusty figures that Pedro got in trouble on his own and he is not responsible for him

However, he feels the pressure, and knows he must be at his best for his friend. In a dramatic match, he beats Bear. Pedro is released, and they become friends again.

In a final scene, Dusty is back in Salinas with his friends from childhood. Pedro, now working for him and out of trouble, is by his side. Dusty runs into Alicia, who admires that he has decided to come back down to Earth, and their future together is hopeful.

TED WILLIAMS

THE REAL DEAL
"You know all those John Wayne movies? They were really about you. You were the real guy he was portraying."
"Yes, I guess you're right," replied Williams.

Once upon a time, Ted Williams was having a conversation with somebody who said, "You know all those John Wayne movies? They were really about you. You were the real guy he was portraying."
"Yes, I guess you're right," replied Williams, who was not the most humble man in the world.

John Wayne - The Duke - was an American hero who played courageous war heroes in epics like "The Sands of Iwo Jima" and "The Longest Day." While nobody ever questioned Wayne's bravery, the fact is that the former USC football player avoided military service in World War II and Korea.

Theodore Samuel Williams, aka The Kid, aka The Splendid Splinter, aka Teddy Ballgame, was like Wayne a product of the sun-splashed playing fields of Southern California. Williams' favorite player growing up was Cotton Warburton, who had played for Wayne's coach at Southern Cal, Howard Jones, a few years after Wayne (whose real name was Marion Morrison).

Like Duke, Williams was blessed with athletic ability, height, bearing, and matinee-idol good looks. Like Duke, he was outspoken, opinionated, and patriotic. Like Duke he was a conservative Republican surrounded by liberal Democrats. Also like The Duke, Williams foiled his detractors at every turn.

Unlike Duke, Williams did not avoid military service. Unlike Joe DiMaggio and other star athletes of that era, who served easy assignments in Hawaii, Williams took on his military career with the same gusto he put into everything else.

Williams joined the Marines after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Not just the Marines, no. Williams became a Marine Aviator. Years later, his service complete, no longer a young man and with no obligation to do so, Ted Williams interrupted his career, again at the height of his fame, popularity, success and earning power, to fly for the Marines in Korea.

How good a pilot was he? John Glenn was his wing man!

Baseball has been played in America, if one believes the legend, since 1839. Over the years, other sports have emerged and gained in popularity. However, when Ted Williams played the game, baseball was at its apex in terms of fan interest. There is a sense that baseball has produced the most daring and colorful characters of any sport, and the men who played the game in Williams' day are viewed as the most legendary.

Many interesting characters have played sports. Moe Berg was a Major League catcher and Ivy League attorney who spoke seven languages. He was sent to Europe by the old OSS to capture German scientists before the Soviets got to them, and is responsible for bringing Werner von Braun to the American space program. Berg was Jewish.

Bill "Spaceman" Lee was a wacky and wonderful quotemeister who once said, "I live on Rural Route One in Vermont. The state came to me and told me they were naming the roads, and I could name mine. I told 'em I didn't want to name it, because I don't want anyone to know
where I live. They said, 'you name it or we'll name it for you.' I told 'em to call it the Ted Kaszynski Memorial Highway."

Broadway Joe Namath changed the face of modern sports with his long hair, fur coats, and swinging lifestyle, modernizing pro football and making it acceptable to the Pepsi Generation to be a jock.

Still, for all the athletes who have ever played games, nobody ever combined playing ability, heroism, looks, controversial opinions and the art of outspokenness like Ted Williams. He is the single most interesting athlete who ever lived.

Growing up in Depression Era San Diego, Williams' mother was a lifelong Salvation Army worker, the very picture of the stoic, long-suffering women who brought up her children without complaint despite the fact that her husband was a handsome, skirt-chasing, alcoholic rogue in the tradition of Burt Lancaster's characters from "Good Bye, Little Sheeba" and "Elmer Gantry."

Williams spent all day, every day, all year, every year, practicing hitting on a palm tree-surrounded baseball field. He was a natural, the best young prospect in baseball when he hit the scene with as much aplomb as any player in history with the Boston Red Sox in 1939.

In 1941, he entered the last day of the season batting .400. The double-header was meaningless, and if he sat out he would finish with the magic average. By that time, the Boston press was already on him because he did not conform to their view of what a ballplayer should be off the field: Deferential and humble. They jumped on him like a cheap suit, accusing him of cowardice ahead of time for riding the pine.

Williams never thought about sitting it out. Instead, he went 6-for-8 against Connie Mack's A's to finish at .406! He is the last man to hit .400.

After Pearl Harbor, Williams volunteered for the Marines, and served as an aviator until the war ended. In 1946, he returned to the game and was named Most Valuable Player in the American League, leading Boston to the World Series. The Red Sox were so talented, more would surely follow.

There have been many great rivalries over the years. Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain were giants of the hardwood. Every year, the Trojans of Southern Cal and the Notre Dame Fighting Irish battle each other in an inter-sectional series that USC assistant coach Marv Goux used to call, "The best of the East vs. the best of the West."

Williams and DiMaggio engaged in what is probably the greatest individual rivalry in baseball history, and gave birth to the most intense team rivalry ever. The passions of New Yorkers and Bostonians for their Yankees and Red Sox exceed anything in the history of sport.

Williams and DiMaggio. The stuff of myth and legend. Two Californians who hold a place of pagan idolatry for East Coast baseball afficionados. A kind of Shakespearean curse seemed to hang over Williams and his team, however. Each year, Boston was favored, filled with talent, their long-suffering fans clamoring for victory over the hated Bronx Bombers. Williams would put up the numbers, but DiMaggio, playing in pain, would find a way to personally push, cajole and will his team to victory over the Sox.

Ted Williams, the ex-Marine fighter jock, had by now entered into a different kind of war, this time with the Boston press corps. Boston is an Irish town; a Catholic town; and a Democratic stronghold.

Ted Williams was a sunburned WASP from California, a rock solid conservative Republican who had no problem airing his considerable disagreement with FDR's New Deal and
Harry Truman's stewardship of the country with the liberal Kennedyites in the Beantown media.

The writers excoriated him. They went after him with everything they had. They clawed around his personal life, exposing flaws in his performance as a husband to a beautiful actress and father to a small child.

Williams fought back every chance he could, decrying the writers as the Knights of the Keyboard, never giving an inch. He was nothing if not stubborn. On the field, he hit like nobody has ever hit in the history of the game.

"When I was growing up," Williams often said, "my goal was to someday walk down the street and hear people say, `There goes the greatest hitter who ever lived.'"

By 1950, even his most vocal detractors had to admit that he was the best hitter of all time. Better than Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, or Joe DiMaggio. The best. Number one.

Off the field, it was a different story. His marriage failed, and the press was on him like a cheap suit. His teams came agonizingly close, but DiMaggio's Yankees bested them over and over again. Still, Williams was at the height of his earning power and abilities in June, 1950, when the Korean Communists crossed the 38th Parallel.

The "old soldier," Douglas MacArthur, was called back to lead another crusade, and despite having served for three years during World War II, and being over 30 years old, the Boston writers immediately began to clamor that Williams was unpatriotic for not volunteering immediately.

Williams, as usual, could not care less what the writers wrote. Strike that, he cared, he just did not let their words dictate his actions. Williams did re-enter the service, but not because any liberal Boston writer, sitting out the war and criticizing MacArthur while he was at it, told him that was what he should do. He did it because he wanted to to.

He did it, like everything in his life, on his own terms. If ever a song should have been written about anybody, "My Way" should have been written about Ted Williams. So Williams was received in the Corps as a combat veteran and baseball hero, right? Baseball hero, yes. Combat veteran? Not so fast.

The Marines had switched over from stick 'n' rudders to jets, and now Ted found himself facing an enormous learning curve. His fellow flyboys were not the hayseeds and kids who had flown with him in World War II. The New Breed included Naval Academy hotshots with the engineering skills to handle the new jet aircraft, and the skills to dogfight against ace Soviet MiG pilots over the Korean skies.

Williams, whose formal education had ended upon graduation from Hoover High School, took to the task at hand with gusto. In Korea, he was an acknowledged ace, who taught young John Glenn the ropes. His exploits were listened to with awe by other aviators over the radio.

"One time, we heard the transmission of a terrible dogfight between our guys and some MiGs," explained former Yankee Gerry Coleman, who was also a Marine pilot at the time. "One of our pilots, in particular, flew and fought his way out of a terrible jam, and barely made it home alive. We rushed out to see his aircraft, which was shot up to hell. It was unbelievable that it had landed safely. Out of the cockpit came the unknown pilot. It was Ted Williams."

Williams survived that and other hairy sky high dogfights. He survived pneumonia, and developed an ear problem that is with him to this day. He made it back for the remainder of the 1953 season, and was finally received by Boston's fans and press with the respect he deserved.
Williams had never tipped his cap to the fans. He occasionally spat in their direction. He still held back, but his war experience, his up and down personal life and his appreciation for baseball, while not mellowing him, did soften his image a bit.

He was given still another nickname, "Teddy Ballgame," and while he argued with Truman's supporters in the Boston media over the handling of General MacArthur, Williams was now seen as an elder statesman, accorded the privilege of his well-earned rank.

Williams had broken into baseball when Lou Gehrig was still playing, and was still around to battle Mickey Mantle. Finally, in 1960, he called it quits. Naturally, he hit a home run in his last at-bat at Fenway Park. Williams had played from 1939 to 1960. At the absolute height of his career, at the age of 24, he had been uprooted from the game, and missed three years because of the war. He was the league's MVP upon his return.

He was still in his prime when he again left the game for Korea, and when he came back he hit .407 in the last 37 games of 1953, then .345 the next year. Overall he had missed virtually seven years. Assuming he had performed close to the rest of his career, and absent injuries, Williams would have broken Babe Ruth's career record of 714 home runs long before Hank Aaron (Williams finished with 521). He would have had 3,000 hits, and would have set every record for runs, walks, and runs batted in. He finished with a .344 lifetime batting average.

Always the curmudgeon, Williams in retirement was as outspoken as ever. He devoted his time to big game fishing off the Florida and Canada coasts. The greatest hitter of all time, and one of the most heralded fighter pilots this country has ever produced, Ted Williams never settled for second best at anything.

He is generally considered to be one of the greatest fishermen ever.

Writers would make the pilgrimage to his Florida fishing headquarters to get a load of wisdom and opinion from The Man. Ted never disappointed. Modern hitters, he said, lacked the discipline of his era, which was why they struck out so much. Anything that was sub-par, whether it be tying a fly or America's foreign policy, was in Williams' words, "Chinese."

Once, at a crowded, ethnically diverse restaurant in Oakland, Williams loudly regaled a newspaper editor with his Korean flying exploits.

"Everything was gook this and gook that," recalled the editor.

"I'd be flying," Williams had told the editor, "and I'd see a column of gooks. I'd make a dive, and come in firing my machine guns, just mowin' 'em down. It was great."

Nobody ever accused Ted Williams of being Politically Correct.

He tried managing, and in his first year transformed the Washington Senators from also-rans to respectability, but over the years it became obvious that he could not manage average ball players. He could not relate to mediocrity.

As the years of his retirement grew, an interesting development occurred. Writers came to recall the Williams legend, and grudging respect was replaced with admiration for everything he had done and stood for. Players would seek him out for advice, and he would be become a genuine guru on the art of hitting.

DiMaggio, on the other hand, saw his legend diminish. Stand-offish and rude unless somebody had something for him, DiMag had long been protected by New York writers, who called his actions "class." Over time, stories appeared that told of his misogynistic attitude towards women, the mental abuse towards Marilyn Monroe, his imperial attitude towards teammates, his ties with Mob figures, his penuriousness and the utterly crass way he would use people to further selfish desires.
Ted Williams, on the other, was, as the young folks today like to say, real. He was and is, totally real. The real deal.

Today, Ted Williams, who has fended off recent health problems the way he fended off Communist fighter jets, is seen as one of baseball's most beloved figures. At the 1999 All-Star Game in Boston, the crowd of modern players who surrounded Williams made up one of the most memorable crossroads of past and present the game has ever seen.

Williams will go down in history with characters like George Patton and Richard Nixon, people who were talented, passionate, and accomplished; men who were great and flawed and human, like characters from Greek tragedy, movers of mountains who are the stuff of legend that lives up to the hyperbole.

Williams has always been a man who engendered love or hate, and often little in between. Now, the hate has been replaced by respect, and more likely, awe. His is one of the greatest stories of all time. A rags to riches tale of personal responsibility and commitment, a story of principles and patriotism.

An American story.

ATHLETE, CITIZEN, WARRIOR

Ted Williams was 34 years old, but still the best hitter in baseball. Joe DiMaggio had retired, but his void had been filled by young Mickey Mantle. The Boston Red Sox, who in the late 1940s seemingly had the best team in baseball, had deteriorated, and now under Casey Stengel, the Yankees were still the cream of the crop.

America in 1952 was riven by factional dispute. The great hopes of the immediate post-war years - glorious peace, followed by the United Nations Conference in San Francisco which would outline a "new world order" - had been undermined by the shifting sands of politics, both at home and abroad.

Franklin Roosevelt knew how to deal with people as diverse as Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin. He loved the art of saying one thing while steering the conversation in the direction of something else entirely.

When he died, Harry Truman had taken over negotiations on how the world would be divided into "spheres of influence," and he was a bull in a China shop. He berated Molotov and Stalin over their failures to live up to agreements. The plain-spoken Missourian had little patience for the imperious Chang Kai-Shek, and expressed little better than open contempt for Madame Chang.

Some, mostly Republicans (Ted Williams being one of them), blamed Truman and his administration for "losing China" when Mao Tse-Tung accomplished his "long march" goal of creating "Red China" in 1949.

Forces had already divided into sides in America. In 1947, a young California Congressman, Richard Nixon, had exposed Communist espionage on our own soil when he went after an elite Ivy Leaguer, Alger Hiss, who had been a Roosevelt advisor throughout the war. Hiss was the darling of the Left, Nixon the darling of the Right.

Nixon, seeing the stickiness of being too associated with anti-Communism, had moved on to other things while still maintaining his "anti-Communist credentials."
A much less intelligent and accomplished Senator, Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin, had picked up on the "Communists in government" theme, then expanded it to an investigation of Hollywood.

In June, 1950, the Korean Communists invaded the southern portion of the Korean Peninsula when they crossed the 38th Parallel. Living up to the Truman Doctrine, which was to stand up to Communism wherever it threatened liberty in our sphere of influence, Truman had sent in American troops, led by Douglas MacArthur.

Now, Americans saw McCarthyism in a whole new light. Communists spouted their political views from the safety of tenured university positions and in Hollywood, while our boys were dying at the Chosin Reservoir.

The fact is that there were many Communist spies and "fellow travelers" undermining the American way of life in those years, although liberal revisionism has painted efforts to expose them in subsequent years as nothing more than a "witch hunt."

In Boston, where Hiss had gone to Harvard and been an intellectual hero in the salons of liberal society, Ted Williams' brand of jingoistic, John Wayne-style anti-Communist rhetoric did not sit well with the Kennedyites in the media.

It should be noted that Kennedy and his family were staunch anti-Communists. Joe Kennedy was a major financial supporter of McCarthy, who gave Bobby Kennedy his first job, but the media in that part of the country was inclined to tilt far to the left, rather than acknowledge the work of Nixon, much less the drunkard Midwestern "yokel," McCarthy.

Williams was accused, in print, of being unpatriotic by writers whose closest proximity to combat was sitting in the Fenway press box during a post-bean ball brawl.

Six games into the 1952 season, on his 34th birthday, Ted Williams said good-bye, again, to the Red Sox, and hello to the United States Marine Corps. He was making $100,000 1952 dollars with the Red Sox.

"I'm not going to bitch about it," Williams said, "this is the right thing to do."

Williams was sent to Willow Grove, Pennsylvania for an eight-week refresher course on flying. Gerry Coleman of the Yankees was called in at the same time. Williams' old Navy SNV was obsolete. Jets were the thing.

"Listen, if you can get in jets, do it," a friend of Ted's, Bill Churchman, just returning from Korea, told him. "If you take an SNV into a target at 400 miles an hour, you have to go out at 400 miles an hour. You take a jet in, you're going 420, you release your bombs, you get the hell out of there at 500."

"I have to say this," Williams complained. "I never felt the Marines got the kind of equipment they deserved. I remember landing at Pohang in Korea, lousy old corrugated mat, crummy quarters, a real dog box. Cold and damp and awful."

After eight or 10 missions, he began to get sick in the miserable, foggy weather, visiting the infirmary regularly for an ear infection. Still, he flew his missions, and one day he was cruising over the 38th Parallel, his target being an encampment for a large troop concentration. Nearing the target, Williams lost visual reference with his lead plane, and when he tried to swing back into wing formation, found himself flying too low.

The purpose of the mission was to drop "daisy cutters," which are anti-personnel bombs that spread out, but he was now low enough to be a target for "I don't know how many thousands of gooks in that encampment."
He was hit with small arms fire, and when he pulled out of the run his red lights were flashing, the plane shook violently, and his "stick had stiffened up" (pardon the pun). He was leaking hydraulic fluid, the plane had a fire burning some place, but Williams did not where exactly.

Knowing he was in trouble, he called for help, but could not "pick up" anybody. Suddenly, he saw a plane on his tail. A MiG? For a second, he thought it was. Then he recognized the sandy-haired pilot, Lieutenant Larry Hawkins from Pine Grove, Pennsylvania. Hawkins was an A's fan who had not much appreciated the damage Williams did to his team, but he let that drop, for now. At first, seeing that Ted's plane was on fire, he tried to get Williams to bail out, but Williams could not read the signal.

Finally, Hawkins used his thumb to indicate that they must try to gain altitude. Williams understood this, and luckily his plane had enough oomph to pick up to 10,000 feet, where the thinner air negated the fire.

"I was sure I'd have to bail out,' Williams recalled, "and at my height, I was strapped in so tight, I was deathly afraid that if I ever did, I'd lose my kneecaps. That's the main reason I held on so long, and was the only thing that really frightened me about flying."

When they pulled in at a village airfield, which was not their original destination but rather the closest friendly landing base, it was a madhouse. Planes were landing almost on top of each other, all low on fuel and in various states of damage. Williams felt only divine intervention prevented his wing from disintegrating upon landing at 225 miles an hour, twice the ordinary landing speed. Once he descended to lower altitudes, the fire had heated back up and was now raging, visible as a 30-foot contrail from the plane. He pulled the emergency wheel latch, but only one wheel dropped down. He hit flush and skidded up the runway, fast, with no diving brakes or flaps, and nothing to slow up the craft.

He skidded more than a mile, ripping and tearing up the runway, sparks flying. Gas was leaking, and Williams was in a quandary. At high speeds, the sparks and fire might not catch on to the gas and blow him up, but once he slowed down, if ever, then maybe he would be vulnerable to a gas explosion.

_A rock and a hard place._

Still, he had to stop, and would worry about bailing out when he had to.

"When's this dirty S.O.B. gonna stop?" he thought to himself. He was mad and scared at the same, and almost broke his ankle pressing the brakes.

Finally, he saw a fire truck, _only he was sliding towards it._ The truck saw him and barely evaded the plane, trailing dust. Williams managed to stop the craft at the end of the runway. The canopy would not open. He hit the emergency ejector, and noticed that everything was on fire except the cockpit.

Williams finally got the canopy open, and dived out, somersaulting to the ground. Two Marines were there to grab him. The fire crew doused the plane with foam, but it was in cinders. Skid marks had left their marks for 2,000 feet.

Normally, he would have been grounded after such a close call, but his unit was hurting for pilots, so the next day he found himself 20,000 feet over Seoul.

**THE NATURAL BORN BACHELOR**
KYLE TUNNEY is a Gen X drifter who has never found himself. This is the kind of guy who surfs--and lives in New York City. It has always been that way with Kyle. People in his Westside Dominican neighborhood look at him like he is crazy as he traipses in and out of the subway station with his Yader Spoon.

Kyle likes to drink, and he has a tendency to be a bit of a silver-tongued devil when laying the rap on the fine young girl's he sees while traversing the Manhattan nightlife scene. Not surprisingly, Kyle finds himself in a predictable predicament. Alcohol, smooth talk and women get guys' in trouble from Cairo to Connecticut, and after a riotous series of blow-up phone calls and messages from pissed-off ladies, it is off to California for our hero.

Are his troubles over? Hardly. They are just beginning. Hey, is that his bag that just got stolen at LAX? Kyle strikes up conversation with a local honey, but she gives him the brush-off. Drinking remains his favorite pastime, a place for him to drown some tears. It is in this setting that our bachelor is introduced Bridgette, an attractive, 30-something bartender. Where does this lead? Into bed, of course. Hey, this is the Natural Born Bachelor. Bridgette helps get things rolling for Kyle, helping him land a job at Montecito where he is constantly on the make for the well-kept women in this tony Santa Barbara enclave.

Ivanna is 50, says she is 39, and is spoiled--of course. She puts Kyle through the paces, but real love does not flourish. Carmen, the beautiful au pair, bonds with Kyle, but sex with her results in the same thing as the all the rest. Whatever you call it, happiness is not part of the equation.

Kyle actually seems to think these ladies should be honest with him. He is irritated when he finds out that they are just as deceptive to him as he is to them. The one person who will listen to him is D.B., a male bartender. How surprising! More trysts follow, and some major drama ensues when Kyle finds out he has v.d. This means he has to go back to Yvonne, a beautiful girl he could fall in love with. Finally, Kyle faces up to his responsibilities. The reaction is predictable: Not Good. Then Kyle finds out the results have been mixed up. Will true love bloom now? He can go back to Yvonne and start his life anew. Will he? Naw. Three beautiful girls have just entered the Blue Agave, and the Natural Born Bachelor is back in business.

When Ken Uston, a repressed corporate executive who has discovered a sure-fire way to win at blackjack, quits his job, he is denied the chance to play in casinos after he wins too much, is targeted by security expert Jacques Dupree, Dupree's girlfriend Lisa is sent to spy on Ken, but she breaks up with Dupree and instructs Ken, skeptical of her motives, on how to use disguises
and to avoid showing card-counting tendencies, in order to evade Dupree.

Ken, a piano aficionado, befriends jazz great Doolittle Scott. Ken and Lisa eventually fall in love when they discover commitment to each other, and later Doolittle, are greater motivations than money. Dupree bans them from playing in casinos worldwide. Ken and Dupree gain mutual admiration for each other's skills. Doolittle's fingers are broken by the mob in order to intimidate Ken, Las Vegas mob boss Carlos Santucci orders a "hit" on Ken when Ken keeps winning, Dupree learns of the hit, realizes he is on the wrong side of the moral equation, and in order to help Ken and Lisa he utilizes the help of capo regime Salvatore Vitti. Vitti has greater power than Santucci, considers Santucci a scungilli, and owes a big favor to Dupree.

Under Vitti's protection, a card-counting team is formed. Using disguises, Ken, Lisa and Dupree "sting" Santucci's operation in the Bahamas and make a million-dollar payday, earning each player $10,000 and using the rest of the money to set Doolittle up for life with his own jazz club.

This is a Capra-esque story of David (Ken) vs. Goliath (casinos and the mob), using a Rocky-style theme of overcoming tremendous odds through the use of a clever plot that pulls the wool over the bad guys heads in the end, similar to the finale of The Sting. Ken learns commitment (to Doolittle) and love (with) Lisa. Lisa also transforms, when her motivations change from pure monetary considerations, as she falls in love with Ken. Dupree also changes when he learns that he cannot separate himself from his work for immoral people.

FIRST INSTIGATING INCIDENT: When Ken sheds his corporate job for the freedom of professional gambling.

PLOT POINT I: When Lisa offers to show the skeptical Ken how to use disguises and the avoidance of card-counting tendencies in order to evade Jacques.

(i.e., Will Jacques catch Ken? - approximately page 30, ending Act I)

SECOND INSTIGATING INCIDENT(S): When Doolittle's fingers are broken by the mob and Santucci orders a "hit" on Ken and Lisa.

PLOT POINT II: When a card-counting team is formed.

(i.e., Will the "team" win the money, beat the bad guys and will Ken, Lisa and Jacques stay alive? - approximately page 90, ending Act II)

MAIN CHARACTER'S (KEN'S) MISBEHAVIOR AND NEED: Ken is a repressed thrill-seeker. He is repressed in the beginning by his job and his boss. He seeks thrills. He fulfills his need by gambling and courting danger.

REFLECTION: Doolittle and, to a lesser extent, Jacques.

KEN'S CHARACTER ARC: He begins repressed and living in a fantasy world. He ends having
his adrenaline needs fulfilled, his fantasies lived out, and thus a worldly character replaces the innocent fellow we first meet.

SUB-PLOTS: (a) The "love triangle" between Ken, Lisa and Jacques. (b) Ken's love of piano and his admiration for Doolittle. (c) The mutual admiration developed for each other's professional skills by Ken and Jacques.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

THREE FACETS OF CHARACTER (KEN): (a) Physical makeup...Late 30's, male, clean-cut, mod-looking, long sideburns, later grows a beard, flashy dresser. (b) Personality...Intelligent, well-spoken, educated, math wizard. (c) Background...Public school/college education, Californian, corporate, slightly protected.

DEVELOPING THE HERO (KEN) - ESTABLISHING CHARACTER IDENTIFICATION: (a) Create sympathy for the character...Little guy vs. the big guy in typical "Capra-esque style." Good vs. evil (mob). (b) Put character in jeopardy...Must evade Jacques' security detection, and then must evade a mob hit. (c) Make character likable...Root for Ken to get Lisa to fall in love with him. He is typical, average, next-door neighbor type, slightly gullible at first, gambles for thrills and is not outwardly greedy. (d) Introduce character as soon as possible...Show what Ken does for living within first page or so (stock exchange and gambling). (e) Show character in touch with his own power...He is fully aware of his blackjack skills, enough so to quit/be fired from his job in order to make living doing it. (f) Place character in familiar setting...Gaming casino's. (g) Give character familiar flaws and foibles...Unconventional...Uneasy around opposite sex?...Nervous under pressure. (h) The eyes of the audience...Achieved when audience learns information only when hero learns it. Done by making hero the eyes of the audience.

MAKING CHARACTERS ORIGINAL: (a) Go against cliche...Ken is not a slick riverboat gambler-type, but rather a little sheepish, corporate, bookworm-type. As time goes on he grows in confidence and stature in order to deal with crisis situations. (b) Play off other characters...Lisa, Jacques, Doolittle. (c) Cast the hero...Ken - Al Pacino, Alan Arkin, Robert De Niro, Eric Roberts, Ray Liotta, etc. Lisa - Julia Roberts, Michelle Pfeiffer, Linda Fiorentino, Jacques - Brad Cole, Kevin Kline, French actors, etc.

DEVELOPING OTHER CHARACTERS (FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRIMARY CHARACTER): (a) Hero - Ken. (b) Nemesis - Jacques/Carlo Santucci. (c) Reflection - Doolittle. (d) Romance - Lisa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outer mot.</th>
<th>Outer con.</th>
<th>Inner mot.</th>
<th>Inner con.</th>
<th>Hero</th>
<th>Win blackjack; Jacques; Lisa</th>
<th>Thrill-seeker; Can't trust KEN</th>
<th>Affair w/Lisa</th>
<th>is &quot;rival&quot;</th>
<th>Desires Lisa</th>
<th>Lisa Win for Doolittle</th>
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Nemesis Prev. Ken Ken won't Sense of fair Admires Ken
JACQUES from playing stop play

Nemesis Prev. Ken Ken is beating - - -
CARLO from winning casino

Romance Partner w/Ken Affair w/Ken Thrill-seeker Still likes
LISA Break-Up/Jacques Jacques

Pair with opposite character? Perhaps when Jacques teams with Ken they can be opposites.
A Hero. Ken's visible motivation drives the plot (to win at blackjack despite efforts to stop him).

Identification. Audience must experience emotion through Ken (Ken's frustration at being denied chance to play; exhilaration at winning).

Motivation. For the card-counting team to win $1 million in one night and get Doolittle back on his feet.

Obstacles. Jacques; the mob.

Courage. Achieving goal with knowledge that mob has a "hit" on him.

High concept. It is a story about how a man overcame odds to become the world's greatest blackjack player.

Originality and familiarity. Have we seen this theme explored before? Not off hand.

Second level of sell and sub-plots. Love triangle/story between Ken, Lisa and Jacques. Sub-plot may be the relationship between Ken and Doolittle and how that ultimately is the motivation for the final conflict.

Familiarity of setting. Everybody in the world has been in a casino.

Film category. Drama.

Medium. Major motion picture or television/H.B.O.

Cost. No big special effects; medium-sized crowd scenes; possibly some international locations; 1990's setting (late 1970's at earliest); weather is not a factor.

Character growth. Ken must battle himself to find the courage to proceed with the plan, thus gaining greater self-knowledge and confidence.

Theme. If the good guys are smart, clever and courageous, they can triumph over the bad guys.

It is the story of a corporate executive who wants to be the world's greatest blackjack player.

PLOT STRUCTURE
Act I - Establish
Act II - Build
Act III - Resolve

1. Every scene contributes to hero's outer motivation - to win at blackjack, get Lisa to love him, avenge Doolittle.
2. Early on, show where story is leading them - Ken is fired and embarks on blackjack career, and Jacques is clearly out to stop him.
3. Build conflict - first through Lisa, then Jacques tracks Ken, until we up the stakes by introducing the dangerous element of the mob.
4. Accelerate the pace - when mob hit is ordered pace picks up.
5. Create peaks and valleys - let audience catch breath.
6. Create anticipation - get audience to try to guess what happens next.
7. Superior position - does audience know something character's don't know? May conflict with courage aspect of character, who is aware of danger.
8. Surprise audience/reverse anticipation - jolt audience out of sense of security.
9. Create curiosity - audience is given reason to "stick around" and learn what happens.
10. Foreshadowing - show Jacques early? Make events believable. 11. Echo change through dialogue/situations to illustrate character growth - line of dialogue perhaps uttered throughout film which reveals changes every time we hear it.
12. Pose a threat to character - mob "hit" ordered on Ken.
14. Teach audience how to do something - counting cards.
15. Humor and seriousness - costume changes are humorous; mob hits are serious.
16. Effective opening - similarities of gambling and hustle-bustle of Vegas casino's with stock exchange, the two world's of Ken Uston.
17. Effective ending - Ken wins money; Doolittle benefits; everybody survives.

SCENE OBJECTIVES

1. How does scene begin, end and how do I get character's to that point? Is each scene carrying main character's motivation?
2. Does scene carry a beginning, middle and end?
3. What is each character's objective?
4. Attitude?
5. Action - or dialogue?
6. Serve multiple functions?

SEQUENTIAL OUTLINE

Act I - No.'s 1-3 (includes 1st instigating incident, PPI).
Act II - No.'s 4-9 (includes 2nd instigating incident, PPII).
Act III - No.'s 10-12.
SEQUENTIAL OUTLINE

1. THE TWO, SIMILAR WORLD'S OF KEN USTON ARE CASINO AND STOCK EXCHANGE, AND KEN WINS AT BLACKJACK.

We close on a dealer's hands expertly shuffling blackjack on a casino table. Credits roll and Elvis Presley's "Viva Las Vegas" plays while a montage of Vegas casino action is intercut with the hustle-bustle of the Pacific Stock Exchange. The similarities between the shills and the floor traders is intercut.

Angle-on a stock exchange floor trader asking an unidentified investor, "What do you want to do?"

Quick-cut to a close on a shill asking, "What do want to do, Mr. Uston?"

Angle-on KEN USTON, flashy dresser, sitting at the blackjack table. Close on the dealer's hand - a King. Uston has 16. He concentrates, eyeing the situation. He hits and comes up five - 21! Applause from a small group that has gathered around the table. Uston has a large stack of chips in front of him. He is the center of attention. A series of hands is played. Uston hits on unusual hands but comes up a winner time after time. He bets large amounts, and keeps winning. The stack gets bigger. The crowd gets bigger. Oohs and aahs accompany each successive winning hand. We see Ken concentrating intently amid the maelstrom of activity surrounding him. A little old lady sits next to Ken, behind him are beautiful women.

Angle-on the "eye in the sky," then pit bosses observing, then talking into a phone, back to the "eye in the sky." Ken wins and wins and wins.

We see Ken take a break and speak to a casino representative, who assures him he is comped at the hotel - free room, food, alcohol, limo service, and airplane whenever he wishes to come back to Vegas. He deposits his chips into his house account.

Ken is back at the table, winning. The house is showing an ace. Angle-on the shill asking, "What do you want to do?"

We see the San Francisco skyline.

Dissolve to the stock exchange, angle-on on the floor trader asking, "What do you want to do, Mr. Uston?" Ken, dressed in a somewhat flashy business suit compared with the staid dark suits of others, buys long. The bell rings, the trading session is over, and Ken walks towards his office. He is the vice president of the Pacific Stock Exchange.

2. KEN IS AUDITED BY I.R.S. AND QUITS HIS CORPORATE JOB.

We follow Ken to his office. His secretary, JAN, informs him that his appointment with an
I.R.S. auditor is on time. The auditor wants to know why Ken has made such expensive purchases in the last year - a new home, a classic 1959 Porsche Speedster - $250,000 all told on a salary of $50,000. Ken explains that he has had a run of luck gambling in Lake Tahoe and Las Vegas. The auditor is skeptical that anybody can win that much playing blackjack, and promises further investigation. The auditor leaves.

Ken is then confronted by his boss, MR. FARADAY, a humorous, efficient man. Faraday is furious and has a laundry list of complaints about Ken: The stock exchange does not need its vice president audited by the I.R.S.; Ken is always late on Mondays and comes in disheveled after a weekend of out-of-state gambling; his clothes are not conservative enough, his hair and sideburns are too long; he is not available to work weekends; he gambles; the exchange does not need bad publicity; his attitude is cavalier, and he obviously does not want the big promotion he is in line for.

Ken agrees with Mr. Faraday, tells him he does not gamble, rather he has a winning system in blackjack, and that he would rather work for himself anyway, so "I quit." With that, Ken terminates his employment.

3. SECURITY EXPERT JACQUES DUPREE EXPLAINS HOW CARD-COUNTERS OPERATE AND FOCUSES ON HIS TARGET: KEN USTON.

A shot of the Las Vegas skyline at night.

Dissolve to JACQUES DUPREE, a dapper Frenchman, and his lovely American girlfriend, LISA PETERS. They are in the "eye in the sky" control room of a large casino. Monitors of card games being played downstairs line the wall. DuPree is holding court with HOLLIS, the casino security chief, and a phalanx of other security personnel. Hollis explains that DuPree is with the Logan Agency, a worldwide firm retained by almost every casino in the world to track cheaters, pilferers, embezzling employees - and card counters. DuPree then directs their attention to the television monitors and points out various things - breaches of security, signals being given by players and shills. They focus on the little old lady who had been playing next to Ken. She touches her ear. DuPree explains that is a signal the dealer is cheating. The little old lady works for him. He introduces Lisa. She explains that she is a world-class card counter herself, trained in undercover casino security, and she will be infiltrating the card games in order to expose big-winner card counters. Card counting is not illegal, but will not be tolerated when the counter wins extraordinary amounts from the house. She cites a code in the Nevada Gaming Code that states the house may prevent a player from playing if it is not in the best interests of the state, which is of course to take money, not pay it out. After all, the casinos and hotels, the employment and tax base of the state are all predicated on gamblers losing money.

"That's why we're paying you." Everybody turns and we see CARLO SANTUCCI, Vegas mob boss, and his entourage of "wise guys." Santucci owns the casino and controls territory. He is a "made" guy. He is smooth and pleasant but his words barely conceal a controlled fury. He is not a man to mess with. "Who are you targeting?" she asks DuPree.
"Him," he says, pointing to a monitor.

Angle-on Ken Uston, now with a beard and long hair, dressed flashy, on the screen, concentrating, a big pile of chips in front of him and a coterie of admirers watching him win.

4. KEN BEFRIENDS PIANO GREAT DOOLITTLE SCOOT; DUPREE'S GIRLFRIEND LISA IS SENT TO SPY ON KEN AND THEY SLEEP TOGETHER.

Ken is taking a breather from blackjack. He enters the lounge area. An elderly black man, DOOLITTLE SCOTT, is playing the piano. He is good. Ken listens and recognizes Scott by sound and by sight. He introduces himself to Doolittle and they quickly become friendly. Ken explains that his greatest passion is to play the piano. Doolittle lets Ken play a few bars. Ken is good, and Doolittle is impressed.

So is Lisa, who has wandered into the bar. She listens to Ken play and makes eyes at him. Ken is encouraged and introduces himself to her. They have a few drinks, Ken plays some more piano, and Lisa starts to ask Ken about gambling. Ken says he has won over $10,000 that night. He is bragging. Lisa is duly impressed. She asks him what his secret is. Ken is sly about it, he says he has a system. Lisa inquires more. Ken holds back a bit, not revealing that he "counts cards." Lisa pushes the subject just a little then backs off.

Later, we see Ken and Lisa making love in Ken's hotel room.

5. JACQUES DISCOVERS LISA SLEPT WITH KEN, THEY ARGUE AND BREAK UP; KEN DISCOVERS LISA WAS A SPY; LISA PROPOSES TO HELP HIM EVADE JACQUES THROUGH DISGUISES AND CARD-COUNTING TENDENCIES, BUT KEN IS SKEPTICAL.

Jacques is sitting in the "eye in the sky" control room. Lisa saunters in. Jacques is mad, and asks where she spent the night. Lisa replies that she was just doing her job per Jacques' instructions - she was spying on Ken Uston to find out what his card counting secrets were. Jacques asks what she discovered, and Lisa says she needs more time because Ken is very cautious about giving out that kind of information. Jacques then explodes and accuses her of cheating on him. Lisa replies that she was just doing her job, that is what Jacques pays her to do. Jacques says that by sleeping with Ken, Lisa is a prostitute and, since Jacques pays Lisa, that makes Jacques a pimp. They argue back and forth, with Jacques resoundingly explaining that he is not paying Lisa to use her body like she has. Lisa says that it's just fine that Jacques sleep with other women and even bring lovers into their bed, but when she does it Jacques holds her to a double standard. That does it, Jacques explodes, and they break up.

Lisa goes back to Ken. At first she is coy, but she starts hinting around that she can help Ken win more at blackjack. Ken starts getting suspicious and asks her if she is a spy. Lisa says that she was a spy, but not anymore. Ken is miffed that apparently Lisa slept with him with reasons other than love or attraction. Lisa says she does care for him, which is why she wants to help him. She then spills everything about how she was Jacques' girlfriend. he is targeting his card
counting, she was sent to gather information, they argued and broke up. She warns Ken that Jacques is about to put him out of every casino in the world, and says she is a quick-change artist and blackjack expert. She can help Ken evade Jacques, and will do so for a 50/50 split of Ken's winnings.

Ken is very skeptical and tells Lisa to take a hike.

6. JACQUES PUTS KEN ON THE WORLDWIDE BANNED LIST; KEN HAS ROMANTIC FEELINGS FOR LISA, WHO PREFERS A BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP; KEN AND LISA USE DISGUISES, TRAVEL TO DIFFERENT CASINO'S AND OVERSEAS, AND MASK CARD-COUNTING TENDENCIES TO EVADE JACQUES AND WIN BIG AT BLACKJACK.

7. JACQUES DOGGEDLY TRACKS KEN AND LISA DOWN; JACQUES AND KEN GAIN MUTUAL ADMIRATION FOR EACH OTHER; KEN IS FORCED TO SELL PORSCHE BECAUSE HE IS UNABLE TO PLAY AND WIN; KEN AND LISA FALL IN LOVE.

8. LAS VEGAS MOB BOSS CARLO SANTUCCI WANTS KEN STOPPED FROM WINNING; HE WARNS JACQUES OF CONSEQUENCES; DOOLITTLE'S FINGERS ARE BROKEN BY MOB.
9. KEN MANAGES TO KEEP WINNING; SANTUCCI ORDERS A HIT ON KEN AND LISA; JACQUES WARNS KEN OF HIT AND THEY JOIN TOGETHER TO FORM CARD-COUNTING TEAM.

10. JACQUES GETS PROTECTION FROM RIVAL MOB BOSS KEN VITTI AND CARD-COUNTING TEAM IS TRAINED BY KEN.

11. "DOUBLES" OF KEN, LISA AND JACQUES DECOY SANTUCCI'S THUGS IN BAHAMAS.

12. THE TEAM WINS OVER $1 MILLION IN LAS VEGAS; DOOLITTLE IS SET UP FOR LIFE.

1. Ken wins in Vegas and is a flashy "high roller." He counts cards and is targeted by Dupree and we see Lisa, Santucci.
2. Ken, in contrast to "high roller" is a buttoned up exec on Mon. am. He attends gala's, is on bd. of directors, makes a lot of $ and has a lot vested in job.
3. Ken leads double life. He meets Doolittle. Lisa is sent to spy on him, they sleep with each other.
4. Jacques discovers Lisa slept with Ken, they break up, and Ken is caught counting.
5. Ken goes back to SF and is busy exec. Lisa sees him in SF and proposes to help him evade Jacques. She wants 50/50 and will blackmail him w/photos, etc. unless he says yes. Ken says no.
FADE IN

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL CAMP - DAY

A summer-time high school football camp bustles with activity in a rural setting in Northern California.

VARIOUS SHOTS

of teenage football players blocking, tackling, throwing and catching.

Coaches bark orders.

TITLE: DIAMOND B FOOTBALL CAMP, BOONEVILLE, CALIFORNIA. 1965.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

14-year old PETE CARROLL is a fresh-faced, good-looking kid. He wears a white T-shirt that reads "Diamond B Football Camp." He works on a foot drill, backing up as a safety, effectively preventing an opposing RECEIVER from making a catch.

RECEIVER

Nice play, Pete.

ANGLE ON

Coach BOB TROPMMANN, early 40s, with a close-cropped Marine-style haircut, wearing the "Diamond B Football Camp" T-shirt and shorts. He has a whistle hung around his neck and is in charge of the camp.

TROPMMANN


Carroll hears Coach Troppmann, looks up, and runs over to him.

CARROLL

Yeah, Coach Troppmann.

TROPMMANN
We've decided to waive your camp tuition. We want you to help with the secondary players.

Troppmann hands Carroll a whistle.

TROPPMANN
(continuing)
Your first coaching gig. Congratulations.

CARROLL
Thanks, Coach.

Carroll observes the other side of the field.

ANGLE ON

JOHN MCKAY, the head football coach at the University of Southern California. McKay is about 40 years of age; a handsome Irishman with short, light-colored hair. He wears a T-shirt that reads "Univ. of So. California football" and coaches pants. McKay talks to a group of young campers, who listen to his every word as if it was coming from the Burning Bush.

CARROLL (O.S.)
(continuing)
What an honor to have Coach McKay and Coach Goux here.

ANGLE ON

MARV GOUX, late 20s, with scary, dark bushy eyebrows, a shock of black hair, wearing the same USC T-shirt as McKay. He wears shorts, revealing massive, thick, very hairy legs. Goux is a relentless, loud, overbearing football coach, yelling and screaming at the campers working on line drills.

GOUX
This ain't some rich kids' school, girls. Today your ass is mine.

INT. LODGE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Carroll, dressed in regular clothes, sits in rapt attention. He and other young campers are intently listening to somebody.

REVEAL

that the audience consists also of a roomful of high school football coaches.
TROPPMAN (V.O.)

You ain't seen nothin' yet.

REVEAL

at the dais University of Alabama football Coach PAUL "BEAR" BRYANT. He is in his early 50s, with sunburned skin and craggy features. He is not wearing his famed hound's tooth hat, and is dressed casual, yet formal, attire. Bryant speaks into a microphone. Behind him a banner reads, "CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION WELCOMES COACH BRYANT."

Also at the dais are Troppmann, McKay, Goux, and other dignitaries. Troppmann wears a suit and tie; most of the others are dressed in casual, yet collegiate, attire.

BRYANT

I especially love comin' out here to California. It's here I met my good friend John McKay.

McKay smiles, puffs his cigar, and waves an acknowledging hand.

BRYANT

(continuing)

Y'all have some great programs in California.
I always say send yer A students to Cal and Stanford.
Send yer B students to Southern Cal or UCLA.
Hell, I'd send my own kin there. Send your C students to one a yer fine state colleges or jucos.
But send yer whiskey-drinkin', skirt-chasin' D students to 'Bama, and let ol' Bear turn 'em into football players.

The crowd erupts in laughter and applause. McKay lifts his glass in a toast to Bryant, who returns a knowing smile.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Carroll lies in bed, dreaming big dreams.

COACH

(from outside)

Lights out, fellas.

Three other CAMPERS lie in beds. They share this room with Carroll.
CARROLL

Good night, fellas.

CAMPERS

Good night, Pete.

TROPPMAN (V.O.)

I can't thank both of you enough, for coming to my camp, for speaking and endorsing what we do here.

Carroll turns out the light.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

The light goes out in Carroll's cabin. The coach who told them to turn out the light moves on in his night check rounds.

EXT. LODGE - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING SHOT

of the lodge, which is about 500 yards from Carroll's cabin. The sound of crickets and night creatures fills the country air.

INT. LODGE BAR - NIGHT

Troppmann raises a toast to McKay and Bryant. They are alone at the bar. Troppmann drinks beer; McKay Irish whiskey, and Bryant a martini. Bryant smokes a cigarette, McKay smokes a cigar.

MCKAY

Honestly, Bob, what you're doing here is the future of recruiting. I can't tell you how helpful it is to get all the high school players in one place like this.

TROPPMANN

Have the race riots in Watts affected you much, John?

MCKAY

Amazingly, no. Everything around us. The Negro population sees us as good neighbors, and they know what kind of opportunity we provide to the
colored ballplayers. Why, my sports information
director tells me Mike Garrett's the favorite for
the Heisman Trophy this year.

The conversation about opportunities for black athletes causes a slight nervousness.

TROPPMANN
Say, Paul, how'd you get the name Bear?

BRYANT
Waall Bob, I done wrestled a big black bear at
a fair in Arkansas when I was just a young un.

EXT. COUNTRY FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

FLASHBACK
to YOUNG PAUL BRYANT wrestling a bear, surrounded by a cheering crowd.

BRYANT (V.O.)
(continuing)
We was from the wrong side of the tracks. My
momma was a lay preacher. I hung out with colored
boys; almost got thrown in jail with one. Didn't
care the difference, we was all dirt poor. The Navy
and football showed me the world. Tried to
bring Negroes in at Texas A&M.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

Paul Bryant, about 11 years younger in 1954, barks orders at exhausted, bloodied Texas A&M
football players, sweltering in intense heat.

BRYANT (V.O.)
(continuing)
Hell, the administration told me, "Coach, that's
the last thing we're gonna do," and I told 'em,
"Well then, last is where we'll finish." That's why
I had to ride 'em so hard at Junction, they had
no talent.

INT. LODGE BAR - NIGHT

Troppmann is a "fly on the wall," listening to these coaching legends. The air is thick with smoke
and another round of drinks is poured.
MCKAY
Paul, but for the grace of God I'd've faced the same problems you have. It's not easy being Catholic in West Virginia.

EXT. MCKAY HOUSEHOLD - DAY

TEENAGE JOHN MCKAY runs out of his house, confronted by a burning cross on his lawn. The sound of a truck gunning down the road is heard; wild shouts from its occupants. MCKAY'S MOTHER appears, shocked. McKay goes to hug her.

MCKAY (V.O.)
(continuing)
World War II, the G.I. Bill; that's how I saw the rest of America. It's different in the South, that's for sure. Oregon was like a whole new country.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Young McKay carries the ball for the Oregon Ducks.

MCKAY (V.O.)
(continuing)
But Corky was from Southern California, so that made it easy to decide to come out to USC. That fella with the Raiders, the AFL guy, Al Davis, he wanted the job but I got it.

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE

of young AL DAVIS, circa 1960.

Troppmann interjects.

TROPPMANN
I didn't realize you were from the South, Coach.

MCKAY
West Virginia's cut out of a different cloth, Bob. They stayed in the Union instead of joining the Confederacy, and it's the only Republican state in the South, I'm proud to say.
TROPPMANN
Well, that explains why you two are such good friends. You're a couple of "good ol' boys."

Glasses tinkle as they toast the observation. McKay turns to Bryant.

MCKAY
I still don't see how you deal with George Wallace, Paul.

INT. CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

GEORGE WALLACE, approximately 40 years of age, with black hair and bushy eyebrows, stares forlornly at election returns posted on a board.

ANGLE ON
the returns, which show that John Patterson has been elected Governor of Alabama over him in 1958.

WALLACE
I tried to reach out to the coloreds like Huey Long. Populist my ass. I promise you one thing; I won't ever be out-niggered again.

INT. FOOTBALL OFFICE - DAY

Bryant sits while four officious-looking men in suits and hats stand over his desk, apparently haranguing him. One of them is a GENERAL with campaign ribbons on his chest.

BRYANT (V.O.)
Hell, Wallace ain't the half of it. When I took the Tide to the Liberty Bowl in 1959, Penn State was integrated and Tuscaloosa "citizen's groups" came a-callin'.

LIBERTY BOWL SCOREBOARD READS: PENN STATE 7, ALABAMA 0.

EXT. LIBERTY BOWL STANDS - DAY

The same men who were in Bryant's office look extremely upset; there is booing, catcalling and the throwing of garbage.
BRYANT (V.O.)
(continuing)
Son, I'm tellin' ya I'd've rather they just burned
a cross on my lawn. Those boys just got no soul.

ROCK 'N' ROLL HEAVEN

a treatment

The story begins on a college campus in Berkeley, California during the "Summer of Love," 1967. There we meet Jason Crown, student, drug user, radical war protester, and fond fan of rock'n'roll, particularly Jim Morrison and The Doors. Through back story we learn that Jason avoided the Vietnam War by attending graduate school, earning a masters degree, getting a job as a history professor at a tiny Catholic college in Kansas, and that he originally planned to stay long enough to get a "real job" at a politically correct university on either the East or West Coast. Two things interrupted his plans, though. He came to love his tiny college, becoming a part of the community, and through A.A. Jason became 20 years sober. He is loved by his students, and tolerated by the faculty, who still think of him as a California oddball. Jason is the kind of guy who people think of as a bit weird until you speak to him, then you realize he is very sharp. Nobody seems to play his kind of music, though. On the radio it is grunge or country, the kids listen to rap, so Jason has to listen to tapes to get the tunes he likes while driving. Robin Williams, Dennis Hopper or Tom Hanks would be perfect in the role.

Jason charismatically makes his history class fun and interesting. Three students stand out in the packed classroom: Mojo, a handsome, dark-haired white guy; Jim, a conservative, bow-tie wearing black guy; and J.J., a shy, frizzy-haired girl who blossoms in class. A few incidents foreshadow what is to come, but cleverly we are not clued in yet.

At his A.A. meeting, Jason is an institution, a pillar of strength, and a man who has helped many others overcome their addictions. Natalie is pretty (think of Ann Archer), Jason's age, new in town, divorced, and desperately trying to overcome alcoholism. Jason is attracted to her, but Natalie is less interested in romance than Jason's strength. He agrees to become her sponsor.

Jason lives by himself in an old farmhouse on the outskirts of town. Next to his home is a barn, which he has painstakingly converted into a musical shrine worthy of a professional recording studio, complete with a fabulous speaker system, microphones, and an incredible collection of 1960s-era records, tapes and c.d.'s. He calls this place "Jason's Roadhouse," it is where he goes to relax, and the whole set-up is worth thousands of dollars.

One night, Jason falls asleep in bed while watching The Wizard of Oz. In the Kansas prairie, a twister begins to build up steam. Bigger and more powerful, the twister heads for the lights of the town. Closer and closer it gets, until, seemingly touched by the devil's hand, it explodes into a big oak tree, which towers above Jason's roadhouse. The tree falls onto the roadhouse, and in one fell swoop everything is virtually destroyed.
Jason wants to re-build his roadhouse, but the insurance company says it was an act of God. The bank says it is was not a business, so they can't grant a loan. The other professors are not so eager to chip in to help the "flaky" former war protester. Jason is determined to re-build the roadhouse, though, so he uses his $30,000 life savings and, with Natalie's help, builds it better and nicer than before.

Alone in the roadhouse one night, Jason is drinking coffee, smoking a cigarette, and admiring his handiwork, when he hears a noise in the back. A shadowy figure with long hair and leather pants is revealed. A hand puts a nickel in the juke box. It is one of those three-plays-for-a-dollar boxes, but the nickel works, and "Roadhouse Blues" by The Doors begins to fill the air. Jason approaches, amazed, and now we see Jim Morrison, the young lion, a handsome heartbreaker, crooning the words to "Roadhouse Blues" -"A keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel..." The words are his, they are not coming from the jukebox, and Jason stares open-mouthed.

"Holy Mary, mother of Jesus," says Jason.

After the song, Jason talks to Morrison. Jason wants answers to a few eternal questions, such, "Is there a God?" and "Is there a Heaven?" but Jim mostly wants to drink beer, which Jason does not have, being 20 years sober. Morrison says he has friends, he will bring them by tomorrow night, but Jason had better have beer. Plus some whiskey. Yeah, and a little Southern Comfort, too.

The next night, Morrison returns with Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin. Jason provides them with plenty of alcohol (laying off the stuff himself), and they already have some weed, and while the three of them are still pretty reticent about answering questions about the Great Beyond, they are not at all shy when it comes to trying out Jason's sound system. The evening is filled with classic tunes performed by these legends. When it is time to go, Jason says that he has friends who he wants to share the legends with, so could they come back, and they reply that they are used to performing in front of audiences.

Jason sets up a big party, inviting a whole bunch of people to see Morrison, Hendrix and Joplin. Natalie is there, the rockers come out on stage and begin to play. The place is rockin', the music so hot that flames are coming out of Hendrix' guitar, and Jason is as excited as when he went to concerts in the '60s. Then the rest of the audience is revealed, and with it the sound of silence. Devastating, total silence. Except for Jason, who looks ridiculous jumping and clapping and shouting. Several p.o.v. shots reveal the contrast between what Jason is experiencing and what the others are experiencing. There is confusion, Jason is befuddled, and eventually his guests leave. Jason is amused, and expresses amazement to Natalie, who he assumes could hear the music, but she is as deaf to it as everyone else, all of whom are now convinced that the guy is a nut experiencing an acid flashback.

Morrison says there other others who would like to play their music, and Jason says sure. Over a period of time, all the great dead rock stars come to Jason's roadhouse to pour out hot music. At
the same time, dead historical figures come and supply the audience, all the while arguing and advocating their particular agendas. Patton, Montgomery and Rommel discuss military strategy. F.D.R. and L.B.J. lament the demise of the New Deal and the Great Society. Eleanor Roosevelt is looking for Hillary Clinton, who she understands has been trying to "channel" her, only to learn that Mrs. Clinton is not among the guests. J.F.K. passionately talks Cold War politics with Kruschev, while behind his back Lincoln is hitting on Marilyn Monroe. All the while, Jason is withdrawing from reality. He stops teaching. He falls off the wagon with a thud. Natalie desperately tries to help him, but he is very happy living in his little fantasy world of history and rock'n'roll, partying every night with his icons.

An interesting character transformation takes place, in which Jason loses control, while Natalie must become strong in order to help him. Finally, things get so bad that Natalie enlists the detox guys to go get Jason and force him into a rehab center. In the meantime, Jason is confronting Morrison and all the dead rockers and historical figures. He wants to cross the Great Divide, the foggy place with a weird glow that lies just outside his barn. He wants to join them. Morrison warns him that his body could not take all the abuse of alcohol and drugs, that the dead people are unaffected because they are already dead. He becomes dark, a little bit evil, and tells Jason that if he wants to become one of them he can, but be prepared for whatever is "out there." Jason says he wants to join them, even though an element of fear has entered the picture, so Morrison tells him to "break on through to the other side."

Just then, Martin Luther King emerges from among the historical figures.

"I was wondering where you were," says Jason.

Also distinguishing themselves from the others are John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Abe Lincoln. The theme of the scene becomes the old folk song "Abraham, Martin and John", and the politicians and the civil rights leader argue with Morrison over Jason's soul. Morrison argues that life is dreary, that death is better, and that these men should understand that better than anyone else. After all, they tried to make the world a better place and were assassinated for their troubles. A sense of 1960s idealism is conveyed, as if to answer the questions that so many Americans ask: What happened to Camelot? What happened to the noble purpose of the 1960s?

The Kennedys, Lincoln and King agree that many times the fight seems hopeless, but after all, the best fights are the ones we do not ever win, but the secret of life is to keep trying, to pass ideals to the next generation, to never give up. Morrison scoffs at the notion, but the idealists tell Jason he must go back to that college and teach those kids, that it is his duty to pass the torch to a new generation of Americans. It is a patriotic message, a Christian message, a hopeful message, and it appeals to Jason. He agrees to go back. Morrison sags his shoulders, having lost the argument, but the moment lightens up when King puts his arm around him and tells him that he is a troubled young man, but he is going to work with him.

The rockers and historical figures slowly file into the foggy beyond, and the scene takes on a comedic angle when Morrison asks Jason one last time if he is sure he does not want to come. Morrison has Marilyn Monroe on one arm and Jane Mansfield on the other, and it is obvious by
the looks on their faces that they are going to be having a good time together. Jason looks at
the beautiful women and is tempted. Then J.F.K. takes Marilyn by the arm and kisses her. King
joins in. It is a party, but Jason is not invited. Jason is envious. J.F.K. tells him that his work is
done, and to carry on. These guys are truly headed for their Great Reward. Lastly, Lincoln
walks out the door, tipping his smokestack hat, and he, too, has a look on his face like he is going
to be having sex, and it is not with Mrs. Lincoln.

In the meantime, Natalie arrives with the detox guys. They break into the roadhouse, finding
empty liquor bottles and trash but no Jason. Natalie goes to the backdoor and we hear her
scream.

Jason has had a drug overdose. He is rushed to the hospital, but the best efforts of the doctors is
fruitless. He is dying. We pan out the window to a sky filled with beautiful, white clouds.
Heavenly music fills the air. Now we pan back into the window, only it is not the hospital, it is
Jason's house. Jason is asleep. It's A Wonderful Life is on the t.v. The alarm goes off, and
Jason wakes up. He goes to the window and sees that the oak tree has fallen next to the barn, not
destroying anything. It has all been a dream.

Natalie arrives to drive Jason to work. She is a little different somehow, more
affectionate towards Jason. On campus, Jason is walking when he hears a rock music
band. He follows the music. It is coming from the main quad, where a small concert is
being held to entertain the students. Jason approaches and sees that the band consists of
the three students from his class, only now, dressed like rockers, Mojo is Jim Morrison,
Jim is Jim Hendrix, and J.J. is Janis Joplin, only they are cleaner, healthier versions of
what these legends would have been had they avoided drugs.

Jason makes eye contact with his students, who smile, raise their fists, Jason raises his fist
in solidarity, and the picture freezes. The end.

This kind of anti-drug message of hope, the appeal to '60s idealism, the religious
overtones of redemption, the possibility of love for Jason and Natalie, the character
transformation, plus the fascinating look at all these historical characters thrown together,
makes for a surefire winner!

DOES HE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

a reality show concept by

STEVEN TRAVERS with JIM STARR AND ANTHONY DAVIS

The television show concept revolves around college football, initially using connections
between the producers, and previous writings by Steven Travers, at the University of
Southern California. USC is currently the biggest name in college sports, and of course
its Los Angeles location make it ideal, but the idea could easily branch out to other
programs and endeavors. However, the focus should expand to attract a national audience with a hook to let the viewer know that in future episodes, their school will be given the attention. The scripting and writing will create as many dramatic sequences, confrontations, highs and lows as possible, with each episode ending on a question that can only be answered the following week.

The concept is one that allows a camera to follow members of the USC football team throughout their daily lives, not merely on the football field but in the classroom, their living quarters, meetings and parties. It is an in-depth look at what it is like to be a college student in 2007, as well as a mini-celebrity of sorts on campus. Not unlike the popular documentary *Hoop Dreams*, it could follow a freshman recruit throughout the travails of his four years at the university. The interactive angle could involve viewers voting on his chances via Internet polling.

The idea is to focus on a “blue chip” star at first adjusting to the competition and collegiate environment, following his success and failure. It will give fans a glimpse into the inner workings of the biggest collegiate football program in the world. It will also delve into the marketing and public relations aspects of college sports; the “Heisman campaigns,” the propaganda of polling, the ranking of tradition; all in an effort to paint the portrait of a program in as flattering a light as possible for the benefit of recruits and national media.

The show will also highlight the academic challenges of collegiate athletes, looking at the unique dynamic of teenage boys being idolized by successful adults as well as their relationship with the coed population. The show will spotlight this precariousness, in which a young man may be elevated to great heights only to plunge into obscurity based on his “ranking” with the team’s hierarchy. Jealousies, rivalry and the inner workings of human interaction will be looked at with a keen eye.

Another aspect of the program will be the NFL Draft. The reality show could easily include who has what it takes to be drafted by the NFL, comparing colleges throughout the nation. Specifically, college athletes are first “drafted” by the schools via “letter of intent (blue chips).” The goals and objectives are the following:

1. Start making plans at eight years old (if they have the aptitude) to play contact football (could film generic footage of youth football programs as the narrator interviews college prospects; interviews throughout the following).
2. Select the most prestigious high schools, known to recruit to major football colleges. (same format as above).
3. Drafted by college (“letter of intent”).
4. Compete for starting position in college.
5. Through college's PR and prestige (obviously ability and tremendous work ethic).
6. The combine.
7. Draft day.
In order to have a competitive top 10 football program, the process really starts now at eight years old, with the goal to be an NFL player. USC has historically been the leader in drafting players into the NFL. Why? Let's follow the process the top 10 schools use to get to number one while we explore what players will make it to their ultimate goal, the NFL Draft.

The producers of this show all have a unique USC connection. Author and screenwriter Steven Travers is a graduate of the university who regularly speaks, signs books and addresses audiences in his role as a Trojan historian. He is the author of three books on USC football and has a unique relationship with coach Pete Carroll, since they attended the same high school. Travers has interviewed over forty Trojan legends in past years and was a columnist with a Los Angeles sports magazine charged with the “Trojan beat” as well as a monthly “distant replay” of great events in L.A.’s sports past.

Jim Starr is also a USC graduate with strong connections to the world-famous marching band, which could play a key role in the show’s popularity. He is available as the “front man” in scheduling and expanding the show beyond USC to other college campuses.

Anthony Davis is a true Trojan legend with a strong inside connection to coaches, alumni, players and former teammates. His acting background and charismatic persona would make him a great narrator and conduit between the show and the players. Through A.D., interviews with former Trojans, both legendary and unknown, can shed light on how these ex-players dealt with identical (or different) experiences, and how they dealt with the aftermath of their USC years. Additionally, comparisons of current stars with freshman recruits would provide for development over time and audience participation as to who will be the next star. A.D., being an experienced former “blue chipper” who starred at USC, played in the NFL, and made the transition to the “real world,” is in a unique position to comment and compare based on his experience.

Lloyd Robinson is a USC graduate and lifelong fan of Trojan football with excellent contacts at the school and its vast Hollywood directory.

MARTA – TREATMENT

ACT ONE – DRAFT THREE
August 4, 2002

HAVANA, CUBA - 1958

The intense afternoon sun reflects low off the water obscuring all vision through a filter of light and haze. After a moment, a long wooden pier can be seen that extends from the shore out into the ocean. Halfway down it, a mid-sized charter fishing boat bobs back and
forth due in part to the movement of the two people on it. A man in his mid 20s, OSCAR, is crouched over the exposed engine of the boat, his oil covered forearm reaches into the mass of black engine with a wrench.

Oscar is a well-built man who has spent his life working with his hands. As a fisherman, under the hot Cuban sun, he has developed a tan and muscular physique, complimented by his clean-shaven face and his short dark hair. He is a Hemmingway man's man who talks little and judges people on their actions rather than their words. He doesn't say much, but when he does, people listen.

Near him, at the front of the boat is a little girl, MERCEDES. She is 7 years old and is fishing with her legs dangling off the bow. Although Oscar is working on the engine, he's keeping an eye on her, making sure she stays safe. As he watches her, he corrects her on how she is holding her little handmade fishing pole. She happily readjusts to the correct method, anxious to please the older man. Oscar gives an encouraging word and gets back to work.

From behind them, a car with police markings comes down the dusty road and parks. ESPADA steps out, sees the boat, and starts walking down the pier with a pronounced limp. Espada is in his late 20s and is wearing a uniform that indicates he is part of President Batista's police force. As he nears the boat, Mercedes sees him first, but before she can say anything she gets a tug on her fishing line and all her attention is redirected to battling the fish at the other end of her line. Oscar looks up and sees Espada. He steps onto the pier and the two shake hands like old acquaintances. Mercedes looks over her shoulder, while still struggling with the fish and Espada gives her a large, theatrical hello. She starts to say something, but the fish gets the upper hand and her attention is once again diverted.

Oscar and Espada talk for a moment about a recent baseball game, but after a moment or two, Espada lets Oscar know that they have something serious to talk about. The two walk to the end of the pier and are silhouetted by the red setting sun.
Espada: *It's Enrique.*
Oscar stops and looks at his friend with a "what now?" look on his face. There is a slight sense of irritation in his glance,
Espada: *We should go to the club.*

Mercedes is in the background and although she is still fighting with the fish, she is trying her hardest to hear what the men are saying. Due to the waves and the noises of the gulls, she can't hear a thing.

Oscar is visibly distracted by the information. The two men turn and head down the dock. As they approach the boat, Mercedes loses her fish and tumbles back a bit. Oscar steps on the boat and scoops her up.
Mercedes: *Oscar, where are we going?*
Oscar: *To see your mother.*
Mercedes: *What's wrong, Oscar?*
Oscar remains silent as the three get in Espada's car and drive off.

**OPENING SCENE IN 1950S PRE-CASTRO CUBA, INVOLVING THREE CHARACTERS, OSCAR, ESPADA, AND MERCEDES. OSCAR AND ESPADA ARE IN THE PRIME OF THEIR LIVES, AND THE FACT THAT IT IS THE BATISTA ERA WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE CUT OF HIS UNIFORM. THERE IS FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THEM, BUT A SERIOUSNESS CONVEYED BY ESPADA'S ACTIONS, OSCAR'S REACTION, AND AUDIENCE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING HISTORICAL CUBAN FACTS. MERCEDES IS A CHILD, FULL OF INNOCENCE. AN UNKNOWN PROBLEM IS AT HAND, SO A SENSE OF URGENCY IS CONVEYED. THE PROBLEM INVOLVES SOMEbody NAMED ENRIQUE. THE AUDIENCE MUST BE MADE TO FEEL THAT A CHILD'S LIFE IS ABOUT TO BE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN, AS METAPHOR FOR THAT OF A WHOLE COUNTRY.**

Inside of the office of the Club Tropicana, FERNANDO sits at a large and cluttered desk doing some paperwork. Nearby, on the floor is MARTA, 4 years old and full of energy. The little girl is smacking two blocks together in a rhythmic pattern and irritating the hell out of the gruff Fernando. Fernando is a large man in his early 30s and dressed in sharp clothes. Due to the girth of his belly, they are a little tight for him. His hair is slicked back.

Through the window, the setting sun is visible, giving the room a reddish hue. Across the room, through another window, the floor of the club can be seen. The outdoor club is starting to fill up with well dressed customers and the stage area remains empty. A dull hum of voices is audible. As much as Fernando is trying to concentrate on the paperwork, Marta's playing disturbs him. Reaching his breaking point, he looks up at the little girl, grabs a rock paperweight, and throws it to her saying, "here, why don't you play with this quiet toy." It is a bit unclear whether he threw it to Marta or at Marta. Regardless, she immediately starts banging a block against it, listening to how the sound is different from the block. Fernando clenches his jaw and mumbles something about being reduced to a babysitter and resumes with his paperwork.

Just then, THE FLOOR MANAGER enters. He is obviously walking on egg shells, not wanting to deliver bad news to his boss.

**Floor Manager:** Senor, there's some trouble in the dressing room.
Fernando continues with his head in his paperwork, ignoring the man.

**Floor Manager:** Senor, there's a problem with one of the dancers, Maela.
Fernando doesn't look up.

**Fernando:** Don't I pay you to handle problems?
**Floor Manager:** Yes, I understand, but Maela is-
**Fernando:** Too much for you? One of our little girly dancers is too much for you?
Floor Manager: *It's about the costume change for the new number tonight. She doesn't like it.*
Fernando: *What doesn't she like about it? It's a great costume. I picked it out myself.*
Floor Manager: *She's refusing to go on.*
Fernando sighs in irritation and gets up and heads towards the door. As he reaches it, he remembers Marta and turns to retrieve her with an agitated sigh. He unceremoniously grabs Marta's arm and drags her along.

Backstage at the Tropicana, things are tense and hectic. A new number is being unveiled tonight and everyone is nervous and anxious. Dancers are running around, getting last minute eye shadow touch ups, putting on shoes, straightening costumes, and making sure everything is in line. In the middle of it all is NELIA, Mercedes's mother and the seamstress for the club. She is a mulatto and looks exhausted, giving the impression that she has taken on most of the work in preparation for the new number. She is in a tense conversation with MAELA.

Maela is a lovely Cuban woman with all the right curves. When she interacts with Nelia, she looks down upon her both as a mulatto and as a seamstress. Nelia is somewhat used to her attitude and is patiently explaining that the costume is Fernando's orders and that none of the other dancers seem to be having any complaints. Maela ignores most of what Nelia is saying and responds with, "what would you know?" Nelia quietly accepts the comment as Fernando walks into the room, still holding Marta.

The moment Fernando enters, the other dancers straighten up a little and add an extra step to their pace, but they all keep one eye on Fernando. They know that there is going to be a confrontation and they want to see what happens. Fernando plops Marta on the ground with no ceremony.
Fernando: *Go find your mother, she's around here somewhere.*
Marta skitters off between the legs of a few dancers and hides under a table. The following sequence is seen from Marta's perspective, partially blocked by a chair and through the legs of the other dancers. Fernando and Maela move as they talk, so Marta manages to see everything.
Fernando turns his attention to Maela. Nelia tries to explain the situation, but Fernando ignores her and speaks directly to the dancer.
Fernando: *Now, what is the problem?*
Maela: *It's this dress, Senor. It reveals everything.*
Fernando: *No, call me Fernando, please.*
Fernando looks her up and down.
Maela: *Does it have to reveal so much?*
Fernando: *No, you're right. I think it could use a few modifications.*
Maela looks a little surprised at Fernando's concession.
Maela: *I am?*
Fernando: *Yes. Look at you. You're beautiful already. There's no need to put you in this skimpy outfit.*
Maela: *Yes, I was thinking I could tailor it so that-*
Fernando takes her by the shoulders and moves her in front of a full-length mirror. He runs his hands down her sides.

**Fernando:** Look at you. I think we can just make a few adjustments to make you happy.

**Maela:** Thank you Fernando, I knew you'd understand.

Fernando grabs a bit of the costume and tears it off. The gesture is quick and has a violent air to it. Maela jumps at the suddenness of it.

**Fernando:** There, just a little adjustment.

**Maela:** Fernando-

**Fernando:** We can make another one if you would like.

Before she has a chance to answer, he grabs another bit and tears it off.

**Fernando:** There. (to the others) Girls, what do you think about Maela's new costume?

The other dancers unanimously say that they like the new look and then quickly go about doing their business, making sure to keep an eye on the confrontation. Maela is visibly frightened and tries to cover herself up.

**Fernando:** No, don't do that, the other girls like it?

Nelia sits watching the effort that she put into the dresses get shredded like yesterday's newspapers. Maela realizes that she should put a stop to this and concedes.

**Maela:** Fernando, I'm sorry to have bothered you. The dress is fine. I don't know what I was thinking. I can dance in this dress.

**Fernando:** You should have thought of that a half hour ago. I don't have need for a dancer with your attitude. Go get your things and never come back here, not even as a customer.

Maela is stunned. The others in the room pick up the pace of their activity, not wanting to look like they were either watching or not working hard enough. Maela leaves in tears. Little Marta crawls further into her hiding place.

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**BROKEN WINGS**

*When heroic, hell-raising Vietnam fighter jock Don Crowe crashes after running into a Kansas tornado, both his legs are ticketed for amputation, but when Don won’t let the doctors cut them off, neither will his wife, Marylin, and in the ultimate battle of “mind over matter,” Don and Marylin discover true love and faith in an agonizing process of rehabilitation that tests this man’s ability to rise above and beyond the call of duty.*

Major Don Crowe was one of those guys that American society considers a necessary evil. Gung-ho, courageous, a fighter pilot trained to kill the enemy. Proud that he had the art down to a science. We call on the Don Crowe’s of the world to go in harm’s way so we do not have to, then after the dirty work is done, we keep them hidden until a “thankful” nation calls on them again.

America, on the last day of tax season ’68, was even more unsure of the military than usual. The North Vietnamese had recently launched the Tet Offensive, and this mysteriously seemed to render a harbinger of doom on the fruited plain: L.B.J.’s decision not to run; Martin Luther King’s assassination; campuses and cities in riotous turmoil.
The fault, according to the “wisdom” of that time, lay with the military, so when Don Crowe walked amongst us in 1968, his hair short, shoes shined, medals proudly displayed, he was a stranger in a familiar land.

Don Crowe, like most fighter pilots, was a rugged individualist who never knew the two brothers who died in childbirth before him, or the one who died when Don was still an infant. Growing up in New York City during the age of Mickey Mantle, Willie Mays and Duke Snider, he was a young rebel who resisted attempts on the part of the brothers at Power Memorial Academy to mold him into their image of what they thought a Catholic boy was supposed to be. He wanted to be a fighter pilot. Not just a fighter pilot, a Marine fighter pilot, a leatherneck, like another great slugger who did not play in New York, Ted Williams. Don gave up his own promising baseball career and joined the Corps.

During the rest of the 1950s, and for half of the 1960s, Don Crowe was exactly what we think of when we think of Marines of that era: Ambitious, successful, moving up the ranks as a pilot and an officer.

A hard-charging, womanizing, barfight-starting hell-raiser whose call sign was Bedrocker.

A love-it-or-leave-it American superpatriot who participated in the notorious Gulf of Tonkin incident and could not have been happier that America was getting into this thing both feet first. This was his chance to do what others had done before him—at Belleau Wood, at Iwo Jima, at Chosin Reservoir.

Halloween night, 1964. The Sandpiper, a popular pick-up spot in Laguna Beach. Music plays, the kind of happy surf tunes that would fortify the Southern California myth. Pretty girls are a part of Don Crowe’s world, a world in which he would brazenly point to his gold wings and tell them, “I’m Don Crowe. I’m a fighter pilot, and these things on my chest are called ‘golden legspreaders.’” In those innocent days many years ago, this Neanderthal approach proved successful more often than not, for Don and others like him.

So it is that a beautiful lady named Marylin Jensen enters the Sandpiper, the large crowd seemingly parting like the Red Sea, leading her straight to him. Love at first sight.

“My chair, madame,” says Don. By August, 1965, they are married.

From 1965-68, Don does two tours of duty in Country, as Vietnam is referred to. By the spring of ’68 he is re-assigned to Cherry Point, North Carolina, and temporary marital bliss with Marylin.

On April 15 he and his navigator, Captain Jim Klingsmith, receive routine orders from the commander, Colonel German, which are to take the squadron’s payroll checks to Yuma, Arizona, making one “hot re-fueling” stop in Olathe, Kansas, where there is no North Vietnamese anti-aircraft artillery. No Hanoi Hilton looming just one flackburst away. A joyride, in what the weather forecaster tells him is “perfect flying weather.”

So why does Marylin feel uneasy as she switches seats while letting Don off at the air station? She had already “survived” two tours in which she could have received a phone call at any time telling her that her husband was in the clutches of the Communists, or worse.

“My God, I’ll never see you again,” she thinks to herself but does not dare say. Later, she calls Colonel German’s wife, Lola, and tells her of her fears.
“My goodness, Marylin,” Lola German says, “can’t you live without that man for two weeks?”

Just before the hop, Crowe and Captain Klingsmith go over a routine checklist of the payroll serial numbers. Because of the perfect weather conditions, no mandatory precautions are undergone. Off they go—into the wild blue yonder!

A few hours later, Crowe’s A6 Intruder descends upon Olathe, Kansas. Kansas is “wild weather” (“w.w.”) country, but today only a few puffy clouds dot the horizon.

After re-fueling, Crowe and Klingsmith launch for the last leg to Arizona. Again, no concerns, no pre-cautions. What they do not know is that the air traffic controller has given them an incorrect radar vector.

Within minutes, they find themselves in clouds—gray, misty, zero visibility. Surprised, yes. Worried, no. These are experienced combat vets, aircraft carrier-qualified.

BOOM! Out of no where, the flight of the Intruder is abruptly interrupted by a tornado. A total fluke.

Crowe loses control. The Intruder begins to auger in. Crowe resorts to his training, what the great Chuck Yeager calls, “If Plan A don’t work try Plan B, if Plan B don’t work try Plan C, if Plan C don’t work…”

Nothing works! Crowe remains calm. Klingsmith is frozen in fear, everything he ever learned is out the window. The order goes out. Eject!

Crowe could eject, but he sees Klingsmith unable to react. He screams at him to eject, but there is no reaction. Crowe reaches over to pull Klingsmith’s face curtain, and this somehow causes Klingsmith to snap out of it, pulling the face curtain and jettisoning himself out. Crowe follows suit, only his exit from the Intruder is like a rag doll being run over by a truck..

Don finds himself airborne, and suddenly time stands still. He thinks clearly, logically, as if he has all the time in the world. He passes in and out of consciousness. His helmet has been ripped from his head. He looks, and the bottom half of both his legs are swinging, as if they have been cut in half and are held together by a few strips of bone and sinew.

He checks his teeth for some reason, making sure they are still there, but mindful also of swallowing or biting off his tongue. He is LAUGHING.

As Don Crowe descends in a heap on a Kansas cornfield, he is LAUGHING, because he is alive and he has beaten the Grim Reaper, the son of a bitch.

On the ground, Crowe looks up and sees Klingsmith approach him, zombie-like, yet essentially unharmed. Crowe sees a nearby farmhouse and instructs Klingsmith to go there. Crowe gives highly detailed instructions, right down to the word, as if reading from a manual, and Klingsmith repeats in slow, staccato sentences Crowe’s directions.

When a Kansas highway patrolman arrives at the scene, Crowe gives him exact phone numbers to call, then repeats verbatim the serial numbers of all the checks. The patrolman writes it all down. Crowe has remembered every single number!

“Tell Colonel German I spoiled his safety record,” Don says in all seriousness before passing out.

At the Forbes Air Force Base hospital, Don fights to stay conscious. The doctor tells him that both his legs must be amputated, or he will die. Don says no.
The doctor realizes Don cannot understand the reality of the situation. A call goes out to Marylin back at Cherry Point. 
“If Don says no, I say no,” is her response.
The doctor is a doctor, and by God he knows better and he is going to save this man’s life no matter what…but he better call Don’s commander first, just to make sure.
Colonel German knows only that his first duty is to his men, and he is not on hand to judge the situation, but something tells him that if Don Crowe says no, no it is!
The hell with it, says the doctor, I am going to amputate these legs, because these people are not doctors, and I am, and I know best. He orders that Don be put down, and the nurse applies anesthesia. Still, Don will not go down. The doctor demands more anesthetic. Don will still not go down.
“I’ve administered a near-fatal dose of anesthetic,” says the nurse, “but he will not go down.” So it went that day. Don Crowe would not go down. By sheer grit, determination and fortitude—and perhaps with some help from a loving God—he stayed awake and kept those people from cutting his legs off.
Crowe is medi-vacked from Forbes to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and it is there that he fights and struggles to recover. Marylin braves the stormy North Carolina weather and what at that time were narrow roads between Cherry Point and Lejeune to visit him faithfully, but the ordeal is taking its toll!
“I can’t do this any longer,” she tells Don. But she can, and she does.
When a Camp Lejeune doctor tells Don he will never walk again, Don says:

“I will walk again. Not only that, I will dance with my wife again. Not only that, I will fly again.”

Don Crowe wears casts on both legs from April until mid-July. His preoccupation during this time is to program his toes into moving, because he is told that if he can ever do this, he might walk again, but if he can’t, he will be paralyzed. One day, his big toe moves, and Don cries out in ecstasy, which turns to despair when a nurse enters to see what the ruckus is all about, but Don cannot repeat the movement.

Eventually, Don does move his toe. He begins physical therapy, rejoicing at small victories, despairing at the inevitable “plateauing” that occurs.

One day, he and two other laid-up buddies decide to go to the officer’s club to watch a ballgame. For half an hour they load into the car. Don drives to the club. For another half-hour they unload themselves. Finally ready to enter the club, they become aware of a huge ovation from the officers who have provided a tearful audience, not wanting to help these proud men who must do this themselves if they are to feel like men again. Once inside the club, Don and his mates are told, “Oh, that game’s been called on account of rain for two hours.” Alcohol consumption follows, and eventually they return to the hospital by ambulance.

One year after the accident, Don begins to jog—slowly. He does dance with Marylin. In fact, the surgeon who saved Don’s legs throws a party for their anniversary, and many of the off-duty medical personnel who watched Don struggle in therapy to make his promise a reality, came to the party to root for his success. 18 months after the
accident he is back in the cockpit, flying again. By 1970, Don is back in Vietnam, assigned to support his squadron commander, again re-qualified to fly A6s.

Don Crowe would go on to graduate with a degree in psychology, a subject perhaps he knows more about than any professor, from Oklahoma State. Today, he lives in Orange County, California with Marylin and works full-time. He is still laughing, and he has danced with Marylin on many anniversaries since the accident.

This is the story of a cocksure young man who thought he was immune from the kind of dangers that other mortals are subject to, and about how that young man distinguished himself in combat, and when he was not in the air he was rocking the world of every pretty girl who fell for his charisma and charm.

This is a love story. It is about the power of a good woman, and how she can change a man for the better.

This is the story of sheer survival against all odds, the desperate struggle of a man and the woman who loves him, and how they banded together to overcome crippling injuries. This is also about faith, how mysterious events can occur without explanation and leave one grappling for an explanation we cannot contemplate.

It is a story of how people grow and mature, how God gives humans only as much to deal with as they can handle, and finally this is the story of a happy ending, in which the love of two people can create a power and a bond that is simply greater than the obstacles placed before them.

It is a story that needs to be told.

EXCERPT FROM "THE LOST BATTALION"

(Note: When non-English speaking people speak - Germans, French, etc. - it shall be in their native language, with sub-titles)

FADE IN:

EXT. POLO GROUNDS - NEW YORK CITY (1914) - DAY

The crowd ROARS while a member of the New York Giants legs out a double against the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Move up and away from the stadium, out past Coogan's Bluff, and towards Manhattan

MUSIC plays, something uplifting and patriotic, a tune that seems to say, "Heed the call to adventure" during a time when America was still innocent.

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY
An aerial view establishes the skyline of New York during a simpler time.

Move out past the moving trains, towards the heart of the city.

EXT. WALL STREET - DAY

The hustle and bustle of the financial district.

Model T's honk their horns, a policeman directs traffic, and stockbrokers move swiftly towards their offices.

Settle on a NEWSIE, about 13 years old, a big hat perched on his head, wearing knickerbockers, CALLING OUT the news of the day. The headline on the newspapers reads, "KAISER RATTLES WAR SABRES." Businessmen pass by without bothering to look or buy the paper.

NEWSIE
GERMANY THREATENS WAR! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Two STOCKBROKERS casually approach.

STOCKBROKER 1
(to other stockbroker)
Doesn't Wilhelm know war's bad for the economy?

STOCKBROKER 2
A quick war can create a nice short-term gain.

STOCKBROKER 1
(dropping change on newsie)
A month or two?

NEWSIE
Thank you, sir.

STOCKBROKER 2
(they head off to work)
That's about it.

NEWSIE
KAISER RATTLES WAR SABRES! WAR DRUMS IN EUROPE! READ ALL ABOUT
EXT. OFFICE BUILDING © DAY

Move away from the newsie and up a fancy office building, past rows and rows of windows, each window revealing office activity inside, until a particular window is settled on.

Inside sits CHARLES WHITTLESEY.

Whittlesey is in his 20s, a picture of Wall Street polish in his suit and tie and starched collar, the time-honored pinstripe and suspenders look, his hair slick back revealing a boyish, innocent face, the face of a man who would not kill a fly.

He wears horn-rimmed glasses which give him the owlish appearance of the bookish academic he is; a stern, upright New Englander, tall, gawky and far too thin, with long, reedy bird legs.

INT. WHITTLESEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Framed on the wall is his Williams College degree, in the name of "CHARLES WHITTLESEY." Next to that his law degree from Harvard. Next to that his Delta Psi pledge pin.

Whittlesey reads the same newspaper being sold on the street below, and his eyes reflect a disquieting thought resting somewhere in the recesses of his mind.

Whittlesey finishes reading about the possible European war, puts the paper down, and shifts his attention to a legal brief.

There is a KNOCK on his door.

End MUSIC.

WHITTLESEY
(eyes still on brief)

The door opens, and his law partner, a man of Whittlesey's age named J. BAYARD PRUYN, just dripping with Harvard polish (with the accent to boot) peeks his head in. The judge bought it, Chick!

WHITTLESEY
(still on brief)
It was the shortest argument I
ever heard.

Whittlesey says nothing.

PRUYN
I suppose I'd've mucked it up with platitudes and redundant case law.

Whittlesey reads intently.

PRUYN (cont.)
Of course you won't - The Count being anti-social and whatnot but a few of the chaps are meeting at the Harvard Club at six if you care to join.

WHITTLESEY
(reading)
No, thank you.

Pruyn's expression tells the story. Whittlesey may be anti-social, but he is also a terrific lawyer. The door closes behind him.

Whittlesey puts his brief down and returns to the newspaper headlines.

As he reads, he gets a more worried look on his face. It is the face of a man who keeps his feelings bottled up inside.

The sound of distant, martial DRUMS is heard.

Whittlesey gets up and looks out his window, beyond the hustle and bustle of Wall Street, beyond the YAWKING newsie, and he looks to the east.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Move out of Whittlesey's office building, aerially traversing the city.

The DRUMBEATS are louder, more powerful.

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - DAY

Move out past the Sound, the DRUMBEATS growing steadily louder.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN © DAY

Establish a view of the vast ocean. Move swiftly over the water, the DRUMBEATS
ringing with fervent, warlike intensity.

FADE TO BLACK:

The drums grow silent.

Then, POW. The sound of a single, very loud gunshot.

At first, there is silence, then scattered shouts, followed by PANDEMONIUM.

FADE IN:

EXT. SARAVEJO STREET (1914) - DAY

Slice through a crowd of onlookers, which breaks up to reveal a carriage, and on the ground, his aides frantically yet helplessly milling about in anguished futility, a pool of blood forming around his head which lies on the ground, is the slain ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND of Austria.

TITLE: "JUNE 28, 1914."

The Archduke's eyes are glazed as he stares lifelessly, looking somehow still splendid in his regal attire, his fancy headdress askew next to his head, slowly drifting in a growing river of blood.

Powerful MARTIAL MUSIC accompanies the still-reverberating WARDRUMS.

NEWSIE (V.O.)
SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD!
READ ALL ABOUT IT. ARCHDUKE FERDINAND
ASSASSINATED IN SARAJEVO!

INSERT NEWSPAPER HEADLINES:

1. "SERB NATIONALIST KILLS HEIR APPARENT."
2. "AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AIMS TO ABSORB SERBIA."

The MUSIC and the DRUMS morph with the sound of rain POURING, mixed with the CLIPPETTY-CLOP of horseshoes on pavement.

INSERT MAP OF EASTERN EUROPE.

INSERT MAP OF THE ARGONNE FOREST, FRANCE.

SUPERIMPOSE - U.S. CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR (faint).
EXT. REICHSTAG - BERLIN, GERMANY (1914) © DAY

The CLIPPETY©-LOP reveals itself to be squadron after squadron of cavalry trotting through the glistening streets.

The cavalry pass under the windows of the German seat of government.

INT. REICHSTAG HALLWAY - DAY

German political and military leaders move past a huge picture which exhibits the gratifying (to them) spectacle of Kaiser Wilhelm I trampling gloriously on the French flag-together with Bismarck and Field Marshal Moltke prancing upon the battlefield of Sedan, while a German soldier in the foreground stretches a French flag beneath the hoofs of the Emperor's horse.

The party leaders move vigorously into the main assembly hall.

INT. REICHSTAG ASSEMBLY HALL - DAY

KAISER WILHELM I addresses an assemblage of German political leaders. He is decked out in full military dress, a large, rotund man with an enormous, upturned moustache.

On the wall are beautiful yet militaristic paintings, one of which depicts Bismarck's army encircling Paris in 1870.

KAISER WILHELM I
When the Anglos deign to cross
the channel - my mother's brother
¡is Edward, a fat cat who has cast
a shadow between the Fatherland
and the sun. He is Satan. You
cannot imagine what a Satan he is.

The hall erupts in LAUGHTER, which turns to CHEERS.

The Kaiser puts up his arms, indicating that he is serious and wishes to make a point.

KAISER WILHELM I (continuing)
Edward is a Napoleonic apologist, nothing more, so taken with all things French that when he crosses the channel, does he make state visits to Berlin? No, only Paris.

(BOOS and HISSES)

Yet, I am persona non grata Paris. This is an outrage!

(More BOOING)

We waited, hat in hand, for the British and French to reach agreement regarding the disputed colonial questions. The snobs! Perfidy! All the long years of my reign, my colleagues, the Monarchs of Europe, have paid no attention to what I have to say. Soon, with my great Navy to endorse my words, they will be more respectful.

The crowd CHEERS wildly. The Kaiser, sensing momentum, pulsing now with energy and ambition, conscious of the strength building among his constituency, speaks with religious fervor.

SEPTEMBER 1970

A treatment by

STEVEN TRAVERS

When two Southern-bred good ol’ boy coaches conspire to play an integrated football game between USC and Alabama, in front of a segregated white audience in 1970 Birmingham, the truth is revealed, followed by the changing of hearts and minds which allows Martin Luther King’s “dream” to finally be realized.

Mournful black Christian soul music plays as the opening credits intersperse with a montage of documentary and docu-drama black-and-white footage. A NARRATOR explains the events on the screen.

The Civil War ends and Reconstruction is botched. Jack Johnson, a black boxer of the early 20th Century, was vilified by the white establishment because he cavorted with white women and lorded his victories over fallen white opponents.
Jesse Owens wins Olympic Gold in front of Adolph Hitler in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Joe Louis defeats Max Schmelling in boxing action from the 1930s. Jim Brown runs rampant for the Cleveland Browns in the 1950s, and Syracuse’s Ernie Davis is the first black Heisman Trophy winner. Willie Mays and Hank Aaron are baseball superstars.

The music takes on an upbeat “California sound” as the narrator explains that great social progress was made on the West Coast, particularly on the field of play between the University of Southern California and UCLA. Images of Jackie Robinson and Kenny Washington playing for the Bruins are followed by Robinson breaking the color line in baseball, then Rafer Johnson winning Gold at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

“Conquest” plays as the narrator describes the social progress at USC brought about by their great black athletes. Brice Taylor was their first All-American in 1925. In 1956, C.R. Roberts ran for 251 yards in the first half of a huge victory over Texas at Austin. By the 1960s, coach John McKay had developed a dynasty using black stars Willie Brown, Mike Garrett, O.J. Simpson and Anthony Davis.

This is followed by images of the “New Breed” of black athletes: Muhamad Ali, Bob Gibson, and Curt Flood.

“Southern Man” by Neil Young replaces the upbeat music while images of the civil rights struggle dominate the screen: blacks in the back of the bus, National Guardsmen at Little Rock; Bull Connor’s dogs and rubber truncheons suppress black protest in the streets of Birmingham. LBJ signs the Civil Rights Act. Medgar Evers is shot; Malcolm X, Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. are assassinated. Anti-war protests and images of Vietnam. The civil rights movement becomes violent, led by the Black Panthers. John Carlos and Tommy Smith give a black-gloved salute at the 1968 Olympics.

“Sweet Home Alabama” replaces “Southern Man” while the narrator describes images of Southern football: all-white players, Confederate flags, and Alabama winning national championships under legendary coach PAUL “BEAR” BRYANT.

FADE IN. Bryant sits in his corner office overlooking Governor George Wallace making his infamous 1963 “stand in the schoolhouse door.”

Bryant speaks to a white audience in the South, mid-1960s, vowing to maintain segregation, and stating that black students in Dixie are not academically prepared for the rigors of college at a white school.

Black-and-white turns to color. While playing golf with Bryant in California, JOHN MCKAY confronts him on his statement. Bryant tells him he has to play to his audience back there, that the pressures from Governor Wallace force him to put on a different face from the one he shows out West. McKay tells him that he, too, is from West Virginia and has sympathy for the situation his friend faces, but that he has been playing black players, has had success with them, and that his perspective has changed because of it, too.

In a Tuscaloosa neighborhood of the 1960s, a black teenager, SYLVESTER CROOM plays sandlot football with his black friends. They are not Alabama fans, choosing to emulate Grambling instead.

In a white Tuscaloosa neighborhood, a young boy, KEITH DUNNAVANT, watches his older brothers play sandlot ball. They emulate white Alabama stars like Pat Trammell, LeRoy Jordan and Joe Namath.
In a Birmingham church, a 40-year old black man, CLAUDE DAVIS, talks about how his nephew, Clarence, will be coming to town to play football for USC vs. Alabama. In a black bar in Birmingham, black fans complain of their plight. Bryant allows Governor Wallace to put his arm around him at a political rally. At a Birmingham A's baseball game, Bryant and A's owner Charles O. Finley meet A's minor leaguer Reggie Jackson. "You're just the kinda n----r we could use in our program," Bryant tells Jackson.

At a Northern California high school football camp, USC assistant football coach MARV GOUX barks orders to a 14-year old camper named PETE CARROLL. There are black players among the campers. The camp’s director, BOB TROPPMANN, entertains two guest coaches, Bear Bryant and John McKay. At the camp’s banquet dinner, Bryant regales a group of California prep coaches, some of whom are black, instructing them to “send your whisky-drinkin’, skirt-chasin’ D students to ol’ Bear, and I’ll turn ‘em into football players.” Troppmann turns to somebody and mentions Joe Namath and Ken Stabler. After the banquet, Troppmann shares a nightcap with Bryant and McKay. The two coaches smoke cigars and drink whisky. The subject of integration comes up. McKay subtly urges Bryant to recruit black players. Bryant says he plans to, and when it happens, “we’ll play ya’all, and it’ll be like a high-speed train.” McKay turns to Troppmann and asks his opinion on integrating the South. “I would offer no objections,” says the high school coach sitting in on history.

At a USC, a white running back, JOHN PAPADAKIS from affluent Rolling Hills Estates, loses his job to a black running back, SAM CUNNINGHAM. Instead of languishing on the bench, John moves to linebacker and earns Sam’s respect through his hard hits. A friendship forms.

In 1970, the NCAA announces that they are allowing for an additional 11th game to be played on the fall football schedules. Bryant gets his brain trust together. Coaches JERRY CLAIBRONE, MAL MOORE, CLEM GRYSKA and BILL RUTLEDGE are told that ‘Bama will open the season against USC at Legion Field in Birmingham. The coaches are adamant that it is a bad idea, not just because USC is integrated but because the Trojans are coming off an unbeaten season and could embarrass the Crimson Tide. Bryant insists. “It’ll be good for Wilbur,” says Bryant. WILBUR JACKSON, black high school senior, attends church in Ozark, Alabama. His friends and family warn him that he should not take Bryant’s scholarship offer to play football, that he will be used and abused. “It’s in the Lord’s hands,” says Jackson.

At Eastern Arizona Junior College, JOHN MITCHELL, a strapping black defensive star from Tuscaloosa, Alabama tells Marv Goux that he will be coming to play for USC.

In a duck blind in Alabama, Bryant and McKay share from a whisky flask. Bryant tells McKay he’ll be in California for the Bob Hope Desert Classic and will see him then.
They discuss a football game at Legion Field and mull over all the variables, and how such a game could end segregation. They agree to play.

Images of black basketball players being abused by SEC crowds.

At USC, black football stars CHARLES YOUNG, TODY SMITH, and CHARLIE WEAVER attend a white fraternity party. They are accompanied by MICHELE MCKAY, the coach’s white daughter. She is a “hippie chick.” Young is very cautious about the “brothers” being seen with her, since it is felt that Coach McKay does not approve of inter-racial dating.

Intersperse the frat party with a dinner party at Bryant’s condo on the Alabama Gulf Coast. Bryant’s wife, MARY HARMON, and McKay’s wife, CORKY, exchange gossip. Bryant excuses himself to go outside. An Alabama alum quietly tells McKay that Bryant has allowed the game of football to “pass him by.”

Back at the party, Tody dances wildly with a beautiful white girl, causing her boyfriend to get jealous. A wild free-for-all fight breaks out, but Young brilliantly manages to extricate his friends from the scene before more trouble occurs.

At USC, assistant coach CRAIG FERTIG is summoned by McKay to make a “mysterious” drive to Los Angeles International Airport. At the Western Airlines Horizon Room, McKay and Fertig meet Bear Bryant. Details are made to open the season at Birmingham.

In Alabama, quarterback SCOTT HUNTER views tape of USC, expressing great fear of their athleticism. His teammate, JOHNNY MUSSO, dismisses Hunter’s concerns.

In white churches, prayers and hymns are sung. Whites are portrayed as unsympathetic to blacks, cocky about Alabama football.

In black churches, more prayers and songs. Black fans express concern that if USC loses, it could set them back.

At a USC banquet in Long Beach, the USC team is fully integrated, seemingly together in every way. McKay tells the audience that the upcoming game at Birmingham will pose a major challenge, but he expects his team to compete for the national championship as they always do.

Scenes of racial angst in Alabama.

Focus on Sam Cunningham, a black freshman football stud from USC. Sam lives in the idyllic community of Santa Barbara, where everybody – white and black – seems to love him.

A black criminal, George Jackson, has just murdered a white judge, Harold Haley, in a California courtroom, using guns smuggled in to him by black Communist Angela Davis. The whole “black gun” mentality is particularly threatening.

A group of black USC players gathers in quarterback JIMMY JONES’ apartment: Tody Smith, Charlie Weaver, and JIMMY GUNN all tell Jones they have a bad feeling about the trip. Smith and Weaver inform Jones, the team captain, that they plan to bring guns to Alabama. Jones tells them that is a terrible idea.
Charles Young, a black USC tight end, and ALLAN GRAF, a white Trojan lineman, drive together to a construction site where they work summer jobs. The two seem to have little in common. When they pass an anti-war protest, they philosophize about how best to effectuate social change, and slowly the seeds of togetherness begin to form.

In USC’s “dungeon,” Coach Goux sends his team to Birmingham with a rousing pep talk, telling them that the “act of ‘conquest’ is to go to another man’s house, rape his women and plunder his possessions.

Upbeat music plays over the following scenes, creating a sense of anticipation and power. At the Birmingham airport, USC is met by the Alabama Million-Dollar band, but the drive to the hotel is desultory. They pass scenes of terrible poverty. Lineman DAVE BROWN whispers, “God help them.”

At the hotel, white fans look at USC’s blacks as if they are from outer space. In Papadakis’ room, small white children reach out to touch the black skin - for the first time – of roommate KENT CARTER. That night, the gun issue again rears its ugly head. Jones is unable to talk Tody Smith from bringing his gun, but Papadakis is able to make sense of the issue.

The next day, Alabama arrives at Legion Field, led by Bryant. USC leaves their hotel, and at the last minute Smith leaves his gun in his room.

At Legion Field, tremendous build-up permeates the crowd and the teams. ‘Bama fans are confident of their “racial superiority.”

A black man argues with his wife and heads off to the bar. Black fans listen to the game on the radio in bars and barbeques.

Johnny Cash’s “Ring of Fire” plays. USC is “fired up” by Goux, and when the game starts puts on an incredible display, led by Cunningham.

“He’s making me look like a genius,” says McKay.

At halftime, trailing badly, Bryant tries to talk his beaten team back into the game, but they have no chance. Their fans look truly puzzled.

In the second half, USC pours it on amid stone silence from the crowd. Only the sound of USC cheering and a small contingent of black fans rooting for the Trojans breaks the silence. As the game wears on, the eerie sound of black fans cheering for USC outside the stadium is heard.

Sylvester Croom listens to the game on the radio. He is amazed. Scrolling over the screen is the information that tells us he will star for Bryant, coach on his staff, and today is the head coach at Mississippi State (the first black coach in SEC history).

Keith Dunnavant plays in a sandlot with black kids. He emulates Ozzie Newsome.

When the game finally ends, Bryant thanks McKay for “helping our program.”

Black fans celebrate in the local bar and backyard cookouts.

In the locker room, Bryant finds Sam Cunningham. He takes him into the hallway, where in front of some players, media, alumni and administrators, says “this here’s what a football player looks like.”

Alabama assistant Jerry Claiborne says, “Cunningham’s done more for civil rights in three hours than Martin Luther King did in 20 years.”
White fans enthusiastically endorse the prospect of Bryant recruiting black players. Their change of heart is almost absurdly turned around from their previous attitudes. A white Alabama announcer says, “Bryant’s gotta get hisself some a them Puerto Ricans.”

A black man returns home and his wife sees new self-respect in his eyes. Outside the stadium, Uncle Claude meets Clarence. He is one of thousands of black fans holding candles and Bibles. They thank the Trojans. As the bus pulls away, the black fans part the road, and the bus descends into a Heavenly light not unlike Moses, having parted the Red Sea, leading his people to the Promised Land.

DENOUEMENT: The narrator explains over images that Jackson suited up the following season, was captain of the 1973 team, and later sent his daughters to Alabama. When one considers the grim treatment given SEC black basketball players just two years before with the way Jackson and other blacks were well treated, one must consider this nothing less than a miracle orchestrated by the hand of God. Images of blacks and whites in the same church, working together in offices, attending the same schools. The South integrated. Politics completely changed. Political analysis of “red states” is given. Images of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush winning the Presidency. Pro sports, the Olympics and an economic boom allowed the South to “rise again.” McKay boasts to Bryant that he had recruited John Mitchell, but Bryant rushes to a phone and does a “sell job.” Skynyrd’s “Free Bird” plays while Mitchell is the first black ‘Bama player, suited up on the opening kick of Alabama’s 1971 17-10 win over USC at the Coliseum. McKay turns to Fertig and says wryly, “Well, that’s what you get.” Both USC and Alabama, both fully integrated, dominated the 1970s. Dave Brown led USC in Fellowship of Christian Athletes before the 2-4 Trojans beat unbeaten Notre Dame in 1971, and the team never lost again, completing the “all-time best” 1972 national championship. Anthony Davis runs a kick back for a touchdown against Notre Dame. Images of six USC players who became Christian ministers. Papadakis and Cunningham maintain a lifelong friendship. Croom and Mitchell insist that if Bryant was racist before 1970, his heart, like that of the South, softened. His friendship with McKay, a Southern man himself who also had a change of heart over the years, created the conditions to allow this game to be played, and therefore change the nature of society through athletics. End credits roll over images of Martin Luther King saying, “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord and the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” plays.

ONE NIGHT, TWO TEAMS

Treatment of the screenplay by Steven Travers

Based on the book

One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation
By Steven Travers

When two Southern-bred good ol’ boy coaches conspire to play an integrated football game between USC and Alabama, in front of a segregated white audience in 1970 Birmingham, the truth is revealed, followed by the changing of hearts and minds which allows Martin Luther King’s “dream” to finally be realized.

14-year old Pete Carroll is a camper at the Diamond B Football Camp in Booneville, California in 1965. USC football coach John McKay and Alabama football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant are guest coaches/speakers at the camp. They are friends, having met at these kinds of events a few years earlier.

A banquet is held and Bryant makes a speech to a group of California high school football coaches, charming them with his homespun humor. After the speech, Bryant, McKay and Carroll's Redwood High School coach, Bob Troppmann, who runs the camp, share late-night cocktails in which they discuss their lives, careers and future aspirations. The fact that they are both "good ol' boys" from the South; hard-scrabble men who had to fight for all they have, reveals the core of their friendship. Bryant discusses the intricacies of football and racial politics in Alabama; the trick of dealing with Governor George Wallace; the KKK; and the mis-conceptions that 1960s America has of him and Southerners in general. McKay indicates that he is lucky not to have to deal with Bryant's racial troubles; that at USC blacks are given unique opportunities. Bryant says he admires McKay and his program. He feels that together they can achieve a breakthrough in racial progress through sports. Plans are hatched. All they need is a window of opportunity.

A documentary montage tells the story of USC's and California's unique role in the area of social progress through athletics. California, on the surface at least, appears to be a place that has found some racial harmony. This is contrasted with Alabama's rigid segregation. At Alabama's football banquet, a Greek-American from Ohio, Christ Vagotis, endures some ribbing over his swarthy skin and Yankee upbringing.

"We don't what he is," says an overbearing 'Bama booster, "but we know he ain' no NEGRO!"

Vagotis survives this test, plays at Alabama and becomes an assistant coach on Bear Bryant's staff. Bryant, after telling Look magazine that "black players are coming to the Southeastern Conference," and he wishes to become the "Branch Rickey of college football," decides to recruit his very first scholarship black football player: Wilbur Jackson of Ozark, Alabama. Vagotis, because of his unique ethnic background, is tasked...
with signing Jackson, which he successfully does after a heart-felt discussion of his own trial by fire.

In January of 1970, the NCAA adds an 11th game to the upcoming fall football schedules. This is the window of opportunity Bryant has been looking for. He meets McKay in Los Angeles and asks him to bring the Trojans to Birmingham in September. It will be a chance for a segregated audience to see a classy, integrated team take on the Crimson Tide. McKay agrees.

Over the course of the spring and summer, the two programs and their fan bases approach the game in different ways. Alabama boosters are confident that the Crimson Tide will handle business at the venerable Legion Field, but there is genuine respect for McKay and USC. It is felt that if Bryant has respect for McKay, then it gives added imprimatur to the integrated Trojans. Alabama's white players are generally open to playing with and against blacks, reflecting the changing times; the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam and the 1960s. The resistance comes from old guard elements of the administration and boosters.

Black people in Alabama remain very hopeful but also worried about the upcoming game. While a USC victory is seen as Deliverance, a Trojan defeat could set the civil rights issue back years. There is great concern that Wilbur Jackson will not play, that he will be a mere token black. At the heart of black life in the South is Christianity, and it is through this lens that they frame the issue. Whites in Alabama are also strong Christians. It appears that church and football are the only things that whites and blacks in this part of the country have in common.

At USC, a racial divide is revealed, centered around the controversy over black quarterback Jimmy Jones and white back-up Mike Rae. Black players at USC are concerned about their safety in Birmingham, and some decide to bring guns with them. This is a reflection of the Black Panthers, who have taken over the Civil Rights Movement, replacing the Christian non-violence of Martin Luther King Jr. A little-known white offensive lineman, Dave Brown, and a star black tight end, Charles Young, help USC come together as a team through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

USC arrives in Alabama. The drive to the hotel reveals stark poverty in the black section of town, which is shocking to their naïve, young California sensibilities. The black players face barbs and taunts at the hotel from white patrons. Their reaction is to stick together, avoiding any controversy. The gun issue comes to its head. The black players decide not to bring guns to Legion Field after all.
On game day, enormous excitement surrounds Legion Field. In Alabama, Saturday night football is a religion. All the elements come together at last: McKay and Bryant; USC vs. Alabama; white Crimson Tide fans whooping it up and taunting the black Trojans; blacks sitting in a small section of the end zone, gathered outside the stadium, and in neighborhood bars. They are quiet but hopeful.

By the time the game finally starts, the tension is unbearable, but USC seems to have bottled it, led by black sophomore running back Sam "Bam" Cunningham. In the first half, Cunningham and USC lead USC to a large lead. With each gain and score, black fans in the stands, outside the stadium and in the bars gain confidence, and with it a sense of religious fervor sweeps them.

White fans are shocked, but when Alabama makes a few scores there is hope that they can re-capture past glories. With each 'Bama gain, black fans find themselves set back. They are on pins and needles. When USC answers each Crimson Tide gain with resounding drives and scores, the Tide turns! White fans at first react angrily, taunting the celebrating Trojans. Black fans are emboldened, cheering wildly. Outside the stadium, the throng of black fans backing USC grows.

In the second half, Cunningham and USC seal the game with an astounding performance that leaves no doubt that if Alabama wishes to compete at the highest national levels of college football, they will need to integrate. White fans express the wish that they "had some a them big nigras." The sound of the black fans cheering outside Legion Field, mixed with the shouts of USC's players and coaches on the field, are eerie in the filled, otherwise-quiet Legion Field. Hearts and minds are changing.

After the game, Bryant congratulates McKay and Bryant. He leads Cunningham into a crowded hallway outside the dressing room. There, before some Alabama players, writers, reactionary fans, alumni and administration - some holding on to the old ways - Bryant announces that "this here's what a football player looks like." He makes it obvious that in the future Alabama will have black players just like Cunningham. Alabama assistant coach Jerry Clairborne reiterates Bryant's view, stating that Cunningham has "done more for civil rights in three hours than Martin Luther King did in 20 years." This sentiment has the ring of truth.

As USC's bus pull out of the parking lot after the game, thousands and thousands of black people from the Birmingham neighborhoods descend upon their buys, carrying Bibles and candles. They thank them for "delivering" them to the Promised Land. The bus parts them like ancient Israelites making their way through the Red Sea in a spectacular aerial sight, amid great evangelical music and Christian imagery.
After the season, McKay brags to Bryant that he has recruited John Mitchell, a black recruit from Mobile, Alabama. Bryant "steals" Mitchell from Bryant, and in the 1971 rematch in Los Angeles Mitchell becomes the first black player in Alabama history. When he races by McKay and assistant coach Craig Fertig on the kick-off McKay wryly remarks, "Well, that's what you get." Wilbur Jackson is also a success, and Alabama fully integrates. With integration comes their greatest era of dominance. Through football, Christianity and the friendship of Bryant and McKay, the 1970 game is viewed as a seminal event in the civil rights struggle. In its aftermath, not only does Alabama achieve great success; Bryant securing his status as a legend, but the South "rises again." With integration comes economic and political success. America is better off for it.

ONE NIGHT, TWO TEAMS

Screenplay outline by

STEVEN TRAVERS

Act I (pages 1-26)

14-year old Pete Carroll at the Diamond B Football Camp in Booneville, California is given first "coaching assignment" by Coach Bob Troppmann. He sees John McKay and Marv Goux.

McKay instructs young players with a mega-phone.

Carroll and others young charges are put through the paces by Goux.

Carroll tells Troppmann what an honor it is to have McKay and Goux at the camp. Troppman tells him that's only the half of it.

Carroll and young players stare in rapt attention; pan Goux, McKay, Troppmann and high school football coaches; VO is Bear Bryant telling audience tall tales; in particular to "send yer whiskey-drinkin', skirt-chasin' D students to old Bear and I'll make 'em into football players."

Carroll says good night to other campers and turns out the light in his cabin.

At a local lodge some 500 yards away, in the bar, Troppmann sits with McKay and Bryant. He tells the legendary coaches how honored he is to have them at his camp; to speak; and to endorse him. The conversation; Mike Garrett, a black running back and Heisman frontrunner in upcoming season; race riots in Los Angeles; and Bryant's background.
Flashback to Bryant wrestling a bear; almost getting thrown in jail with a black kid; living on the "wrong side of the tracks"; serving in the Navy; and coaching at Junction.

Bryant tells Troppmann and McKay he tried to recruit blacks and was told "that's the last thing we'll do," and he said, "Wa'al, last is where were fixin' to finish then."

Back at the lodge, another round is served; cigarettes and cigars; Troppmann is a "fly on the wall." McKay tells Bryant but "for the grace of God" he could be in his shoes.

Flashback to cross burning on the Catholic McKay's lawn in West Virginia; McKay a tailgunner in the Army Air Corp; playing football on the G.I. Bill at Oregon; Al Davis almost getting the USC job that he got.

Troppmann interjects. "I didn't realize you were from the South, Coach." McKay says West Virginia was only state not to join the Confederacy; votes Republican. "Still, it explains why you two are friends. You're both a coupla good ol' boys." McKay tells Bryant he does not how he deals with Wallace.

1958: Alabama gubernatorial candidate George Wallace looks at his losing 1958 returns. He tells an aide he tried to campaign like Huey Long, to reach out to blacks, but it only got him beat, and "I'll never be out-niggered again."

1959: a local "citizen's group" (KKK) warns Bryant that he better not play integrated Penn State in the Liberty Bowl.

Bryant and his team run off the field after beating Penn State.

1960: Martin Luther King is jailed in Birmingham. He gets word that Richard Nixon has declined to help with his release, but John Kennedy has intervened, and that Jackie Robinson has switched his support from Nixon to JFK.

Wallace, elected Governor, makes his inauguration speech and vows "segregation now, segregation forever."

Bryant observes from his second floor office as Vivian Malone and Hood are escorted into the admission's office. Bryant tells president of the school it was "all for show," that Wallace made his "stand in the schoolhouse door" to mollify his racist base. "Well, I'll be a son of a gun," says the president, unaware of this, marveling at how Bryant seems to know all.

Joe Namath rifles a pass in practice.

Namath woos a coed with whiskey. Troppmann's VO: "Namath's one of those 'whiskey-drinkin', skirt-chasin' D students' you were talking about."
Namath walks the streets of Birmingham. 13-year old Sylvester Croom observes him and says, "He looks like a cool jazz singer."

Back at the lodge, Bryant tells McKay and Troppmann that he's recruiting players from Pennsylvania, Florida, even California; times are changing; Wallace has Presidential aspirations and there are term limits; and that some day he'll bring in blacks and "it'll be like a high-speed train." "From your mouth to God's ears," says Troppmann.

The sound of a train morphs into the sight of USC running back Mike Garrett running over the opposition. Voiceover description. Song plays: "California Dreamin'" or "Surfin' USA"

Garrett wins the Heisman Trophy.

Photo image of Brice Taylor.

Documentary footage of Jackie Robinson-UCLA vs. USC; John Wooden's Bruins.


Documentary footage of 1960s California. Voiceover says California seems to have achieved racial harmony. Images of whites, blacks getting along - discos, beaches, schools. Song plays: "Conquest!" Documentary footage of O.J. Simpson, Heisman Trophy, Trojan national championships, Rose Bowl, Traveler, fans wave "V for victory."

Documentary footage of 1960s protests. Music switches to more apocalyptic rock of the era.

Documentary footage of civil rights protests in the South. Music switches to Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Alabama football banquet. Christ Vagotis is introduced by alum who says, "We don't know what he is, but he ain't no Negro."

Jim Murray writes his column saying Alabama should not win 1966 national championship.

Crowd shots of Alabama fans - "Notre Dame plays politics."

Final 1966 polls show Notre Dame wins "Catholic vote." Music switches to Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'."

Bear Bryant tells a writer, "Black players are comin' to the Southeastern Conference. I wanna be the Branch Rickey of college football."
Look headline: "Blacks coming to SEC says Bear." End music.

Wilbur Jackson runs for a touchdown for Ozark High School. Black fans cheer.

Pat Dye and Christ Vagotis are the only white faces in the stadium. Dye tells Vagotis that since he is Greek and from Ohio, Bear wants him to handle the Jackson recruitment.

Vagotis recruits Jackson; talks to his family; arguments over how he will be treated. Jackson agrees.

26 PAGES

Act II (pages 26-91)


McKay approaches Craig Fertig. "Craiger, let's go."


Car approaches LAX exit: "We're goin' to the airport" says McKay. "Recruiting trip?" asks Fertig. No answers.

Car approaches LAX: "Short term or long term parking?" "Short term." "Ah, short flight."

Horizon Room, Western Airlines: "He'll be here in a couple minutes." In walks Bear Bryant. Conversation takes place, and Alabama vs. USC game is set. 29 MINUTES.

Meeting between Bryant and coaches; announces USC coming to play. Much discussion.

John Papadakis loses job to Sam Cunningham. Charlie Evans and Cunningham still compete. Evans fumes.

Practice scenes of Scott Hunter, Johnny Musso, John Hannah (The Cage).

Practice scenes of Charles Young, Charlie Weaver, Tody Smith, Dave Brown, Jimmy Jones.
Ty Hudson talks to Michele McKay. Young tells him to "cool it."

Whites take grievances to white coach; blacks to black coach. Tom Kelly notices.

Jeff Prugh, Jim Murray, Bud Furillo at practice.

Hunter and Musso talk.

Clarence Davis.

Birmingham neighborhoods.

Clarence Davis's uncle, a Christian minister. Show the cross. Evangelical music plays.

Black churches.

Whites churches. End music.

Fraternity; fight between Tody Smith and white fraternity.

Young and Graf in car.

Bryant-McKay in a duck blind.

Bryant, McKay, wives. Alumni says Bear over hill.

1970 Marin Courthouse killing.

Documentary footage, 1968-70: Civil rights movement; Christian to militant.

Jimmy Jones' apartment.

Hannah and The Cage. Players falling about.

Hannah falls asleep. Voiceover. Bryant's voiceover: "You see how human body can recover."

Jim Murray, Jeff Prugh meet with Bryant.

"Bama fan respects McKay, USC as private, conservative school; reason why Bear scheduled game. Says 'Bama boys are "dirt poor," SC is school of "wealth and privilege."

Show scenes during his VO.

USC send-off with Marv Goux; cheerleaders, band. Blacks are still hesitant, fearful.
Dave Brown approaches McKay about Fellowship of Christian Athletes "demonstration."

FCA meeting. Tody Smith does not participate.

On plane, John Vella sees Tody Smith's gun.

At the airport, Alabama's Million-Dollar Band meets the team.

Highway; players are quiet in bus. Music: "Sweet Home Alabama."

Bear Bryant "walks on water" on billboard.

Scenes of roadside poverty.

Dave Brown says, "God help them."

Hotel; sign welcomes Trojans.

Lobby; strange reaction.

Blacks walk/run past pool.

Room - Carter, Papadakis and the little kids.

Jones' room; gun argument.

Vella sees gun with Smith. Vella confronts Smith.

Smith leaves gun. Voiceover: Dave Brown/FCA.

91 PAGES

Act III (91-129)

Legion field: Confederate flags.

USC arrives.

"Bear meat" taunts.

Alabama walk-through. Hannah is still on team.

Fertig observes Bear.
Bear approaches stands, kisses a baby; pagan idolatry.

On field taunts of USC.

Black neighborhoods.

Black bar; game on the radio.

Popping sound in stands worries SC's black players.

McKay-Bear meet at mid-field.

Goux's pep speech in locker room - "wrecking crew."

Kick-off.

Cunningham running.

Cunningham scores.

Fertig: "Give it to Sam."

Prugh in press box, Alabama fan.

Game progression.

Halftime; Bryant tells 'em "we have class."

Second half progression.

Crowd quiets - hear outside.

Blacks cheer.

Shouts of USC players on field.

Close-ups of celebrating Trojans. McKay says to Fertig: Sometime you'll be on the other side of the field and know how it feels."

Sound of blacks outside stadium.

Blacks outside stadium; gathering, cheering.

Blacks at Birmingham bar, cheering.
Bryant-McKay at midfield.

'Bama fan leaves stadium; "Bryant oughta get some of them blacks."

Locker room celebration; enter Bryant.

Bryant approaches Fertig to "borrow" Sam.

Approaches McKay.

Bryant takes Sam.

Hallway scene; "this here's what a football player looks like."

Prugh and the fan.

Bus, bibles, candles. Voiceover: Murray's column.

Prugh at coffee shop; 'Bama fan overheard.

End voiceover of Murray's column.

129 PAGES

**Denouement (129-137)**

Golf course: Bryant, McKay.


Bryant on phone at clubhouse; "get me John Mitchell."


Opening kick.

Mitchell runs past McKay, Fertig. McKay turns to Fertig: "Well, that's what you get."

Scoreboard: 17-10, Alabama.

John Mitchell.

Wilbur Jackson.

Sylvester Croom.
Clarence Davis

Jimmy Jones.

Tody Smith

John Vella.

John Papadakis.


Dave Brown.

1972 national champs. Anthony Davis runs for score. End voiceover.


Documentary footage; Wallace shot.

Wallace apologizes

South rises again, Olympics.

Cunningham, Hannah - teammates.

Cunningham, Papadakis return to Alabama for 2003 USC-Auburn game.

Shots of McKay at Julie's. Voiceover: SC-'Bama dominate the 1970s.

Bear Bryant.

Winner of game was America.

137 PAGES

Possible additional scenes

Black fraternity at USC

McKay, USC banquet

SCREENWRITER'S NOTES
- There is a screenplay, a treatment of the screenplay, a scene-by-scene outline of the screenplay, and the screenwriter's notes. It is a PG work; no swear words.

- The screenplay is 137 pages. Act I is 26 pages and gives the backstory of the Bear Bryant-John McKay friendship; the contrasts between USC and Alabama; California and the South; and the events surrounding the recruitment of Wilbur Jackson. It also includes documentary footage of the era with Anthony Davis providing significant narration.

- Act II is from page 26 to page 91. This covers the period beginning with the NCAA's announcement of an 11th game; the scheduling of the game; and the contrasting ways in which the two schools, states, players and coaches prepare for the event. The press weighs in with their opinion of the social significance of the game.

- Act III is from page 91 to page 129. This covers the actual game itself; Bryant's hallway "this here's what a football player looks like" statement about Sam Cunningham; and the post-game Biblical hopes and dreams fulfilled for black people in the South.

- The denouement goes from pages 129-137. This includes significant narration by Anthony Davis revealing what happened to the key people of the story; the region's, the coaches and the program's.

- The screenplay is probably too long. The denouement could be eliminated or reduced. There are other areas that can be changed/shortened.

- The dialogue includes significant quotes from the book that come directly from the participant's mouths in interviews with the author/screenwriter. Any overlap of dialogue or story resembling previous works by John Papadakis/Allan Graf is included only if it was confirmed in interviews and research, for the book, by the author. Any dialogue/scenes from previous screenplays that could not be verified, confirmed or spoken of are not used. This includes most significantly the relationship between Jimmy Jones's and his girlfriend, Dee Dee. It also includes scenes from the black fraternity at USC.

- The fight at the white fraternity is included because Charles Young described it for the book.

There is no expectation that this screenplay will be used by Kerry McClugge and Barry Kemp; or that it will be incorporated by Jeff Nathanson or any other screenwriter. It was written strictly for the sake of writing it. It has some excellent scenes and dialogue that may very well be used in the film version; most of these are lifted directly from the book and the research, which is significant. That said, the screenwriter offers no objection to it being used and a screen credit accorded thereof.

THE LAST MIRACLE

A film treatment by
THE FILM

The film opens with the courtroom scene from *Oh, God!* in which George Burns tells the questioning attorney that miracles are “too showy,” that his “last miracle” was “the 1969 Amazin’ Mets.”

Religious music plays while Biblical language about the Promised Land and other acts of God are depicted. This morphs into a swank Sinatra tune as the scene manifests itself into a wrecking ball destroying Ebbets Field. Various shots of crying Giants and Dodgers fans are shown, as the two New York teams move to California.

This is replaced by various scenes of the comically bad New York Mets of the 1960s, and their clown act manager, Casey Stengel asking “Can’t anybody here play this game?” The poor quality of the Mets is contrasted to visions of Yankee glory.

The scene shifts to a packing crate car in Fresno, California, 1962. 17-year old Tom Seaver sweats through 100-degree heat. Snakes and spiders jump out of the crates, scaring him half to death. We follow Seaver as he joins the Marines and suffers its indignities, then returns to Fresno City College, suddenly three inches taller and 30 pounds heavier. Considered no prospect in high school, he suddenly possesses an explosive fastball.

Seaver and his lovely girlfriend Nancy move on to USC, where we see shots of his development as a man and baseball player, his drafting by the Mets, and ascension to the big leagues with the New York Mets.

Seaver becomes a star on a bad team, but the Mets hire a new manager, Brooklyn hero Gil Hodges. A sense of professionalism is infused to the team, but Hodges has a heart attack. In Spring Training, 1969, Seaver and his teammates; Jerry Koosman, Nolan Ryan, Bud Harrelson, Tug McGraw and Nolan Ryan, fish in St. Petersburg, Florida and discuss their high hopes for the season. Hodges recovers.

The season opens and Seaver is hit hard by lowly Montreal. He is beaten by St. Louis and Chicago. The Cubs’ manager, Leo Durocher, orders his pitchers to hit Mets hitters, intimidating them, but in late May and June a series of incredible games are played, all with breathtaking, game-saving plays that propel the team to an 11-game winning streak and surprise contention.

Two incredible games are shown: a comeback over the Cubs followed by a one-hit shutout by Seaver in which the fans implore him to be their new hero, the latest in a long line of great New York sports stars. Visions of past stars – Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, Gifford, Namath – seem to welcome Seaver to this new, mythic status.

This is followed by a big letdown, and all seems lost. The team begins to argue, and resentment over Seaver’s status and his showy wife start to fracture the club. Against Houston, Hodges removes Cleon Jones for failing to hustle, but this spurs a winning streak.

Against the Cubs at Shea Stadium, a black cat emerges in front of the Cubs’ dugout. The Mets go on to win, and capture the division. Individual players emerge as heroes in the city. Seaver and Nancy are bigger than rock stars. Mayor John Lindsay
attaches himself to the team, hoping to revive a flagging campaign. Crime goes down as New Yorkers stick to their TVs to watch the Mets. An entire city revives and comes together, but in new ways.

The Vietnam War plays as backdrop; Nixon’s “secret plan” is shown in scenes from the White House, and soldiers fighting the Viet Cong. It is an unstable world in which the Mets appear to be the only ray of hope.

The play-offs open and the contract between New York and Atlanta, socially and in every way, is exemplified. The Mets, despite poor performances by Seaver and Koosman, prevail. Next come the Baltimore Orioles, who symbolize Goliath to their David. After Seaver is beaten in the first game, all hope seems lost, but just like the Jets, who beat the Baltimore Colts in the Super Bowl, the Mets’ engineer a thrilling upset. Scenes of utter chaos and disbelief in New York accompany the win, which propels Lindsay to a Mayoral victory and has anti-war activists believing that if the Mets can win the series, the Vietnam War can end, too.

The sense of unreality pervades the city; its citizens are less jubilant sports fans and more like children entering Heaven in awe of what they see. Seaver is elevated to the highest place in our society, but the concluding scenes show that success went to their heads; Seaver achieved greatness but was never had a halo like in 1969; Vietnam went on for several years and 100 million died under Communism; New York almost went bankrupt, but revived in later years.

In 2009, the new stadium opens in New York with a 40-year celebration of the ’69 Mets.

CONCEPT

It is the biggest city in the world. “If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere,” as the Frank Sinatra song goes. But by 1969 New York City and all it represented was in disarray; criminally, politically, athletically.

“Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?” sang Simon and Garfunkel. Then a modern Lancelot rode forth to lead the New York Mets to heights above and beyond all glory, before or since. It was the biggest sports story of the twentieth century.

This film tells the complete, unvarnished story of the greatest, most improbable tale in the history of American sports: the 1969 “Amazin’ Mets” World Championship season. The Mets were led by that rarest of all American heroes, the true New York Sports Icon. In a city that produces not mere mortals but sports gods, Tom Seaver represents the last of the breed. His deeds, his times, his town: it was part of a vanishing era, an era of innocence. In 1969, six years after John Kennedy’s assassination, Seaver and the Mets were the last grasp at idealism before free agency, Watergate, and cynicism.

Seaver’s great status was that of half rock star, half political figure. Seaver and the Mets are a metaphor for a changing society, the “Age of Aquarius” confluence between black and white during racially divided times, set against a backdrop so perfect it appeared to have been guided by the hand of destiny.

Now, we can reflect on the political, religious, sociological and racial views of the 1960s, all imbued by 40 years of experience in America during her most challenging
times. It was Seaver and the Mets who stood astride issues such as Vietnam, free agency, the “new breed” of black athletes.

The Mets rode the whirlwind of fame and celebrity after the triumph of 1969, but many teammates were unable to maintain a steady course in their life and career. Here, for the first time, America learns the unvarnished truth about human beings elevated to ultimate hero status in New York City, a town that builds them up only to tear ‘em down. Incredibly, Tom Seaver never was torn down, staying at the top for twenty years, retiring to the broadcaster’s booth where his caramel rich voice, smooth intellect and veteran experience made him a popular, admired character to generations beyond his playing days; but his teammates and team met less kind fates.

This is also a nostalgic look back at the hero machine that is New York City. There remain a tiny handful of ultimate sports superstars who stand out in the Big Apple above all others. This tells the story of how they got there, stayed there, or fell from grace. As times changed, it became virtually impossible for others to follow with Seaver in the footsteps of Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Joe Namath.

THE AURA

When mythic Hollywood movie star Marilyn Monroe returned from a tour of Korea in the 1950s, she declared to husband Joe DiMaggio, “Joe! Joe! You never heard such cheering.”

Joe D.冷ly replied, “Yes I have.” This exchange encapsulates something unique in America and in the world. In so doing it summarizes why this is the quintessential New York story.

In today’s world, celebrity is cheap and comes in many varieties, courtesy of cable TV, the Internet and the scandal sheets. Hollywood has a refined process of producing, assembly-line style, its celebrities. But beyond this kind superficiality lies true celebrity status. No living movie star attains it. Few ever have, even beyond the grave. It is something beyond celebrity. Call it greatness. This kind of person, while not solely American, remains a historical figure in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who, aside from Winston Churchill, can only be a larger-than-life figure in a country as big and full of swagger as America.

There are those lauded for their greatness in Mt. Rushmore style; George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, perhaps John Glenn. But beyond national heroes – Presidents during great crisis, generals in a desperate struggle, and astronauts embodying Cold War pride – there is one very select group of uniquely American celebrity-heroes.

This is that tiniest, most elite group known as the true New York Sports Icon. Even this gaudy title does not tell the true story, for many athletes who play in New York City are superstars, but do not rise to the heights of the true, recognized-by-history New York Sports Icon. To live in this rarified air one must have achieved things above and beyond the mere mortal. They must have done so in the most crucial manner possible,
and risen to a place in the spotlight - *The Arena* as Theodore Roosevelt called it – that minimizes all other accomplishment.

To understand this status, one must understand that very few non-New York athletes achieve this level. In Boston, Ted Williams took years to rise to this place in history, while Bill Russell, Carl Yastrzemski and Roger Clemens never did. In California, Sandy Koufax did what Willie Mays and Barry Bonds did not. Most of the legends are regional in nature: college football stars at Southern California or Oklahoma; Tony Gwynn toiling away in obscurity in San Diego; Hank Aaron breaking records in comparable silence. A Michael Jordan, a Joe Montana; these kinds of figures achieving their *bona fides* without benefit of the Big Apple’s stage are rarities. In fact, it is usually only when they are recognized by New York – cheering crowds at the Garden, “The Four Horsemen of Notre Dame” at the Polo Grounds, or on Madison Avenue – that the imprimatur comes to them. But The New York Sports Icon achieves status in an almost religious manner; their moments in the sun say what words fail to accomplish. Theirs is a truth which, when witnessed in an American arena, is never misunderstood.

Who are these gods of the New Greece, gladiators of the New Rome? In the biggest city, on the biggest stage, the list is oh-so-short. As Christ says in the New Testament, “many are called, few are chosen.” The Chosen Ones are Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Frank Gifford, Mickey Mantle, Joe Namath and Tom Seaver.

It is the list of those who are so close, yet do not make the cut, which makes this group all the more impressive. John McGraw, Bill Terry, Mel Ott, Willie Mays, Whitey Ford, Yogi Berra, Casey Stengel, Jackie Robinson, Duke Snider, O. J. Simpson, Walt Frazier, Willis Reed, Reggie Jackson, and Derek Jeter are just a few of the all-time greats, the Hall of Famers who have toiled in New York City and New York state; achieved fame, fortune and honor; yet remain ever-so-slightly below the hallowed shrines of these eight players (Mathewson, Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, Gifford, Mantle, Namath and Seaver).

The last of these represents the crux of what makes this book so unique, so compelling, such a nostalgic memory of a town, a team and a time that is no more. Gone like the wind, like the Old South, is the age of the superstar. Lost to free agency and player strikes. Records still get broken, but somehow the heroes of yesteryear stand above and beyond their successors, untarnished by steroids or, at least in the comparable mind’s eye, greed. All that is left is the *last* of the true New York Sports Icons.

This is a story about not merely their one superstar, but a team that was one big, collective *superstar*, a term bandied about on Broadway that very year by virtue of the rock opera *Jesus Christ: Superstar!* Never had any single Yankee, Dodger or Giant team captured the imagination of the “city that never sleeps” as did the 1969 Mets. It has never come close to happening in all the years since. Never have the “stars been aligned” as they were that magical, miraculous summer and fall of 1969.

The Yankees folded and a proud city bowed down. It was the late 1960s. The sports landscape was egalitarian, with champions spread throughout the Fruited Plain: Los Angeles, Detroit, Boston, Baltimore, Green Bay and points beyond. In New York a
famous stadium suddenly was old, decrepit, its Bronx neighborhood overrun by crime. Drugs, prostitution, promiscuity and racial division now sprung forth, replacing the old veneers of respectability. This monied metropolis was in debt, its citizens racing to the suburbs in what was known as “white flight,” the old neighborhoods quickly deteriorating into a Martin Scorsese film noir. A terrible war tore at the fabric of a great society that just a few years before had enough hubris to call itself the Great Society.

Enter into the mix a stand-up comedy act called the New York Mets. In a city where only the sports version of Caesar’s triumphant return from Gaul was considered worthy of public admiration, the fumble house Metsies were so bad New Yorkers laughed at ’em, but even this was a predicament telling of a city’s downfall. Was this the level New York had fallen to?

But a stadium was built which by 1960s standards was modern. Slowly but surely the Mets’ front office began to come around to the idea that, in order to built a lasting fan base past the anybody-but-the-Yankees Brooklyn crowd, which mostly lived out on Long Island by now anyway, actual on-field accomplishment must be attained.

In reality, it looked like the old Soviet “five-year plan.” In 1969, it seemed the most anybody could reasonably expect would be contention by 1974. A World Series seemed an impossibility, something that might happen some time between a decade and a century from that point in time, if ever. It was a preposterous idea.

The Mets were “new breed” all the way. People were talking about the “new breed” among the black athletes. The “old school” black athletes were generally quiet, Christian family men who did not “rock the boat.” The “new breed,” symbolized by St. Louis ace Bob Gibson, were proud, outspoken and articulate.

This was a “new breed” of white and black players in an era in which more and more players were college-educated, hailing from the suburbs, many from California. These were athletes whose societal views were cutting edge.

They did not buy into the Mets’ clown reputation, forged in the early years of Casey Stengel, “Marvelous Marv” Throneberry, and “Choo Choo” Coleman. It was not funny to them. In 1968 things began to change as Seaver and Jerry Koosman starred and a young corps of talented players asserted themselves.

But there is no explaining 1969. In the film Oh, God! George Burns is asked what His last miracle was.


It is not an exaggeration to state that the 1969 “Amazin’ Mets” or “Miracle Mets,” or whatever adjective is attached to the story, represents the most incredible, unbelievable, impossible story in all the history of sports. Nothing was more improbable, nothing more unexpected, nothing more unlikely to predict. They won the World Series. It was the greatest top-to-bottom upset ever; not just beating 109-win Baltimore in the Fall Classic, but the entire “rags to riches” tail from Spring Training to Game 5, when New York’s 5-3 win gave them the title before a world’s disbelieving eyes.

But the story is only half about an improbable team. The New York setting, the desultory fall of the Yankees, the still-smoldering loss of the Brooklyn Dodgers, all placed against the landsdscape of the Vietnam War, protesters, hippies, drugs, a battered but unbowed city, and a country changing at warp speed; this is what makes 1969 the year, the Mets’ story a compelling Hollywood drama. Furthermore, the 1969 Mets saved
The Mets were tempered by a 1960s awareness, an empathy for the poor, the working man, the downtrodden. Yet these were never “bleeding heart liberals.” Some felt the Mets “sold out” in succeeding years. When they were at their height, everybody wanted a part of them. There were those who tried to freeload off of them, their image, their reputation. Some resisted that, not always without damage.

**AUTHOR’S QUALIFICATIONS**

Tom Seaver is alive to tell his story which, incredibly, has never been told before; not in its entirety. Not in the soft light of true reflection. There has never been a quintessential 1969 Mets book.

Travers grew up idolizing Tom Seaver. The 1969 Mets were a Holy Grail for Travers, who saw in Seaver all that he aspired to be. It was originally because Seaver had gone to USC that Travers became a huge fan of the Trojans, where he eventually graduated from.

Travers followed every aspect of Seaver’s great career. His life is known to him in thorough and great detail. He is the man to capture greatest highlight of that life, captured in the non-narrative style of Tom Wolfe, within the pages of this, the great Mets book everybody has long waited for.
Furthermore, as a former professional baseball pitcher himself, Travers will develop a rapport with the players he interviews unlike that of any other writer-sports subject.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

GENERAL SPORTS

PEEPING DIDN'T START WITH EAGLES CHEERLEADER

In March, 1961, the McAllister Hotel in Miami, Florida was teeming with minor league baseball players in the Baltimore Orioles farm system. Minor league baseball players are, with the possible exception of rock stars, the horniest people in the world. Put them together in a place like Miami, and you have a recipe for disaster. In light of revelations that NFL players have been staring at Philadelphia Eagles cheerleaders for years, the following story reminds one that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Three of the wildest Orioles were promising left-handed pitchers. First, there was Steve Barber, a hard thrower who had control on the mound, not so much off of it. Next, Steve Dalkowski. Dalkowski was a short, blocky guy with horn-rimmed glasses. To this day, those who saw him say he was the hardest throwing pitcher in the history of baseball. He is said to have thrown faster than Walter Johnson, Bob Feller, Sandy Koufax, or Nolan Ryan. He had no idea where the ball was going, however. He also was an alcoholic of the first order.

Finally, we have Robert "Bo" Belinsky. The only reason Belinsky had signed a professional baseball contract was because he was getting in too deep with the rackets in his home town of Trenton, New Jersey, and figured he should split town before the cops got too close.

Throughout his minor league career, Belinsky had barely evaded the law and other precarious situations, based on his adventures as a pool shark, con artist, and gigolo, which led him to the beds of underage girls, the wives of Army generals, and to pool rooms where the action was cut straight out of "The Hustler." The guy who did for Bo what Jackie Gleason did for Paul Newman was a somebody known only as The Farmer.

The general manager of the Orioles, the man responsibility for their actions, was Paul Richards. For some reason, Richards was considered a baseball genius. If you wanted to know if he really was a genius, he was happy to confirm it for you. He also was only slightly less dictatorial than Napoleon Bonaparte.

Our cast is not complete without Juanita. Juanita was a gorgeous, dark-eyed beauty from Bogota, Colombia, who was in Miami as a reward for having won the Miss Universe pageant a short while earlier. She was accompanied by her mother, who had the disposition of the wife of a concentration camp commandant. Her sole job on Earth was to save her daughter from the animals of North and South America.
Juanita and Mom were staying in room 814 of the McAllister Hotel. As fate would have it, Bo Belinsky was assigned to room 812, right next door.

Barber and Dalkowski, who hung out with Belinsky because they figured they could get some of his "leftover" women like Phil Esposito picking up "garbage goals" around the net for the old Bruins, showed up one day just as Juanita, wrapped up in a delightful 36-24-36 package, was leaving the room with Mommy Dearest. Dalkowski almost passed out with excitement.

"Bo, Bo, fer crissakes, did you see the broad in the next room?" asked Dalkowski.
"Oh, Juanita, sure," replied Bo, cool. "Nice, heh?"
"Are you getting any of that?" asked Dalkowski.
"I'm too busy," said Bo.
"Too busy," said Dalkowski, almost losing consciousness. "Bo, you gotta be out of your mind. She's the greatest thing I've seen since I've been 10 years old."

Dalkowski was almost going out of his mind. Barber was slightly less excited. Bo played it cool.

A plan was hatched. Dinner was post-poned, and Dalkowski went down stairs to the maintenance room of the hotel, returning with a drill. He and Barber drilled holes all over the wall, looking into Juanita's room. Bo did not engage in the activity, but he watched with amusement.

Word then spread like wildfire, and by 10 o'clock, Bo's room was filled with the Baltimore Orioles 1961 farm system.

When voices in Spanish were heard, the boys found their places and turned out the lights. Barber and Belinsky laughed. Dalkowski panted. Miss Universe entered the room, took off her shoes and earrings, and pulled her dress over her head. Mom turned on the TV, then went to the bathroom, returning in saggy pajamas. Miss Universe stared into a mirror, combing her hair endlessly, as if to say, "mirror, mirror on the wall, whose the fairest of them all?"

Finally, Miss Universe tired and went to bed. Mom turned out the lights.

Now what? No fear. One of the players had a flashlight. When the light hit her, she let out a scream. The players scattered into the Miami night light cockroaches from an opened cabinet.

Of course, it was Belinsky's room.

Mommy Dearest called security, who called Richards, who immediately called for Belinsky, Barber and Dalkowski.

"When anything goes wrong around here, Belinsky," said Richards, the veins popping out of his forehead "you're the first one I suspect. Did you drill the holes?"
"What are you talking about, Skip?" said Bo.
"The holes, who drilled the holes in your room?" yelled Richards.
"Oh, those holes," replied Bo, all innocent.
"Were you looking in the holes at the next room?" "asked" Richards.
"I don't know, I might have, I forget," said Bo.

Then Richards turned to Dalkowski, who admitted drilling the holes. At first he owned up to two or there, then eight or 10. With Richards almost apoplectic by now, Dalkowski claimed he did not look through the holes to see the girl. He said he just liked to drill holes.
Dalkowski and Belinsky were immediately shipped to Little Rock. Barber, who was the best of the three, made the club.

Belinsky would pitch a no-hit game for the Los Angeles Angels one year later, and become famous for dating such Hollywood starlets as Ann-Margret, Tina Louise, Connie Stevens, and *Playboy* Playmate of the Year Jo Collins.

Dalkowski never pitched in the Majors, and eventually became a street bum and migrant farm worker in Central California.

The activities these guys engaged in are known as "beaver shooting," first exposed by Jim Bouton, who said Mickey Mantle would lead the Yankees on beaver shooting expeditions to the roof of Washington's Shoreham Hotel, known for its angles which provided perfect viewing of the rooms of "stewardesses staying at the Shoreham," wrote Bouton, "or better yet, a stewardess and a 'friend.'"

Another beaver shooting incident of note occurred in the minors. An outfielder liked to drill holes in the dugout and look up the skirts of girls sitting in the first row. One day he caught a girl wearing no underwear, and went crazy. The whole team soon was staring through that hole at the girl. The inning over, the player was late rushing to right field, pretending to be fixing his sunglasses. The rest of the team spent that inning staring through that hole at the girl.

When the inning ended, the player came running in, all excited to get another view. He looked up to see who the girl was. She waved at him with a big smile. It was his wife.

Gives new meaning to the term "box seat."

**THE GOLDEN AGE OF SPORTS**

Billy Crystal, Roger Kahn and other New Yorkers love to speak glowingly about the “golden age” of New York sports. In the 1950s, center field was patrolled by Duke Snider in Brooklyn, Mickey Mantle at Yankee Stadium, and Willie Mays at the Polo Grounds. Frank Gifford was the glamour boy of the New York (football) Giants. The Dodger-Giant rivalry reached its peak, and the winner usually faced the Yankees in the Subway World Series (1951, '52, '53, '55, '56). From 1969-70, they saw Broadway Joe Namath of the Jets, Tom Seaver of the Mets, and Willis Reed of the Knickerbockers, lead their teams to World Championships.

No question, New York had it goin’ on.

Fine. However, any kid lucky enough to grow up in California from the late 1960s until the 1980s was spoiled with the greatest, most exciting, successful sports era any place has ever seen at any time. Period. Fugghedaboutit!

Here is why.

USC FOOTBALL: National champions (1962, '67, '72, '74 and '78), they had four Heisman Trophy winners (Mike Garrett/1965; O.J. Simpson/1968; Charles White/1979;
Marcus Allen/1981). They were the glamour team of college football, but what made the Trojans so special was not just that they won, but the *way* they won. John McKay and John Robinson’s squads probably manufactured more improbable, last minute comebacks than any team of all time. The undefeated 1969 Trojans were known as the Cardiac Kids, and SC’s comeback from 24-0 to beat Notre Dame in 1974 remains the most exciting sporting event in Los Angeles history.

UCLA BASKETBALL: John Wooden won 10 National Championships from 1964 to 1975. He did with big men and not-so-big men. They were the classiest program in the history of collegiate sports, led by a man of such dignity and Truth that all other mortal’s pale in comparison. If you were lucky enough to get a seat at Pauley when Lew Alcindor or Bill Walton was dominating the paint, you saw the game played like it has never been played since.

OAKLAND/LOS ANGELES RAIDERS: The silver-and-black won three Super Bowls (1976, 1980, 1983), but like USC they were the most exciting of teams. First George Blanda, then Ken Stabler thrilled Oakland Coliseum crowds with improbable two-minute drives that led, as announcer Bill King would declare, to “the promised land!”

OAKLAND ATHLETICS: They wore funny uniforms and played before sparse crowds, but Charlie Finley’s A’s were not only one of the greatest teams of all time (World Champions, 1972-73-74), but like the other great California sports teams of the era, they were incredibly exciting. They did it with pitching and defense, prevailing in nail-biting Play-Off’s and World Series’ vs. Detroit and Cincinnati (1972) and Baltimore and New York (1973).

LOS ANGELES LAKERS: The Jerry West/Elgin Baylor/Wilt Chamberlain teams of the 1960s were the greatest NBA teams never to win a World Championship. They played in some seven-game Play-Off finals with the Boston Celtics that were nothing less than classics. The 1972 World Championship squad may have the greatest team ever, and the Magic Johnson era (1980s) saw four NBA titles.

LOS ANGELES DODGERS: First, the Sandy Koufax/Don Drysdale team won the 1965 World Series. The 1970s saw the greatest divisional rivalry ever between Steve Garvey’s Dodgers and Cincinnati’s Big Red Machine, resulting in three National League pennants, and in 1988 Kirk Gibson’s home run was LA’s greatest single sports moment in a World Championship season.

LOS ANGELES RAMS: Like the Lakers until they broke through, the Rams were possibly the best team not to win the brass ring, but under George Allen and later Chuck Knox, this club played in some memorable (and frustrating) Play-Off games, mostly in the ice against Minnesota. There was something Shakespearean about the Rams’ so close-and-yet-so-far inability to bring a Super Bowl home.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS: A forgotten team, but led by the great Rick Barry they beat Washington in four straight games to capture the 1975 NBA championship, and had the league’s best record the next year before being upset by Phoenix in the Western finals.

UCLA FOOTBALL: The Bruins’ are something of an enigma. They consistently have excellent teams and super talent, yet a National Championship has eluded them since 1954. Still, Dennis Dummitt, the “Blair Pair”, Mark Harmon and John Sciarra excited their fans year in and year out. In 1972 Harmon led them to a huge upset over seemingly invincible Nebraska, in 1975 they upset Archie Griffin and Ohio State in the Rose Bowl, Terry Donahue’s teams won some improbable New Year’s Day games, and Troy Aikman was a wonder.

USC BASEBALL: Bill “Spaceman” Lee, SC’s All-American pitcher who twirled for Boston, once said the greatest baseball team he ever saw was “either the ’75 Reds, the ’68 Trojans, or any Taiwan little league team.” Rod Dedeaux’s clubs captured the College World Series in 1968, 1970-71-73-74 and ’78.

OLYMPICS: USC and UCLA would have been world-class track powers if they were countries, and the 1984 Games at the Coliseum are generally considered the most successful in the history of the Olympiad. More great athletes come from California than any other place.

PREP/JUNIOR COLLEGE: It is here and in Olympic sports that California truly outdistances New York or any other pretender. Verbum Dei basketball in the 1970s. Lakewood baseball under John Herbold and the Al Endriss dynasty at Larkspur Redwood in the 1970s. Wally Kincaid and Cerritos JC baseball. Hal Sherbeck and Fullerton JC football. Santa Ana Mater Dei basketball under Gary McKnight. Concord De La Salle’s football dynasty. It is because of these kinds of programs, these kinds of coaches, and the players who emerge from them, that California is the Sports Capitol of the World, and never was that more true than from the 1960’s until the 1980s.

WHERE FAMOUS PEOPLE COME FROM

California produces more celebrities than any place on Earth, even more than New York. It was not always that way. California was all the rage during the gold rush of 1849, which led to statehood in 1850, but for many years the Golden State took a back seat to Eastern states in terms of political clout and importance.

Hollywood began to change the way people looked at California after World War I. U.S.C. football player John Wayne became the idol of millions. California became known as a sports Mecca. Joe Di Maggio of San Francisco and Ted Williams of San Diego became two of baseball’s greatest legends. General George Patton was from San
Gabriel. A real sea change in California’s image, however, occurred because of World War II and Richard Nixon.

The end of the war coincided with prosperity, the jet airplane, highway expansion and suburban growth. Suddenly, a post-war baby boom created a population explosion that turned the state into an electoral-rich land of Presidential voters. Nixon, born in Orange County and raised in Los Angeles County, was the right man to attract those voters for Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. Later, Ronald Reagan rode to national prominence largely based on his promise to deliver the same electoral votes.

The entertainment industry is dominated by Californians. It is an advantage to be from here, because when the going gets tough, the natives stay, rather than returning to Peoria or Fayetteville. Later on when opportunity knocks, they are around to take advantage of it, instead of gone and forgotten. It does not hurt to grow up around it, knowing a little more about how the system works, and maybe even a few people making it work.

Many box office superstars are Californians. They include Wayne (Glendale), Clint Eastwood (Oakland), Robert Redford (Van Nuys), Robin Williams (Tiburon), Kevin Costner (Villa Park) and Tom Hanks (Alameda). One of film’s most famous writers is Robert Towne of Rancho Palos Verdes; it’s most powerful director is Modesto’s George Lucas, whose success coming out of the U.S.C. School of Cinema-Television helped to propel the dominant role of the film school’s at S.C. and U.C.L.A. Marilyn Monroe and Leonardo DiCaprio are Hollywood High grads. Rock groups? Try The Beach Boys, The Byrds, The Doors, Jefferson Airplane, Credence Clearwater Revival and Van Halen, just for starters.

The Silicon Valley produces cutting edge computer pioneers like Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. Top scientists and scholars mann California’s great universities and contribute to the aerospace industry. Stanford Law School is well represented on the Supreme Court by San Franciscans Kennedy and Breyer.

The weather, ultimately, is California’s greatest natural resource, and because of it the finest athletes in the world hale from here. Pete Sampras hails from Palos Verdes, Billy Jean King from Long Beach The two most dominant players in baseball, Mark McGwire and Randy Johnson, are not just natives, but former teammates at a school—U.S.C.—that also produced Tom Seaver.

Ironically, New York reserves its greatest hero worship for California athletes who “made it there,” among them Di Maggio, Seaver, Frank Gifford, Jackie Robinson, Duke Snider, and in Buffalo a guy named O.J. Simpson.

The twenty-first century dawns on a world increasingly dominated by trends sprung forth along the Pacific Rim, while a look back on the twentieth reveals that it was not just the American Century, but the California Century, as well!
I WAS MAD AS HELL, AND I WASN'T GONNA TAKE ANY MORE

I am glad the baseball players are not going on strike, but I have been wounded by their actions already. Let's start in June, 1981, I was a young pitcher. Not a top prospect, but definitely a prospect. I had an 87-mile per hour fastball, a roundhouse curve, a biting slider, a great screwball, a reliable sinker, and perfect control. I was 6-6, 220 pounds, healthy as an ox, and able to start or relieve effectively.

Two scouts approached me that Spring. Paul Tavares of the Boston Red Sox told me the Sox are going to draft me. Tom Gamboa of the Milwaukee Brewers told me the same thing. I was projected as a twentieth round pick. Not a major prospect, but no slouch. I would be able to get about $10,000 in bonus money.

The draft came around the first week in June. I waited by the phone. It never rang. I turned on the TV, and Commissioner Bowie Kuhn announced that the draft was being limited to 17 rounds because of the imminent baseball strike. That meant they ended the draft three rounds before I was supposed to get drafted.

"Lousy, rotten stinkin' millionaire baseball players," I thought to myself.

The players struck a couple of weeks later.

The St. Louis Cardinals did sign me as a free agent, but I got no bonus and was not accorded prospect status. I got hurt, and my career was short - two years. I can not help thinking if the players had not struck, I would have been drafted, protected, given decent medical attention, and a better chance.

Fast forward 13 years. It is 1994. I have graduated from USC and attended law school. I am now a budding sports agent. My partner and I represent Al Martin of the Pittsburgh Pirates. Martin had a strong rookie season in 1993, replacing Barry Bonds when he left for San Francisco. He is having another good year in '94. We have started talking to Cam Bonifay, the Pirates' general manager, and are making progress towards wrapping up a multi-year contract early. We have arranged for various marketing opportunities for Al, and the commissions are just enough to keep the company alive until the commission from his Pirates contract.

On August 12, 1994 the players strike. Al's marketing opportunities dry up. The Pirates put all contract negotiations on hold. The strike lasts until the next Spring. The company withers up and dies. Martin goes back to his old agent, Joe Bick. It is "Jerry Maguire" without the happy ending.

"Lousy, rotten stinkin' millionaire baseball players," I think to myself. Then I add "lousy, rotten stinkin' agents," and "lousy, rotten stinkin' union."
Eight years pass. Now it is 2002. I have segued from almost being one of those agents, babysitting baseball players, to being an author who writes about them. My new book, "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" hits the shelves. It makes some Best Seller lists. It does not make me a millionaire, but it sells out its printing in a few short months. Naturally, it is time for my publisher to go into another printing. This is the key, the difference between a successful book and a really successful one.

"We're waiting to see if the players go on strike before we order another printing," my publisher tells me.

This was at mid-season. My man Bonds has homered in the All-Star Game, and he leads the league in batting average. His team is in contention. He is the favorite to win his fifth Most Valuable Player award.

"Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" is selling out of bookstores from Bangor, Maine to San Diego, California, but we are not re-stocking because the players might go on strike. Valuable days and dollars are just passing by like water running down the sinkhole.

I am galled beyond belief that this book, which I have put my heart and soul into - not just writing it, but promoting it, and willing it to be a success - may fall short of what it should be because a bunch of malcontent, greedy men-children may decide to strike. I am just one person affected by the possible strike. How many newspapers can keep beat writers who have no beat to cover? What about stadium workers, broadcasters, restaurant owners, sports memorabilia sellers?

All because these players do not realize that they do not own baseball. Instead of leaving the game better than they found it, they were ready to ruin it for everybody. Especially those of us who have a big financial stake in the game.

I know this. If I had made it to the Major Leagues, I would have been ostracized. I would have announced early on and told anybody who asked that I am not a "union guy" by nature, would never strike, and if the players struck, they could not count on my support.

I no longer think they are "lousy, rotten stinkin' millionaire baseball players," but I am none too happy that because of them, my book was not being printed in time to capitalize on the Summer. Better late than never, though. It will be re-printed in time for the stretch run and post-season. As Mick Jagger once said, "You don't always get what you want… but sometimes, you get what you need."

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

NOVEL BY STEVEN TRAVERS
"Angry White Male" follows the life of Stan Taylor, the white scion of a prominent California family, and his baseball rival since childhood, the African-American superstar Billy Boswell. This is a book that is drenched with pornographic sex, racial tensions, obsession, jealousy, and bitter business dealings rife with surprising twists of fate. Disparate elements of lust and modern worldly wants constantly interject with Stan's self-taught religious values and the need to live a life of moderation while making moral choices. In other words, all the things that makes life worth living!

Stan struggles to live up to the standards of success set by the Taylor's who preceded him since the Revolutionary War and the Gold Rush. In particular, he must deal with being an only child in an affluent, dysfunctional family, and growing up amongst rich white kids with questionable racial attitudes in Palos Verdes Estates. His alcoholic, attorney father, tormented by his own failure to succeed as a professional athlete or attain his ambitions in Republican politics, bitterly finds blame in all but himself: Minorities, liberals and a host of "others" who are obstacles to his vision of success. As Stan grows up and shows great promise in baseball, his father lives vicariously through his son, leaving little breathing room for Stan to be his own man. Stan's mother, dominated by her heavy-drinking husband, loses focus of her own self and becomes an unwitting accomplice over years of verbal abuse that becomes so common place that Stan's parents are unable to see their own faults.

Beginning in little league, Stan excels at every level of baseball, but Boswell, the son of a Major League star, frustratingly overshadows him at each turn. Boswell also has a white friend named Matt Hobli. Matt becomes his best lifelong pal; his sycophant, assistant, caddy, chauffeur, "beard" when he needs to hide women, in all ways Boswell's sidekick and shadow. Matt cannot stand Stan. Stan's father coaches his son's teams, but alienates the community with his loud, overbearing ways. The result is that Stan, naive, socially awkward, and sexually repressed anyway, becomes the object of adolescent derision that makes his youth years barely tolerable. Baseball and his own search for meaning, which results in Stan grasping for a beach head of Christianity, keeps sanity and hope alive. Not having grown up in a religious atmosphere, Stan's search for spirituality is one he takes on by himself. Stan and Boswell star for rival high schools, and for three more years when Boswell leads UCLA, while Stan pitches for USC. No matter how good Stan is, Boswell is always better, leading Stan to become obsessed with the arrogant Boswell, who seemingly glides through life, enjoying spectacular success in sports and with women.

During his college years, the blonde-haired, blue-eyed, handsome Stan, who has never had a girlfriend or experienced carnal knowledge, befriends wild party animals on the fringes of the early 1980s L.A. bar scene. He sows his wild oats in a series of outrageous sexual hi-jinks that takes him to the edge. He meets Rebecca, a promiscuous Linda Carter look-alike who fulfills his lustful needs. Stan sees in her a vulnerable potential that he is
determined to help bring out. She mysteriously moves in and out of his life. Stan's friend Brad, returned from Europe and suddenly worldly, well-read and political, impresses Stan's father, who embarrasses Stan in front of Brad by calling his son a "stupid kid who doesn't know anything about the world." Determined to show his father, Stan embarks on a quest for knowledge, applying himself for the first time in college, and reading everything he can get his hands on - newspapers, magazines, books, classics, poetry, plays. In school, Stan meets Karen, a USC cheerleader who is practical and seemingly a good match for him. Karen becomes pregnant. Stan by this time has begun to formulate cogent conservative political and religious views. Convinced that he is mature enough to have a family, he talks Karen out of an abortion and they get married, despite her warnings that she "is a bitch whose made the lives of everybody involved with me miserable."

Stan, now 6'-6", 235 pounds, embarks on a promising professional baseball career, but like his father before him, bad breaks beyond his control shatter his dreams of big league success. Stan's father seems to take his premature "retirement" harder than Stan does. A daughter, Kaitlyn, is born. Karen fails to take care of herself, becoming overweight, sickly and moody. Stan, who has never cared for children, and has always been selfish, changes dramatically after the birth of Kaitlyn. He becomes more aware of his Christianity, develops a social conscience, and for the first time feels pure, unconditional, over-the-top love for this beautiful child. Stan also begins to come to grips with his feelings about his parents, and no longer blames himself for the way they have acted towards him all his life. As he matures, he is able to exceed his father intellectually. This causes some frustration for his father, no longer able to dominate his son. It gives Stan some piece of mind and the ability to understand their relationship better.

Stan, who has graduated from USC, enters law school as a Marine Corps officer, but his wife hates military life and leaves him. Stan gives up a promising career as a Marine JAG attorney to save the marriage, but to no avail. He drifts through coaching stints at SC and in Europe, and the inevitable divorce. He takes a job as a paralegal with his father's law firm in Los Angeles, where a politically connected attorney who has big plans for him in the Republican Party mentors him. But to the embarrassment of Stan and the lawyer, Stan discovers the lawyer's secret bi-sexuality, and the lawyer no longer mentors him.

Stan's soul is tortured by the fact that his beloved Kaitlyn has been "taken" from him when his ex-wife moves to another city, and he prowls lonely places of the heart, crying out to God, who he is convinced is the only one who can understand the pain he feels. He struggles with himself, his mind expanded by an unquenchable desire to read books and attain intellectual credibility, but he is unable to make good money and achieve professional success. He re-enforces his Christian faith, but finds himself constantly battling the demons of sexual desire and alcoholic consumption.

Stan becomes a denizen of strip clubs. Using his intelligence and a learned sense of timing, Stan observes the girls of the sex industry. He learns their tricks, their habits, and their vulnerabilities. He comes to the conclusion that the most attractive girls are the ones
who can be picked up most easily, which goes against the common thinking of most men. Stan is able to tell, by observing habits, eye contact, and telltale signs, which girls are promiscuous, and which girls are in it just for money. He slyly moves from strip club to strip club, seeing which girls leave by themselves, which ones have boyfriends, and which ones swing by bars near the clubs. Slyly, he is able to talk his way into having sex with a variety of strippers and porn stars. These adventures lead him into some dangerous liaisons, which he manages to scrape out of; sometimes cleanly, sometimes with a cost. One porn star invites him to the Adult Film Convention in Las Vegas, where Stan finds himself engaged in wild swing parties with numerous beautiful women. For the young man who could not get a date in high school, he has come full circle, but Stan realizes that his view of women has been stilted. Perhaps because they seemed unattainable to him when he was younger, he has now reached out for a certain kind of fantasy girl, not a real person, but rather an object for his gratification. The conflict between good and evil rages in his mind. Stan, the thinking man, rationalizes, blames and asks questions about why he is the way he is.

Rebecca re-appears, but her life has taken a downturn in a sea of drugs and promiscuity that leaves her on the fringes. Stan re-doubles his efforts to "save" her, but must question his own motives. Is he trying to help another person in a Christian manner, or is he motivated mainly by the fact that she has Vogue cover model looks and fulfills his most lustful sexual needs?

Things look to be on the upswing for Stan when he and a childhood friend form a company representing professional baseball players in New York. His partner steals money from the company, though, creating chaos, and there one promising client leaves. It is "Jerry Maguire" without the happy ending. However, a fringe client, an ex-baseball player who has led a colorful life, tells Stan that Hollywood wants to make a movie of his life. Stan, who studied film at USC but never pursued those dreams because baseball, marriage and practical necessities stood in the way, now writes the screenplay. It wins an award and gathers interest in Hollywood. Stan moves back to Los Angeles and writes plays and movie scripts with little success, but learns valuable lessons about the craft and business of writing. He runs into Rebecca, who has become a full-blown alcoholic and drug addict. She is dying of liver cancer. A few weeks later, he learns of her death, and he asks himself if somehow he is to blame. Could he have "saved" her?

Some years earlier, Stan had watched a porn movie starring a gorgeous, stacked blonde who gets gangbanged by an army of studs. Vaulted into X-rated superstardom, the girl appears as the "headline feature" at a strip club in L.A. Stan goes to see her, but she does not notice him. Stan follows her home and makes his move when she goes into a bar. He finds her to be down to Earth and easy to talk to. She talks about growing up and her great love for her father. She does not tell Stan she is a porn star, and Stan does not reveal that he knows. Many of the pre-conceptions of such a girl are dispelled, though, and Stan opens up to her about his own life, how his wife moved away with Kaitlyn, and how, while he is struggling to succeed as a writer, he has faith that his dreams will be fulfilled. A connection between the two is formed, and they fall in love.
Her real name is Michelle, and she lives in Hermosa Beach, California. Stan moves in with Michelle. She is smart and loving. She is crazy about animals and children. He introduces her to his daughter, and they fall for each other. Stan's parents love her. Stan meets her dad, who thinks his daughter is a swimsuit model (which she has been), and they get along famously. Michelle no longer makes gang bang porn videos, but she works for an exclusive Beverly Hills madam, who arranges for her to have sex with actors, celebrities and high-powered executives for enormous sums of money. The secret is maintained. Michelle does not tell Stan, and Stan does not tell Michelle that he knows what she does. Stan's career becomes the focal point of interest in the household, and Michelle gives him the kind of ego-gratifying support for his work that inspires Stan to strive forward. Kaitlyn moves back with them, and all seems right with the world.

Over all these years, Billy Boswell has become the greatest athlete on the planet. After achieving astounding success with the New York Yankees, Boswell has signed with his hometown team, the Los Angeles Dodgers, and is on a pace to break the all-time career home run record. He is a millionaire many times over, and is considered the most high-profile baseball player the game has seen in years. He has also earned a reputation as a swinger with the women, a pain with the media, and a problem with his teammates. He, like Stan, has developed a taste for a certain kind of woman. Years earlier in New York, he married a porn star of his own, thinking that his greatness and celebrity would outshine the notorious occupation of the girl, but the tabloids trashed him and the marriage. Now divorced with no children, he is the most eligible bachelor in Los Angeles. Stan has tried on occasion to contact his old rival, but phone calls to his agent, the club, the team hotel, and to Boswell's parent's house, have gone unreturned. Stan has placed himself before Boswell next to the dugout at stadiums, even outside the clubhouse after games, but Boswell has never shown the slightest acknowledgement of a guy he grew up with him, and whom he battled against in baseball from the age of eight to 21. Stan has dealt with racial angst and professional jealousy of Boswell all his life, and becomes increasingly obsessed with him.

Stan's screenwriting career, while not a failure, is by no means wildly successful. He gets some TV work, some "script doctor" work, and has projects optioned, but he has not moved forward the way he had hoped. He and Michelle decide they want to get married. Stan begins to look for more regular employment. He covers high school football for the Los Angeles Times, and catches the eye of the editor. Stan's background as a college star and professional pitcher separates him from the average sportswriter, and Stan parlays his way into a column with the Times, which comes with some jealousy on the part of other writers who think he has not paid his dues. In particular, the Times' Dodgers' beat writer, who wanted the column Stan has, feels Stan got something he should have gotten.

Just when things seem to be going his way, Stan runs into trouble. Michelle has numerous friends, many of whom have worked as porn stars, escorts and strippers. Needless to say, they are beautiful. She has brought some of them to the house, and tries to engage Stan in a fantasy menage a trois. Stan turns down the offer because he wants to
maintain the "secret" and the fiction that their relationship is wholesome. However, one of the girls stays at the house while Michelle has to travel. Stan has sex with her. Michelle finds out and leaves. The marriage date is canceled.

On top of that, Stan gets fired by the *L.A. Times* after the jealous beat writer sets him up. He creates a situation where it looks like Stan has falsified an expense report. The beat writer has also fooled Stan into missing a plane that he had to make in order to do a story on deadline, which he fails to do. He has changed the time on a wake-up call, causing Stan to miss another assignment.

Suddenly, things look bleak again for Stan. He moves back into his parent's house, and all the old feelings of resentment, the yelling, the screaming, and the blaming, play themselves out as if in some weird twi-light zone. Stan's father's attitude is still sour. He is filled with resentment of all the usual suspects. Stan is unable to comprehend why his old man is so bitter. The father has had a smooth life, with few bumps in the road. He has had a long marriage, and was able to raise his child with no interruptions, while Stan has experienced professional and personal disappointments, and faced the gut-wrenching tragedy of not being an everyday presence in Kaitlyn's life. Somebody has tipped Stan's ex-wife what Michelle has been doing for a living, and she insists that Kaitlyn move back with her, even though Stan has broken up with Michelle. Stan has thoughts of suicide.

But something else is happening. Billy Boswell is going to break the career home run record this baseball season. A light goes on in Stan's head. He approaches Matt Hobli, Boswell's longtime friend who has always despised Stan since childhood. Stan tells him he wants to help Boswell write his autobiography, and that it should come with a big advance from a publisher. It will be a huge book. Boswell agrees. Weeks pass, and negotiations with publishers ensue, but the elusive contract with Boswell is not yet signed while his lawyers go over details.

Boswell breaks the record. Later, he holds a press conference. At the press conference, Boswell announces that he is writing his autobiography, and that his co-writer is the Dodgers' beat writer, who has stolen the project out from under Stan. In the media hullabaloo surrounding Boswell's breaking of the record and his announcement that he will be writing a "tell all" book, Boswell's ex-porn star wife is contacted, and she begins to reveal things about Boswell. Her comments are nasty and controversial, tremendous tabloid fodder. Stan contacts her about doing a "tell-all" book of her own, to get back at Billy. Then she turns up dead.

At first, much evidence points to Boswell as the killer in an O.J. Simpson-style murder. But as the police look further and further in Boswell's business dealings, they find that the evidence points not to Boswell, but to Stan Taylor. Taylor is arrested. The police paint a picture of an obsessed rival with a hatred of blacks, a failure in his own life who tries to ride Boswell's coat tails via a book deal. They point to articles Stan has written over the years, berating affirmative action and expressing elements of disgust at the failure of some African-Americans to rise above their circumstances and attain the
American Dream. In some of these articles, Stan has demonstrated that outside of sports and entertainment, many blacks have not succeeded. The police say this indicates that he feels Boswell was not deserving of his high ranking in society because if he were not an athlete, he probably would not have been wildly successful. Stan is depicted as an ultra-conservative "Jesus freak" who killed Boswell's white ex-wife because he thought it was "unnatural" for races to mix. When the book deal fell apart, he became enraged, determined to destroy Boswell's life, they say. Rather than kill Boswell, the police say, Stan kills the woman who is trying to make Boswell's life miserable, making it look like Boswell did it to silence her. He wants Boswell to be destroyed and disgraced publicly, rather than made out to be a martyred black sports icon, but has not covered all his tracks. The evidence has come back to Stan. The police, trashing Stan beyond imagination puts out all of this.

Stan is sent to jail pending trial. Finally, the book reveals what the public, the police and Boswell never know. The real killer of Boswell's ex-wife is Matt Hobli. Matt is a closet homosexual who has always been in "love" with the heterosexual Billy. He has hidden his feelings for years, and watched the object of his sexual infatuation ride his way through a mountain of sexy women, driving Matt to distraction. Furthermore, Matt is not only a closet homosexual, but also a closet racist. His loyalty to Boswell has been the veneer hiding his confusing hatred of him all this time. He could not have Billy sexually. He had been no athlete while Billy was a star. He was himself obsessed with his own inadequacies while Boswell shone. He hated the fact that a black man could be catered to, seemingly given a pass through life. He has thought and planned often of killing Boswell, but never could pull it off. Matt, not Stan, is the Angry White Male! Finally, he has decided not to kill Boswell, but his ex-wife, so as to frame Boswell. Only he has not counted on Stan, who had plans of his own. After the autobiography deal fell through, Stan contact Boswell's ex-wife himself, to see if she would write a tell-all of her own to embarrass Boswell, who Stan now felt had double-crossed him (along with the beat writer). Stan, with his natural affinity for "fallen women," bonds with Boswell's ex, and they begin an affair of their own. When she turns up dead, he is the natural suspect.

In jail, violent black criminals who have heard that he hated Boswell because he is black confront Stan. Stan is killed. Matt gets away with it. Boswell is able to go on with his life, making millions and being a baseball idol. His book becomes a best seller, and the beat writer makes millions. He signs a deal to write the screenplay, worth more millions.

At Stan's funeral, sweet Kaitlyn cries in the arms of Stan's grieving, confused mother and father.

"I love you, Daddy," she says to Stan's casket.

From Heaven, Stan says, "I love you, too, baby. I love all of you."

EXCERPT FROM "ANGRY WHITE MALE"
CHAPTER: "SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA GO AGAINST THE GRAIN"

So he could not sleep his way to the top. Not like Michelle. Rebecca could have done it if she had had ambition. No, the world had changed, and Stan Taylor had to fight, and scratch, and claw his way up the ladder. In Hollywood, he was just another white guy, and not all that young any more. Everybody seemed to want something he was not. Women. Young women. Gen Xers. Hispanics, Orientals, people of color. Ethnic sensibilities. The old White Anglo Saxon Protestant world that his grandfather and his uncle had dominated was not the one he was living in. The invitation into its privileged clubs had somehow never been sent to Stan. He had missed the boat. He was the guy on the outside looking in. Michelle thought she had the answers. She thought if he offered to press Steven Spielberg’s suits, Spielberg would option one of his screenplays.

With reality staring him in the face, Stan took what he could get. He tried for the big jobs at first. He had written some good freelance articles, some for national magazines. But getting hired as a full-time staffer was another story. He had sent his resume and writing samples to Esquire, the New Yorker, and the Saturday Evening Post. He had tried with the L.A. Times, the New York Times, and the Washington Post. He accumulated a large drawer full of rejection letters.

Finally, he started stringing high school sports for the Los Angeles Times. The pay was low, but he hoped the right people would notice. He sat in the press box with the other aspiring writers, mostly 20-something freelancers for various papers, thinking to himself, Little do these guys know that when I go home at night, the world’s sluttiest porn star waits for me in nasty lingerie. It was a thought that helped sustain him through more than a few boring prep football match-ups. He developed great respect for high school football writers, though. The games were not interrupted by television time-outs. There were no media relations specialists handing out stat sheets every quarter. Half the time, the public address announcer spotted the wrong player making a tackle or a catch. There was usually no phone line for Internet access. After the game, he had to get some quotes from the star and the coach and write his story before the janitor turned out the lights. Sometimes he was the last one to leave and had to hop the fence because the field was locked up. Some of the neighborhoods were not so safe, either. He called his stories in, word for word. He was good at it, and the people at the Times did notice.

Stan was a resourceful fellow. He had writing talent. He had accumulated a tremendous knowledge base, the result of his insatiable desire to read and learn, but also because he had traveled, lived in different places, and had a wide variety of exotic experiences. He also began to send out articles on the Internet to members of the media, calling it Stanley Taylor’s Journal. Stan calculated the cost-benefit of doing this. The “cost” was that some people thought he was “a yahoo and a self-promoter.”

“Hey,” Stan emailed back, “I resemble that remark.”

The benefit was that it made his name and his work known to influential people. It quickly became apparent that a few complaints about unsolicited emails were no comparison to the contacts he made with columnists and editors who liked his work. His email journal would prove to be of great value to his career.
His favorite writer was Jim Murray of the Times, and Stan developed a similar style.

“You’re a good writer,” the Times’ prep editor told him, “but high school sports is not the place to talk about ‘Thundering Herds’ and ‘Galloping Ghosts.’”

“You mean if I see ‘Four Horsemen,’” laughed Stan, “I can’t report it?”

“I’m afraid not,” the prep editor replied. “You ought a be a columnist.”

“Now that’s the best ideas I’ve heard yet,” replied Stan. “Can you put a good word in for me?”

“I can,” he said, “but with your background, you’ve got very little shot at getting that with this paper.”

The prep man did mention Stan to the paper’s sports editor, Bill Dwyre. Dwyre was a gruff Notre Dame man who loved tennis more than any other sport. He had come to Los Angeles after years covering Lew Alcindor, later named Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, for the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. Then Stan started to contact him on his own. Finally, Dwyre got back to him.

“I know you’re doing a good job with the preps,” the sports editor told him, “but do you really expect me to give you a column?”

“To quote from one of my favorite films, ‘The Player’, ‘no stars, just talent,’” said Stan. “I’ve got what it takes. I have a similar background to Jim Murray, who wrote about Hollywood, and carried that flair for entertainment and social pathos when he became a sports columnist. I love what he wrote in 1970, after Sam ‘Bam’ Cunningham led USC to a trouncing over Bear Bryant’s last all-white Alabama team. ‘We welcomed Alabama back in to the Union yesterday…The Constitution was ratified in Birmingham, courtesy of a black sophomore running back from Santa Barbara, California named Sam ‘Bam’ Cunningham.’ Or he’d write ‘USC wasn’t a football team. They were the Wehrrmacht during the blitzkrieg…’ ‘Woody Hayes in the press box must’ve felt like a Prussian military commander with a birds-eye view of Napoleon’s Italian Campaign.’”

“Young man,” said Dwyre, “I loved Jim Murray, but quoting a veritable ‘Great Moments in USC Football’ is not the best way to get these Irish eyes smiling. Besides, there aren’t many writers who can pull off that kind of writing.”

“I understand that,” said Stan, “but I’m one of ‘em.”

“Stan,” said Dwyre, who had read Stanley Taylor’s Journal regularly and, because of it, recognized Stan’s talent. “I appreciate you’re enthusiasm. I see something in you. You have no idea how rare it is that I would even call somebody back, but I see something in you. Still, the Times only hires from within, or from other major metropolitan dailies. Writing preps is a start, but frankly I have too many other writers ahead of you, and that’s just talking about staff positions. You’re shooting for the moon if you want to get a column.”

“Okay,” said Stan. “I can appreciate that. Let me propose this. At the end of this year, you’re gonna have all the Millennium stories. I have one I want to contribute. The all-time high school all-star teams in baseball, basketball, football and track from Southern California. Going back to Walter Johnson at Fullerton High School in 1905. Jackie Robinson from Muir. Bill Walton from Helix. Pat Haden of Bishop Amat. It’ll be a big spread. If I pull this off - all the research, everything - will you consider me?”
“I’m intrigued,” said the editor. “I’ll give you the assignment, and see where we go from there. But I can’t promise you anything, you understand that? Frankly, if you’d come to me 10 years ago it’d be different, but you seemed to have done everything ass-backwards, at least as far as newspaper work is concerned.”

“Bill,” said Stan, “sometimes you gotta go against the grain.”

“You’re not average, are you?” asked Dwyre.

That was all Stan Taylor needed to hear. *You’re not average, are you?* He went on a major research binge. He discovered the Amateur Athletic Foundation library on West Adams, which had been opened with money from the 1984 Olympic Games. It was a sports fans’ paradise. Stan set up base camp there, coming up with all the great names from Southern California’s glorious prep sports history. No other area in the world approaches Los Angeles and the surrounding counties when it comes to producing sports heroes. Stan put it all together. He also included a special section on famous people who had played sports in Southern California high schools. This included former President Richard Nixon, who had played football at Whittier High, and actors like Robert Redford, who had been a teammate of Don Drysdale at Van Nuys High (where they were both classmates of an actress named Natalie Wood).

The piece ran during the 1999 Christmas season and drew a tremendous public response. Fans wrote in that they remembered Ralph Kiner of Alhambra, Greg Goorjian of La Crescenta, and the many other great stars - some world famous, some obscure, all of them great heroes of the Southland at one time. The ambitious article brought Stan to the forefront of the editor’s attention.

He gave him a few more special assignments. Stan responded beautifully. He wrote a long feature called “The Poet of Venice”, which was about a football player from the 1950s named Ronnie Knox. Knox starred at four high schools in four years, including Santa Monica and Beverly Hills. His rich stepfather had moved him each year because he had disagreed with the offense the coaches ran for his triple-threat quarterback/running back stepson. Then Ronnie had gone to Cal, but the old man pissed off legendary Golden Bears coach Pappy Waldorf, so the kid transferred to UCLA. Knox helped the Bruins into the Rose Bowl under coach Red Sanders, but his father had managed to get under Sanders’ skin, too. Ronnie quit college football, and had a shot in Canada, in the NFL, the AFL, and tried out as a contract actor with MGM, all without lasting success. Eventually, he just became a drifter in Venice, where he wrote poetry that never sold.

Stan then wrote a long story called “A Tale of Two Pitchers”. This featured two left-handed hurlers from Southern Cal. The first was Bruce Gardner, a prep star from Fairfax High who had turned down a large pro offer to attend USC because his Jewish mother wanted her son to be a college man. At SC, Gardner had made All-American, but he sustained nagging injuries that reduced his status with the scouts. He played a few years in the minors, but more injuries ended his career without fanfare. Gardner drifted through life, wondering what might have been had he signed out of high school instead of fulfilling his mother’s wishes. In 1974, he had committed suicide on the mound at Dedeaux Field, leaving a note to Coach Rod Dedeaux and his mother saying, “This is what I think of your college education.” Stan knew from his own experience at SC that it was *verboten* to mention Gardner within earshot of Rod.
The second pitcher was Bill Bordley, a prize hurler out of Bishop Montgomery High School in Torrance, who had led USC to the 1978 National Championship. Bordley’s big league career was cut short by the same arm injury that ended Stan’s pro aspirations, the torn rotator cuff. Instead of despairing as Gardner had, Bordley had taken his life in a new direction. He became a Secret Service agent, eventually assigned to the Chelsea Clinton detail at Stanford.

Stan saw parallels between their situations and his, and brought the special perspective of an ex-athlete to his writing. He found in his experience reservoirs of insight that other sportswriters sadly lacked. The beat writers loved to talk about “access,” just because they were in close physical proximity to the players on a regular basis. Stan went way beyond that. He wrote from experience. He had his readers believing they were there with him. A few, rare books had done that. “Ball Four” by Jim Bouton, “North Dallas Forty” by Peter Gent, and “The Suitors of Spring” by Pat Jordan had tread in this territory. Stan also wrote to entertain. He was breezy, funny and sexy. He loved the writing of Dan Jenkins, the author of “Semi-Tough”, and he borrowed from his mentor, Maury Allen. Stan had been a good screenwriter. He was a great sportswriter.

His editor was astounded, and in 2000 Stan found himself on the staff of the Los Angeles Times. Stan was in the office in March when the story came in off the wire service about the arrest of Elrod Miller, his old client, for bigamy and assault. Stan wrote a long story about Miller, admitting his own shame at helping the man cheat on his wife back when he was with New York Sports Management, Inc. He detailed the calling card, the handling of Miller’s mistresses’ itinerary, and the Pirates’ wives suspicions, resulting in requests for phone bills for “tax purposes.”

The article was another big hit, and again Stan’s personal, up-close experience shone through. It was obvious he was a special talent who could draw on areas of knowledge and insight that other scribes could only dream of. The writer who covered the Dodgers was a black fellow named Larry Wishborn. Wishborn was the local chapter president of the Baseball Writers Association of America. He was a decent enough writer, but like so many “beat” writers, he coveted his little fiefdom. He welcomed newcomers like Stan in a manner similar to the way Northern Yankee veterans of the Detroit Tigers had welcomed the Confederate Ty Cobb when he came to the Majors in 1906.

Wishborn had formed a loose cabal of “insiders” within the sports department’s editorial staff. Stan realized right off the bat that he was an outsider. He had not “paid his dues.” Most writers had started with preps, which Stan had done, but then they had toiled for papers like the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, the Pasadena Star-Tribune and the Daily Breeze. They saw Stan as a guy who had seemingly come “off the street.” All he had done was write a few high school football stories. He had never been a beat writer. He had written some half-ass screenplays. He had written a couple of features and wowed the aging sports editor into elevating him over a pile of resumes to a job almost equal to the one Wishborn had after 15 years. That galled Wishborn. The fact that the former Trojan jock Stan looked like a 6-6 Viking with his blonde hair and beach boy tan rubbed Wishborn the wrong way. Wishborn was five feet, six inches tall and pudgy. He had never been a good athlete. He was sensitive to the stereotype that all blacks are supposed to be good athletes. In his heart he knew he could not hold Stan’s dirty jockstrap as a
writer. Then Wishborn caught a good look at Michelle, who accompanied Stan to the office one day. That was the final kicker. He disliked Stan anyway, but the fact that the guy had this awesome-looking girlfriend really made him hate the guy. Stan knew what was going on. He looked at Wishborn and saw shades of Frankie Yagman.

Stan approached Wishborn about membership in the BBWAA. If the look on Wishborn’s face could have killed Stan, he would have been dead on the spot. Stan just smiled and complimented Wishborn. One of the copy editors was a white fellow named Jim Painter. Painter was one of Wishborn’s pals, having worked with him at the Riverside Press-Enterprise. Painter, like a lot of copy editors, was one of those guys who felt the need to protect his position. In his view, there was a chain of command. He and Wishborn thought Taylor had by-passed that right from the start, going to the sports editor and doing a big end-run past all the other writers and editors at the Times.

When he went into the office, Painter called Stan aside.

“I hear you got an attitude,” he told Stan.

“I have an attitude?” asked Stan.

“That’s what I hear,” said the assistant. Stan knew he and Wishborn were pals.

“I apologize,” Stan said. He knew there were forces working against him. He simply accepted it. Stan also noticed that Wishborn seemed to have a special “in” with black athletes, and he tended to hang out with other black writers. None of this made any difference to Stan, who could care less if Wishborn had an attitude. He was just happy to be there. Stan filled in when Wishborn had days off, and did the same when the Times’ Anaheim Angels beat writer was off, as well. He did not travel with either team.

Painter and Wishborn stabbed people in the back differently. Wishborn made it clear he did not like Stan. Painter, on the other hand, would give Stan the Pepsodent beach boy smile, and offer his help. Stan knew one of his upcoming assignments would be to write about the NBA draft. He was a basketball fan with decent knowledge, but he lacked the kind of expert perspective that he brought to baseball.

“I know a lot about the NBA draft,” Painter told Stan. “Feel free to let me help you when have to write that article.”

“Gee, thanks, Jim,” Stan said. “I really appreciate the teamwork.” He did. Stan had been an athlete and a member of teams all his life. He truly did appreciate the value of cooperation.

When Stan got his assignment to write the story, he went to Painter, who had accumulated a great deal of good research on the various college players in that year’s draft. He knew what the particular needs and tendencies of each team’s general manager and scouting staffs were. Stan was able to write a good story, and gave Painter many thanks for his help. What he did not know was what Painter said to the sports editor.

“He’s a tragedy, chief,” Painter said. “He took up half a day of my time when I was busy, helping him. He didn’t know shit. I had to carry him on my back.”

“Maybe,” said the sports editor, “but he can write like a son of a bitch.”

Stan went to Wishborn, again requesting membership in the BBWAA. Wishborn barely spoke to him, and made no effort on Stan’s behalf. Stan just laughed. He had the goods and the talent. Such qualities had an inexorable, unstoppable way of rising above such petty, little people.
The first time Stan went to Dodger Stadium as a credentialed member of the media, he entered the clubhouse and approached Billy Boswell. Boswell occupied two lockers. He had a personal leather lounge chair and a big screen TV above his stall. He was situated in a corner, separated not just from the media, but teammates.

Over the years, Stan efforts at getting a hold of Billy - through his parents, writing letters care of the club or through his agent, emails to his fan club - had met with no success. He had tried to get his attention near the dugout when he was at games, and Billy was finished with batting practice. He had not had one iota of communication with the guy since he had given up a line drive double to him in the last game they played against each other, USC vs. UCLA at Jackie Robinson Stadium, in 1985.

Stan never saw him around Palos Verdes. He never saw him at UCLA games, or Palos Verdes games, or in bars in the South Bay - all places that might have been familiar haunts. Now, Boswell lived in a mansion in Beverly Hills, overlooking the city.

Since signing with the Dodgers, Boswell had put together numbers and achievements that rated him as the best athlete on the planet, and very possibly the greatest baseball player in history. He had elevated the Dodgers to the Promised Land of World Series victory several times, and there was no record, no award, no accolade that had escaped his attainment. Entering the 2000 season, Boswell had won five Most Valuable Player awards and been named The Sporting News Player of the Decade for the 1990s, and to Major League Baseball’s All-Century Team. Averaging 46 homers a year, he was closing in on Hank Aaron’s all-time career home run record of 755, 3,000 career hits and exclusive membership in the 500 homer/500 stolen base club. He had won a triple crown, three batting championships, and three times gotten 200 hits in a season. He was the first big leaguer since Ted Williams to hit .400 and carried a lifetime .355 average. He had led the league in hits five times, stolen bases three times, and been the league champion in home runs and RBIs numerous times. He had joined the 30 homer/30 stolen base club, and the 40/40 club, too. He was on pace to become the all-time RBI and walks leader. He had slugged over .800 twice. Only Babe Ruth had ever slugged .800.

Bos had twice finished seasons with a .500 on-base percentage and once with a .600 on-base percentage, the greatest in history. He had the greatest single season and career on-base/slugging percentage totals ever. He consistently struck out less than he homered, and had more homers in his career than strikeouts. Boswell had been voted as the starting center fielder in the All-Star Game every year of his career. He had won the Gold Glove every season, too. He was the highest paid athlete in history. In every way that athletes measure success, Boswell was the very best. He dominated baseball the way nobody, except maybe Babe Ruth, had done. He had revolutionized the game, and elevated the way fans view athletes. He was a god, a legend who eclipsed all others before him, and according to most, all who would follow. The fans did not like his arrogant, unsmiling demeanor. His marriage had been trashed, and the press felt he had thumbed his nose at them for marrying a porno queen. It was as if he was publicly saying, “I’m better than you, I’m above you, and I can do anything I damn well please.”

Billy did not care, and the fans still came around. Billy never signed autographs, posed for pictures and rarely did interviews. He gave a lot of money to charity, making no effort to publicize it, but his foundations were major tax breaks. The only people who knew him were his immediate family and his sidekick, Matt Hobli. It no longer mattered.
His total greatness and on-field performance lifted him to iconic status above and beyond all others. He was not loved so much as he awed people, leaving them in gaping, open-mouthed wonder. The fans did not cheer him, they revered him. His standing ovations took on the form of Roman tributes to Caesar.

Bos had done what seemed impossible. He had literally willed New York into idolizing him, even after leaving the Big Apple. As a Yankee, Boswell had owned the city, wowing capacity crowds at Yankee Stadium who oohed and aahed over him in a way not seen since Mantle and DiMaggio. But he had left New York for his hometown of Los Angeles. Nobody leaves New York. They come there as a reward for achieving superstardom. Steinbrenner’s money and the halo of fame were granted by New York, endowing one with the imprimatur of true greatness.

When Boswell left for the West Coast, the New York newspapers and electronic media went after him with a vengeance. How dare he desert the City That Never Sleeps? On top of that, it was the middle of his divorce from his porn star wife. The press destroyed Boswell. Every male New Yorker joked about getting blowjobs from Desiree. He was caricatured, cartooned and lampooned.

When he returned, to Shea Stadium as a member of the Dodgers to play the Mets, the boos were above and beyond scornful. Bos responded with booming home runs, daring stolen bases, stretching singles into doubles and making center field the place where triples went to die. Cheers interrupted the thunderous booing. That was nothing compared to the World Series between the Dodgers and the Yankees.

The Yankees had to hire extra security. Fans were searched, and thousands of graphic photos of Desiree in full sex mode were confiscated from “fans” who had planned to litter the field with the images. The Commissioner’s office was apoplectic, fearing that the wholesome game of baseball, a game for kids and families, was now being usurped by smut and an arrogant player who was too indifferent to people’s opinion to care about it. The booing came down as hard as ever when the game started, but Bos was on a different planet. He batted .600, stealing two bases and picking off a homer at the top of the fence, scooping a would-be triple at the foot of the Yankee monuments, and hitting six homers in five games. He hit three in the fifth and final game at Yankee Stadium, the final one a grand slam in the ninth that capped an improbable Dodger rally from 8-0 down to a 9-8 win, clinching the World Championship.

A pleading, throbbing, sobbing New York crowd, desperately trying to will the Bronx Bombers to the title, sat back, the air taken from them in one last, impossible gasp. Boswell rounded the bases to the sound of his teammates’ cheers and the shouts of the Dodger fans now brave enough to open their mouths in the House That Ruth Built. Then it started. A few hometown claps.

“Way to go, Boswell.”

“He’s the greatest player ever.”

“I don’t believe that guy.”

One by one, the Yankee faithful clapped, then shouted, and then came to their feet. A standing ovation. An unbelievable moment. A never-seen-before moment. The adulation of 56,000 haters turned around and made to appreciate the sheer greatness of Billy Boswell. The loudest ovation anybody had ever heard. Louder than the one Reggie Jackson received in 1977. Five minutes straight.
The headlines in the *New York Times* the next day said it all: “Ruth’s stadium now the House of Bos.”

Billy had taken the two biggest media markets in the world by storm. He was as big in New York as he was in L.A. He was still single. He had finally shaken Desiree’s shadow. He had no children, at least none he acknowledged, and he was still a legend with the ladies. Desiree had made so much money out of her scandalous association with Boswell that she had “retired.” She had homes in New York, L.A. and Hawaii. She had never re-married, and subsequent pregnancies were terminated by abortion.

Stan entered the clubhouse, credential hanging around his neck. He located where Boswell’s locker was, and saw Matt Hobli sitting on a stool in front of Boswell’s stall. He was talking to Boswell.

Stan approached.

“Matt,” he announced.

Matt looked up at him as if he was a bug.

“Stan Taylor,” offered Stan, extending a handshake.

“Who?” asked Matt, not taking the shake.

“C’mon,” said Stan. “Don’t tell me you don’t remember me.”

“I never seen you before in my life,” Matt said.

“Ah, horseshit,” said Stan. He then addressed Boswell, who had not acted as if Stan even existed. “I know you gotta remember me, big guy. You gotta admit we had some battles, but I gave as well I got.”

Boswell did not look at Stan. It was as if Stan simply was not an extant being.

“Stan Taylor,” Stan continued. “USC. All-Pac-10. Struck your ass out with guys all over the sacks. Palos Verdes Little League. Rolling Hills High School. Shit, all that dough rob you of your memory banks?”

Boswell stared at Taylor. Then he grinned.

“Stan Taylor,” he said. “Shit, bro, I’m sorry. I gotta a lotta shit goin’ on. Sorry, dude, what the hell are you doin’ here?”

Boswell stared at Taylor. Then he grinned.

“Stan Taylor,” he said. “Shit, bro, I’m sorry. I gotta a lotta shit goin’ on. Sorry, dude, what the hell are you doin’ here?”

“I’m with the *L.A. Times* now,” said Stan, indicating his credential.

“The *L.A. Times*?” said Matt. He said “*L.A Times*” the way one might have said the National Man/Boy Love Association. “Fuck those guys.”

“And a very nice day to you, too, Matt,” said Stan. “Now that you’re guy acknowledges me, do you remember who I am?”

“Yeah, sorry, dude,” said Matt. “Sure, you were a hell of a pitcher.”

Matt had graduated from Palos Verdes High in 1982, gone to El Camino for two years, then attended Cal State, Long Beach without attaining a degree. After working odd jobs for six years, he had taken a paid job, as Boswell’s assistant when Billy signed with the Dodgers prior to the 1993 season. He was still single. The media called him The Gatekeeper, because he was always standing in front of Bill’s locker stall, keeping the press or any other prying eyes away from The Man.

Neither Boswell nor Matt asked a single question about Stan; not about his dad, what he had done after getting out of USC, or whether he had seen any of their many mutual acquaintances. Still, he spent a good 10 minutes chewing the fat with them, and an interesting thing happened. A small group of writers began to assemble not far from
Boswell’s stall, observing the exchange. Few of them even knew who Stan was. He was new on the scene, and he was not even the Times’ regular beat guy. He was here on this day because Wishborn, who traveled with the club and had spent Spring Training with the club in Vero Beach, Florida, was taking the day off.

“Who is that guy?” writers were asking each other. “Shit, does he know Boswell?”

The media in Los Angeles still treated Boswell as the Wizard of Boz. Reporters from small radio stations who did not regularly cover the team would be sent to Dodger Stadium to “get a Billy Boswell sound bite.” That was about as intimidating as Dorothy’s instructions to get the broomstick from the Wicked Witch of the East. They would get the aforementioned “Patrick Swayze effect.” Nothing had changed.

Now, here was this new guy talking it up with Boswell like they were old pals. Well, maybe they were not old pals, but they went back a long way with each other. It did not sit well with the veteran writers.

The next day, when Wishborn was back at the stadium, the other wordsmiths immediately reported word of Stan’s cheery conversation with Boswell to him. It did not go over well with Wishborn, who had been covering the Dodgers for Boswell’s entire career in Los Angeles. He had a barely tolerable relationship with Billy, which consisted of Wishborn saying, “Hey, Bos” while Billy strolled to the batting cage, and Billy uttering a barely audible “Whas’ sup?” or “Dude” or, most likely, nothing. The fact that Wishborn was black and still did not get the favorable treatment from the superstar burned his ass.

Who is this guy? Wishborn asked himself, of Stan. Stan just seemed to appear out of nowhere; this big, blonde guy who had talked his way into a job with one of the most prestigious newspapers in the world. Now Stan was firmly on his turf. What Wishborn could not get through his thick head was that Stan was comfortable on a baseball field. Wishborn, like most writers, felt like interlopers in the athlete’s macho world. Stan had heard cheers on this very mound.

Guys came up to Stan when he worked at Dodger Stadium and asked him how he knew Boswell. They told him tall Boswell tales, usually horror stories about Boswell blowing them off, and acting like a jerk. Boswell’s father, the ex-Dodger, was sitting in the dugout talking to a writer once when Billy just walked in and said to the writer, “Get the hell out of here.” One of Boswell’s friends came to the stadium and parked in a space reserved for a member of the media. When Boswell was asked to see to it that the car be moved, he said simply, “Fuck you.”

“How do you get along with him?” asked Doug Krikorian of the Long Beach Press-Telegram.

“I don’t get along with him,” Stan said. “We exchange a little small talk, that’s about it. All you guys think just because he acknowledges me that we’re friends. We were never friends. We were rivals, but never friends. He doesn’t accord me anything special.”

“Well, that’s better than most of us get,” replied Krikorian. “I don’t think you understand what it’s been like for us. He’s the biggest thing that ever hit the pike, but we can’t get him to give us the time of day. I mean, nothin’. Just saying hi to you, that’s huge in comparison.”
I graduated from San Diego High School in February of 1935. I played with Ted Williams in junior baseball. He went to Hoover High. I played for the Ryan Juniors, which was in a youth league in the city. That team was made up of high school kids who were going to the playgrounds. I played on the same fields with him. He pitched and I caught at different times together. My favorite player was Cotton Warburton, and I understood that he was Ted's favorite, too. Cotton had come out of San Diego High before me. He was my inspiration. He was so great, the best day of my life was after watching Cotton play in a high school game, finding out he was coming back for another year of high school football. He was there four years, a little guy but he could sure run and so you were inspired my him. Harold Hobbs Adams was our high school coach. He coached both Warburton and I. Howard Jones hired him as an assistant coach at USC and he brought me with him.

This was a fairly common practice in those days. It was started by Nibs Price, a high school coach from San Diego. College football teams had always consisted of players trying out from amongst the student body, but after World War I the country became more mobile and the concept of recruiting came into being. Suddenly teams did not consist generally of boys from the general region, but rather a young man might be enticed to come to school even if he did not live near the campus.

The University of California at Berkeley had a large number of students come there for military training so they were attuned to this situation, and coach Andy Smith decided to turn his program into a national powerhouse. He hired Price because he had many contacts among the coaching fraternity in Southern California, which was a growing populace that Smith recognized was the place where most of the great athletes were coming from. One of those player was Brick Muller out of San Diego. Smith brought Price to Berkeley because he could bring Muller into school with him, but this practice
was fraught with a new set of problems.

These recruits were prima donnas unlike average students, and Smith was a hard driver who conducted exhausting practice sessions. Muller and the Southern California contingent got fed up and decided to leave school. A meeting was held in the summer half-way in between, in Fresno, between Price and the players from Southern California in which it was agreed that the practice sessions would not be as strenuous. They all came back to school. Muller was the greatest player in the nation and those teams were known as the Wonder Teams, up until then the best dynasty the country had ever seen.

Well, Howard Jones had decided to one-up Andy Smith and Cal. "Gloomy Gus" Henderson had built USC from a regional program to a national power by bringing in high school players from the Seattle area, which had been the best hotbed of prep talent for years. He ushered USC into the Pacific Coast Conference and won our first Rose Bowl over Penn State in 1923. Jones started the rivalry with Notre Dame, which gave us an edge over Cal and Stanford, making us a national power and the top program on the West Coast. Coach Jones also had an advantage in recruiting, which was the movie industry. John "Duke" Wayne had played for him before going into the movies, and Duke arranged for Trojan players to be extras in movies, attend Hollywood parties, and be around all those pretty actresses.

By the time I got to USC this was the standard practice and the program attracted the greatest players in America. I entered USC in February of 1935, right out of high school. It was mid-year, and as I say I went with my high school coach, who got his job as an assistant under Jones. It was never really spelled out for me, but I understand that he got the job by bringing me into school with him.

Cotton Warburton was at USC for three years before me. I attended at night at first. I had been on the track team in high school. A track meet was held at Southern Cal and I participated and visited the campus in a slight drizzle. The Tommy Trojan statue was getting wet a little bit but it was an awesome sight, as the campus was turning from dusk to dark, so I could not have been there at a better time to be impressed. It was kind of plain otherwise, it was not much of a campus at the time. Coach Hobbs had all the connections. I never really claimed Hobbs got the job because of me, but Hobbs had coached Cotton, he had a good track record coaching in baseball, football and track. So Hobbs had gotten to USC and we were all together and were Sigma Alpha Epsilon. It was a great time, a great time in my life. I can't imagine anything being any better.

Even though USC was the school you wanted to play for, the football program had been down just a little bit before I got there. Cal and Stanford had gotten really jealous
and accused us of cheating and academic impropriety, but it was all just a response to our surpassing them as a West Coast football power. We had won three national championships and the 1931-32 teams were probably the best teams ever, the famed Thundering Herd, but those freshmen up at Stanford had promised never to lose to Southern Cal again and they never did, so they became known as the Vow Boys. UCLA was getting better and better every year, so Coach Jones was determined to have his team get back to where they had been.

For me, it was a struggle. There was a lot talent, playing time was always hard to come by, and I broke my foot in a freshman game against Santa Ana High School, so that set me back for a year and a half. All of my freshman year was gone, but it did not affect my varsity eligibility. Freshman could not play varsity ball in those days. I became a starter in my sophomore year and started all the time I was at USC as long as I was healthy, but there was always competition at my position.

I was a tailback in a single wing offense. We lined up out of the huddle in a box formation single wing called the Warner B. It was a designated single wing offense and I always ran out of that formation. My varsity years were 1936, 1937, I laid out in '38, broke an ankle, then in 1939 I played my senior year. All in all, I was at USC for five and a half years including everything.

I played against California in 1937. They were the most powerfully organized team I'd played against and when I played against them they were seniors. Stub Allison was their coach and they had great players, they were great athletes like Vic Bottari and Sam Chapman, who went on to play outfield for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics. Cal and Stanford made comebacks, they were determined to be national powers again, as Southern Cal had become. In 1937 Cal won the national championship, beating Alabama in the Rose Bowl, and in 1940 Stanford won the national title when they beat Nebraska in the Rose Bowl. Those were the last national championships each of those two schools won.

I got hit in the head against Cal. I was fuzzy, I was down and a guy just swung his foot through my helmet and I was goofy after that. We had a fierce competition with Cal and Stanford. Cal and Stanford never played an honest game in their lives, but there were a lot of shenanigans at that time. Cal would arrive in Los Angeles and it would be 90 degrees, it hadn't rained in months, but the field would be a quagmire. The maintenance guy would come out all apologetic, "Oh I must've forgot to turn off the sprinklers," but it would slow down Bottari and Chapman, you see.

It was always like that, rivalries between Northern and Southern California teams.
Later the Candlestick ground's crew did the same thing to slow down Maury Wills of the Dodgers. Gamesmanship, all part of the sport of it, you see. But it was also an evolving time in the relationship between USC, Cal, Stanford, and now UCLA became our biggest rival. They were just a little commuter school, first in downtown then in Westwood, where at first people said nobody would travel that far just to go to school, but they played in our stadium, the Coliseum, and they were integrated and quickly built themselves into a competitive team by doing that.

We had been integrated way ahead of almost everybody, what with Brice Taylor making All-American back in the 1920s, so these games between the integrated Bruins and Trojans in front of huge crowds at the Coliseum were just visual statements that were more powerful than any speeches.

Jackie Robinson and the Bruins tied us, 0-0 in 1939. In 1936 they'd tied us 7-7. These games were just intense struggles with everything on the line. That game started to even things between the two teams, and over the next couple of decades UCLA was at least as strong as USC. Robinson was a great player, and his wife, Rachel Robinson was a student at UCLA then, why she still talks about the rivalry, which she compares to the Dodgers-Giants rivalry. But Jackie met his match in terms of opposing coaches when they went up against Jones. As a matter of fact we were getting ready to play them and Jones was at the blackboard drawing up UCLA's offense and defense. He drew their offense vs. our defense and he shifted where he saw weakness in our defense and we asked, "What about that, coach?" and Jones saw weaknesses but Jones covered up the hole and we outclassed them by overshifting them on our defense to offset their power. Robinson was on that '39 team but when they were driving towards the end for some reason they did not go to him and it cost them a chance at winning the game.

Kenny Washington, who also was a great sprinter in track, played for UCLA. Woody Strode was a big wide receiver and we didn't have anybody who was tall enough to cover him, but they weren't able to get the ball into his hands as much as they'd like. Jones just out-coached 'em, but they put the ball in the air and that scared the livin' daylight out of Jones. Afterward he just hid in his office like he was hiding from their passing.

I had some injuries, I think maybe I'd been hurt in '37 too, but anyway we were the Coliseum "visitors" and I didn't play, and so I was sitting outside with the lockers right behind us at tunnel six. I was on crutches and I decided to walk up the tunnel to avoid both teams from rushing up past me. So I walked across the track and entered the tunnel and started up and then somebody said to stick around, and all hell broke loose. Kenny Washington broke through with the ball twice and scored two touchdowns in 45 seconds.
Oh man!

But we won in the Rose Bowl two years in a row. You know, we beat those Southern teams, we beat Notre Dame, our most difficult competition was in the conference, and so the big argument going on at that time was, where's the best football being played? Before World War II it was determined that the best players were out west and there were all kinds of theories, ranging from the sunshine, the vitamins in our fresh fruit, the gene pool of pioneers, more athletic men and women coming out to Hollywood. The world was taking notice of American football. Adolf Hitler was alarmed that America had the most rugged athletes playing football and that would make us formidable in war, and he sure would've been smart to have played that hunch.

I was hurt in 1938 and when we played Duke in the Rose Bowl we were heavy underdogs. Those guys had not only not lost a game, but nobody had even scored a point on them. They would punt on third down just to pin opponents down, they would get turnovers and score off their defense and just overwhelm you. Nobody really gave us a chance. I didn't play in that game. I'd played two or three games early in the season but I was injured with a broken foot so I just decided to sit out and save my eligibility for 1939.

Well we all know what happened. Duke led 3-0 and we couldn't move the ball against them at all, certainly not on the ground. That was how Howard Jones liked it on offense, he never liked putting the ball in the air. He never felt it was safe, but we went through several quarterbacks and all were ineffective and so Jones was desperate, we had to put the ball in the air if we were going to have a chance.

Quarterback Doyle Nave was fourth string, end "Antelope Al" Kreuger was third string I think. In another offense either guy would have started, they were great athletes, fast, Nave could throw, but neither was entirely compatible with Jones's offense. But Duke was unprepared for Doyle's passing effectiveness, and we drove with a few minutes to go and Doyle hit Al on several clutch passes until we were down near their goal line and then he hit Al for a touchdown to win the game, 7-3.

The place just went bonkers and the press made the biggest possible deal out of it. For years, decades, this was said to be the biggest sports moment of the century, the biggest Rose Bowl game ever, and Doyle Nave was instantaneously elevated to national hero. Women wrote him letters, magazines featured him, and even though Southern Cal was a huge football power before that, it put us on the map. It was on the radio across the country and Norman Topping heard it supposedly on his deathbed and it "miraculously" cured him, so the story goes. Braven Dyer just made his name writing about that game.
Kreuger was a demonstrative character. He and Doyle had great personalities and this helped because they talked to reporters and expounded on what happened, it was all very colorful. They were both fun-loving guys and the girls fell in love with 'em after that and they just had a great time at USC, we all did.

In a video Tom Kelly did some years ago Kreuger made these great descriptions of those catches. Doyle was sitting a little in front of him and he would say, "Oh, every pass was right on the numbers," and in the back Al was gesturing and gesticulating like every catch he had to dive and stretch out, and it was all great fun, typical of their personalities.

But as great as they were, neither really got better. Doyle never got better as a tailback, not in the kind of offense Howard Jones liked to run. Grenny Lansdell and I were ahead of him at tailback. The newspapers said Grenny and I were about equal. Doyle could not make three yards running in the single wing. He could throw and kick, but Jones liked us to run and both Grenny and I were better runners. He would have been excellent in a better system for passing but we were ahead of him.

Doyle as a person was sure of himself, he was athletic, confident in what he could do. Sometimes he felt he could do more than what he really could do. He was not as good a runner as Grenny and me, a good passer but not a field general. Grenny and I were given a better rating.

Kreuger was a happy-go-lucky fellow, a great player but not to the point where we would build an offense around him. He could execute his plays excellently but the coaches did not develop an offensive around him. He could get open against anybody who tried to cover him, though.

In 1939 Jones would not have made Doyle the number one tailback. Grenny and I held up the position. This was the single wing, it was different then, a quarterback was not what he is today. Doyle was more oriented towards what we now think of as a "drop back" quarterback, whereby Grenny and I usually ran out of the formation but could on occasion throw short passes.

In 1939, I recognized that I had a helluva job to play vs. the competition between myself, Grenny and Doyle. Now Doyle was at first one up because of his Rose Bowl performance against Duke. Jones was influenced by the newspapers, because they all backed Doyle. Braven Dyer of the *Los Angeles Times* particularly advocated the "modernization" of football. The ball had been reduced in size, making it easier to throw, and it was not a uniform-size ball, whereas at one time balls might be one size in the West, another size in the South, you know. Sammy Baugh was a throwing sensation, and Don Hutson an end who could catch any thrown ball at Alabama, and we had Doyle
Nave. His performance against Duke had been considered a breakthrough.

It went against Howard Jones's natural instincts to throw the ball, but how could you argue against what Doyle had done? But we tied Oregon in the opening game and boy we all just thought that was the end of world. How to overcome that? I don't recall much about that game. I'd say we were inexperienced, Doyle had hardly played in '38 aside from the last couple minutes of the Rose Bowl, so I was getting up and running and Doyle did not make it. After that I got more playing time, Grenny and I. Doyle certainly played a fair amount, but he did not emerge as the great star his Rose Bowl performance led so many to believe he was destined to become.

Well, we found our rhythm and just went on a streak, and by season's end there was not a better team in America. That was the year we went back to South Bend and walloped Notre Dame. In those days we played the Irish at the end of the year back there as well as at home, and it could get cold and that was an advantage for them, but we beat them 20-12. We'd beat them 13-0 in Los Angeles the previous season and the rivalry was very even, but USC never beat the Irish at Notre Dame again until O.J. Simpson in 1967.

The USC-Notre Dame rivalry is and always was exemplary of what college football is all about. To go back there and play against them, to be a part of that is an honor, it really is. As I say, it was the end of the season, it was colder, and put it this way, I was a disappointment to Jones because I was a senior but I was not playing as much as I thought I should. Doyle got a lot of time on the field and Grenny was an All-American. I probably could have made a big success at any other school but at USC that year there was more competition for playing time than the opposition provided in games. Vs. Notre Dame we won 20-12. I went in, played well and we won. I ran an end run in front of coach Elmer Layden and made about eight yards and decided to run it again and I broke loose 44 yards for a touchdown. The whole weight of the game, I could feel it, I knew it, and nobody was gonna catch me so I thought of thumbing my nose at Layden. Some guy from 'Bama had thumbed his nose on about the 12, so I thought of doing the same thing, then I thought it would be disrespectful so I stuck my tongue out at him and nobody saw it but me. I said to myself, SC doesn't do that.

The West Coast had the best football teams at that time. We barely beat Washington, 9-7, then tied UCLA, 0-0, so when another unbeaten, untied, unscored-on Southern team, this time Tennessee, came out to the Rose Bowl we were not intimidated at all. We did not think of the national title before the game, it was not recognized, no group was authorized to do that. I was not playing to win that, just to win the game. The Associated Press had started up a poll in 1936, and there were a number of systems, the most
recognized and respected being one devised by a Professor Dickinson based on strength of schedule, performance, it took into consideration the bowl games and it was the most legit, but as I say there was not the hype for this then as today so our main concern was to win the game for the prestige of the University, the conference, the Pacific Coast.

Coach Bob Neyland's Tennessee Volunteers were a fine team but frankly we had a superior team, both in terms of our ability and our coaching. I felt I was best quarterback on that team for field generalship so I don't think we would have done as well without me, and I had earned the playing time I got in that game.

I threw a touchdown pass to Kreuger, and as I say in those days passing was not number one in SC's method of advancing the ball, especially when I was in the game, but Doyle was the inspiration for the idea of passing the football. Maybe not so much because of what Braven Dyer wrote, but he liked Doyle. Rather, Jones saw the way the game was changing and started opening things up.

The offense we designed meant that every pass was from the threat of a run, so you faked to run, drop one or two steps, then threw a pass something under 10 yards. I was primarily a runner and only threw about two passes in that game. What I'm trying to say is we depended on running more and had to make it all look like I was running to help the passes.

I remember we had the ball on their two. I went back to the huddle and I said to myself, "Here we are in the Rose Bowl," and I said, "Give 'em somethung to think about," and I faked two or three steps and arched a perfect, beautiful pass, and Al was not looking, and he just turned around and it was there. We only needed two yards and it was perfect.

Jones possessed tremendous ingenuity, but it was his application of the defense that made him great. He understood the game of football and understood defense, and his players were always strong on defense. He recruited good players who were strong on defense.

I felt we were better physically than our opponents. We had a first team and a second team. In the days of both-sides-of-the-ball football, you used to go with two teams, and out second team was as strong as our first. The second team with Joe Shell as our captain, they did most of the scoring and Shell was really proud of that, made a big point of it.

Jones had adjusted to what he had because he had great players on that '39 team and they produced for him and they knew that. He never got beat badly. We never lost 40-0. Heck, that's just SC football over the years. Even in the rare times they're down the Trojans never lose 40-0. They lost like that to Notre Dame one year and it was such a
rarity they talk about to this day like it's a freak thing, which it was.

What does it mean to be a Trojan? I was happy I was able to go to USC and be successful in football. I had been well coached and could do what was required of me and was so happy that other players were equally as well skilled in football, on offense and on defense. I was very fortunate and we could play with anybody. I figured we were as good as anybody we played and we loved competition. We weren't afraid of Notre Dame or any teams.

We skipped over before this question, what USC meant, and behind my mentality on that would be that we were a big university that wanted me to play football, to represent them. We had wonderful scholars there and I had great teammates. We were recognized as a champion and I was thrilled to death to play because of that, it was the best place I could possibly go to further my desire to educated and get great coaching.

There is a sense of tradition there, it was strong then and it's been maintained, and that's a big part of What It Means to Be a Trojan, because a young fella like yourself can come talk to me about it and we have this common understanding of the place, of what it does mean. Historically USC never lost site of fact they are USC, and they represent the great collegiate world of education and football, and are a vital part of the collegiate experience for undergraduates, as it should be. It was a perfect place to do the collegiate education and we had great coaches to help us out.

USC was a place where all kinds of people come together. Patricia Nixon, the First Lady, was at USC when I was there. She was not yet married to Richard Nixon, they both lived in Whittier and Richard Nixon had a car, which was a little unusual in those days, but he had one because his father owned a grocery store and he needed it to drive to the Farmer's Market in L.A. to buy groceries for that store. He would drive Pat Nixon on dates with other guys, like a limo service, and they'd go to the Coliseum to watch football games together.

USC drew good athletes. It was great to be part of that machine. The Olympic team in those days was like our track and swim team wearing red, white and blue instead of cardinal and gold. In our leisure time, if you had money you could do what you liked and really enjoy being a USC person, but it took money to be able to socially enjoy the social scene, to join a frat. It took money to maintain a wardrobe. You had to be a guy people wanted to associate with in order to be invited as a pledge.

But as an athlete we were considered part of that in crowd. John Wayne had played there and even though he didn't come from money he was invited to pledge a fraternity because he had a persona others wanted to have around, but he injured himself body surfing down in Newport Beach and when he fell out of the first string he lost his
scholarship. His fraternity brothers loaned him money but the debts got too big after a while so he left school and went over to Fox Studios and got into the movies, but he always maintained loyalty to USC. That's *What It Means to Be a Trojan*.

**BOOKS BY STEVEN TRAVERS**

"IT'S A GOOD DAY TO BE A TROJAN!"

BY PETE CARROLL
WITH STEVEN TRAVERS

A BOOK PROPOSAL

The hottest football coach in the United States is Pete Carroll, who in 2003 led the University of Southern California Trojans to their first National Championship in 25 years. Just a few short years ago, this was a highly unlikely scenario. Carroll had been fired after short stints as head coach of the New York Jets and New England Patriots. The hardcore East Coast media declared that he was "too soft," "too New Age," and definitely "too Californian" to succeed in the dog-eat-dog world of professional football. Carroll found himself battling for attention first in a town dominated by the New York Yankees, the greatest sports franchise of all time, and later in the "shadow of the Green Monster" - Fenway Park in Boston. Twice fired, he was out of football in 2000, wondering whether he would have a chance to be a head coach again.

In the history of college football, two programs stand out as the greatest of pigskin traditions. One is Notre Dame, and the other is USC. These two hallowed institutions had created the best inter-sectional rivalry in America, beginning in the 1920s. They built themselves up, the rivalry developing great mutual respect for each other. Over the following decades, numerous National Championships and Heisman Trophies were won by these two schools. From 1962 to 1982, under the stewardship of legendary coaches John McKay and John Robinson, the Trojans enjoyed the most successful 20-year run ever. "Tailback U." won five National titles and four Heismans, but by 2000 USC was derided as "Yesterday U." Under Ted Tollner, Larry Smith, Robinson in his encore, and finally Paul Hackett, the Trojans had fallen on hard times. They experienced NCAA probation, drug and gambling scandals during the disastrous Todd Marinovich years, and just plain mediocrity. Their great running attack was a joke, and USC endured brutal losing streaks against Notre Dame (1983-95) and cross-town rival UCLA (1991-98).

In December, 2000, USC was a program in flux. Athletic Director Mike Garrett, who had won the Heisman in 1965, was under fire, especially for his handling of Robinson's firing in 1997. Once considered a "football school," USC had been named College of the Year by the *Princeton Review*. The average freshman G.P.A. was now above 3.5; the film school was a virtual primer for Hollywood success; and the general consensus was that great academics was not compatible with national success on the gridiron.
The school had won the National Championship in baseball in 1998, and maintained its great position in the "secondary sports." Like Stanford, it seemed that this was the best they could hope for. Football success had become the province of Nebraska, Miami and Florida State. Hackett was fired, and Garrett looked for the right candidate to replace him. Former Miami coach Dennis Erickson turned him down. So did former pro coach Mike Bellotti. The greatest college job in the country was no longer a coveted position. Coaches feared that the L.A. media and the USC alumni could not be satisfied. There was, it seemed, little upside at USC.

Enter Pete Carroll. After three coaches told Garrett "no," Carroll contacted him on his own. His daughter was playing volleyball for the Trojans, and Carroll wanted to interview for the job. He was Garrett's fourth choice, and probably lower than that with the alumni, the sports talk pundits, and the writers. Tollner had taken Troy to the 1985 Rose Bowl before losing control. Smith had the Trojans within two games of the National Championship in 1988 before the Marinovich years, which set the program back for years. Robinson promised to return USC to prominence, but his second tenure was a disappointment. Hackett, an ex-Trojan assistant who had mentored the likes of Joe Montana in the NFL, had come in with great promise and enthusiasm, but quarterback Carson Palmer had never materialized into a star under his tutelage. How could Carroll expect to succeed where these accomplished coaches had failed?

In 2001, Carroll did not start out like a house afire. His team was 2-5, which included another galling loss to Notre Dame. The only bright side was the comparison with McKay, who had presided over two losing years before leading USC to the 1962 National Championship. Carroll's system then began to take root. SC finished the regular season on a winning streak, won a shutout over UCLA, and made a trip to the Las Vegas Bowl. It was considered a modestly successful year by the diminished standards that SC had come to expect.

In 2002, fifth-year senior quarterback Carson Palmer was frustrated when freshman wide receiver Mike Williams dropped pass after pass in a stalled comeback-that-fell-barely-short at Kansas State. A few weeks later, SC lost in overtime to Washington State in Pullman, and expectations were limited at best. But Carroll never lost his enthusiasm, and a trend developed. Great coaches tend to improve their teams over the course of the season. For the second straight year, Carroll did this. Williams emerged as a star, and Palmer came from near-obscurity to win the school's fifth Heisman. SC won enormous, lopsided victories over both Notre Dame and UCLA. Playing the strongest schedule in America, they won a share of the Pacific-10 Conference title, routed Iowa, 38-17 in the Orange Bowl, and finished fourth in the nation. In the off-season, Carroll achieved the best recruiting class in the country, and came into 2003 with a team promising to contend for the National Championship.

Despite the high expectations, "experts" thought it would be a re-building year. Quarterback Matt Leinart was only a sophomore who had never thrown a pass in college, and if he failed, blue-chip recruit John David Booty would still be a mere freshman who had skipped his senior year at Louisiana's Evangel Christian High School.

The running backs were all true freshmen and sophomores. Williams was a sophomore. They were supremely talented, but inexperienced. The team would have to rely on defense, which was a Carroll specialty. He had been the defensive coordinator for
the San Francisco 49ers in their heyday. The season opener was at Auburn. The Tigers were ranked number one by *Sports Illustrated*. Their touted running backs had been featured in the *New York Times*. USC stuffed them completely, taking the partisan, fanatical SEC crowd out of the game, and won big, 23-0. The Tigers no doubt felt the game was a great disappointment. In fact, it was one of the closest games any team would play against the Trojans in 2003.

In October, Southern California lost in triple-overtime vs. California at Berkeley's Memorial Stadium, when their kicker missed a chip shot and a potential game-winning touchdown was lost by a goal-line fumble. The loss to the Golden Bears, who went on to defeat Virginia Tech in the Insight Bowl, was the only blip in an otherwise-perfect season. After rebounding from injuries and a brief letdown at Arizona State, USC was unstoppable. Their run against Stanford, Notre Dame, Washington State, Arizona, UCLA, Oregon State and Michigan in the Rose Bowl was one of the most impressive in college football history.

On December 6, 2003, USC defeated Oregon State, 52-28 at the Los Angeles Coliseum, completing a regular season in which they set attendance records at their historic home stadium. That night, seemingly invincible Oklahoma was beaten by Kansas State, 35-7 in the Big 12 championship game. Both the *A.P.* and *USA TODAY/ESPN* Coaches Polls ranked Carroll's team number one, setting up a National Championship match-up with number two Louisiana State in the Sugar Bowl. However, late that Saturday night, Hawaii, who had lost to the Trojans in September, lost to top 20-ranked Boise State. Notre Dame had lost their finale earlier, and the losses reduced USC's "strength of schedule" component in the BCS computers. On Sunday afternoon, to everybody's consternation, the BCS in its "wisdom" announced that Oklahoma and LSU would play in the Sugar Bowl.

Once the dust settled, Carroll showed great class and demonstrated that the BCS had in fact done his team a kind of favor. While they were denied the opportunity to play in the so-called "National Championship game," they were going to represent the Pac-10 in a *de facto* home game at Pasadena's Rose Bowl against their traditional Big 10 opponent, Michigan. They would be able to win at least a share of the National Championship, the *Associated Press* version, which traditionally has been considered the "official" National Champion. The Trojans dominated the Wolverines, 28-14 in a game that was the hottest sports ticket L.A. had seen in years. The Rose Bowl garnered enormous attention, earned the highest rating of the bowl games, and the controversy simply spotlighted Carroll and his program. They did earn the *A.P.* title, and even gained few votes from "rebel" coaches who voted them number one in the BCS poll. Oklahoma played poorly in the Sugar Bowl, demonstrating that they had not earned their place there. LSU won but in a highly flawed manner. USC was obviously the best team in the country, considered the "people's champion." Carroll earned National Coach of the Year honors from several organizations, and is currently presiding over a recruiting effort that experts say will yield the best crop of blue chippers in America.

Aside from the in-coming recruits, USC returns 17 of 22 starters. Of those, most will be sophomores and juniors. Wide receiver Steve Smith will be a superstar, as will be the three running backs, LenDale White, Herschel Dennis and Reggie Bush (two
sophomores and a junior). Second-year back-up quarterback John David Booty has All-American promise, but he will have to wait for junior quarterback Matt Leinart, the 2004 Heisman Trophy favorite. The second Heisman favorite will be his wide receiver, junior Mike Williams.

USC will enter 2004 ranked number one. They have an excellent chance of winning two or three National Championships in a row, putting together a streak to rival Oklahoma's undefeated seasons in the mid-1950s. In the history of college football, there has never been a program that offers greater potential than USC under Carroll in the next four years.

"It's A Good Day to Be A Trojan" promises to be the football version of Michael Lewis' "Moneyball", showing how a New Age coach brought a different philosophy to the game, a philosophy for the 21st Century. Coaches will be emulating Carroll's methods for 30 years. Based on the words Carroll often utters to his team in the locker room before games, this book will be his authorized autobiography, co-written by Best Selling author Steven Travers, who captured Barry Bonds' historic 73-home run season in 2001 in "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman".

Pete Carroll is different. He is not "old school." He is not Darrell Royal or Bear Bryant. He is the perfect coach to deal with the modern athlete, and few have ever bridged the so-called gap between white coaches and black athletes. To understand how different Pete Carroll is, one must understand his unique upbringing. He was born in San Francisco and raised in the affluent Bay Area suburb of Marin County. Carroll attended Redwood High School along with the supercomic, Robin Williams. Janis Joplin lived a block from the school. Marin was the home of the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and bohemians living in the Sausalito houseboats, like blacklisted actor Sterling Hayden. Located across the bay from the University of California-Berkeley, it was a time and place of great social change. With the Vietnam War raging, anti-war protest, free speech, sexual revolution and irreverence towards authority dominated the atmosphere. Carroll was into sports and played them all. He starred in baseball for Al Endriss and in football for Bob Troppman, but despite his "jock" reputation, he was influenced by the times that were a-changing. A controversy ensued with the Redwood football program when players balked at cutting their hair per the rules set down by Coach Troppman, who was forced to resign over the incident.

Troppman, however, would remain one of Carroll's greatest influences. The undersized Carroll, a quarterback who had played Pop Warner football against future Hall of Famer Dan Fouts, another Marin resident, was not recruited out of Redwood. He played at the College of Marin before moving on to the University of Pacific. At UOP, he developed, earning all-conference honors at the safety position, but upon graduation Carroll was not considered a professional prospect. He went directly into coaching, first at UOP, then at a series of big-time college football schools. Eventually, Carroll moved on to the NFL, and became a defensive coordinator for different teams. Over time, Carroll developed a sterling reputation as a defensive mastermind, and by the late 1980s his name regularly came up in discussions of coaching openings in college and the NFL.

In 1994, Carroll was given his first big opportunity, with the New York Jets. The East Coast press went after him, saying he was too "enthusiastic," too much of a "New Age"
California guy, and too soft with his players, who he tended to befriend instead of berate. The team was mediocre, and Carroll was fired. George Seifert hired him as defensive coordinator of the defending Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers, then was hired by the New England Patriots.

In New England, Carroll found himself vying for attention in a town dominated by the Red Sox, who played their games at the venerable Fenway Park, a stadium dominated by the "Green Monster" left field fence. After two average seasons, Carroll was fired again. When his daughter enrolled at USC to play volleyball and Hackett was fired at the end of the 2000 season, Carroll inserted himself into the coaching search.

It has been a family affair ever since. Along with his volleyball-playing daughter, Carroll's son has been on Pete's coaching staff, and his old coach, Troppman, has often been flown at Pete's expense to Los Angeles so he could be close to his protégé. Unlike many successful people, Pete has always remained close to his roots. Old friends, coaches and teammates describe cell phone calls from Pete, calling from the locker room minutes before kickoff or from a post-game celebration.

Carroll is handsome, physically fit, and charismatic in a manner that combines the wit and intelligence of John F. Kennedy with the football wisdom of Bill Walsh. His enthusiasm is utterly contagious. He wows recruits and their families, and has audiences spellbound when he speaks to groups.

At USC, when alumni long ago concluded that Rose Bowls and National Championships are their birthright, Carroll is approaching god-like status, on a par with such icons as "Gloomy Gus" Henderson, Howard "Head Man" Jones, McKay and Robinson. It cannot be emphasized too much how enormous an accomplishment, and how important it is to Trojan fans, to have the tradition of Troy restored in all its Cardinal and Gold glory.

In this book, Carroll will describe his philosophies. They are truly new, revolutionary ideals, replacing the tired nostrums of old-time grid coaches. Carroll, the Californian, a man of the Age of the Aquarius, a man who routinely uses phrases like "cool" in a free and easy manner, has found the right combination for success. "It's A Good Day To Be A Trojan" is far more than the inside story of an overachieving football coach. It is a textbook for life, as applicable to business and sales professionals as sports fans. It is a book that describes a template for success in the 21st Century and it promises to be the next Best Selling sports book on the heels of "Moneyball".

ONE NIGHT, TWO TEAMS

September 1970. In the words of legendary Los Angeles Times sports columnist Jim Murray, a group of "hostile black and white American citizens" invaded Birmingham, Alabama to do battle against an equally hostile group of white American citizens. The event could have gone either way. A riot could have ensued. Blood could have been spilled.

The battle did not take place at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Bull Connor did not preside over the scene. George Wallace did not stand in the way. Instead of a riot, a fairly played football game took place between the University of Southern California Trojans and the
University of Alabama Crimson Tide, on a sweltering hot night at the venerable Legion Field.

The Good Lord, as they say, works in mysterious ways. He picks ordinary, often flawed people, among them sinners, prostitutes, tax collectors and adulterers, to be his prophets and disciples. This book tells the story of how the Greek ideals of Platonic justice combined with Christian righteousness, free market capitalism and American Democracy, effectuated the only real change that ever matters, a change of heart, on an entire region - the South - allowing America to come together as only she can, more than a century after the Civil War. After years of protests, speeches and demonstrations, a tipping point was reached, spearheaded by a young football player from California named Sam "Bam" Cunningham, who on this day would be God's vessel.

This is the story of how one game finally ended segregation in the South once and for all. It is the story of how suspicious white and black USC teammates became a family of warriors, and how the team they defeated helped their fans to finally rise to the moral righteousness their Bibles had taught them since childhood. Thus, the power of Christianity was the impetus for the Deep South to pay heed to what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature" and, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to "live up to its creed that all people are created equal."

The 1970 season played out without great success for either team, but in the succeeding years, USC and Alabama dominated college football. The Republican party husbanded the South into the mainstream of our political system. Cunningham would become a Pro Bowler with the New England Patriots. The game was all-but forgotten, its impact understood only by those who dig deep for such nuggets of Americana. Now, the story is spreading like Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Today, the tale is this book, a proposed documentary, and a film in development. The story explains more succinctly the country we live in than any other tale told by columnists or know-it-all "talking heads." This is the story of Truth and the redemptive powers of change.

This work brings you into the locker room where Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant may or may not have declared to his beaten team that Cunningham was "what a football player looks like." It describes the "new breed" of black athletes influenced by the militancy of the Vietnam era. The entire story - the history that preceded it, the machinations that surrounded it, and the sea change that occurred after it - are tied together through the research, probing interviews and writing of the Evangelical Christian historian Steven Travers, himself a USC graduate whose unique love for his school's legacy shines forth in this monumental book. Travers successfully links Greek ideals and Christian love to modern America, demonstrating that desegregation was not a unique movement, but the result of centuries of philosophical evolution. This work, which combines theology and philosophy using the Socratic method of questioning, tackles the monumental task of exploring the nature of good and evil as it affects the ordinary decisions of men. Travers is also one of the last journalists to have interviewed deceased former USC coaches John McKay and Marv Goux before they passed away. The captured memories of these events shed great light on this story.

"The Turning of the Tide", written in the tradition of David Halberstam's "October 1964", is viewed through the prism of football as a metaphor for a changing America. The game played in September of 1970 was a seminal moment in which liberalism and
conservatism came together, in many ways the last time this has happened. The winner was America. In this, the 35th anniversary year of that game, Travers demonstrates in this work how the events of that month explain much of what we now know about "red staves" vs. "blue states." He also goes to great pains to give a fair, balanced journalistic account of history, giving appropriate attention to both the USC and Alabama (or Northern vs. Southern) sides.

One reason for this was Jimmy Carter, the moderately conservative (liberal by Georgia standards) Southerner who succeeded the racist Lester Maddox as Governor on the strength of the new black votes that the 1965 legislation helped to usher in. Carter was a hybrid of time and opportunity. He filled the Democrat vacuum still left open by Teddy Kennedy’s Chappaquiddick. His squeaky-clean evangelical Christianity was palatable to the South, and seen not in religious terms but rather as a sign of honesty by the liberals and the electorate, begging for accountability after Watergate. Carter took advantage of new techniques in polling, started the trend of early campaigning in the Primaries instead of playing to the “smoke-filled rooms” of convention politics, caught the Republicans at their most vulnerable period since 1932, and won.

Carter’s ascendancy was part of a trend, embodied by numerous national essays detailing how the “New South will rise again.” Included in this development were strange tales of a “new” Ku Klux Klan, led by an educated, telegenic man named David Duke. Even racism understood the growing dynamics of public relations.

From 1964 to 1980, every election cycle saw the Republicans slowly chipping away at the Southern Democrat base. This trend took evolving forms. First, there was the “Wallace factor,” in which the influence of Alabama’s maverick Democrat Governor proved to hurt his own party and help the Republicans. This “revolt” against Democrat liberalism within the party was not limited to Wallace, and resulted in growing G.O.P. success through the 1960s and ‘70s.

Second, emerging Republican enclaves took shape in the solid South. One of them was the wealthy Houston district represented by Congressman George H.W. Bush from 1967 to 1971 (the future President lost Senate races in 1964 and 1970).

Finally, there was the unkindest cut of all, the actual switching of parties by prominent Democrats to the Republicans. Trent Lott made his switch in 1972. Senator Strom Thurmond, who had splintered the “Dixiecrats” in 1948, also switched. But conservative Democrats, the likes of which in later years included Georgia Senator Zell Miller, undercut the party’s base for years without actually leaving.

American politics in the South mirrored the 1970 USC-Alabama game. The game had accomplished a symbolic victory for African-Americans, but it was so much more than that. It had opened the door for real, actual change, and it had done it athletically the way Nixon and Reagan’s theoretical “Orange Countification” had done it in politics: Quietly. The civil rights struggle had plodded along, loud, noisy, sometimes dangerous. King had attracted crowds, fomented protest, defied the law. Malcolm X was in the white man’s face. The Black Panthers were openly militaristic and increasingly violent. An elemental staple of politics, diplomacy and human psychology had seemingly died with Lincoln in 1865.
Lessons that would be learned and made instructive to any State Department desk chief studying China and its obsession with “saving face” or Russia’s respect for toughness, were (seemingly) not taught, learned or implemented by the well meaning civil rights crowd. It took a Southerner, Bear Bryant, who was really a sly fox, to schedule a game with his duck-hunting friend John McKay. From there it took the hand of God, guiding a naïve, beautiful young black man named Sam Cunningham to his destiny on the field of athletic strife, thus embodying the best way to effectuate change.

“The Truth,” says John Papadakis over and over again, “as witnessed in an American arena, is never misunderstood.”

Truth is what happened that day. It did not happen in a way that embarrassed Alabama, the Bear or his team. It happened on a fair field of battle, in a way that allowed the "losers" to save face and eventually come out winners. As Bryant himself told his men many times, it "doesn't matter how the game starts, but how it ends."

When King spoke, his words could be misconstrued. He had Communists in his organization or he was a degenerate womanizer. Nobody trusted the Federal government. The courts, the laws, the judges, all of them were viewed as corrupt. But Cunningham and the Trojans had done it in the purest form imaginable.

The pro athletes on the Falcons and Oilers, or Braves and Astros? They were mercenaries, subject to professional lifestyles, gambling interests, and other corruptions. Texas Western’s basketball team? That was the “black man’s” game, wasn’t it? Who cares about watching a bunch of blacks run around in their underwear? Black baseball players in the Southern minor leagues? That was the minor leagues, barnstormers, clown acts, minstrel shows.

No, this was the citadel of college football, the University of Alabama, in the very heart of Dixie. This was Bear Bryant, who according to the Coca-Cola ads actually did walk on water. These were the new aristocrats of the South, its best and brightest football talent. And, yes, this was USC, and its multi-talented, multi-faceted, integrated squad, coming in full of esprit de corps, kept together by the Socratic Greek linebacker Papadakis, led by coaches McKay and Goux who insisted they do it the right way. With class, with honor, with jubilation but not overt celebration.

A school located half an hour north of Orange County had come to Birmingham and a form of “Orange Countification” had taken place. What the Alabama football fans saw, in the esteemed McKay, the well regarded Goux, the talented Jimmy Jones, the explosive Clarence Davis, and the spectacular Sam Cunningham, was the future. A way in which it could be done, with class and dignity. It was palatable to them, just as Nixon and Reagan were palatable to them.

Thus, the merging of political and athletic theatre, explaining so much about the next 35 years of American history.

After that game, black athletes did not just desegregate Southern football rosters; they began to desegregate Southern political staffs, government office buildings, law firms, schoolhouses, grocery stores, and all other forms of society and commerce.

It did not happen because of court orders or protests. No National Guardsmen accompanied these people into this Brave New World. It happened because the Truth had been witnessed and understood.
“The Truth will set you free,” as it says in the Gospel according to John, and herein is the true answer to the civil rights question in the South. The answer is Christianity. Here was the most Christian region of this great nation, yet these same people had been inculcated by Satan’s influence. The devil had fed them defeat, war, famine, and all its stepchildren; mistrust, hatred, vengeance. But Christianity had taken hold here. In the 1920s, a major revival had spread the religion throughout the region even more. For years, preachers had scoured the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to justify slavery and racial separation. Arcane language was cited. Even Plato’s Greece was demonstrated as “justification” for the practice, since Athens had been, like every other major population, a slave state.

But true Christians are required to look within their own beating hearts. The life of Jesus Christ was so far from an endorsement of slavery and racial hatred as to be beyond the ken. Christianity, hand in glove with a new country, blessed by God, a nation literally shining with His grace, where freedom and justice were not words but sacred Truths; no, people were not unequal. We are all God’s children, and every one of us deserves the chance to roam unfettered in God’s delightful path.

The politicians and educational administrators who made up the American South at the time of Sam Cunningham’s remarkable football performance in 1970 had all rode to their high place of public esteem at least in part because they adhered to the demand that they be churchgoing men of Jesus Christ.

“Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.”

No man can truly believe those words, to instill their meaning, to truly believe in their own hearts and live life adhering to what they really mean, and then turn around and enslave his fellow man. Man sees the coming of the Lord, and he knows too that the Lord sees him, into the bottom of his heart and soul.

The lie had to die.

The work of Dr. King had been done. The work of millions of well meaning American citizens had taken place. It would not go for naught. The men and women who had traveled South during the Freedom Rides, to “teach the Southerners a lesson,” had been frustrated in their efforts, but their work, like God’s, would succeed in unforeseen, mysterious ways. Liberalism and conservatism would come together. The winner was America.

Quietly, just like Bear Bryant liked it. Like a thief in the night, as Christ told his followers, their times would come. Seemingly, a convergence took place and a new “feeling was in the air.” Many years of improvements would lie ahead. Hatred never dies, and it did not die that day at the Legion Field. But one of its allies, the “prejudiced South,” was on the way out. Cunningham and USC, with Bryant’s “help,” had put a chink in the armor.

In 1980, America needed a change. Jimmy Carter had been bamboozled by the Communists, allowed Islamo-Fascism to take root in Iran (with American hostages fueling the effort), and created an economic “malaise” that allowed interest rates to climb to 25 percent, making home ownership extremely difficult to attain. Out of the Republican Party emerged Reagan. His detractors saw only an aging actor. His devoted followers remembered “The Speech” he made in 1964, and the way he righted California
for eight years. They recalled the way he had almost nabbed the nomination from a
sitting President in 1976, and now he was “the right man in the right place at the right
time” (not unlike Cunningham 10 years prior).
Reagan sent a message by starting his campaign, symbolically, in Mississippi. It was
another example of the “Orange Countification” of the South. The Mississippians who
supported Reagan had been supporting nearly a decade of integrated Ole Miss football.
By 1980 the sight of black football players - not to mention basketball players, baseball
players, cheerleaders, even fraternity brothers and professors - was, if not entirely
commonplace, certainly not out of the question.
Reagan’s critics naturally tried to paint him as racist for making his announcement in
Mississippi. They totally missed the point that Reagan was not racist, and he was still
popular in that state.
George Wallace called civil rights leader John Lewis and asked if he could apologize for
his segregationist past. He went to a black church and apologized to a roomful of
African-Americans. They told him that what he had done “was forgiven, but not
forgotten.”
It should never be forgotten, but the power of Christianity is the power to forgive. It is
not merely a power exercised by Christ, who sheds grace on sinful wretches. It is power
endowed to humans, who use this power to forge a better world. The mainstream of
African-American citizenry has, over time, forgiven the South for its sins. They have not
forgotten, although too many young black people do not know the stories. They do not
know about the sacrifices of Jackie Robinson, or the accomplishments of Sam
Cunningham.
Charles Scott, a close friend of baseball star Barry Bonds and a fellow African-American,
once said that being black in America meant “hearing the stories handed down, from
aunts and uncles, grandfathers.” While this is generally true, too often millionaire black
superstar athletes take their success for granted. They too often fail to recognize not just
that their paths were paved for them by black pioneers, but that a generous, hopeful
America also gave them opportunities unavailable anywhere else in the world.
Reagan’s eight years in the White House are generally regarded by historians, who now
have enough time to assess his legacy, as one of the best Presidencies in American
history and, in some circles, the best of the 20th Century. Had Reagan failed, much of the
conservative revolution would have faltered. The nexus between the 1970 USC-Alabama
game and the husbanding of the American South into the mainstream, thus setting the
stage for Republican Electoral hegemony, would not be told, at least in such startling
terms, had Reagan not achieved what he did.
His Vice-President, George Herbert Walker Bush, succeeded Reagan. In theory, he was a
Southerner. It was just a theory. Bush was a Northeastern Rockefeller Republican. It was
true that he earned his spurs wildcatting the Texas oil patch in the 1950s, but his Yale frat
image was too ingrained. He was Old Money. A blue blood.
Reagan had taken major hits from the Democrats and the media. They pounded him
during the failed Robert Bork nomination to the Supreme Court and the Iran-Contra
scandal. What the liberals failed to realize was that the Bork and Iran-Contra events were
viewed differently by conservatives, particularly in the South. Bork had argued against
the Constitutional legitimacy of *Roe vs. Wade*. Southerners were just itching to overturn the questionable 1973 abortion ruling.

Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North became a star defending Reagan during the Iran-Contra hearings. Southern anti-Communists were all for backing the rebels fighting an illegitimate Marxist cabal in Nicaragua.

Bush came on promising a “kinder, gentler” Presidency. Bush tried to make friends with Democrats, to cut deals with them, to reach out. These efforts left him vulnerable to the campaigns of not one but two Southerners who, while not members of the Republican Party, had some conservative credentials.

Ross Perot ran as an independent. He was a billionaire Texas business mogul who had graduated from the Naval Academy. Bill Clinton claimed to be Baptist, and in an effort to right a floundering Democrat Party, had helped found the Southern Democrat Leadership Council. These were moderately conservative Southern Democrats who recognized that the South was the key to Electoral success.

Perot took an enormous bloc of votes away from Bush. Clinton painted a moderate downturn as “the worst economy of the 20th Century” and slickly got away with it. Bush lost because he did not appeal to the blue collar, conservative and Christian elements not only in the South but also throughout Republican heartlands.

His defeat was not lost on his son, who had had an epiphany leading to sobriety, became a born again Christian, and already had made contacts with the Christian right. Young Bush was a different kind of conservative. He does not fit the mold of “Orange Countification” reflected by Nixon and Reagan, but he is certainly closer to it than his father.

Bush, despite sporting the same blueblood credentials as his father, was all Midland, Texas. He serves as a perfect example of the New South. The man does not have a racist bone in his body. Two of his top aides were African-Americans. Secretary of State Colin Powell and his successor, former NSC Advisor Condoleezza Rice, were (and in Rice’s case, still is) two of his most trusted advisors. Their jobs are the farthest possible jobs in America from “token.”

Rice is particularly symbolic in reflecting upon the 1970 USC-Alabama game. She grew up in segregated Birmingham and knew one of the little black girls killed when the KKK blew up a church there in the early 1960s.

Bush rode to success on the heels of successful Republican Congressional strategies and Clinton’s horrid personal immorality. 1994’s Contract With America was orchestrated by Georgia’s Newt Gingrich, the Speaker of the House. It was a brilliant campaign that completely devastated the Democrat Party.

Bush’s Presidency, beginning in 2001, benefited from the Republican majorities birthed by the Contract With America. After some party switching that briefly gave the Senate to the Democrats, Bush presided over historic Republican mid-term victories in 2002, and in 2004 he won re-election with the largest vote count in history, in the most high-turnout election ever. The Republicans dominate every level of U.S. politics - the House, the Senate, Governors, the courts, and state legislatures. The key was “moral values” in the heartland, and the South was solidly behind Bush and his party. No American President, with the possible exception of Abraham Lincoln’s Northern backers during the Civil War, has been more popular in a region than Bush in the South.
Republican hegemony in the 21st Century South has given rise to some telling observations. After the 2004 elections, Democrats in the "blue states" complained that "banjo pickers" and "cross-breeders" had decided the White House. This unfortunate statement, made en masse by a huge portion of the Left, is not only a lie but also the height of hypocrisy. Using the legal "but-for" method of proximate causation, an examination of the facts reveals just how hypocritical.

For many decades, the South was backward. Their rural counties often lacked running water, electricity and indoor plumbing, much less cable TV or computers. For all the decades in which a large swath of the South actually was ignorant, two constants remained:

They were racist.
They were Democrats.

After the TVA Authority was established and Federal works projects brought modernity
In September of 1970, a black USC sophomore running back from Santa Barbara, California named Sam "Bam" Cunningham, in the words of the late SC assistant coach Marv Goux, "did more to integrate the South in three hours than Martin Luther King did in 20 years."

The University of Southern California Trojans football team, led by legendary coach John McKay, traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to do battle with the University of Alabama Crimson Tide, led by even more-legendary coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. The game was played at the venerable Legion Field on a sweltering hot late Summer night. A capacity crowd was on hand to watch two of college football's all-time greatest football programs play each other, at a time in which the Trojans were at the height of their glory, and the Tide was ever-so-slightly on the downgrade.

Normally, this event would not have been any more significant than other major inter-sectional confrontations, such as Notre Dame tackling Michigan, UCLA sparring with Ohio State, or Oklahoma taking on Penn State. So why did Sports Illustrated rank it the sixth most important sporting event of the 20th Century? Why are ESPN and Fox Sports preparing to make a documentary about it? Why do the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the L.A. Daily News and the Orange County Register still writing about it to this day?

Why did famed L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray write at the time that the event ushered the state of Alabama back "into the Union"? Why is the Hollywood Reporter coming out with articles about how this game will be depicted in a movie and that a director is already attached? Finally, why would this be a Best Selling book?

Because "The Turning of the Tide" is a feel-good story about how American sports transcends societal differences, and therefore it shall reach that elusive audience of readers who want to be informed, who want to learn something they did not know, who wants answers to societies' most vexing problems. Therefore, we have the potential for a book that will not just be bought in stores, but will be required reading in schools. It is a blueprint for how America can do better by combining two of the great philosophies of Western civilization, Platonic justice and Christian love.

MARKETPLACE

There exists an enormous, institutional base of readers who will be attracted to "The Turning of the Tide" like a moth to a flame. Let us start with the University of Southern California.

A book about USC's football history could not come at a better time. First, USC's two greatest historians, Jim Murray and Mal Florence, have passed away, leaving a void when it comes to the telling of their storied traditions.

USC is as "golden" as any college football team has probably ever been. Head coach Pete Carroll is a hero in L.A. In 2002, he led the Trojans to an Orange Bowl victory while quarterback Carson Palmer garnered the Heisman Trophy. In 2003 he took Southern California all the way to the Promised Land, their first National Championship since 1978. His 2004 Trojans have been ranked number one by every publication and poll since the pre-season, and there is talk that not only will they be the first repeat National Champions since 1995, but that this young team may be the greatest ever.
Junior All-American quarterback Matt Leinart is the current favorite for the Heisman. Sophomore All-American running back Reggie "The President" Bush (a common t-shirt seen at SC games reads "BUSH/LEINART '04") will be a finalist at the New York ceremony and may be next year's favorite. The 2005 Trojans could win a third straight national title, and SC could even challenge Oklahoma's 57-game winning streak of the 1950s. This is just the beginning of the greatest dynasty since Notre Dame's Knute Rockne.

USC is located in the second greatest media market in the world, the center of attention and the talk of legions of loyal fans and alumni who are spread throughout not just America but the world. With no pro football in L.A., they are selling out 90,000 fans to all their games at the Coliseum and are the hottest ticket the region has ever seen. USC fans cannot get enough when it comes to their school.

"The Turning of the Tide" will be sold in block quantity to the SC bookstore, alumni association, fan clubs and web sites. The University has great experience marketing itself, especially in football, where they have successfully promoted six Heisman Trophy winners. They will cooperate in the marketing of this book.

The University of Alabama, incredibly, may be more enthusiastic about their Crimson Tide than USC fans feel about their Trojans. They will buy this book because it will be a source of pride for them, describing not how they changed because of protest, political pressure and the righteous indignation of meddling Northerners, but rather because they looked to a leader, Bear Bryant, who told them what was obvious to them was true, and that this truth could only lead to a change of heart from within.

There is term that is given to a sports book that goes beyond the playing field, teaching stories about life and history, and at the same time informing people with "the rest of the story" - news they previously did not know about famous people. The term is Best Seller! Hollywood already has come calling. So, too, will the academic community, the historians and the curious. It will be appealing to young and old alike with its timeless message of equality. It will bring black and white together. It contains the most appealing elements of the liberal 1960s and the conservative ethos that often put into practice what previously seemed to be Utopian ideals.

This book will be written in the first-person by the two men who lived it, USC football players John Papadakis and Sam "Bam" Cunningham. Individual chapters will be devoted to their particular telling of the tale. But because it is a book with so many historical, societal and political implications, author Steven Travers will intersperse it with chapters that tell the larger story of a changing America - then and now. Because the author will have the full cooperation of all the participants, plus the athletic department and football programs at USC and Alabama, and the USC sports information office, the book will contain numerous wonderful photos and documents that will look like nothing less than a snapshot of a unique time and place in U.S. history.

**COMPETITION**

There has never been a book quite like "The Turning of the Tide". However, this book will pick up on the popularity and general theme that turned the 2000 film "Remember the Titans" into a huge hit. Obviously, there have been many books about sports, and many books about society. Few, however, have been able to make the connection
between the two. One that did was David Halberstam's "October 1964", which described
the two World Series teams that year as mirrors of a changing country.
The St. Louis Cardinals were a young, aggressive and diverse group of whites, blacks and
Latinos. They looked like the Democrats. The New York Yankees were a veteran,
mostly-white team of tradition and Wall Street polish. They were the Republicans. The
Cardinals' victory foreshadowed a time of change in America, and the return of the
Yankees more than a decade later mirrored the Reagan Revolution.
So, too, did the 1970 USC Trojans and the Alabama Crimson Tide reflect their
environments. The Trojans were a unique combination of California Beach Boys and
militant Black Panthers - glamorous, attractive and a little scary. The Tide represented the
New South - respectful towards their elders' traditions, but with longer hair and youthful
awareness of the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movements, and the world they would
soon inherit.
Other books and movies that combined the themes of sports and sociology include
"Friday Night Lights", "North Dallas Forty", "Ball Four" and "Semi-Tough".

THE BOOK
Individual chapters will resonate "in the voice of" both John Papadakis and Sam
Cunningham, each of whom lived the experiences of "The Turning of the Tide". They
have unique takes on what happened, based on their life experiences and worldview.
Other chapters will record the historical analysis of Steven Travers, who has the ability to
separate the emotion of the participants from the larger picture. Cunningham has said that
it took years before he realized that what he had done had such a huge impact on so many
people.
The overall theme of the book will be upbeat, drawing on the good works of Plato aJesus,
so important in shaping the American creed that Dr. King had for so long urged the
country to live up to. The book will not attempt to browbeat Southerners for their long
history of bigotry. An example of how this book will approach the subject might be found
in the 1997 Steven Spielberg film "Amistad". That film depicted how Africans were
captured and put on a Spanish slave ship en route for Cuba. The Africans broke free,
killed most of the crew, and were found drifting off of American waters. They came into
American custody.
They were put on trial in the U.S. for murdering the crew, but their defense was that they
acted out of self-defense in an effort to achieve freedom and return to their homeland,
acts that were said to be justifiable under the circumstances. The defense worked, they
were declared "not guilty," and were returned to their homeland eventually.
Despite the fact that the film depicted racism, bigotry and the evils of slavery, as
practiced on American soil by Americans, the story nevertheless left the thoughtful
viewer with a sense of patriotism. How could this be? The answer to that question is that
the story tells how in America justice was done. It was done by Americans, using laws
written by Americans, and carried out by Americans. No foreign power came to America,
defeated America, and forced "justice" on Americans. America is where slavery came to
die!
The same applies to the story of de-segregation in the South. Sports columnist Jim Murray put it best in the Sunday, September 13, 1970 edition of the L.A. Times, brilliantly headlined "Hatred Shut Out as Alabama Finally Joins the Union": "OK, you can put another star in the Flag.
"...the state of Alabama joined the Union. They ratified the Constitution, signed the Bill of Rights. They have struck the Stars and Bars. They now hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal in the eyes of the creator. "Our newest state took the field against a mixed bag of hostile black and white American citizens without police dogs, tear gas, rubber hoses or fire hoses. They struggled fairly without the aid of their formidable ally, Jim Crow. "Bigotry wasn't suited up for a change. Prejudice got cut from the squad. Will you all please stand and welcome the sovereign state of Alabama to the United States of America? It was a long time coming, but we always knew we'd be 50 states strong some day, didn't we? Now, we can get on with it. So chew a carpet, George Wallace...Get out of our way. We're trying to build a country to form a democracy. "The game? Shucks, it was just a game. You've seen one, you've seen 'em all...Hatred got shut out, that's the point. Ignorance got shut out, that's the point. Ignorance fumbled on the goal line. Stupidity never got to the line of scrimmage. The big lie got tackled in the end zone."

Murray would go on to write that the previous time he had been in Alabama, the only black man in the stadium was carrying towels, but that "a man named Martin Luther King" thought that if you paid for a seat on the bus, one ought to be able to sit in it, but that the only thing white folks in the state cared about was "beating Georgia Tech...". Murray pointed out that the citizens of Alabama took their football so seriously that they realized that if they wanted to play in the big time, it would require integration. Otherwise, instead of invites to all the best bowl games, they would continue to be relegated to the Bluebonnet Bowl. "And," wrote Murray, "if I know football coaches, you won't be able to tell Alabama by the color of their skin much longer. You'll need a program just like the Big 10. Grambling may be in for a helluva recruitment any year now."
He was prescient, but remarkably few others were. Murray recognized what Coach Bryant was trying to do, something even the likes of McKay, Marv Goux and the fans in the stands did not fully understand.
"I had no idea what had really happened at the time," Cunningham says.
The cover of the book should include a montage of people and symbols: Cunningham, Papadakis, Bryant, the Confederate flag and the American flag.
"September 1970: Two Teams, One Night and the Game That Changed A Nation" is a book that is already written. It captures all the best elements of what makes a great read - history, both as told by the actual participants who made that history, and by a historian who possesses the skills to analyze the effects of that history. Furthermore, this book fits into almost every "niche" that bookseller's will try to place it in. It will be of great interest to the national football fan bases of the University of Southern California and the University of Alabama; sports fans in the West and the South; and fans across the Fruited Plain. It is, however, much more than a sports book. It is a book about America, and how, as Abraham Lincoln called them, "the better angels of our nature" allowed a divided
nation to come together 100 years after the Civil War. This is a book that is not just about football and racism. It contains all the elements of great storytelling that push great drama, written in both in the novelistic, narrative style of Tom Wolfe, but also in the first-person "Other Voices" style of the men who made it happen. It is a tale of how events surrounding a single football game crystallized the successful works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., two years after his murder. Therefore, it will be an impossible-to-putdown read for proud African-Americans seeking to find meaning in society; for white Americans interested in seeing how their country made the choice to be on the right side of history; and for international readers who wish to know the heart and soul of our great nation.

CONCEPT

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The University of Southern California Trojans football team, led by legendary coach John McKay, traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to do battle with the University of Alabama Crimson Tide, led by even more-legendary coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. The game was played at the venerable Legion Field on a sweltering hot late summer night. A capacity crowd was on hand to watch two of college football's all-time greatest football programs play each other, at a time in which the Trojans were at the height of their glory, and the Tide was ever-so-slightly on the downgrade.

Normally, this event would not have been any more significant than other major inter-sectional confrontations, such as Notre Dame tackling Michigan, UCLA sparring with Ohio State, or Oklahoma taking on Penn State. So why did Sports Illustrated rank it the sixth most important sporting event of the 20th Century? Why are College Sports Television, ESPN and Fox Sports preparing to make a documentary about it? Why do the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the L.A. Daily News and the Orange County Register still write about it to this day? Why did famed L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray write at the time that the event ushered the state of Alabama back "into the Union"? Why is the Hollywood Reporter coming out with articles about how this game will be depicted in a movie and that a director is already attached? Finally, why would this be a Best Selling book?

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Carroll, who is quoted saying that "Steve Travers is the next great USC historian, in the tradition of Jim Murray, Mal Florence and John Hall," and is an old acquaintance who attended the same suburban California high school, has already offered the author carte blanche access to the team, promising to hold a book signing at the USC practice field and to help promote the project in any way he can.

USC is located in the second greatest media market in the world, the center of attention and the talk of legions of loyal fans and alumni who are spread throughout not just America but the world. With no pro football in L.A., they are selling out 90,000 fans to all their games at the Coliseum and are the hottest ticket the region has ever seen. USC fans cannot get enough when it comes to their school, and 2005 is the 35-year anniversary of the game!

"September 1970" will be sold in block quantity to the SC bookstore, alumni association, fan clubs and web sites. The University has great experience marketing itself, especially in football, where they have successfully promoted six Heisman Trophy winners.

The University of Alabama, incredibly, may be more enthusiastic about their Crimson Tide than USC fans feel about their Trojans. They will buy this book because it will be a source of pride for them, describing not how they changed because of protest, political pressure and the righteous indignation of meddling Northerners, but rather because they looked to a leader, Bear Bryant, who told them what was obvious to them was true, and that this truth could only lead to a change of heart from within. Travers, after extensive research and interviews with the men who knew Bryant the best, concludes that Bryant is a Lincolnesque figure who helped usher integration into Southern sports in the best way possible. He emerges as a heroic figure of the civil rights movement, while his counterpart, USC coach John McKay, is found to be a veritable Moses of progressivism when it came to providing opportunities for black football players.

There is term that is given to a sports book that goes beyond the playing field, teaching stories about life and history, and at the same time informing people with "the rest of the story" - news they previously did not know about famous people. The term is Best Seller! Hollywood already has come calling. Denzel Washington has expressed interest. Ron Howard and Brian Grazer (both USC graduates) of Imagine Entertainment are reading it.
ABC is interested in a TV movie. Various film agents have requested copies.

Hollywood is dominated by graduates of its world-famous film school (where Travers studied from 1982-83), giving a film about the school a decided edge and extra attention. Former USC football player Allan Graf, a longtime second unit director who is considered the leading cinematographer/editor of football movies (his credits include "Any Given Sunday" and "Friday Night Lights") is currently working with Travers, and is close to making a deal with Disney.

The academic community, the historians and the curious are all potential buyers, too. It will be appealing to young and old alike with its timeless message of equality. It will bring black and white together. It contains the most appealing elements of the liberal 1960s and the conservative ethos that often put into practice what previously seemed to be Utopian ideals. The author posits in this book a theory he calls the "Orange Countification" of the South. The nexus of this theory is based on positive Southern reaction to two California Republican politicians, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan.

Their base was most solid in the Orange County suburbs where anti-Communism was popular but racism was not. Nixon, in particular, worked a tightrope act called the "Southern strategy" to woo enough of George Wallace's voters into his corner to win the 1968 Presidential election. This book helps explain how the South could go from all-Democrat in the 1960s to all-Republican in the 2000s.

Travers worked closely for five months with two major participants of the story, former USC linebacker John Papadakis and fullback Sam Cunningham. This book also includes first-person "Other Voices" interviews by the men who lived and observed it up close. These include upwards of 50 ex-USC and Alabama players, coaches, media members, academics and historians. Individual chapters will be devoted to Travers' telling of the tale in the "New Journalism" style of Tom Wolfe. It is a book with many historical, societal and political implications, telling the larger story of a changing America - and author Steven Travers is just the right writer to weave these implication into the book with the perfect mixture of pathos and sporting flair. He intersperses it with first person accounts of all the participants, who have already been interviewed and chronicled by the author!

Being an ex-professional athlete himself, Travers bonded with the ex-jocks he called upon, giving him the freedom to push them beyond the recounting of a simple football game. Instead, he challenged them to analyze the history they made; the political ramifications, racial and social aftermath, and the religious convictions of whites and blacks, Northern and Southern, USC and Alabama. The result is a fascinating mirror of American society, then and now. The way different kinds of people see the same thing is a telling educational experience!

Because the author had the full cooperation of all the participants, the book will contain numerous wonderful photos that will look like nothing less than a snapshot of a unique time and place in U.S. history.

COMPETITION
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THE BOOK

Individual chapters resonate "in the voice of" the 40 men Travers interviewed, each of whom lived the experiences of "September 1970". They have unique takes on what happened, based on their life experiences and worldview. Other chapters will record the historical analysis of Steven Travers, who has the ability to separate the emotion of the participants from the larger picture. Sam Cunningham has said that it took years before he realized that what he had done had such a huge impact on so many people.

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Despite the fact that the film depicted racism, bigotry and the evils of slavery, as practiced on American soil by Americans, the story nevertheless left the thoughtful viewer with a sense of patriotism. How could this be? The answer to that question is that the story tells how in America justice was done. It was done by Americans, using laws written by Americans, and carried out by Americans. No foreign power came to America, defeated America, and forced "justice" on Americans. America is where slavery came to die! Travers, in studying history, determines that America's unique greatness lies in part in the fact that social movements that take years, decades, even centuries throughout history in other countries, occur, by contrast, with lightning speed in America.
The same applies to the story of de-segregation in the South. Sports columnist Jim Murray put it best in the Sunday, September 13, 1970 edition of the L.A. Times, brilliantly headlined "Hatred Shut Out as Alabama Finally Joins the Union":

"OK, you can put another star in the Flag."
"...the state of Alabama joined the Union. They raitified the Constitution, signed the Bill of Rights. They have struck the Stars and Bars. They now hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal in the eyes of the creator."
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He was prescient, but remarkably few others were. Murray recognized what Coach Bryant was trying to do, something even the likes of McKay, Marv Goux and the fans in the stands did not fully understand.
"I had no idea what had really happened at the time," Cunningham says.
The author has a potential cover of the book already, which is a shot of the stadium from the press box, the Crimson colors of the partisan night time crowd dotting the stands, while a silhouetted shadow of young football players, obviously the modern, "new breed" of football player, overshadows the event. Other ideas could include a montage of people and symbols: Cunningham, Bryant, the Confederate flag and the American flag.
"September 1970" has been fully and completely legally vetted and documented using the respected Chicago Manual of Style.
September 1970. In the words of legendary Los Angeles Times sports columnist Jim Murray, a group of "hostile black and white American citizens" invaded Birmingham, Alabama to do battle against an equally hostile group of white American citizens. The event could have gone either way. A riot could have ensued. Blood could have been spilled.

The battle did not take place at the Edmund Pettis Bridge. Bull Connor did not preside over the scene. George Wallace did not stand in the way. Instead of a riot, a fairly played football game took place between the University of Southern California Trojans and the University of Alabama Crimson Tide, on a sweltering hot night at the venerable Legion Field.

The Good Lord, as they say, works in mysterious ways. He picks ordinary, often flawed people, among them sinners, prostitutes, tax collectors and adulterers, to be his prophets and disciples. This book tells the story of how the Greek ideals of Platonic justice combined with Christian righteousness effectuated the only real change that ever matters, a change of heart, on an entire region - the South - allowing America to come together as only she can, more than a century after the Civil War. After years of protests, speeches and demonstrations, a tipping point was reached, spearheaded by a young football player from California named Sam "Bam" Cunningham. Cunningham on this day would be God's vessel.

This is the story of how one game finally ended segregation in the South once and for all. It is the story of how suspicious white and black USC teammates became a family of warriors, and how the team they defeated helped their fans to finally rise to the moral righteousness their Bibles had taught them since childhood. Thus, the power of Christianity was the impetus for the Deep South to pay heed to what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature" and, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to "live up to its creed that all people are created equal."

The 1970 season played out without great success for either team, but in the succeeding years, USC and Alabama dominated college football. The Republican party husbanded the South into the mainstream of our political system. Cunningham would become a Pro Bowler with the New England Patriots. The game was all-but forgotten, its impact understood only by those who dig deep for such nuggets of Americana. Now, the story is this book, a proposed documentary, and a film in development. The story explains more succinctly the country we live in than any other tale told by columnists or know-it-all "talking heads." This is the story of Truth and the redemptive powers of change.

This work brings you into the locker room where Coach Bryant (allegedly) declared to his beaten team that Cunningham was "what a football player looks like." It tells the story behind this mythological statement, shedding, perhaps for the first time, the truth behind what actually happened that evening. It describes the "new breed" of black athletes influenced by the militancy of the Vietnam era. The entire story - the history that preceded it, the machinations that surrounded it, and the sea change that occurred after it - are tied together through the research and writing of historian Steven Travers, himself a USC graduate whose unique love for his school's legacy shines forth in this monumental book. Travers successfully links Greek ideals and Christian love to modern America,
demonstrating that desegregation was not a unique movement, but the result of centuries of philosophical evolution. This work, which combines theology and philosophy using the Socratic method of questioning, tackles the monumental task of exploring the nature of good and evil as it affects the ordinary decisions of men. Travers is also the last journalist to have interviewed deceased former USC coaches John McKay and Marv Goux before they passed away. The captured memories of these events shed great light on this story.

"September 1970", written in the tradition of David Halberstam's "October 1964", is viewed through the prism of football as a metaphor for a changing America. The game played in September of 1970 was a seminal moment in which liberalism and conservatisim came together, in many ways the last time this has happened. The winner was America. Travers demonstrates in this work how the events of that month explain much of what we now know about "red staves" vs. "blue states." He also goes to great pains to give a fair, balanced journalistic account of history, giving appropriate attention to both the USC and Alabama (or Northern vs. Southern) sides of this great event, and its aftermath.

**DYNASTY!**

**By STEVEN TRAVERS**

In 2000, the sports media tackled all the various "greatest of the century" stories. ESPN announced that Michael Jordan was the greatest athlete of the 20th Century. Long Beach Poly High School was named "High School of the Century." The University of Southern California earned its share of accolades, as well. They garnered "Baseball Program of the Century," and coach Rod Dedeaux was named "Baseball Coach of the Century," in polling conducted by Baseball America. The NCAA said USC was the "Athletic Department of the Century."

However, it was still felt that the greatest historical football program of the century was still USC's biggest rival, the Notre Dame Fighting Irish. In January of 2000, the Trojans were in a slump; a slump that had begun in 1983. For years they had held firmly to the number two position behind Notre Dame in a "battle of traditions" with the other great powers, the University of Alabama and Oklahoma University.

In December of 2000, USC hired Pete Carroll, considered a cast-off of the NFL after being fired by the Jets and the Patriots. His hiring was met by little enthusiasm, and athletic director Mike Garrett's job was rumored to be in jeopardy.

Carroll was not on USC's "short list." He was interviewed only after several "better" candidates turned down what once had been the premiere job in college football. He approached Garrett himself, eager to coach at a school in which his daughter was already on the volleyball team; his father-in-law was an alum; and he had rooted for John McKay's Trojans as a suburban California teenager.

In 2001, Carroll's team started 2-5, including a loss at Notre Dame, but they finished the regular season on a high note, shutting out UCLA, 20-0. Carroll's 6-6 rookie season as the Trojan head man was considered a slight improvement. At least they went to a bowl game. This was indicative of how far the Trojan Empire had fallen.
What has occurred over the next four years, however, is unprecedented. The University of Southern California has won two straight National Championships, had two quarterbacks win the Heisman Trophy, one has been selected number one in the NFL draft, they are riding a 22-game winning streak, and are 33-1 since October, 2002. They have been ranked number one for 16 weeks, going back to 2003, and enter the 2005 campaign still ranked number one, favored to win a third straight National Championship.

This year's team is considered a contender for the title "greatest college football team of all time." If they run the table, by season's end the Trojans could have a 35-game winning streak. No team in history has ever won three consecutive national titles. They are looking at their third Heisman winner (quarterback Matt Leinart or running back Reggie Bush), five Heisman finalists (Carson Palmer, Leinart and Bush twice), and two NFL number one picks (Palmer, plus Leinart or Bush), all in four years. They would enter the 2006 campaign one undefeated regular season away from Oklahoma's all-time record 47-game winning streak.

Considering that Carroll has presided over the best national recruiting class in the nation the past four years, and that both of their back-up quarterbacks (John David Booty and Mark Sanchez) were at one time considered the best high school signal-callers in the nation, the possibility exists that Coach Carroll could be winning National Championships and extending winning streaks at least until the senior year of current incoming freshman quarterback Sanchez in 2009. By the end of Sanchez's career, the Trojan decade could include seven national titles, six Heismans, five NFL number one picks, plus Outland Trophies (Jeff Byers, Jeff Schweiger) and Lombardi Trophies (Keith Rivers). Quite simply, Carroll is already in territory that few coaches have ever tread. By the time he is done, he will have eclipsed the accomplishments of Knute Rockne Frank Leahy, Paul "Bear" Bryant and John McKay.

In light of the fact that Carroll's Trojans are threatening to be the greatest dynasty in the history of college football, it is time to re-evaluate the historical record of struggling Notre Dame, and in so doing crown the title "Greatest College Football Program in History" on the deserving new champions from USC.

This book will take us back to the aftermath of World War I, when returning Doughboys, hardened by war and ready to live again, joined college football teams in the West, shifting the balance of power from elite powers Harvard, Yale and Army. New York Times columnist Grantland Rice observed that the new California athlete was "different, a hybrid," some kind of superman, indigenous to a land of sun and fruit trees, the offspring of hardy settlers and handsome men and women who had been venturing to the state to pursue movie careers.

Great powers emerged in the West: California's Wonder Teams and Pop Warner's Stanford Indians dominated, but it was a railroad handshake that had the greatest impact on college football, East and West. Notre Dame's Knute Rockne was approached by USC student manager Gwyn Wilson about a yearly home-and-home arrangement. Rockne declined, stating that the administration was on him about too much travel anyway. But in a separate conversation, Rockne's wife told Wilson's wife that she loved shopping in Beverly Hills, and that a game in warm Los Angeles on a regular basis was a grand idea.
Thus was born the greatest rivalry in the game, and with it, Notre Dame elevated USC to national prominence.

In the 1920s under Rockne, the Irish were the undisputed champions of the college game. When USC beat them in 1928 to earn their first National Championship (and the moniker "greatest team ever" up to that point), coach Howard Jones's Trojans put themselves on the map. They did more than that in the 1930s, when they were that decade's dominant program, earning national titles in 1930, 1931 and 1939.

In the 1940s under Frank Leahy, Notre Dame regained prominence, playing a series of titanic games against Red Blaike's juggernauts from West Point. The balance of power shifted to the Midwest in the late 1940s and '50s, when the great teams were Michigan, Bud Wilkinson's Oklahoma Sooners, and Woody Hayes's Ohio State Buckeyes. But social changes played a role in the balance of power shifting back to the West in the 1960s.

Jackie Robinson had broken the color barrier in 1947, and integration came to the South via the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954. However, Southern football programs refused to integrate. USC coach John McKay took full advantage of this, providing opportunities for black players and winning two National Championships in that turbulent decade (1962, 1967). It was under McKay that the Trojans firmly re-established themselves as an elite power. Two of his black running backs, Mike Garrett (1965) and O.J. Simpson (1968) won the Heisman Trophy. But McKay's duck-hunting pal, Alabama legend Paul "Bear" Bryant, won three National Championships (1961, 1964-65) and narrowly missed the 1966 championship when the "Catholic vote" went to the Irish.

In 1970, the two legends met in Birmingham. College football would never be the same. Bryant's Crimson Tide was still all white. McKay's Trojans shocked the packed Legion Field crowd when their integrated squad lambasted the Tide, 42-21, behind the efforts of Sam "Bam" Cunningham.

The game had such an effect on the Deep South that the door to integration, which Bryant had barely opened by recruiting Wilbur Jackson, swung wide open. The result: Alabama won two National Championships in the following decade. The only team better? USC, with three (1972, 1974, 1978). From 1962-81, USC enjoyed the greatest 20-year run of all time. Aside from their National Championships, they won four Heismans (Charlie White in 1979 and Marcus Allen in 1981 joined the elite club). The 1972 Trojans are generally regarded to be the best collegiate team of all time. The transition from McKay to John Robinson (1976-82) was seamless.

In 1964, Notre Dame revived a moribund program with the hiring of coach Ara Parseghian. The "era of Ara" (1964-74) included dashed national title hopes in a stirring come-from-behind USC win over the Irish in '64, and two other memorable games in three years (1972, '74). In '72, sophomore running back Anthony "A.D." Davis scored six touchdowns in SC's 45-23 victory, but it was the 1974 game that left fans breathless. Trailing 24-0, USC scored 55 points in the most unbelievable 17 minutes in the game's long history. Davis ran two kickoffs back for touchdowns, scoring four in all, as Troy ended Ara's National Championship plans again, 55-24. It was good enough to swing the number one vote to the Trojans, although Davis was denied a rightful Heisman because the game was played after the votes had been cast.
USC began a down period when Robinson left USC to take over the Rams after the 1982 season. Perhaps of greater loss to the team was the departure of legendary assistant coach Marv Goux, who left with Robinson. Amid NCAA penalties, the Trojans maintained a position as a college football power, but were well below their previous standard, over the next 20 years. In 1988 under coach Larry Smith, they were 10-0 going into the Notre Dame game, but lost to the Irish and to Michigan in the Rose Bowl. They recruited the best prep quarterback in the nation, Todd Marinovich, but he was a problem child. By 1991 they were losing to Memphis State.


Carroll has reversed this trend entirely. USC now is riding a six-game winning streak against UCLA and a three-game streak against Notre Dame. Notre Dame has 12 National Championship, and USC now has 11 (favored to win again this year). Notre Dame has seven Heismans, but SC with six has not one but two Heisman favorites in their backfield this year (and Bush possibly coming back in 2006).

"Dynasty" will tell the personal stories of Trojan legends, ranging from John "Duke" Wayne to Howard Jones; Cotton Warburton to Frank Gifford; the men who made them "Tailback U."; Mike Garrett, O.J. Simpson, Anthony Davis, Ricky Bell, Charles White, Marcus Allen, and Reggie Bush; the great quarterbacks; Pat Haden, Paul McDonald, Rodney Peete, Carson Palmer and Matt Leinart; receivers Rod Sherman, Bob Chandler, Lynn Swann, and Mike Williams; linebackers Tim Rossovich and Junior Seau; linemen Marlin McKeever and Ron Yary; coaching legends Howard Jones, Jess Hill, John McKay, John Robinson and Pete Carroll; among many others.

Written from the unique perspective of college football historian Steven Travers, a USC graduate who worked in their sports information office and coached under Rod Dedeaux, "Dynasty!" promises not just to fill its pages with anecdotal sports stories, but will analyze why the Trojans have earned the right to be called the best college football program of all time, as well as why Carroll's current team is the greatest "Dynasty!" the game has ever seen.

Lastly, a chapter will be devoted to USC’s great record in non-football sports. This includes 12 National Championships in baseball, 26 in track and field and, even though they are not known as a basketball school, three Hall of Famers (Tex Winter, Bill Sharman, Alex Hannum) who starred on the same 1946 team, when the "triangle offense" was invented.

USC boasts more NFL first round draft picks, pro players and Hall of Famers than any school. They have more Major Leaguers than any school. If they were a country, they would have placed third in the medals count at the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

"Dynasty" will be must reading for all Trojan fans and alumni, sports media and college football buffs. It could not be coming at a more opportune time, as USC is currently the hottest name in college sports.

EXCERPTED FROM DODGERS BASEBALL YESTERDAY AND TODAY
Baseball lore and the state of New York are inextricably inter-twined. An Army officer, Abner Doubleday, may or may not have "invented" baseball in upstate Cooperstown in 1839. The game's roots actually came from the English games of rounders and cricket. But when Doubleday distinguished himself in the Union's decisive victory at Gettysburg, the baseball story became popularized. Eventually the Hall of Fame was built in Cooperstown.

The Knickerbocker Base Ball Club of New York formed as the first amateur team in 1845. Crowds began to form at New Jersey's Elysian Field to watch base ball. Over time the Atlantics, the Excelsiors, the Eckfords, the Mutuals, and others joined the Knicks. In 1857, 16 clubs from Brooklyn and New York assembled at the first Base Ball Convention. By 1866, more than 200 clubs were organized, and in 1869 the first professional team, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, played an undefeated 65-game schedule. The first team with "connection" to the Dodgers was the Atlantics, a collection of dockworkers and day laborers who were the "national champions" of 1860.

The best college baseball in the early years of the 20th Century was played in the Ivy League. Columbia University in New York produced such stalwarts as Eddie Collins and Lou Gehrig. The greatest of all Brooklynites, not to mention the finest Jewish athlete in history, was Sandy Koufax. His path to stardom, however, was a tortuous one. He gained attention as a high school basketball star, but at the University of Cincinnati went out for baseball because he wanted to make a warm weather trip to Florida that the team had scheduled. According to legend, the catcher who caught his fastball on the indoor wood court where the try-out occurred, slid several feet, like a scene in The Scout.

Brooklyn signed him to a bonus, thinking him Manna from Heaven, but rules forbade his being sent to the minors. He languished on the Brooklyn bench, but away from neighborhood expectations blossomed in sunny California.

The New York Mets became a natural extension of the Brooklyn fan base, and in 1969 captured the World Series. Brooklyn has produced a few Major Leaguers, including Phil Rizzuto, Lee Mazzilli and Shawon Dunston, but after the Dodgers left basketball became the sport most associated with the borough. In recent years, however, independent professional baseball became part of a revitalization effort in Brooklyn, with a shiny minor league stadium built adjacent to the famed Coney Island amusement park. Baseball has taken it upon itself to try and attract black players from the inner cities through the building of high-quality baseball parks.

EXCERPT FROM

ONE NIGHT, TWO TEAMS: ALABAMA VS. USC AND THE GAME THAT CHANGED A NATION

By STEVEN TRAVERS
In 1964, the Democratic Party dominated U.S. politics. Lyndon Johnson defeated Barry Goldwater with 64 percent of the vote. He had enormous filibuster-proof majorities in the House and Senate. The imprimatur of John Kennedy’s legacy hung solidly on LBJ. A majority of America’s governors and state legislatures were Democrat. The Civil Rights Act and the Great Society were ongoing accomplishments of massive impact on American life, on a scale that experts felt would approach FDR’s New Deal. LBJ had effectively erased the Democrats’ “soft on Communism” label, still resonant from the McCarthy era, by launching a bold war to stop the scourge of Red advance in Vietnam. This was a war that surely would be won in massive victorious fashion by the Hitler-conquering U.S. forces.

Goldwater and his party were out of the mainstream, a fringe element of the “extreme Right.” Furthermore, Goldwater’s refusal to back the Civil Rights Act had swung the black vote, already leaning toward the Democrats after JFK’s charismatic intervention in Dr. King’s 1960 Birmingham jailing, solidly into the Democrat column.

If politics could be explained through the metaphor of baseball, the Democrats were the 1964 world champion St. Louis Cardinals—young, hip, urban, mixed races, aggressive. The Republicans were the New York Yankees, so yesterday in their pinstripes, so token in their African American representation—country club Wall Street elites.

An attempt to make a similar metaphorical comparison to the USC and Alabama football teams of 1970 is not as easy. However, the aftermath of the games, as viewed through the prism of sports as a metaphor for a changing America, offers the opportunity for some comparison.

The Trojans could be seen as a successful coalition, like those of Nixon and Reagan, who had risen in the Golden State and were prominent in 1970. They were conservative, in that the school, the alumni, and the coaching staff were conservative, but their “new breed” of black athletes was something different. Alabama represented the elephant in the corner of the Democratic Party. For years, the party had tolerated the Jim Crow South because they reliably voted Democrat. But their ways, just like ‘Bama’s old-style football, had no future.

Lost in the expert punditry of the time was the hopeful fact of Western political influence in confluence with growing migration to the wide-open spaces of Arizona, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, and other states that had for so many years been looked upon as the frontier.
It was Richard Nixon who understood the power of the new West; he
manipulated it, improvised it, and benefited from it. He had tapped into a seminal hatred
of Communism that thrived in southern California. His constituency there was more
conservative, more Christian, and, depending on one’s point of view, arguably more
patriotic than the population of the San Francisco Bay Area, where the labor unions were
being radicalized and the universities turned into hotbeds of anarchist dissent. His
opponent in the 1946 Congressional race (covering an area ranging from Orange County
into Whittier, Artesia, and parts of the city of Los Angeles proper) was the New Dealer
Jerry Voorhis. In the 1950 Senate campaign, Nixon squared off against Helen Gahagan
Douglas, the Hollywood wife of actor Melvyn Douglas. Nixon painted Voorhis and
Douglas as so radically liberal as to be virtually sympathetic to Communism. He was one
of the first Republican politicians, if not the first, to successfully paint Hollywood as
being left of the mainstream, unpatriotic, and far too influential. He won both elections.

Nixon’s role in the House Un-American Activities Committee gave him this
platform. He and the Republicans dragged Hollywood actors, directors, and producers
before Congress, exposing and embarrassing many of them into detailing their flirtations
with and sometimes even commitment to Communism and even Soviet espionage.

In 1952, anti-Communist fervor was at an all-time high. The Korean War was
going badly in the wake of President Harry Truman’s firing of General Douglas
MacArthur. Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy was one of the nation’s most popular
figures, based on his attacks and investigations of American Communists. But it was not
McCarthy whom Republican presidential candidate Dwight Eisenhower tapped as his
vice presidential running mate. It was Nixon.

Aside from his anti-Communist credentials, Nixon represented that great new
bastion of influence, postwar social change, and electoral votes—California, and with it
the other growing, influential states. The Republicans had briefly captured the House in
1946 but were branded by Truman as the “do nothing” Congress during their losing 1948
elections. The victory by Eisenhower and Nixon (and for a few years Republican
Congressional control) had revived a political party that some thought might splinter into
some lesser version of itself.

Nixon actually defeated John Kennedy in 1960, but a cabal led by JFK’s father,
Joseph P. Kennedy, stole the election from him. This cabal consisted mainly of the
Chicago Democrat machine of Cook County, Illinois, controlled by Mayor William
Daley and Johnson’s cronies in Texas. The main tactic of the Kennedy campaign was to
register millions of dead citizens in Illinois and Chicago, having them vote for JFK “early
and often.” It was a replay of Lyndon Johnson’s 1948 Texas Senate victory, which he had
stolen using dead voters still on the rolls. In what was the tightest campaign in history
until the 2000 George Bush–Al Gore race, however, Nixon still might have pulled it out
had he not lost the black vote. The South was still solidly Jim Crow Democrat. Even
Eisenhower had not been able to win there.

However, the black vote was migrating north. Blacks in Illinois, in particular,
might have made the difference for Nixon. But Nixon’s decision not to interfere in Dr.
King’s Birmingham jailing had killed him. When JFK stepped in, he secured the support
of first a skeptical Coretta Scott King, then her grateful husband, and perhaps even more
disastrously for Nixon, baseball great Jackie Robinson. The official “black leadership” became solidly Democrat, and now African Americans were a bloc constituency.

The conundrum of the 1960 and 1964 elections was that the Democrats had the solid Jim Crow South and the black vote. Much changed between 1964 and 1968, however. Under the radar screen of actual voting patterns was the emergence of conservatism, embodied less by Nixon and more by Goldwater and actor-turned-political-figure Ronald Reagan. Goldwater’s support was strongest, at least in a publicly identified way, in Orange County, California, just south of L.A.

Orange County, the home of Disneyland, was mostly white, mostly Christian, very capitalistic, completely suburban, totally anti-Communist, yet strangely moderate. It was a bastion of conservative Republicans, yes. The John Birch Society was strong there. But racism was strongly looked down upon. There was a substantial Latino population. Just a few miles to the north was the large black population of South L.A. Easy freeway access meant comingling in the new car-crazy commuter generation. People there were too beautiful, too tanned, too athletic, too laid back in a surfer kind of way; the women too pretty; and the weather too perfect to appeal to virulent racism, which seemed to emanate like rising hell in the sticky, humid muck of the angry South.

The man who embodied Orange County politics was Reagan. If Goldwater angered some black voters by playing to what he perceived as his constituency in not backing the Civil Rights Act (odd, since the solid antiblack Democrat South was off limits, especially against Johnson), Reagan’s easygoing charm made him palatable to a wider audience. It was this palatability that sowed the seeds of marriage between the South and what Orange County represented. This was, in essence, a “third way.” The liberals were pounding the Southerners over the head with incessant charges of racism, accusing the proud denizens of Dixie of activities tantamount to the hated Nazis so many of them had fought against in World War II. Reagan and the new conservatives wanted change and racial equality, but they recognized the contributions of the South. They respected its symbols, its rich heritage, its fight for freedom on the fields of military strife. Reagan and the Western conservatives noted Southern literature, instead of denigrating the area as incessantly downtrodden, rural, ignorant, and backward. It was a simple approach, based on the old maxim that “it is easier to catch a bee with honey than vinegar.” The protesters and shouters of the Left, many funded by Communist front groups, used only vinegar.

Waiting his turn (again) was Nixon. Goldwater had stirred a movement whose time would come. Reagan, after endorsing Goldwater at the 1964 Republican National Convention in San Francisco (and another televised performance revered by history simply as “the Speech”), was statesmanlike, while sound bites only seemed to repeat Goldwater’s “extremism in the name of liberty is no vice” comment. But Reagan was not yet tested.

In 1966, the Right was organized. They ran Reagan for governor of California against the incumbent, Edmund “Pat” Brown. Two things drove conservative politics in California and, by reflection, nationally. These were the increasingly violent protests of free speech, civil rights, and, especially, anti-Vietnam War protesters. No place was more angry than the University of California, Berkeley, a state school funded by taxpayer dollars. The California citizenry wanted law ’n’ order. Reagan ran on this premise.
The other event that stirred the soul of America was the disturbing 1965 Watts riots in South Central L.A. This, combined with the rise (and assassination) of Malcolm X and the Black Muslim “nation,” along with the formation of the militant Black Panthers in Oakland, created fear in whites. They found comfort in Reagan’s promise to deal with these elements in a stern manner instead of the “wishy-washy psychobabble” offered by the likes of Brown and his party. The Left, for the first time, began to see that its solid black voting bloc could be an albatross around its neck. Brown, who had defeated former vice president Nixon in 1962, was beaten soundly by Reagan. Reagan now had his hands full reforming California, and suddenly Nixon emerged as a viable figure once more.

The Republicans outflanked LBJ’s Democrats in the 1966 midterms. They demanded a Douglas MacArthur–like resolution to the ongoing Vietnam conflict while expressing backlash against the Great Society. Nixon’s legendary work ethic paid off. He crisscrossed the country campaigning for Republicans, who were beginning to knock a few chinks in the Democrats’ Southern armor. Nixon then cashed in the chits he had earned with Republican elected officials and committeemen in 1966. In 1968, he outshined Nelson Rockefeller and the rest of the Republican field to earn the nomination.

What happened in 1968 will be debated forever. From a philosophical point of view, it was a year of irony, tragedy, karma, and horror, all wrapped up in nothing less than Shakespearean, maybe even Biblical, dimensions.

The year began in turmoil—race riots in Chicago, Newark, and other cities had continued from 1967 into the new year. The Tet Offensive turned the liberal media squarely against the Vietnam War, creating paradigms of confusing patriotism in a brave new world. The campuses were ablaze with hatred and protest. Democratic Senator Eugene McCarthy entered the New Hampshire primary as an antiwar candidate and took more than one-third of Johnson’s vote. LBJ then announced he would not run. Robert Kennedy announced that he would. So did George Wallace.

In April, a white man assassinated Dr. King in Memphis. Black rage exploded throughout the country. Kennedy assumed the mantel of sainthood, and the Left willingly anointed him. He forged a giant shadow, as large as his martyred brother and the slain civil rights leader. He created a coalition of antiwar zealots and black and Chicano civil rights activists, along with traditional Democrats.

In June, after winning the California primary, RFK appeared unstoppable. A Nixon-Kennedy rematch had all the trappings of major political theater, but every indication, then and now, is that Nixon would have lost again; perhaps this defeat would have been too unbearable for him to overcome his dark inner demons. Then Sirhan Sirhan murdered RFK at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

To say that Nixon benefited (in the short run) from this event is one of the great understatements of the twentieth century. When one examines the fourteen years between 1960 and 1974, it becomes hard to imagine that there is no God, or no devil, and that they do not interfere in the affairs of man, as Charle’ Young likes to point out. The implications of all the “what might have beens” that surround Nixon and the Kennedys—John, Robert, and Teddy—conjure wild imaginings of evil and goodness pulling the strings of historical irony. An entire book could be written about all the scenarios that connect in a spiderweb of possibilities.
Kennedy stole the 1960 election from Nixon. Had Nixon been president, there
probably never would have been a Cuban Missile Crisis and very likely either no
Vietnam War or the conflict would have been concluded in a show of force resulting in
American victory and Southeast Asian hegemony. The Communists, led by Soviet
Premier Nikita Kruschev, concluded that JFK was a “rookie,” and therefore they were
emboldened to test him in Cuba, Indochina, Africa, and Latin America. It may be
revisionist at this point, but it is also not a stretch to determine that they feared Nixon and
would not have tried any of this had he been in the White House.

First, Nixon was the former vice-president of the respected Dwight Eisenhower, a
man nobody had wanted to challenge in his eight years as president. When the
Communists defeated the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Nixon had very seriously
recommended the use of “battlefield nuclear weapons.” This may sound crazy, but it
frightened the Communists into halting major operations until JFK assumed office.

JFK either ordered or at least allowed a CIA-inspired coup to overthrow South
Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. How much blood was on Kennedy’s
hands is debatable. A little over a month later he was dead himself. His plans to de-
escalate in Vietnam were completely destabilized by these events.

(In retrospect, JFK might have achieved success in Vietnam by orchestrating
elections in South Vietnam in 1963–1964. Instead he “allowed” the assassination of an
ally. The lesson of this event was seemingly learned by the George W. Bush
Administration, where the election option was used in Iraq. However, elections held in
South Vietnam after LBJ took office did not quell disaster. Iraqi elections did not lead to
immediate freedom and democracy, either.)

Had JFK lived, Bobby might have succeeded him in 1968. Nixon might never
have been a major player on the national stage. Of course, that means Watergate never
would have occurred. Teddy Kennedy might not have been driving drunk at Martha’s
Vineyard in 1969, and his viability as a presidential figure likely would have resulted in
the family becoming what their father wanted them to be. They never got there. Almost
as if to spite the Kennedy Left, the Bush family has assumed all the heights of power and
prestige that seemed so destined for the so-called American royal family.

As it was, all the soaring rhetoric of King and RFK was replaced by naked
political maneuverings. Wallace threatened to take not only the South but also a fair share
of the West. But the Californian Nixon, who thwarted a native son bid from Reagan and
picked up Goldwater’s constituency, cleaned up the region. In addition, he had in his
Wall Street years made himself attractive to the East Coast establishment, once known as
“Rockefeller Republicans.”

The Democrats were hamstrung. First Vice President Hubert Humphrey divided
the party by waiting too long to distance himself from President Johnson’s Vietnam
policy. Then, almost as if by karmic irony after the events of 1960, Mayor Daley’s heavy-
handed response to protests during their convention turned the event into a war zone.
Riots in Chicago doomed their chances.

Humphrey never looked like a winner. He appeared to have won the Democrat
nomination by drawing straws. He never really rose above the other second-rate post-
Kennedy candidates.
But the key to 1968 was not really Vietnam or Kennedy’s assassination. It was Wallace. Wallace, who was turned down by former USC-football-player-turned-actor John “Duke” Wayne for the running mate slot (Air Force general Curtis LeMay accepted the role), ran a wide swath through the South. For the first time since the Civil War, the South was not solidly Democrat. Nixon played it like the political genius he was. It was called the “Southern strategy.”

Nixon did not run a particularly strong campaign in Dixie, but he saw to it that Humphrey, a Minnesota liberal who was now fully willing to cut and run against the Communists in Southeast Asia, was weak there. Nixon never campaigned against Wallace, instead associating himself with the policies that they could find common ground on. Call it the “Orange Countification” of Southern politics.

Nixon had attended Duke University Law School in North Carolina. During his time at Duke, he had engaged in long, friendly arguments with his Southern classmates regarding racial issues. Nixon (like Eisenhower before him) understood the Southern mind-set. He admired their traits of loyalty, aristocracy, gentlemanly manners, chivalry towards women, military valor, and patriotism. He contrasted that with his disdain for the “elitism” of Harvard and Ivy League intellectuals. Unfortunately his somewhat negative attitude toward Jews was perhaps reinforced by the experience.

All in all, Nixon’s persona among the Southern electorate was a gentle agreement to disagree, but he refused to let the racial question overshadow his other traits, which were popular in the region. Nixon was a bona fide Commie hunter, a traditionalist, a huge football fan, and a believing Christian who had befriended the great Southern evangelist Billy Graham.

Over time, the “Southern strategy” has become vilified by blacks, who see in it a manipulation of white racism on the part of Nixon. In 2005, the Republicans themselves went so far as to apologize for engaging in such blatantly political maneuverings. However, this apology is much more about the attempt to swing modern twenty-first-century black voters into the Republican column than it is an honest historical appraisal of the strategy itself. The fact is that it swung Wallace voters away from Wallace and into a moderate political philosophy. The ensuing years, if one wishes to apply cause and effect, certainly indicate that it was successful not just for the GOP but also for blacks. Opportunities did open up. Racism did subside. Blacks did gain political power.

The Republicans have been frustrated in the succeeding decades by black refusal to vote their way. Blacks somehow have forgiven Democrats their Jim Crow legacy while allowing the “Southern strategy” to be defined as veiled Republican racism. What they have not understood in adopting this attitude is that the strategy was, like Bear Bryant’s approach to desegregation and the USC game, an incremental approach to a problem that, in the end, needed just such Lincolnian leadership.

After Nixon’s inauguration in 1969, oddly enough, many of his most popular achievements were unpopular in the South. Conversely, his most unpopular were popular down there. His handling of Vietnam, which included an escalation of bombing and aggressive action against Viet Cong sanctuaries, resulted in protests at Berkeley, Columbia, the Lincoln Memorial. . . .

In Birmingham, Oxford, Nashville, he was cheered.
Nixon’s decision to open talks with Red China had the Left in a euphoric tizzy. Southern businessmen could not believe it. They saw Nixon as “going soft” on Communism, they thought NSC advisor Henry Kissinger was just another East Coast Jew, and they were infuriated by activist judges ordering enforced busing, EPA regulations, and abortion on demand. They had no choice but to back him, however. If the South and, in a larger sense, the conservative movement were to throw their hats in with Wallace full bore, America would find itself helmed by the likes of George McGovern and Teddy Kennedy. All of this went for naught when Watergate hit.

When Democrat Jimmy Carter was elected president in 1976, the Left felt almost an “end of history” sense of victory—not just victory in the latest national campaign, but a feeling they were the winners of twentieth-century political theory. This attitude is rich with hubris and reminiscent of Caesar after he crossed the Rubicon, reunifying Rome in his image. Modern-day Republicans predicted the demise of the Democrat party as we know it, an event “planned” by Karl Rove to begin in 2008 and be in place by 2012. When the Iraq War did not result in easy victory followed by parades and speeches, the GOP watched their carefully-nurtured congressional majorities eliminated in the 2006 mid-terms. The 2008 presidential campaign promises to either fulfill the Rove strategy or reverse years of political groundlaying.

The Democrats of 1974–1976 and the Republicans of 2004–2006 would both have been wise to recall that Roman conquerors did understood the nature of hubris, at least to some limited extent. They employed slaves to walk in their shadows, at all times whispering in their ears, “You are mortal. All glory is fleeting.”

The modern Republicans were planning to rule the world as Alexander did, blithely ignoring unseen future events that could spin them off their axis: terrorist mega-attacks, economic disasters, scandal, Armageddon in the Middle East . . .

The Nixon lesson, which emanated on a much smaller scale (a third-rate burglary), seemingly set the GOP back twenty years. George W. Bush’s Texas cowboy image and Christianity seem to engender a similar loathing toward him. The liberal media tainted Nixon’s Vietnam record. The pullout of U.S. forces, followed by the slaughter of anti-Communist resistance, was depicted as a refutation of American militarism and exceptionalism.

The period from 1974 to 1976 remains a dark one in American history, but as the saying goes, all dark clouds have a silver lining. The American and world Left felt they had achieved “victory.” First, the hated Nixon, the slayer of Alger Hiss, had supposedly been brought down in a mountain of irony involving the “avenged” memories of the Kennedys and all the abused liberals in Nixon’s wake. It was a tale that made Macbeth look tame. The Democrats on the Watergate Committee; Archibald Cox, Bob Woodward, and Carl Bernstein), they were portrayed as Moseses leading their people out of bondage from the “Pharaoh” Nixon.

One by one, Nixon and conservatism was deconstructed. The Soviet Union was now thought to be a nation we had to respect as an equal. The term Cold War was made passé. Enormous shifts in attitude toward race, sex, religion, drugs, morality, and patriotism took place, seemingly taking on a liberal image. In the late 1970s, Sam Cunningham’s performance would have been given little credence in comparison with
the protest movements. It has only been the sands of time that have allowed us to
correctly judge the true sweep of history.

However, Nixon’s own words still had resonance, in a phrase he had invented in
1968: the silent majority. Herein lies the effect of Sam Cunningham and the 1970 USC-
Alabama game on America. It is intertwined with Ronald Reagan and the Orange
Countification of the South, the husbanding of the a region into the mainstream via
Nixon and the GOP. It helps explain the backlash against liberalism that gained its
foothold in the Goldwater run and its power in Nixon’s presidency. In the wake of Gerald
Ford’s loss, its voice was found in the Reagan revolution. After Reagan, the road to
George W. Bush was paved by the Contract with America. Even Bill Clinton’s successes
are attributed to Southern politics embodied by the post-Cunningham period.

One of Nixon’s closest friends and advisors was Billy Graham, who invited the
president to speak at one of his outdoor sermons before a sellout football stadium crowd.
The mainstream media treated the event in one of two ways. Either they ignored it as
insignificant pandering to a no-longer significant constituency, or they criticized it as a
violation of church and state.

But Nixon’s Christianity and his relationship with Graham are telling. This was
Orange Countification. Nixon, despite his failure to come to King’s aid in 1960, had
significant black support. There was still a semiconservative black minority. Basketball
star Wilt Chamberlain was a Nixon man. So, too, were Sammy Davis Jr. and Frank
Sinatra’s “rat pack.” Nixon was as stiff as a board, but a fair number of “cool”
Hollywood and entertainment types, such as Elvis Presley, rallied to him.

Presley, born in Mississippi and raised in Tennessee, was overtly paranoid about
Communists in the entertainment industry, offering his services to the president to help
root these elements out, not unlike the way Reagan had in early 1950s Hollywood.
Southerners like Presley were emerging as the image of the New South. In the wake of
the Civil Rights Act of 1965, blacks now had the vote in Dixie. The Atlanta Falcons and
Houston Oilers were two of several top pro football squads that operated totally
integrated operations, as did the Houston Astros and Atlanta Braves baseball teams.
Orange Countification was silently taking place. White racial moderates, conservative
politically, Christian by religion, patriotic and respectful of Confederate Civil War valor,
pro-family traditionalists who hated Communism and knew the way a military was
supposed to be used. They were rugged Western individualists representing California’s
electoral juggernaut. A marriage was being made, if not in Heaven then in the South. This
was a region that had been marginalized and taken for granted by its uneasy Democrat
sponsors. They now saw a chance to attain its rightful place via a new partnership, first
with conservatism and eventually in official alliance with the Republican Party. This was
not an uneasy “understanding” between Huey Long and Franklin Roosevelt, but rather
trust and respect between Southern pols and their constituencies with Nixon, Reagan, and
their growing followings. Amazingly, the American punditry either did not see it coming
or mistook it for something else.

One reason for this was Jimmy Carter, the moderately conservative (liberal by
Georgia standards) Southerner who succeeded the racist Lester Maddox as governor on
the strength of the new black votes the 1965 legislation helped usher in. Carter was a
hybrid of time and opportunity. He filled the Democrat vacuum still left open by Teddy
Kennedy’s Chappaquiddick. His squeaky-clean evangelical Christianity was palatable to
the South and seen not in religious terms but rather as a sign of honesty by the liberals
and the electorate, begging for accountability after Watergate. Carter’s ascendancy was
part of a trend, embodied by numerous national essays detailing how the “New South will
rise again.” Included in this development were strange tales of a “new” Ku Klux Klan,
led by an educated, telegenic man named David Duke. Even racism understood the
growing dynamics of public relations.

From 1964 to 1980, every election cycle saw the Republicans slowly
chipping away at the Southern Democrat base. This trend took evolving
forms. First, there was the “Wallace factor,” in which the influence of
Alabama’s maverick Democrat governor proved to hurt his own party
and help the Republicans. This “revolt” against Democrat liberalism
within the party was not limited to Wallace, and it resulted in growing
GOP success through the 1960s and 1970s.

Second, emerging Republican enclaves took shape in the solid South. One of
them was the wealthy Houston district represented by Congressman George H. W. Bush

Finally, there was the unkindest cut of all, the actual switching of parties by
prominent Democrats to the Republicans. Trent Lott made his switch in 1972. Senator
Strom Thurmond, who had splintered the “Dixiecrats” in 1948, also switched. But
conservative Democrats, the likes of which in later years included Georgia senator Zell
Miller, undercut the party’s base for years without actually leaving.

In 1980, America needed a change. Jimmy Carter had been bamboozled by the
Communists, had allowed Islamo-Fascism to take root in Iran (with American hostages
fueling the effort), and had created an economic “malaise” that allowed interest rates to
climb to 25 percent, making home ownership extremely difficult to attain. Out of the
Republican Party emerged Reagan. His detractors saw only an aging actor. His devoted
followers remembered “the Speech” he made in 1964 and the way he righted California
for eight years. They recalled the way he had almost nabbed the nomination from a sitting
president in 1976, and now he was “the right man in the right place at the right time” (not
unlike Cunningham ten years prior).

Reagan sent a message by starting his campaign, symbolically, in Mississippi. It
was another example of the Orange Countification of the South. The Mississippians who
supported Reagan had been supporting nearly a decade of integrated Ole Miss football.
By 1980 the sight of black football players—not to mention basketball players, baseball
players, cheerleaders, even fraternity brothers and professors—was, if not entirely
commonplace, certainly no longer out of the question.

Reagan’s critics naturally tried to paint him as racist for making his
announcement in Mississippi. They totally missed the point that Reagan was not racist,
and he was still popular in that state.

George Wallace called civil rights leader John Lewis, asking if he could apologize
for his segregationist past. He went to a black church and apologized to a roomful of
African Americans. They told him that what he had done “was forgiven, but not
forgotten.”

It should never be forgotten, but the power of Christianity is the power to forgive. It is not a power merely exercised by Christ, who sheds grace on sinful wretches. It is a power endowed to humans, who use this power to forge a better world. The mainstream of African American citizenry has, over time, forgiven the South for its sins. They have not forgotten, although too many young black people do not know the stories. They do not know about the sacrifices of Jackie Robinson or the accomplishments of Sam Cunningham.

Charles Scott, a close friend of baseball star Barry Bonds and a fellow African American, once said that being black in America meant “hearing the stories handed down, from aunts and uncles, grandfathers.” While this is generally true, too often millionaire black superstar athletes take their success for granted. They too often fail to recognize not just that their paths were paved for them by black pioneers but also that a generous, hopeful America gave them opportunities unavailable anywhere else in the world.

Reagan’s eight years in the White House are generally regarded by a circle of historians, who now have had time to assess his legacy, as the best of the twentieth century, and one of the best in American history. Had Reagan failed, much of the conservative revolution would have faltered. The nexus between the 1970 USC-Alabama game and the husbanding of the American South into the mainstream, thus setting the stage for Republican electoral hegemony, would not be told, at least in such startling terms, had Reagan not achieved what he did.

The success of the 1970 USC-Alabama game; the near-seamless transition of blacks not only into the SEC but into Southern society; the continual economic, cultural and political advancement of blacks in America; much of this can be attributed to the conditions that embody this game.

Bryant and his team succeeded in large measure because white hearts softened. On a larger scale, America succeeded because white hearts (and not just in Dixie) softened. Considering what the streets of Birmingham, Selma and Montgomery looked like in 1963-1965, and what Legion Field looked like in 1970 and beyond, the prospect that a Christian miracle is responsible must be considered a valid possibility. From a more earthly perspective, it appears to be the success, in large measure, of a political philosophy espoused by Ronald Reagan, given the moniker conservatism, and embodied by a more succinct phrase herein called Orange Countification. The philosophies of Orange County adapted by the formerly hard-line South. Somehow, a football team just north of Orange County, helps to symbolize, 37 years after the fact, how it all came about.

The region was officially Democrat but conservative to the extreme. Conservatism found its conscience, which moderated its extremist tendencies to more fittingly adapt to its natural Christian instincts. In so doing, conservatism moderated to better fit the Western model of Reagan, of California, and of Orange County. Instead of racism and resentment, rugged individualism, entrepreneurial spirit, and religious morality inculcated conservatism in the South. Its white citizens began to see as plain as day that Christianity did not mean white supremacy or separatism.
Herein lies a conundrum for liberals. Whites came to see that the Christian phraseology of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was as right as rain. Dr. King was a liberal, at least by standards of the 1960s. It always seemed that, to the extent a “winner” would emerge from the civil rights struggle, it would be the “liberals,” the Democrats, the Left. No so. It was the conservatives and the Republicans.

This fact has caused more than a little bit of angst among modern black leaders and Democrats, who instead of accepting the tenets of this self-evident truth often try to deny it, call it something else, accuse it of being a cynical ploy by the Right. In the mean time, as the old song says, “the truth is marching on.”

This has a familiar ring to it, though. Some call this political phenomenon the “Nixon goes to China” syndrome. Nixon was the most vehement of all anti-Communists, yet he went against his own constituency to open diplomatic relations with Red China, which history judges to have been a smart move. “Only Nixon,” it was said, could do this. A liberal would have been excoriated as being “soft on Communism.”

Similarly, the Democrat Bill Clinton reformed welfare. A conservative would have been burned had he tried such a thing. These are just two examples of the “Nixon goes to China” theory.

Reagan’s vice president, George Herbert Walker Bush, succeeded him. In theory, he was a Southerner. It was just a theory. Bush was a Northeast Rockefeller Republican. It was true that he earned his spurs wildcatting the Texas oil patch in the 1950s, but his Yale frat image was too ingrained. He was old money. A blue blood.

Reagan had taken major hits from the Democrats and the media. They pounded him during the failed Robert Bork nomination to the Supreme Court and the Iran-Contra scandal. What the liberals failed to realize was that the Bork and Iran-Contra events were viewed differently by conservatives, particularly in the South. Bork had argued against the constitutional legitimacy of *Roe v. Wade*. Southerners were just itching to overturn the questionable 1973 abortion ruling.

Marine lieutenant colonel Oliver North became a star defending Reagan during the Iran-Contra hearings. Southern anti-Communists were all for backing the rebels fighting an illegitimate Marxist cabal in Nicaragua.

Bush came on promising a “kinder, gentler” presidency. Bush tried to make friends with Democrats, to cut deals with them, to reach out. These efforts left him vulnerable to the campaigns of not one but two Southerners who, while not members of the Republican Party, had some conservative credentials.

Ross Perot ran as an independent. He was a billionaire Texas business mogul who had graduated from the Naval Academy. Bill Clinton claimed to be Baptist, and in an effort to right a floundering Democratic Party, he had helped found the Southern Democratic Leadership Council. These were moderately conservative Southern Democrats who recognized that the South was the key to electoral success.

Perot took an enormous bloc of votes away from Bush. Clinton painted a moderate downturn as “the worst economy of the twentieth century” and slickly got away with it. Bush lost because he did not appeal to the blue-collar, conservative, and Christian elements not only in the South but also throughout Republican heartlands.
His defeat was not lost on his son, who had had an epiphany leading to sobriety, had become a born-again Christian, and already had made contacts with the Christian Right. That Bush was a different kind of conservative. He does not fit the mold of Orange Countification reflected by Nixon and Reagan, but he is certainly closer to it than his father.

Bush, despite sporting the same blue-blood credentials as his father, was all Midland, Texas. He serves as a perfect example of the New South. The man does not have a racist bone in his body. Two of his top aides were African Americans. Secretary of State Colin Powell and his successor, former NSC advisor Condoleezza Rice, were (and in Rice’s case, still is) two of his most trusted advisors. Their jobs are the furthest possible jobs in America from “token.”

Rice is particularly symbolic in reflecting upon the 1970 USC-Alabama game. She grew up in segregated Birmingham and knew some of the little black girls killed when the KKK blew up a church there in the early 1960s.

Bush rode to success on the heels of successful Republican Congressional strategies and Clinton’s personal immorality. The Contract with America was orchestrated in 1994 by Georgia’s Newt Gingrich, the Speaker of the House. It was a brilliant campaign that completely devastated the Democratic Party.

Bush’s presidency, beginning in 2001, benefited from the Republican majorities birthed by the Contract with America. After some party switching that briefly gave the Senate to the Democrats, Bush presided over historic Republican midterm victories in 2002, and in 2004 he won reelection with the largest vote count in history, in the election with the highest turnout ever. The Republicans dominated every level of U.S. politics—the House, the Senate, governors’ races, and state legislatures. The key was “moral values” in the heartland, and the South was solidly behind Bush and his party. No American president, with the possible exception of Abraham Lincoln’s Northern backers during the Civil War, has been more popular in a region than Bush in the South.

Republican hegemony in the twenty-first-century South has given rise to some telling observations. After the 2004 elections, Democrats in the “blue states” complained that “banjo pickers” and “crossbreeders” had decided the White House. This unfortunate statement, made en masse by a huge portion of the Left, is not only a lie but also the height of hypocrisy. Using the legal “but for” method of proximate causation, an examination of the facts reveals just how hypocritical. In so doing, it demonstrates almost as scientific fact the superiority of conservatism over liberalism, Republicans over Democrats. This is the kind of thing Plato would have made use of, since he sought not political advantage, the majority or opinion, but rather scientific truths to guide public administration. This is the birth of the phrase “political science.”

For many decades, the South was backward. Their rural counties often lacked running water, electricity, and indoor plumbing, much less cable TV or computers. For all the decades in which a large swath of the South actually was ignorant, two constants remained:

1. They were racist.
2. They were Democrats.
After the Tennessee Valley Authority was established, federal works projects brought modernity. Over time, these modernities effectuated an educated, informed populace that was no longer ignorant. Along came cable TV, the Internet, talk radio. The following came about as a direct result:

1. They are no longer racists.
2. They are now Republicans.

A couple of things. The following and others are sections that may be of concern, and I think you know what I am talking about. This concerns my political opinion/commentary, which is very patriotic to the point of jingoistic. I am extremely patriotic and believe every word of what I write as pure truth even if the cynic might think I do not. I truly believe the hand of God has guided this nation throughout. I do not state this as a theory or philosophy but as something I truly believe is real and actual. That said, I realize this may not be on-point with this book; it could be too controversial; it could be subject to liberal criticism. I have read and re-read all of this many times before sending it in. I include it with a caveat. Edit as you see fit. If you want to change it to lighten it up, do so. If you need me to do so, let me know. I am not “married” to this and do not want it to distract from the themes of this book. I believe in it but think I can use a good editor on it.

Conservatism and Christianity, working hand in hand in America, have proven themselves to be the winning ideology of 2000 years of history. In the immediate here and now, there are variations on the theme. Had the United States gotten the same results in Iraq in 2003-2007 as they did in 1991, the Karl Rove strategy of a “permanent” GOP majority may well have been realized. The Democrat Party might not have survived such a thing, splintering into something else, possibly two parties independent of the traditional party of FDR and JFK.

The faults and blame the Bush Administration has received – much of it well deserved – when Iraq ’03 did not resemble Iraq ’91, emboldened the Democrats to mid-term wins in 2006. Behind the likely banner of Hillary Clinton, they enter the 2008 presidential year with high hopes. However, this is a smokescreen diverting attention from the ultimate historical success of conservatism over liberalism.

“When I got started in the movement,” columnist William F. Buckley, considered by some not to have been part of the movement but the founder of it, told Human Events magazine, “the Republican Party was a Northeast liberal party. Our ideas were considered to be fringe elements of society. But today I look about the political landscape and I see international Soviet Communism on the ‘ash heap of history.’ I see old-style socialism to be a thing of the past in this country; the New Deal and the Great Society discredited. I see conservatives proudly wearing their banner while nobody calls themselves liberal and expects to win elections under that moniker. I see a refutation of Keynesian economic theory in favor of that of Hayek or Friedman. I see losses but many more victories. Sure we won.”

Indeed, even the 2006 congressional victories were achieved in large part by conservative Democrats taking advantage of an electorate, much of it in the South, frustrated that the Republicans were not conservative enough!
The prospects of a Northeastern liberal like Hillary are not good. Her husband, Bill Clinton, ran as a Southern moderate-to-conservative Democrat. He was raked over the coals when, beholden to liberal money interests he veered to the left. He achieved successes when the Republican Congress came on, held his feat to the fire, and “helped” him enact relatively conservative policies. The South continues to be the rock of Republican electoral prospects for years to come.

The world currently faces a new crisis in the form of Islamo-Fascist terror. Any long term hopes the Democrats have will not reach fruition as a result of their response to terror. When they were elected by surly voters, frustrated by lack of progress in Iraq, they had the unique opportunity to join the fight and, when victory is attained, share in the plaudits just as history tells us the Cold War was won not just by Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, but also by Harry Truman, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. So far, no Democrat has appeared on the horizon to do now what Truman or JFK clearly saw needed to be done in their day. Instead, the party has for all practical purposes assumed the role of de facto public relations wing for Al Qaeda, just as UC-Berkeley once allowed its campus to be the staging grounds of American Communism.

There are people on the Left; elected Democrats, media commentators, columnists, Hollywood actors, entertainers, “comics,” who are so unpatriotic that it appears they are on Osama Bin Laden’s payroll. Unfunny comedians like Bill Maher and Rosie O’Donnell, just to name two, give the appearance of people who traveled to Afghanistan; met with bin Laden; asked him, “What is it you would like me to do to help your cause, to hurt America?; were told, “Do precisely, exactly, and continuously, that with which you have been doing.”; and followed those orders to the letter.

Was it any surprise that Al Qaeda in Iraq advised America to “vote Democrat” prior to the 2006 mid-terms? Democrats did do that with which the terrorists thus advised. Conservatism is far from perfect, but to paraphrase Winston Churchill, it may be “the worst political philosophy known to man, with the exception of all other political philosophies known to man.” The Republicans have consistently shot themselves in the foot. Their biggest mistake has been, despite being given the bully pulpit of the winning ideology of conservatism, to keep trying to make friends with Democrats by adopting psuedo-Democrat
ideas. The result: Democrats stab them in the back anyway, and the ideas are bad.
Whether conservatism’s ultimate victory will manifest itself in Republican sweeps in 2008, resulting in Karl Rove actually getting his wish — the break-up of the Democrats in 2012 not unlike the nineteenth century Whigs — is immaterial to the movement’s place in history. Individual candidates, public opinion and external political factors — war, the economy, scandal — will swing individual elections to one side or another based on peculiarities of the moment. There have been times when conservatism had the mandate, the votes, the majority; and other times it has not. For the most part, even when it wins elections, it will always be a minority because to be a conservative requires courage, historical knowledge and a willingness to buck easy public opinion. Therefore, its adherents even when a minority in number, shall remain in an evil world the “thin red line” separating civilization from anarchy; right from wrong, order from chaos. George Washington standing up to the British Empire; Abraham Lincoln standing up to slavery; Winston Churchill standing up to Nazism; Ronald Reagan standing up to Communism; and George W. Bush standing up to terrorism.
A recent documentary called In the Face of Evil outlines the lonely, brave role of conservatism in a world of unimpressives. It tells the story of Reagan’s often lonely fight against Soviet expansion and influence. While Reagan saw the Cold War won, the documentary does not declare “victory” as such. It describes “the Beast,” a metaphor for the devil, Satan, evil, which simply changes form over generations: religious intolerance, despotism, racism, slavery, nationalism, Nazism, Communism, terrorism . . . and the seeming inability of supposedly well meaning people to see that with which is placed before thine eyes. The Left has either failed to see evil in the past, or worse, been part and parcel of it (Communism most obviously). Communism may be dead; that is, there may be no Soviet Union. There may be no “hammer and sickle.” One million Chinese regulars many not be crossing the Yalu River. But it is still alive as an idea; something that is against religion, especially Judeo-Christianity; against family values, tradition, manly courage, military valor, and other things that mark America. It is, therefore, against America, and it manifests itself in the form of — take your pick — Leftism or liberalism. The worst part about it is that it camouflages itself as something righteous, something for the environment, the planet, the children, the poor. It lies.
Its current failure to either oppose evil or do its bidding is not new. In 1972-73, Republican President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger crafted a hard-won peace with the North Vietnamese Communists. It was based on Kissinger’s realpolitik, a European concept outlined in post-Napoleonic peace treaties, using the interests of rival Communist states, the U.S.S.R. and China, against each other in favor of American global interests.

Then Watergate hit. The Democrats, after having suffered a massive loss in the 1972 blowout to Nixon, saw political opportunism. They challenged Nixon on the issue. The Communists, seeing American military will weakened by Democrat gains, attacked South Vietnam, which had been maintained as a sanctuary not unlike South Korea. With Democrats in power after the 1974 mid-terms, Nixon weakened, then resigned. Gerald Ford, unable to get Democrats to oppose the Communists, was thus unable to stop the North Vietnamese Army from invading the south.

It would be moral relativism to blame it all on Ted Kennedy, who led the Democrats at that time. After all, it was Communist leaders and soldiers who ordered and carried out the killings. Nevertheless Kennedy, being an intelligent man, could reasonably see it coming, yet still he did not oppose it. None in his party did. The result? Estimates vary, but the results of all this add up to about 1 million South Vietnamese dead, 1.5 million Cambodians dead, multiple thousands of Laotians and others dead, and millions of refugees.

That is what “the Beast” looked like between 1975 and 1979. Democrats, as if having made a deal with the devil, won the White House in 1976. By 1980, these and other events were no longer murky, hidden behind Democrat allies in the liberal media. Millions by now had seen and understand what occurred. The result? Ronald Reagan in two landslides.

When faced with the “the Beast” in its 1980s form – nuclear weapons, threats against western Europe, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, adventurism in Africa and Latin America – Reagan chose not the Kennedy strategy (3 million dead) but victory.

“Reagan won the Cold War without firing a shot,” declared British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Today, “the Beast” is Islamo-Fascist terror. The Democrats are advocating a replay of the Ted Kennedy strategy of 1973-75, for pure naked, short-term political gain. Whether the results would be 1 million
dead, 3 million dead, or more, in Iraq and throughout the Middle East, none of these scenarios are worthy to conservatives. The Democrats find themselves between a rock and a hard place. If the Kennedy strategy – now outlined by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (R.-California) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D.-Nevada) – is implemented, with the result a repeat of Cambodia’s “killing fields,” at some point Democrat responsibility for the carnage will again seep through the liberal media (which is now countered by conservative talk radio, meaning it will happen much faster). The electorate will react against the Democrats as they did in 1980, and the Republicans will go on another winning streak.

If, however, George Bush and his backers succeed first in fending off Democrat cowardice, then win, all credit will go to the Republicans. There will be no sharing of the credit, as in the Cold War. It will be the end of the Democrat Party, and not merely another Republican winning streak. It will be that “permanent majority” Karl Rove is seeking. This great nation is built on a two-party system. “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Pure Republican hegemony would not be good for the world. Despite its inherent ideological advantages, the party is run by human beings and therefore subject to human flaw. It is obvious by the writing in this book that an opinion has been made advocating for Republicans and conservatives, but it does not advocate for one-party Republican rule. A “loyal opposition” is needed. At this point, however, only the Democrats can save themselves and there do not appear to be any modern Lancelots on white steeds riding to their rescue.

It might seem incongruous that a book describing how the cherished liberal view of racial equality somehow sparked the political fire that led to liberal failure and conservative triumph. It would also be a mistake to assume that the opinions expressed herein advocate a “liberalism is all bad” philosophy. America needs liberalism. Conservatism, left to run amok, would screw up too. Liberalism is the bulwark of Western Civilization. Many of its best tenets are found in Greek Philosophy, Christian teachings, the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment, and the American Revolution.

It was liberalism that sparked the civil rights movement, and thank God for it. But it was only when conservatism met it half-way that the movement succeeded. Embodied by the modern South, symbolized by
the 1970 USC-Alabama football game, it has been the impetus for monumental political change favoring the Right. But the prospect of a Republican recovery resulting in the ultimate demise of the Democrat Party foretells potential doom, too. Not just political doom, but a larger kind of Doom, with a capital “D.”

“Pride goeth before the fall,” as former USC All-American tight end Charles “Tree” Young likes to quote from Scripture. There are preachers, many on the radio, who believe that the world is in the End Times. Call it what you like – the Great Tribulation, Apocalypse, Armageddon – but polls show that in America a remarkable 30 to 40 percent of the population holds to the evangelical Christian view that the Lord Jesus Christ is Coming . . . soon!

Some say the end of the “church age” began in 1988. The Book of Revelations describes events eerily similar to our world; the creation of national Israel, wars, rumors of wars, plus a population explosion matching the Biblical statement that there will be saved more than “any man can number.” “Signs and wonders” abound in the form of global climate change. Radio, TV, the Internet, modern communication and travel have made the spreading of the Gospel possible in ways man never could contemplate for the previous two thousand years.

The Bible describes the fall of great empires; Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Today, America is the greatest world empire in the history of human existence. While we appear to have our hands full with terrorists, the fact is that the U.S. could wipe all enemies off the planet through nuclear weapons. China and Russia, among others, may pose a threat and probably would get a few off in retaliation, but the only factors preventing the U.S. from utter global domination are two things: (1) the U.S. decision not to do so, (2) because the U.S. knows God would not look favorably upon such an act. So we instead fight our human enemies with one hand tied behind our back. His will be done.

Beyond our military, American dominance manifests itself in the form of pop culture, Hollywood, music, fashion, sports, and most importantly, the spread of Christianity through the freedoms advanced by this great nation.

Since great empires have all fallen in Biblical times, followed by the rise and fall of Spain, France, Great Britain, Germany and the Soviet Union, if one takes Revelations to its logical conclusion, would it not make sense that the “last empire,” its strongest and most righteous –
America – would be at its most impregnable when He returns in judgment?
Furthermore, would it not make sense that the truly good empire that is America would not be in place to free the most people, allowing the most souls to hear the Gospel, at a time of the world’s greatest population explosion (roughly 2 billion to 6 billion in 50 years)?
Lastly, is it not logical (at least as far as such things go) that the last great political philosophy – the uniquely American form of conservatism astride evangelical Christianity – officially cloaked in Republican victory, would be standing alone fighting “the Beast” in its death throes in the Last Days; and finally that Republican hubris, vanity and pride would be man’s final insult against God before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Of course, if all of this is to happen in our time, an Anti-Christ is required. An American political figure? Does anybody come to mind? Somebody out of the Middle East? The Bible tell us that all of this shall happen like “a thief in the night,” except for those who are standing in metaphorical watchtowers, waiting.

EXCERPTED FROM "GOD'S COUNTRY"

A MODERN THEORY OF GOOD VS. EVIL

Americans like to congratulate themselves on what a great country we are. We pat each other on the back because we got it right where others were off the mark. Our Constitution has lasted well over 200 years. We managed to effectively end the institution of slavery as a viable trade between legitimate nations. We have fought wars for the right reasons. Instead of plundering the conquered lands for booty, we re-built nations and endeared ourselves to grateful millions. We managed to create a political and economic model that defied the previous assumptions of men. Our mistakes are placed in the storefront window, not hidden from view. We study our errors and seek to correct them in a way no country has ever done.

Consider Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France in the beginning of the 19th Century. Bonaparte was one of the greatest military strategists of all time, but his strategies failed to take into account important aspects of campaigns. First, aggressive war makes enemies. Second, post-war occupation is a breeding ground for conspiracy. People are remarkably pliable over time. As generations change, populations get used to their situation. But Napoleon was not much more benevolent than all previous dictatorships. The Roman Empire plundered and enslaved conquered territory, and so did Napoleon. The Romans did bring their culture to distant outposts, and some of the native populations managed to prosper under their command. But mainly populations chafed
under Roman dictate. This was not the impetus of the empire’s crumbling. However, benevolent strength throughout their empire could have proven to be the necessary infrastructure of its existence. This lesson was not learned by Napoleon. He thought he could do better. He attacked his neighbors and looted their riches. He did not institute governments or policies that improved the situations of the defeated nations and armies. Many of the dispossessed multitudes would have welcomed changes that improved their political landscapes. The British, while the most progressive of the great pre-American empires, made the mistake of treating the populations in their colonies with contempt instead of endeavoring to create respect for law and equality. The one real exception to this was America, where the British viewed the colonists as semi-equals because they came from English stock.

What is important to understand, however, is that the United States has had the great advantage of history, timing and modern sensibilities guiding its destiny. Imagine how much recorded history had passed, like sands through the hourglass, before the U.S. came into being. England had crossed the seas, coming upon strange lands filled with mysterious, dark-skinned peoples. While the precepts of morality and goodness tell us that the English should have treated these populations with respect, it may be too much to expect the English race, faced with their own ignorance, suspicions and religious view of “pagans,” to act out in the manner God would intend. The English, imbued with a superior view of themselves, were not advanced enough to welcome non-whites as equals. Many have tried to blame Christianity for this, but one finds nothing in the Bible, or the teachings of Christ Himself, any justification for this behavior. Holding historical people responsible for their acts, using modern knowledge, is a standard that few can live up to. There are exceptions, but they are rare. The American Ideal was born from what we knew about the British, but because we were colonists chafing under their authority, it gave us the principles that lie at the heart of our country’s foundation. Thank God for it.

This is not to discount our own dark moments. The slavery experience, and the Indian Wars, in retrospect could have been handled much differently. But slavery did not continue, and the Indian experience was not the holocaust it could have been. What other countries in the 19th Century would have handled the Indian confrontations in a manner substantially different from the U.S.? A reminder of the Spanish Inquisition offers some perspective. The American West was an unavoidable of civilizations. Mainly, the history of America occurs side-by-side with enlightened times. The civil rights struggle, women’s suffrage, and modern religious, political, economic and psychological ideas are part of America’s growth. The question is worth asking, Has the world grown up because of America, or is America the by-product of a grown-up world? No doubt a little of both. This chapter endeavors to place credit where credit is due, by looking at historical figures whose writings and teachings influenced the formation of American political thought.

Dennis G. Dalton is a Ph.D. who teaches a course at Barnard College, Columbia University, called “Power Over People: Classical and Modern Political Theory.” Professor Dalton teaches in a beautiful, non-judgmental manner that seems to be devoid
of the kind of political correctness and historical revisionism that colors so much scholarship today.

Professor Dalton endeavors to tell us who we are by examining the giants of political thought throughout history. He uses two major criteria: How important the questions are, and the responses to the questions.

Since America is at its core a Democracy, it seems to make sense that one begins with an examination of Democratic principles. This takes us to the cradle of Democracy, Athenian Greece. But the three great philosophers of Greece, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle (and before them, the medical ethicist Hypocrates) did not just come to their conclusions without teachers of their own. Who and what influenced them?

Western political theory generally falls into three broad areas. The first involves the characteristics of human nature and interaction within society. But what drives human nature? Are we a product of internal or external matter? Does reason or passion drive us? Let us cut to the chase. Are people sinful or good? Violent or non-violent? Understanding these questions is as fundamentally difficult today as it was in Socrates’ time. It is the essential question that drives public policy today and in our future.

The attempt here is not just to gain some understanding of these tenets of the human animal. The purpose is to apply what we have learned to a study of the unique American character. The premise of this treatise is an acknowledgement that in the United States, we have made better and more moral decisions for the public good than any previous power. Still, we have not achieved a perfectly harmonious society. The quest for harmony goes back several Millennia. In order to achieve harmony, leaders must find a balancing act between coercive acts of power and the containment of conflict, as outlined by the laws written by institutions. Professor Dalton then asks, or really repeats the question, is social unity achievable? Is it even what we are looking for? Ah, as Shakespeare once said, there’s the rub. This is the nexus of struggle.

What about human rights? The American promise is based on the principle that man has unalienable rights. Legal theory has over the years ascribed the term “natural law” to this concept. It is brought up a great deal today. Natural law was a major part of the questioning of Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas in 1991. When the inevitable debate occurs over Roe vs. Wade, the abortion decision delivered in 1973, it will be the central theme of this question.

To understand the rights of man, one must address whether a Creator endows his rights. This requires that leap of faith religious people have made. But many do not take that leap. Furthermore, remember that throughout the ages, many people lived under the rule of people who thought they were gods. This premise creates further complicating dilemmas when addressing the question of equality and human rights in the context of social authority.

As somebody once said, the one constant is change. If this is so, should revolutionary thinkers be extolled for endorsing their cataclysmic ideals, or are they just historical conduits of necessity? Inevitable shifting sands of thought? To put it in plain terms, if Socrates, Plato and Aristotle do not come along, does somebody else take their place? Are we dealing with inevitability? If this is the case, one shudders to think that somebody like Adolph Hitler was inevitable.
So the question of dynamics is addressed, in the context of moral leadership and inexorable laws of history. The attempt here is to define some kind absolute truth that exists as obviously in Athenian Greece as in 21st Century Iowa. Let us call this what it is, the question of good and evil. To determine a kind universal, enduring code of ethics is to dispute a premise that makes its way around the modern landscape. This is the idea of moral relativism. Is it okay for Palestinian suicide bombers to blow up 50 Israeli men, women and children at a shopping mall, because Palestine has not achieved independence? Is it okay for the State of Texas to put another human being to death because that man killed another human being? Is it okay for a military commander to order his men to shoot into a crowd trying to break up a riot that would cause more casualties than those inflicted in order to stop it?

Are the answers to these questions founded in the realists’ grasp of hard facts, or some higher truth? This question has been framed at times as, What would Jesus do? One finds it difficult to imagine Jesus yelling, “Fire” at a column of soldiers who respond to His command by shooting at civilians, even if they are rioting civilians. If humans can operate on the premise that there is a God, and that the vagaries of life on Earth pale in comparison to an eternity in Heaven, then the quest for truth becomes operational. Perhaps we must simply acknowledge that while we have come a long way, the kind of understanding needed to avoid life’s hard facts is still far beyond our ken. What is realistic is that humans will not do the same things that Jesus did, because we are humans. Asking us to do what He did is not a viable expectation. Jesus had better information at His disposal than we do.

As we look at ourselves in the beginning of the New Millennium, it is important to address the nature of change. We live in a world of newspapers, cable television, satellites, the Internet, and information that is readily available to much of the world’s population. Change can occur much faster now than it did 300 years ago. Could the Communist Revolution have survived the kind of available knowledge we have today? National Socialism? Slavery? Or is technology a source of evil? This seems to be a strange question, but the Internet has turned out to be a place where child pornographers and terrorists communicate and readily find what they want. Is there some kind of universal dark message on the World Wide Web? The Web dislocates us from our communities, which have always operated as a kind of bulwark protecting us from ourselves. Believe me, I am a guy who uses the Internet every day. Maybe the Internet is just the way evil operates now. Through back channels. Via subterfuge. No more frontal assaults. I have a theory, based on my faith not only that there is a God, but that there is a devil, and that these forces of good and evil are constantly battling for the Earth. Maybe if the devil wins, that is when Armageddon occurs.

Or, maybe Armageddon has already happened, and we are just living in a post-Armageddon world. World Wars I and II could have been Armageddon. The atomic destruction in Japan could have been Armageddon. Maybe the build-up of opposing forces in the Middle East will lead to Armageddon. There actually is a place in the Holy Land called Armageddon. Maybe we averted Armageddon when we defeated the U.S.S.R. in the Cold War. Maybe the success of America thwarted the devil's Armageddon plans and he was forced into a rearguard action.
Great advances in science do not equate with morality. Look at the world we lived in 100 years ago. We made great strides during the 19th Century in art, culture and political philosophy. The work of Sigmund Freud symbolized a new Modernism, heralding a dawn of understanding among men of goodwill. The United States was an optimistic nation, led by Theodore Roosevelt, making its bid to be a world leader. We had settled the terrible slavery question on our own shores, and the feeling was that we had learned from our mistakes, our wars, and our misunderstandings. Hope sprung eternal.

But one might posit the notion that the devil had a plan. He might have seen the new technologies of the Industrial Revolution, and determined that man would just as likely put them to use for evil as for good. That is what happened during World War I. We ended that conflict and called it the "war to end all wars." We formed the League of Nations and told ourselves that civilized men and nations would keep the peace. The great expectations of the new century had simply been postponed by unfortunate old feuds between ancient European rivals. But evil has a face. It is the face of Hitler and Stalin. It was symbolized for years by the swastika, and the hammer and sickle. In the Roaring '20s, a group of Parisian-based writers called the Lost Generation sensed that the horrors of war had unleashed darkness that was spreading, not receding. The devil discovered, to his great delight, the machine gun, chlorine and mustard gas, the railroad line; these were weapons to further his work. It was heard in the cries of Armenians who died by the hundreds of thousands at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, in a genocide that the world ignored.

How wonderful, thought the devil. How convenient. A massacre of an entire people, all done under the color of "military necessity," and given the imprimatur of government respectability. The devil knew then and there that the selfish people of the world, concerned only with their own petty national problems, could be duped easily. We would just stand around while his work was done. The devil set out to find the most efficient regimes to carry out his plan. The United States? Naw, said the devil. It would be great if he could get those people to carry out his work. He had had a few successful campaigns in the New World. Slavery. The Civil War. But the U.S. was too Christian, and those Founding Fathers were independent thinkers. Trying to overcome the Constitution was too difficult a task. So the devil looked at the two huge countries hit hardest by the Great War, Germany and Russia. How perfect, he thought. He would pit them against each other, and it would not matter who won. The devil was hedging his bets for both sides.

First, and how perfect was this, the devil planted the seeds of hatred in Germany against the Chosen People of Israel. By almost the middle of the century, over 45 million people were dead. Among them were 6 million Jews, plus another 6 million who died with in the camps, and countless soldiers and civilians. Misery, disease, injuries, and displacement. The devil was on a roll, but he was facing his old nemesis, the United States. A chosen nation, given all the extra advantages that God could bestow upon it. The devil might not have expected the U.S. to come out of this latest war so well, but that is what happened. Damn, thought the devil. Foiled again. Just when it looked like the 20th Century would be his greatest victory, America came along with its principles, its ideals of happiness and equality. The French had espoused these ideals in 1789, but the devil saw to it that greed and retribution would win the day. But these Americans kept doing the right thing.
The devil kept getting his licks in. He managed to divide this beautiful nation, just enough to keep us from achieving our goals in the rice paddies of the Southeast Asia. He smiled when Pol Pot’s minion’s killed millions in Cambodia. But when the Berlin Wall fell, the devil knew the old techniques would not work any more. He needed to change the plan.

Now, the U.S. faces new challenges in a new century. Evil is a tricky thing. Like Communism, evil looks for disciples amongst the dispossessed, the losers, and the left-behind. Who better than the Arabs, who contributed little to victory over the Axis Powers, then aligned themselves with the Soviets in one of history’s poorer choices. These are the people who live in Third World squalor. They have occupied these countries for centuries, while the desperate, refugee Israelis moved into their back yard. Within a few years, they created the ultimate in your face: A thriving economic and military power.

The devil knew how to get to these Arabs. He planted seeds of hate, masked in the guise of destiny, within the little heads of Hussein, Arafat, Qhadafi, bin Laden, al-Assad. He found in these small people admiration for Hitler’s Germany. He told them that Der Fuhrer had been doing God’s work by massacring Jews, and that it was their chosen path to keep up the good work. This time, the Jews fought back, armed with better brainpower, moral authority, and partnership with the United States, who were now calling the shots instead of France and the ancient appeasers. The U.S.-Israeli alignment simply said no, and the little men were stopped.

In this new War on Terrorism, we are more and more facing an “enemy” that we call Militant Islam. But is this the real enemy? Is the devil just using the Muslims, a convenient group as it is, to hide his real agenda? He has, it would seem, just substituted the Jewish face, or the Armenian face, with the musky, bearded face of Islam. Something different and hard to understand. The enemy? Just as the Germans learned that the Jew was not their enemy, we will learn the Muslim is not ours. The key is to do it in time, before World War III breaks out in a massive misunderstanding of chaos and anarchy that sounds like the laughter of evil.

Who will say, “Never again?” Who will do the heavy lifting necessary to advance civilization in such a way that the devil retreats and cries “uncle” for 100, 500, maybe even 1,000 years? That is a pretty good guess, pilgrim. The answer: The United States of America.

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The United States of America at the beginning of the 21st Century is the greatest, most powerful nation and empire in the history of Mankind! This fact has been reinforced by the events that followed September 11, 2001. The U.S. has achieved effective victory in the War on Terrorism, rendering Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda relatively impotent; achieving total victory over Saddam Hussein; and laid the groundwork for American hegemony in the Middle East. Powerful U.S. Democratic, military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural influence spans every corner of the globe, in a way that no colonizing empire has ever known.

In the second half of the 20th Century, liberals have written the majority of history. Conservatives have been spoon fed the Leftist point of view to us in schoolbooks, from college professors, books, magazines, newspapers, network journalism, and Hollywood. All along, conservatives had a sneaking suspicion that what they were being told did not add up.

Steven Travers, America’s poet-warrior and Renaissance Man – an athlete, soldier, writer, political philosopher, historian and patriot - has written his magnum opus. He is one of the New Conservatives who have recently decided to fight back and tell the Truth about history and America's extraordinary place in it. He says that we are embarking on the age of the New American Empire, but that it is a "new kind of empire." He writes that this conclusion is based not on vanity but on moral responsibility, and that it is ideas, not military success or occupation, that will shape the new empire of the 21st Century.

Travers concludes that America is and will continue on the path of greatness because we are a nation that submits to God's will, instead of succumbing to the vainglorious paganism that has marked too many historical powers. He has taken on the task of outlining how America’s extraordinary place in the world came to be, and details the no-holds-barred, unflinching strategy for the future of America and the world. This is not your average "objective" history book. Instead, it details the facts of the past 3,000 years, interspersed with the slant of a columnist's right-leaning opinion. However, it offers the theory that the so-called "end of history" has demonstrated that the socialist-Communist theories of the Left are the demonstrable losers of history.

Travers boldly poses questions like, "Is it biased to say the New York Yankees are the greatest sports team of all time, or is that simply stating a fact?" His answer is that the
statement is not opinion, but fact backed by empirical evidence. He offers that same logic to his dissection of history. America is not hated, it is respected. It is the best country on Earth, but being the best does not generate love. Time after time, conservatism, Christianity and America have triumphed, and this is not an accident or a trend. Rather, to state that this trinity represents the best hopes and aspirations of Mankind is not merely a biased opinion, but rather a simple, accurate description of events that repeat themselves time after time.

If not for the U.S., according to the author, "the world would be one big concentration camp, with German, Soviet, Japanese and Chinese nuclear missiles crowding the skies above us."

“God's Country” is a comprehensive history book, covering Mankind’s triumphs and failures, including the rise of Christianity and a study of all the world’s great religions. Travers gives treatment to the most influential philosophies (giving equal weight to good and evil). Covered are the wars, politics, territorial disputes, cultural influences and dramas that shaped the world, leading to the rise and fall of great empires in Rome, China, England, and France; and the minds of those who are most responsible for great movements, ranging from Athenian Democracy, the anarchism of Rousseau, Thoreau and Emma Goldman, Marxism-Leninism, and finally the ultimate triumph of Jeffersonian Democracy.

The second phase is the history of America, from the Revolution to Iraq. Travers, an unapologetic conservative, boldly offers that America is the greatest country ever conceived by man, and theorizes that the young nation has not achieved this by accident. First, he offers “evidence” that America, from the Founding Fathers to the present day, is a country Divinely Inspired and protected by God, a notion that no doubt drives the liberals crazy! Rather than paper over or justify America’s controversies – the U.S.-Mexico War, Manifest Destiny, slavery, Vietnam – Travers explains each of these events with unflinching honesty, rebuffing the lies of detractors without excusing the human failings that demonstrate that this great country is neither infallible, nor impervious to future threats. The author is able to show the huge advantage that the United States has. Idealistic, intelligent, Christian Europeans who were brave and moral founded the nation, thus inculcating a unique ideal. Geography and natural resources have proven to be of enormous benefit. But most important, by outlining the patterns of history, he demonstrates that the wise men who built America had centuries of lessons to learn from and avoid the many mistakes of history. That is why the Great Experiment is such a resounding success.

Finally, Travers writes that the U.S has "saved" the world and must accept its role as the greatest superpower of all time. He details the wisest plan to make use of this status in a way that will best benefit his country and the world as we enter the new Millennium. “America’s Manifest Destiny” is written from the perspective of his Christian worldview, and an interesting back-story permeates this view. That is the concept that good and evil constantly battle each other. The author outlines his fascinating theories of how the devil has strategized and schemed to gain advantage through a never-ending series of lies, bluffs, false alliances and rear guard actions involving governments, despots, religious, political and military leaders.
"God's Country" also posits fascinating "what if?" theories, including a dissection of John Kennedy's "stolen" Presidential victory over Richard Nixon in 1960. The author offers that had Nixon been in office, the Bay of Pigs would have ousted Fidel Castro and freed Cuba, Nikita Kruschev never would have risked the Cuban Missile Crisis, and Communism would have been halted in Vietnam before that war escalated. He also argues that Communism is worse than Nazism, and details how the Cold War "normalized" it. Travers makes the point that had World War II ended in a stalemate with Adolph Hitler, a Cold War with the German Empire would have resulted in off-shoots of international Nazism that Western appeasers would have dismissed as less threatening than in fact it would have been.

"God's Country" is not your average "history book,” the dry ruminations of a Ph.D. thesis. "God's Country" serves as "one-stop shopping," offering 2,000 to 3,000 years of history under a single cover, while at the same time providing the information with conservative opinion. It used the gathered knowledge of centuries to demonstrate the victory of conservative thought and why America is where it has flourished. It is highly opinionated and filled with personal reflection. Travers contends that the world needs liberals, but left to their own devices with unchecked power, their criticisms of American policies would lead to ruination. The good news, Travers says, is that America is so great even the Left cannot bring it down. Their formulas are untenable in the real world. So even when they come to power, they must govern conservatively because they have viable alternatives. Liberalism has failed and those on the Left have little left except to blame America first. He informs the reader with stories, drama and modern cultural humor, providing a scathing review of unpatriotic Hollywood, the falsehoods of the Blacklist, liberals who find themselves on the wrong side of history, media bias, and how new communications are feeding a public thirsting for Truth.

His fascinating "Reagan Theory" details how Ronald Reagan should be credited with winning the Cold War without firing a shot, and will do more to enhance his legacy than any other retrospective. In the end, Travers outlines the next century, where he sees a battle for the world's soul between liberalism and conservatism. In a chilling "cautionary tale," he details how Communism has found a substitute international ideology which stands at odds with American values. He describes how Plato's "warrior spirit" is a concept that the U.N. and Europe have abandoned for the worse. Travers warns that unless Christianity makes a comeback outside the U.S., Napoleonic mistakes of the past may repeat themselves. The Internet has the potential to disseminate evil on a massive scale.

He is a futurist who makes a surprising observation, which is that the "defeat" of liberalism has the potential of launching destructive forces. Pointing out that Nazism and Communism strove for a "purity" of form, Travers says that the evil specter of White Supremacism and race wars may be in our future unless stopped. After 3,000 years of history, he feels the only way to prevent this catastrophe is through the messy ideals embodied by America, and that it is this great country that was empowered by a loving deity to prevent such a thing. The future of our world, therefore, depends on the success of America.
GOOD SPORTS

How athletics motivates men and women to succeed in business and in life

I. SUMMARY

"It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game."

This age-old phrase has been debated over the years. Legendary Green Bay Packers football coach Vince Lombardi once said, "Winning's not everything; it's the only thing." Controversial Raiders owner Al Davis urged his charges to, "Just win, baby!" But perhaps former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden said it best:

"Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."

Let's face it: nobody wins all the time. Nobody is perfect. Human beings are flawed, morally and physically. All we can do is our best. Nothing embodies these truths better than the wide world of sports. The lessons learned in athletics are among the most poignant, long lasting and influential in our lives. Since the 1970s, women's sports have grown not just in popularity but in the shaping of a new generation of girls who have succeeded as women in business, in relationships, and in life.

We cheer the great, multi-millionaire heroes of professional baseball, basketball and football, but as the NCAA proudly touts in their commercials, 90 percent of college athletes go pro in something other than sports. Our leaders include many of these ex-jocks of both sexes. They have learned lessons on our playing fields; usually small, non-revenue sports played before a handful of fans, not cheering throngs at the Coliseum or Yankee Stadium.

Good Sports focuses on 50 successful men and women who played sports. It tells the tale of lessons learned from coaches, teammates, from the very struggle to win and, as often as not, the desperation of disappointment that comes with defeat. The most successful amongst of are those who use defeat as motivation, as a stepping-stone, as a lesson learned, as a door that closes only to reveal another one opening. Those who handle the glories of victory not as conquest of others, but as the natural result of hard work and preparation.

Read all about Terry Marks, who came from a large, blue-collar Irish Catholic family in upstate New York, but journeyed west to expand his horizons and play baseball at the University of Southern California. Great diamond success never came his way, but he shifted his focus to success in sales and marketing. Baseball lessons inculcated his rise all the way to the presidency of Coca-Cola/North America.

Read about Bob Ladouceur, who only wanted to teach religion at Concord, California's De La Salle High School when he was asked to take over the school's moribund football program. Over the years, Coach Ladouceur always emphasized the lessons of Christianity over winning. The result: the winningest prep football dynasty of all time.

Read about Billie Jean King and Pat Summitt, two of the all-time pathfinders of women's sports. Read about the people who run the top 10 non-revenue men's and women's college sports programs; how competitiveness, experience, joy, sadness,
camaraderie, hard work, and focus has produced countless success stories . . . in something other than sports.

From little league to the pros, sports is a part of our lives. Every win and loss; every practice; every experience provides a lesson that can be used in our marriages, our relationship with our children, with co-workers, and in all aspects of our lives. Here is a bottom-line look at sports behind-the-scenes. This is not about world championships or the breaking of records, but at the discipline and joy d'vivre that can translate from victory in the field to victory from the boardroom to the living room.

THE NEW MEDIA

In January 1968, CBS' anchorman Walter Cronkite, after observing the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, told America that in his estimation, the war was unwinnable. There were few other media outlets that had the standing to dispute Cronkite's assessment. Many Americans assumed that if "the most trusted man in America" felt the country was failing, it was not to be disputed.

Over the next 12 years, the "liberal media" defined America. After Watergate, the Left may well have felt justified in feeling that they had won the ultimate argument of history. When Ronald Reagan won election to the White House, it not only proved that the Left had not "won," but that conservatism had a major voice aching to be heard.

Over the next decade, encouraged by electoral victories, the Right felt compelled to engage in a culture war that would be defined by new forms of media and battlefronts on old forums.

This first took form on radio, embodied by Rush Limbaugh. Limbaugh became a hero to conservatives and anathema to liberals. Up until 1993-94, Limbaugh stood almost alone, battling the Left in a "daily pursuit of the truth," as he put it.

While conservative talkmeisters had always had a voice - Father Coughlin the 1930s, Paul Harvey nationally and Bob Grant in New York - none had the power of Limbaugh.

The Left looked at Limbaugh and saw an anomaly. Their feeling was that he was a singular phenomenon, but when he faded from the scene his influence would fade, too.

They were wrong on two fronts. First, Limbaugh's message never grew old, but what truly changed the country was technology. While radio is an old medium, it worked in confluence with emerging new media which the conservatives put a stranglehold on. This was cable TV, the Internet and the so-called blogosphere.

Today, a CBS anchorman like Cronkite might make a statement such as "the Iraq War cannot be won," and he would immediately be shouted down by talk radio, the conservative print, the Internet, cable news and the blogs.
An exclamation of how the conservative media and technology became the voice of the
Right, of modern American Christianity, of the "flyover states" and the New South - thus
making it the sounding board of electoral success - is the exclamation of how America
regained its footing; how the U.S. went from stumbling and failure, to establishing itself
as the greatest empire in world history.

LIBERAL MEDIA BIAS CREATES NEW PARADIGM

Liberal media bias displayed during the recall campaign coalesces some new dynamics.
First, liberal bias is not a "myth" or a "lie." It is a fact. This factual knowledge lives
within the province of the knowledge of millions upon millions of ordinary, patriotic
American citizens. These are the people Hillary Clinton calls the "vast right wing
conspiracy." This "conspiracy" consists of fed-up people who know how to fill out
ballots, and are motivated to vote. That's what the meaning of is is!

Second, liberal bias has gone through a conversion. It was a huge backlash against
McCarthyism, which reached crescendo status in Hollywood, print media, and the
networks, during the Vietnam and Watergate eras. The American Left came very close to
achieving "victory," but conservatism's "secret weapon," the Silent Majority, held the thin
green line until Ronald Reagan and Rush Limbaugh emerged. In the 1990s, talk radio,
followed by the Internet and cable news, diluted the effect of the liberal media.

Third, because of Bill Clinton's character, the new conservative media, and then 9/11,
liberal bias was reduced between 1998 and 2003. The Left wing, sensitive to criticism
and seeing smaller profits, reduced its vitriol during the 2000 campaign, benefiting
George Bush. However, the same people who have fueled the liberal/anarchic wing of
elite opinion, could not help but revert to true character. Two things are behind this return
to form. In the 21st Century, the United States is the most powerful empire in world
history. The Left despises the concept of American hegemony and success, preferring "an
even playing field" of "fairness" and other utopian nostrums. Communism was defeated,
but the mindset behind the Western version of it remains. This strain of society is the
Emma Goldman wing of anarchism. Its modern ally is terrorism. This is an evil that takes
the defeated ideologies of Communism, Fascism and racism, ball it all up, and create
hatred among people who do not share in the victorious history of Democracy. Finally,
simple psychology comes into play. The Democrat party is on its last legs. They were on
the verge of crumbling in 1972, 1991 and 1994. They were saved by Watergate and
Republican blunders. Counting on more G.O.P. mistakes in 2004 is not realistic. By
2012, the Democrats will be splintered into independent parties. They are the new Whigs.
Its members, and their friends in the media, frustrated by their lack of influence, react like
any animal that knows it is cornered. They visciously strike out. The media was
constrained by the Iraq War, but the Leftist press and the Democrats' reaction to President
Bush in its aftermath is the most hateful I have observed since the Reagan years. They are
reduced to rooting for scenarios that are bad for America and the world. The Republican
party has never in its history given in to such blatant politics.
Now, here is the "dirty little secret." As a conservative, I should probably let the Democrats keep killing themselves, but my guess is they are so filled with (self?) hate that this lesson will not sink in. The secret is that Democrats and the media, who engage in viscous quasi-unpatriotic attacks, are hurting themselves and helping the Republicans. The media labors under the myth that they still have influence and power, when in reality their words are either not believed or are unread/unheard by a citizenry who choose to find Truth in other quarters. The Left may be reaching liberals, but they are creating a smaller audience, not an expanding one. The more the Left criticizes the right, the more votes they "create" for the right. Liberals read their attack headlines and labor under the falsehood that they are changing minds, but each November they are stunned to find that Republicans make gains. As Pauline Kael said after Richard Nixon won 49 states in 1972, "I don't know how he won. I don't know anybody who voted for him." This is an inevitable reality, based on the fact that conservatism and (Judeo) Christianity are the winning ideologies of 2,000 years of history. Democrats and the liberal media, however, have little wriggle room. To continue to spew negative politics is to dismantle their apparatus further. The alternatives are not attractive to them, and include dropping out of public life or making a turn to the right.

The liberal media has played down a little-known reality, which is that Communism made huge in-roads in American opinion in the 1930s, '40s and '50s. When Whittaker Chambers exposed Alger Hiss, he had lunch with Henry Luce and an escaped dissident from Stalin's Russia. The Russian explained that, "In America, the working class is Democrat, the middle class is Republican, and the upper class is Communist." I offer the work of Hollywood as one piece of evidence that demonstrates that while the Communist conspiracy was foiled by the likes of Chambers, Nixon and J. Edgar Hoover, the motivations behind it coalesced into anti-Americanism, which found a home in the Democrat party and the liberal media.

God bless this beautiful nation.

STRIKE THREE!
(Working Title)

An inside expose of Barry Bonds, baseball's steroid scandal, and its far-reaching effect on modern society

A BOOK PROPOSAL

By STEVEN TRAVERS

Excerpts from Chapter One: " Crossing the Rubicon"
San Francisco, California - October 5, 2001  SBC Park used to be called Pacific Bell Park. It is the jewel by the bay in San Francisco, a place that brings to mind the lyrics of Journey's classic rock anthem to their hometown, "Lights":

"When the lights go down in the City…
"And the sun shines on the bay…"

It has meant a great deal to The City, a place of duality that is both arrogant and beset by an inferiority complex. Pac Bell is something that San Francisco did right, finally. It is something that San Francisco did right, of course.

Pac Bell Park has been a source of pride in the Bay Area for five years now. In a town where many would not attend a baseball game at dilapidated Candlestick Park if they were paid to do so, Pac Bell became a Mecca of baseball and the "in" place to be. A place for cool cats and hipsters, for those who feel the need to see and be seen. The trendy restaurants and waterfront bars that surround the stadium have become hot spots in a part of town, China Basin, that was once a blue-collar wasteland.

Pac Bell was built after decades of angst in and around a city known for its angst. Mainly, it was built to accommodate the heroics and histrionics of a single athlete named Barry Bonds.

Friday night, October 5, 2001, was the night everything would be worth it. The politics and the money that went into building the world's best baseball stadium. The enormous contract that lured Bonds home from Pittsburgh to play for the San Francisco Giants. The locker room dissing of the media by the *prima donna* superstar. All of it would be overshadowed and made right by the events of this fateful night.

It was chilly at Pac Bell on this evening, certainly not a surprise in a town where Mark Twain once said he spent the coldest Winter of his life in the Summer. The capacity crowd was appropriately wrapped and bundled. Their very appearance on this night was more significant than the usual "sports history is being made" scenario. Less than one month prior, terrorists had flown airplanes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and thanks to a handful of American heroes who said the Lord's Prayer before taking action, into a Pennsylvania field instead of the White House. In the weeks after 9/11, the American public had grieved and tried to find answers. Now, on this night a continent away, for the very first time, they were fighting terrorism in the best way they knew how. With the threat of Anthrax or bombs literally hanging over their heads, they were sending a message to Osama bin Laden. The message, which would be repeated by New Yorkers at the World Series a few weeks later, was that "we live, we love, we win." The reality of the crowded arena now held special meaning in a world in which terrorists seek to kill as many people as possible. Part of this reality was a growing sense of defiance, denying satisfaction to an enemy thirsting for evidence that they had changed a nation through fear.

At 8:15 P.M., half a continent away, a big red-head named Mark McGwire went down on strikes, and at that moment an African-American slugger who is a walking contradiction took a mighty cut and made McGwire the *former* home run champion. It was Barry Bonds' 71st homer of the season, and the greatest record in all of sports had fallen. It was the result of a personal crusade of excellence by a man who had taken the
art of long ball hitting to a new level. His efforts had a superhuman quality to them, as if he had the will of the gods and the lightning touch of Zeus at his disposal.

Sports, perhaps more than any endeavor, allows people to observe on occasion man at his absolute primal best. The arena of sports is the truest, best place to display human excellence. Those who pursue these arts are, of course, flawed people like the rest of us, which only adds to the duality and mysterious conundrum that makes it so beautiful and real. When Bonds broke McGwire's record, he helped America take its first steps back towards normalcy, and at the same time erased - at least for the time being - the public's perception of him as a spoiled, arrogant superstar.

Burlingame, California - September, 2003  Located just a few miles south of Pac Bell Park on Highway 101 in the town of Burlingame, in a non-descript mini-mall, Federal agents were collecting evidence from a sports nutrition company called Bay Area Lab Co-Operative, BALCO for short. BALCO had been supplying some of the most elite professional athletes in the world with steroids. They were run by a man named Victor Conte. Conte's brother was Stan Conte, the respected trainer for the San Francisco Giants. Now the jig was up. A new era in steroid enforcement would soon hit the sports world like a ton of bricks. The Feds were not just going after a few athletes, mostly little known track stars. Now they were going after the biggest of the big fish, and their suppliers, too. It was the sports version of RICO, a conspiracy law that former New York prosecutor Rudy Giuliani had used to cripple the Mafia in the 1980s.

The sports world is a pay-per-view life of home runs, multi-year contracts and fan adulation. The players are made out to be modern day gods, and like Roman emperors of yesteryear, it would not be such a bad idea to place a mortal by their side, whispering in their ear the warning that, "All glory is fleeting."

Almost two years after breaking McGwire's record, Barry Bonds continued to defy that warning. He was in the process of winning his third consecutive Most Valuable Player award, giving him six in his career. No player had ever won more than three. In 2002 he had led the Giants into the World Series, where he hit four home runs in a dazzling, heroic effort against the Anaheim Angels. Now he had his team in first place, driving towards another championship, and baseball's home run records were falling faster than Eastern Europe under Stalin. Bonds had, since 2001, surpassed a collection of Hall of Famers on the all-time career list. Now only three icons were ahead of him. His Godfather, Willie Mays, warily watched his protégé approach his mark of 660, which would fall either late in 2003 or early in 2004. Next was the ghost of Babe Ruth, whose various records for homers, slugging percentage, and on-base average were being erased by Bonds, seemingly bent on purging the Bambino from the record books like some disgraced politician during the Cultural Revolution.

Beyond Ruth lay Henry Aaron. Aaron symbolized American Struggle - the black man who overcame prejudice to break Ruth's record of 714 home runs in 1974, helping to pave the way for a new generation of millionaire African-American athletes like Bonds. Aaron had retired a couple of years later with a seemingly unbreakable 755. Aaron had been the thin kid with the quick wrists and the unorthodox, hit-off-the-back-foot batting style. He was old school all the way. After Bonds broke McGwire's record, Aaron had lent himself to a Charles Schwab commercial, "warning" Bonds in a semi-comical "Field
of Dreams' voiceover to retire instead of pursue his career mark. But pursue Bonds did. Bonds had the greatest season in baseball history in 2001, and now he was passing
records that were making more and more experts consider that maybe, just maybe, he
would someday be accorded the title Greatest Baseball Player of All Time.

In continuing to achieve glory year after year, Bonds' was improving with age! Instead of limping towards his middle years with deteriorating skills, relinquishing the
glory as Ruth, Mays and Aaron had before him, Bonds would not head quietly into that
good night. Whereas his ability defied the logic of known batting skills, his body defied
the laws of age, of gravity, of Father Time. He was baseball's version of the picture of
Dorian Gray, and an amazed sports world wondered how he did it.

In September of 2003, the heady concerns of Barry Bonds were a pennant race, Mays'
mark, another MVP award, followed by The Babe and "Hammerin' Hank". Little did he
know that at this very time, only a few miles away and in Washington, D.C., an
investigation was underway that would rock the very foundations of his insulated, "I'm
Barry Bonds and you're not!" world. Deals would be cut. Stool pigeons would sing like
canaries. Everybody would save themselves.

The first target was Greg Anderson. Anderson had grown up with Bonds in San Carlos, a
San Francisco suburb located next door to Burlingame. He had played little league
baseball with Bonds, then parlayed his friendship into a successful career as a personal
fitness trainer. Through this connection he had become associated with BALCO, which
saw itself as a "one-stop shopping" center in which Bonds could train, and have his
nutritional and "strength" needs taken care. In the Bay Area, a warm weather
metropolitan place that is home to two Major League baseball teams, two pro football
teams, an NBA franchise, two major colleges and some of the top athletes in the world,
BALCO was in the right place at the right time. Or so it seemed. As they say, be careful
for what you wish for!

Federal authorities raided BALCO. They raided Anderson's condominium. They
found illegal anabolic steroids. They were "caught looking," to use a baseball term. Red-
handed. Flat-footed. With a "smoking gun."

While sports pages heralded the pennant race and the beginning of football season,
Federal authorities were questioning Anderson and Conte. Anderson told them that he
had provided steroids to a number of his clients. This included several top Major League
baseball players. One of them was Barry Bonds.

Earlier that season, Major League Baseball had tested players for steroids. Seven
percent of them had come up positive. Whether Bonds had been one of them was not
revealed, because the players' union had negotiated a deal in which steroid abuse would
be met with little more than an anonymous slap on the wrist. But this was not the
Commissioner's Office. This was the United States Justice Department, led by a no-
nonsense, conservative Christian named John D. Ashcroft. Ashcroft reported to a
President, George W. Bush, who just so happened to have once owned the Texas
Rangers. Bush was a man who cared deeply about the state of Our National Pastime. All
bets were off.

San Francisco, California - December, 2003  Anderson's confession and the ensuing
investigation had been kept quiet while Bonds completed his MVP season. The Giants
were upset by Florida in the Divisional Series. Soon after the Marlins completed their improbable run, culminating with a victory over the vaunted New York Yankees in the World Series, the Justice Department announced that Anderson and Conte had been arrested, and that BALCO was being investigated for distributing illegal steroids to elite athletes. Among them were Bonds and his best friend, Gary Sheffield. Sheffield, the newest member of the Yankees, had experienced resurgence in his career after spending an off-season at Bonds' home, training with him. Sheffield's Yankee teammate, Jason Giambi, a former member of the cross-bay Oakland A's, was also under investigation. So were a number of pro football players and track stars.

A hearing was held at the San Francisco Federal Courthouse. Bonds appeared, smiling, dressed to the nines, and arrogant. A media circus scrutinized his every move. He denied everything.

Scottsdale, Arizona - February, 2004 In the months after his appearance in a Federal courtroom, Bonds had continued to deny using steroids. This was the official line of most of the accused. Bonds most likely did not know that Anderson, as far back as September, had told the Feds that he had given him steroids. They had set him up for a fall, giving him just enough rope to hang himself. When President Bush made his State of the Union speech in January, he mentioned steroids in sports. The public, like Bonds, was unaware of the fact that Attorney General Ashcroft had told him about Anderson's statement.

Now, in the idyllic Spring Training atmosphere of Scottsdale, Bonds "perfect world" was further rocked by the public disclosure, by Anderson, that he was among the athletes who had received steroids. Questioned by the media, Bonds assumed the "bunker mentality" mode that he always does when mere humans question and require the truth from him. He told reporters to "get the hell out of my locker," and reverted to the trusty "race card," declaring himself the "most wanted man in America," thrusting his arm outward in a gesture reminiscent of either Tommy Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Olympics, or Adolf Hitler at Nuremberg.

"Black power!" was his statement to the press.

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida - February, 2004 Jason Giambi, the 2000 American League MVP, whose rise as a baseball star had coincided with his becoming the workout partner of Mark McGwire, reported to the New York Yankees' Spring Training facility. He had signed a multi-million dollar free agent contract with the Bronx Bombers following the 2001 season. One of the things he had brought with him to New York was his personal trainer, who had quit his job as the A's strength coach to work solely for Jason. Giambi had gotten more buffed, ripped and strong than ever before. Appearing in two-page color ads in ESPN the Magazine, Giambi appeared to look more like a bodybuilder than a baseball player. However, after the 2002 agreement between owners and players had mandated steroid testing, Giambi's appearance began to fluctuate. He was no longer allowed to bring his trainer with him into locker rooms and on the field. Now, possibly scared off by the steroid accusations swirling around the game, Giambi reported to Ft. Lauderdale, and the first reports from the media were that he looked like "a scarecrow."
Washington, D.C. - March, 2004  While Bonds was living in a state call Denial, and Giambi was sweating out his association with BALCO and the fallout that this would entail, much of the focus of the scandal shifted to our nation's capital, principally two places. Segue to the Justice Department, where government lawyers and investigators were preparing for the next phase of discovery. Over on Capitol Hill, U.S. Senator John McCain (R.-Arizona) was leading the questioning of baseball Commissioner Bud Selig and union head Donald Fehr. Fehr had more to hide than a Red during the McCarthy hearings. The union he represented had been harming the game for years, and now it was apparent to Senator McCain that Fehr was not interested in the players nearly as much as he was interested in holding onto power; a power that had shifted over the previous 20 years, imperiling the balance of the game, and leaving the fans with the feeling that baseball was no longer pure.

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Steven Travers has freelanced for magazines, newspapers and web sites. He produced Steven Travers’ Journal on the Internet, and formed San Francisco Sports Management, Inc., where he was a sports agent before embarking on a full-time writing career in 1994. STRIKE THREE! by Steven Travers promises to be the first, and most comprehensive book to provide an honest appraisal of steroid and performance-enhancing drug use in the sports world generally and the baseball world specifically. It will be written by an author and sportswriter of multi-varied experiences, which makes Travers uniquely qualified to write STRIKE THREE! For example, Travers is:

• the author of the controversial bestseller, BARRY BONDS: Baseball's Superman, which was nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of 2002
• the former lead sports columnist for the San Francisco Examiner and StreetZebra; sportswriter for the Los Angeles Times and the Los Angeles Daily News; a sports stringer on San Diego’s XTRA 690 AM radio station
• a former freelance sports writer for magazines, newspapers and web sites
• a former professional pitcher in minor league baseball
• a former minor league teammate of Jose Canseco — an alleged steroid user — in the Oakland A's organization
• a former classmate of Mark McGwire at the University of Southern California, where Travers was an assistant coach
• the co-founder of San Francisco Sports Management, Inc., a sports agency which represented, for a brief period, the Pittsburgh Pirate outfielder Al Martin.
• intimately aware of the workings of the Players Association, its Executive Director, Donald Fehr, and the Association’s intransigence and the arbitrary nature of its actions in the steroid controversy
• intimately knowledgeable about the role of Major League Baseball and its Commissioner, Bud Selig, in the steroid controversy.
• a former personal trainer with a first-hand knowledge of the drug-drenched fitness industry
STRIKE THREE! follows in the tradition of great sports exposés. In 1970, Jim Bouton, a journeyman baseball pitcher, wrote "Ball Four". Bouton's magnum opus spawned a generation of tell-all books and movies ("North Dallas Forty", "Semi-Tough", "The Bronx Zoo").

Now comes Travers with an inside book written by an insider. STRIKE THREE! promises to rock the very foundations of the “tight-lipped” baseball establishment and, to a large degree, American sports itself.

Just as Michael Lewis' "Moneyball" educated fans on the intricacies of scouting and economics in baseball, STRIKE THREE! will educate people on what really happens behind the closed doors of locker rooms and fitness training facilities.

Travers' will employ a non-narrative, dramatic writing style influenced by such books as Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood", Hunter S. Thompson's "Fear and Loathing In Las Vegas", Tom Wolfe's "The Right Stuff", and David Halberstam's "The Best and the Brightest", all blended with his personal style, which has been described as "the new Jim Murray."

STRIKE THREE! will read like a "whodunit" — a story of betrayal and Faustian choices by a Rogues' gallery of celebrities and wannabe's, each in a quest for fame and fortune. The dramatic, fast-moving, cinematic pace of this book will take us from Major League locker rooms to shady, back-of-the-building encounters at fitness and nutrition centers, to Capitol Hill, into Federal courtrooms, and to points in between.

The book will focus on the recent, on-going news reports involving BALCO (Bay Area Lab Co-Operative), a San Francisco Bay Area sports nutrition company run by Victor Conte, whose brother, Stan, is the trainer for the San Francisco Giants. BALCO's close connection to Barry Bonds is centered around Greg Anderson, who played little league baseball with Bonds in nearby San Carlos. Anderson, as Bonds' personal trainer and nutritionist, has maintained a lifelong friendship and professional relationship with Bonds.

The Federal government alleges that, in September 2003, they were told that Anderson had given steroids not only to Bonds, but to such Major League superstars as Gary Sheffield (Bonds' best friend and off-season workout partner) and New York Yankee slugger Jason Giambi. Shortly after the 2003 season ended, news of the Federal investigation hit the sports world like a tornado. In December Bonds, among elite athletes in football, track and other sports, was compelled to testify under oath. A month later, President George W. Bush, having been apprised of the Justice Department's findings, decided to politicize the issue by speaking out against steroid abuse in his State of the Union address. Just as the Major League players reported to Spring Training in March, 2004, another bombshell struck: BALCO had given steroids to Bonds, Sheffield, Giambi, football star Bill Romanowski, and many others. The rumbles coming from San Francisco equaled any earthquake the region had previously endured.

In his earlier Bonds biography, Travers promoted the slugger as the "greatest baseball player of all time." Now, in the light of Bonds’ alleged illegal use of steroids, Travers will recant that assessment. This "new view" of Bonds will not merely affect his...
place in history, but will require a re-assessment of the statistics and accomplishments of "modern athletes" in all sports as compared to those untainted stars of yesteryear.

THE FEATURED PLAYERS

At the heart of this story is a thirsty desire; greed for fame and fortune and for success on the playing field, a desire to get ahead, and to rise head and shoulders above the competition - at any price! What drives this greed is the "new morality" of success in America, a "win at all costs" mindset that has inculcated our children and manifested itself in our "heroes." The old saw, "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game," seems to have been replaced by the latest version of Leo Durocher's philosophy that "nice guys finish last," or the CIA maxim that "the end justifies the means."

BARRY BONDS

It is fitting that when it is all said and done, Barry Bonds is at the heart of this controversy. Bonds is a man who has never played by the same rules as the rest of society, because he never had to. From his earliest youth, he has been special, gifted, anointed. To expect a young man with his advantages to be in any way "normal" is to expect a miracle. His decision to take steroids, if in fact the final facts prove beyond doubt that he indeed did so, falls in line with his arrogant outlook on life, encapsulated by a Sports Illustrated cover story titled, "I'm Barry Bonds and you're not!"

MARK McGWIRE

For a few years, McGwire was one of our greatest sporting heroes. He was a larger-than-life figure; boyish and modest in an "aw shucks" kind of way, Big Mac was the anti-Bonds. When he broke into the big leagues, McGwire was friendly and accommodating. In the early 1990s, his body type changed dramatically. He began to lift weights "seriously," and many now suspect that he began to take steroids. With his body transformation came a mood transformation, as well. Close friends from his past - USC and high school - found themselves cut out of his world. Writers noticed that he was subject to moodiness, a trait associated with steroid usage. Still, McGwire's basic decency, which manifests itself in his love of kids, shined through when he broke Roger Maris' single-season home run record. A mere three years later, however, beset by strange injuries - the kind that steroid use creates over time - McGwire retired into obscurity. Why did he disappear? Could it be that he anticipated the exposure of steroid abuse in baseball and wanted to remove himself from the scene before the story broke? Now, faced with an inquiry that may drag him back in like a retired Mob boss who cannot escape "the life," McGwire may have to face up to his own responsibility in this sordid mess, not just for the sake of honesty, but to convey a message to those he truly cares about, America’s youth.

JOSE CANSECO
The "clown prince of baseball" has freely admitted to steroid usage. He believes that as many as 50 percent of Major League players have ingested these substances. The conundrum of Canseco's career is that steroid use may have hurt him as much as it helped, since it created injuries that kept him off the field, while turning him into a one-dimensional player.

JASON GIAMBI

Giambi is McGwire's best friend. Despite his "party like a pornstar" persona, he is at heart a decent young man, like McGwire. Giambi may well have been on steroids, and he likely weaned himself off them for three reasons: They were causing him freak injuries, he came under suspicion, and he wanted to set a good example. Still, faced with the scrutiny of the New York media, and representing the "pride of the Yankees," Giambi will be under pressure to come clean while protecting the image of his game and his team. He may turn out to be the "wild card" of the steroid scandal.

KEN CAMINITI

Lost in the recent furor is the sad tale of Caminiti, a journeyman who discovered that illegal steroids turned him into a batting machine, but robbed him of his most precious gifts in the prime of his life. Steroid abuse caused him to sustain injuries and turned him into a manic-depressive. This was further exacerbated by the ills of alcohol and drug abuse. Now, he is a broken man, who is desperately seeking help, understanding and forgiveness for his sins.

GREG ANDERSON

They say it is not what you know, but who you know. That may have been the key, and the key to Anderson’s success. Since he knew Barry Bonds intimately, he became the personal trainer of star athletes, a coveted role in the competitive fitness world. Like Charlie Sheen’s Bud Fox character in "Wall Street," he found that his talent and hard work could be easily replaced. Instead of inside information, what was required of Anderson was access to steroids. His is the story of a regular guy who had to look himself in the mirror and make the choice of delivering the goods and thus "losing his soul."

VICTOR CONTE

Like Anderson, Conte used his special access to create a niche for himself. His access was through his brother, Stan, the trainer for the San Francisco Giants. His intermediary, Greg Anderson, was Barry Bonds' childhood friend. Conte’s stock-in-trade was pills and drugs that helped make the dreams of athletes come true. But at what price?

AND OTHERS . . .

On the periphery of this story are a number of others. So far, Cubs' superstar SAMMY SOSA has escaped close scrutiny, but the man who hit home runs with a corked bat also became huge very quickly. His home run power has turned him into a multi-millionaire and an icon in baseball-crazy Chicago, but he is not as innocent as the original Mr. Cub, Ernie Banks.
A controversial figure in football for years has been BILL ROMANOWSKI, who allegedly received his steroids from BALCO. Romanowski has long been a player who performs on the brink of sanity, amped by his own manic personality and a testosterone boost courtesy of steroids. He is an outrageous example of "better football through pharmaceuticals."

Also to be heard from will be Attorney General John D. Ashcroft, who already heads a Justice Department probe of BALCO, and Senator John McCain, the man who seems bent on getting baseball to own up to its role in the scandal.

STRIKE THREE! will highlight another scandalous chapter in the innocence of Our National Pastime — baseball. It will shine a light on pitchers, those worthy warriors who, armed only with their natural courage and skill, have been battling unfair odds for years. The nature of "right vs. wrong" will be played out in this book, and in the end it is hoped that the fans will renew their faith in the honesty and integrity of the game. If baseball is forced to put the symbol of a syringe next to Bonds' records, in lieu of the asterisk that was added to Roger Maris’ home run record year, then so be it. STRIKE THREE! is also meant to provide a wake-up call to parents, coaches and athletes at the college and high school levels that steroid usage will not be tolerated, and those using steroids will be exposed. It will also be emphasized that although a tiny percentage of youngsters who try steroids may achieve athletic success, all users will risk sustaining long-term physical harm.

SPORTS AND STEROIDS; AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Not since Canadian track star Ben Johnson was caught on the "juice" at the 1988 Seoul Olympics has steroid abuse been as prominently displayed for public consumption as it is now. The questions regarding steroid abuse, especially in baseball, go to the heart of the question of cheating and fairness. In this regard, baseball holds a special place in American society. Unlike football, track or other Olympic sports, in the public psyche, baseball is "different." It is the sport of "everyman," a game that your next door neighbor can play. While the majority of football or basketball players, require abnormal physical attributes like great height, Hercules-like strength and enormous size, baseball players of ordinary height and weight can succeed.

Football was, for many years during and after the turn of the century, a "college game." It was not until the 1950s, when television popularized it, that professional football became a national obsession. Basketball has always been a sport that engenders great enthusiasm for the athletes who perform it at its top level, but the average citizen finds it hard to relate to its seven-footers and urban edginess. Boxing was the sport of lower classes who chose to participate in the "sweet science" to avoid dreary factory work. Unfortunately, its close association with organized crime always made it suspect.

Baseball, on the other hand, was pure. It was, and still remains, Our National Pastime. Its enduring myths are accepted by adoring fans who prefer to believe them regardless of the "facts."
In the 1930s, scientists first started experimenting with steroid-like substances. Out of cancer research, scientific farming techniques and hormonal growth studies, the first crude steroids were created. Experiments on animals and racehorses began. Nazi scientists also began to experiment, using steroids on human subjects. In the years after World War II, Soviet scientists came to the realization that steroids could make human beings bigger, faster and stronger. In the effort to gain the upper hand over the West, in the 1960s and '70s East Bloc athletes were doped up, and suddenly Communist countries were seriously competing in the Olympics. The sight of "female" East German track athletes, weighing well over 200 pounds, possessed of incredible strength, complete with moustaches and overtly male characteristics, competing against innocent American women, quickly created a furor in the sports world.

Now, decades later, it is time for an examination of just what happened to many from the East Bloc countries - early deaths, deformities, birth defects, cancers, and other ailments. STRIKE THREE! will look into this long-overlooked netherworld.

Steroids and silicone became artificially implanted in human beings, and the result was a plethora of large athletes and larger-chested strippers. Agricultural crops were injected with steroids, as were farm animals. It was all hailed as a benefit to society, since foods could be kept longer for travel, making for cheaper prices and an answer to world hunger. While the use of steroids outraged American sports fans who saw them as providing unfair advantages to Communist athletes, few understood the health risks involved.

In the 1970s and '80s, steroid use exploded in two major areas. First, bodybuilding emerged from the shadows and became a highly popular activity. Led by the uber-Austrian Arnold Schwarzenegger, bodybuilders developed "perfect" physiques through better steroid use. Women and gays were attracted to the quasi-sexual nature of the sport, and with the advent of ESPN, television made it available to everyone.

Secondly, steroid use came to dominate professional and eventually college football. Doctors became the behind-the-scenes superstars of football, as depicted in such books and films as "North Dallas Forty", "Meat on the Hoof", "The Program" and "Any Given Sunday". Not only were they injecting players with steroids in order to effectuate their strength gains, but they were using a variety of pharmaceuticals to mask pain, provide artificial psychological stimulation, and to put the athletes in the uncomfortable position of "playing in pain" and determining the difference between "pain and injury." The high testosterone levels created by steroids also provided athletes - male and female - with the "mental edge" of fighting competitiveness. It was the answer to thousands of years of efforts on the part of military leaders to create "trained killers" for the battlefield.

Anabolic steroid use, for the purposes of packing on muscles, became the dominant off-field activity in football. Linemen became bigger and bigger every year. Today's linemen are on average 75 pounds heavier than they were in the 1970s, even though weight training was mandatory. A recent HBO "Real Sports" documentary revealed the terrible "Catch-22" of steroid use among the biggest men in the NFL. Terrible health problems confront those who have retired after years of steroid use. Away from the cheers, the money, the glory and the women, these men struggle with liver problems, sexual dysfunction, joint inflammation, heart trouble, and a variety of ailments that range from serious to deadly.
The competition and the money have become so intense that linemen have little choice but to use steroids in order to maintain competitive balance. If they do not, somebody else will. Their opponents are on it. They either "juice" or they do not survive the Darwinian jungle of football's interior "strength game."

In the early 1990s, former Raiders' wildman Lyle Alzado died of brain cancer, blaming his predicament on steroid use throughout the 1970s and '80s. It did nothing to curtail the activity. Sports had become dominated by a win-at-all-costs mindset best summarized by a poll of track, swimming and other Olympic sport athletes, who freely admitted that they would ingest steroids if it "guaranteed" a Gold medal, even if it meant lopping off five to 10 years from their lives.

Somehow, steroid use among football players, bodybuilders, Olympic hopefuls and Communist automatons did not fire up the public. This was still a relatively small group, seen as hybrids of society; exceptionally big men, narcissists, semi-human products of East German training centers. But in the 1980s, things began to change dramatically. Baseball players started taking steroids. This has been the event that is causing a sea change in public opinion regarding steroids, for two main reasons. First, baseball players are "just like us." They are not 6-7, 340-pound behemoths. If steroids work in baseball, then the impact of these drugs on the competitive balance and health of our nation will be affected in a brutally negative manner. Worse than the concept of a handful of millionaire superstars using the drugs to achieve advantage, steroids are now creeping into our high schools, colleges, the minor leagues, and everywhere else that young men play sports. This is the great cautionary tale of our times, and the reason why this issue is of such paramount importance. Every parent of any high school athlete should be scared to death!

For years, steroid use was "okay" if the "ends justified the means." That is, a bodybuilder could accept the consequences of his actions if it meant competing for the Mr. Olympia title. A track star could talk himself into believing a Gold medal was "worth it." A football player craved glory and riches in the game he had devoted his life to. Shriveled testicles, low sex drive, loss of hair, bad hearts, brutal acne, and other side effects were the "price to pay," and besides, once retirement came, there would be time to get healthy again. It was a lie.

But steroids in baseball? Baseball was the one sport that would not be affected by steroids, it was decided. For years, baseball coaches told their players not to lift weights because it would "tie them up" and leave them muscle bound, unable to freely swing a bat or cavort like a gazelle in the field. Could steroids make baseball players better? That is at the heart of the question which STRIKE THREE! shall address.

§ § § § §

In 2000, Barry Bonds had his best season since 1993. He slammed 49 home runs and led the Giants into the play-offs. But in 2000, he turned the game upside down. His locker at Pac Bell consisted of four separate stalls all blocked off by a huge pillar that hid him from general view. He relaxed in a Barcalounger and watched cable television on a personal screen available to nobody else on the team. He was surrounded by a nutritionist, several fitness trainers, a personal stretcher and various sycophants.
Early that season, Steven Travers, recently hired as the lead sports columnist for the *San Francisco Examiner*, approached Barry Bonds and established a relationship with him. When Travers arrived at Pac Bell Park, he quickly sized up the situation.

"The Bay Area media treated Barry like the Abominable Snowman," Travers wrote. "Writers and reporters approaching his locker did so with trepidation, resembling Dorothy attempting to steal the broomstick from the Wicked Witch of the East."

At 6-6 and 230 pounds, a former professional pitcher who had been at USC with McGwire and Randy Johnson when they were battling Bonds of Arizona State, Travers was unfazed by superstars in Hollywood or sports. He was a contemporary of Bonds who felt no intimidation about his star status or surly reputation. He approached Bonds, introduced himself, and shortly thereafter wrote a glowing column after Bonds hit his 500th career home run. In it, Travers pronounced that Bonds had broken into the pantheon of Bay Area sports greatness, like Joe Montana and Bill Walsh. He was now accepted as a Son of San Francisco by the fans, just as they had taken to Willie Mays slowly at first. Like Reggie Jackson, he was now more than just an athlete, and his new status reminded Travers of the way Boston fans had taken to Ted Williams, or New Yorkers to Mickey Mantle.

In May of 2001, Bonds hit five home runs in a series at Atlanta. Shortly thereafter, teammate Shawon Dunston bet Barry a Mercedes that he would break McGwire's home run record. At the same time, Travers arrived at this conclusion on his own. When the club returned from the road, he approached Bonds about ghostwriting his authorized autobiography. Publicly, Bonds discounted his chances at breaking the record. Privately, he agreed with Travers that he might very well break it. Perhaps he knew just how much the steroids he may have been on by then were helping him. He had gained 30 pounds of lean muscle mass, and stripped to his shorts in the locker room, Bonds' body was a marvel. Bonds agreed to let Travers pursue the book deal, but when discussions with publishers ensued, Bonds began to ask for millions. For this reason, the authorized autobiography became a biography. "Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman" was nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of the Year, made Best Seller, and went into multiple re-print, including paperback.

During the 2001-2004 seasons, there were revelations about steroid abuse in baseball; they were directed at baseball in general, and Bonds in particular. No sooner had Bonds won his third straight National League MVP award, than a story hit that BALCO was being indicted on various Federal charges, namely surrounding the illegal distribution of steroids and other performance-enhancers to elite athletes. Along with Bonds there was Sheffield and Giambi of the Yankees, and Oakland Raider crazyman Bill Romanowski. Sheffield's name further added to the speculation, since he was Bonds' best pal and off-season workout partner. He had experienced a rebirth in his career after training with Barry in his Hillsborough home. But what tied Bonds ever more closely to the BALCO fiasco was his association with Greg Anderson, who had parlayed the association into a career as a personal trainer and BALCO steroid supplier. The incestuous Bonds-Anderson-Giants connection was deepened further by the fact that BALCO owner Victor Conte is the brother of Giants' trainer Stan Conte.

In December, 2003, Bonds testified before a Federal grand jury, but his testimony was not made public. What the public did learn was that in February of 2004 the Feds had
known three months prior to his testimony that Anderson had supplied the players with steroids. This news rocked Bonds and baseball just as he was reporting for Spring Training in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he arrogantly sniffed at the media's attempts to hold him accountable for his actions.

At the Houston Astros' Spring Training facility in Florida, former Giants' teammate Jeff Kent conducted an obtuse, roundabout interview in which he accused Bonds of using steroids, but added that many other players were on it, and probably had been much longer than many fans suspected. In Pittsburgh, former Pirates' teammate Andy Van Slyke, who was a member of an enormous club that might as well be called "Those of Us Who Know Barry Bonds Well and Can't Stand the Guy," told the media that Bonds was undoubtedly juiced to the max. Cousin Reggie Jackson chipped in with sour grapes commentary in which he all but accused Bonds of juicing, claiming that "nobody's better than Hank Aaron." Hank was watching Bonds' approach in the manner of French citizens waiting for the Werhmacht in early 1940. Commissioner Bud Selig issued a gag order, as if silence would dissipate the impending disaster.

CAUTIONARY TALE: THE STEROID USE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Steroids have become the drug-of-choice not just among professional athletes, but throughout the amateur ranks, as well. As long ago as the 1980s, a football player at a small school, Cal State, Sacramento, told a friend of the author that "everybody on the team does 'roids except the kicker and the quarterback." If a low-level program like Sac State was infected by steroids that long ago, then the problem is obviously far more widespread than anybody truly suspects. The fact is that steroids are now in wide use everywhere - in health clubs all over the world, and most frightening, in high school sports programs. The fact that steroids are found to "help" in almost all aspects of athletic endeavor - all sports, almost any position, men's and women's sports, any age group - means that the problem is not relegated to the province of big men, gargantuans or "freaks." It is in baseball, the most pedestrian and Democratic of sports. It is in the schools. It is in the homes. Every parent, every young athlete, needs to read this book and know the stark truth about steroid abuse.

Baseball is now an established Olympic sport. It is one of the most international of games, and its influence is therefore widespread. The game's visionaries hope to someday create global leagues that will compete in a true "World" Series. They have a vested interest in the game's marketability, popularity and integrity. Major League Baseball instructed players and coaches not to speak to the media about the Bonds, Giambi, Sheffield and BALCO investigations. This is a typical "head in the sand" approach to the issue. Baseball in particular needs to address steroid abuse, because it is more dangerous in baseball than other sports. The "average" size of baseball players means that steroids have become average, not the province of rare huge men. Not only is their a growing threat of steroid abuse in high schools, but in Latin America, where baseball offers a way out of poverty, steroids and increasingly-dangerous "steroid imitations" pose deadly health dangers.

But the baseball union is the most powerful of all sports unions. It has done more to hurt the game than any other factor, infecting Our National Pastime with poisonous strikes
that seem to disrupt baseball just when it reaches maximum popularity every seven
years or so. Currently, the union has the power to resist a true testing system, one with
actual accountability. What is happening in baseball, as it pertains to its approach to
steroids, is a lie. This lie will be exposed in STRIKE THREE! The baseball union is
interested only in maintaining their own power, and in propelling the contracts and
bargaining position of Major Leaguers. Retired players, the ones facing the brunt of post-
career steroid injuries, are of little concern to the union.

The first tepid tests were conducted in light of the Ken Caminiti and Jose Canseco
allegations. Both players told the media that upwards of half the players in the big
leagues had used steroids. After a 2002 strike was averted in favor of a new contract
between players and owners, approximately seven percent of unnamed players came up
positive. This seven percent promises to be a very small number. The players were well
aware of the dates of upcoming tests, allowing them to cycle down in time to take the
tests and avoid detection. Furthermore, sports science has reached the point where
masking agents, water-based steroids and other agents are able to dilute or hide the
existence of steroids. In addition, many players are able to cheat the system by switching
cups or results in pre-arranged acts of obfuscation. The seven percent who had been
cought were incredibly stupid and careless, perhaps even making a desperate call for
help. Many, many more players no doubt were hiding their dirty little secrets in the
manner of Mafia wise guys.

The truth is that sports science is one of the most rapidly advancing areas of
medicine today. With the advent of cloning and stem cell research, we are embarking on
a Brave New World of sports perfection, a world of "Stepford Wives," silicone-enhanced
porn fantasy girls, robotic humans capable of breaking barriers never believed possible;
of eternal youth and physical artificiality worthy of a "Twi-Light Zone" episode. But this
"advancement" in humanity comes with a cost, and this cost will be paid in blood by the
youth of our children unless we wake up and take the boldest possible action.

Approach to the book

Travers believes that he can research, interview and write throughout the 2004
baseball season, submitting chapters to the publisher as they are completed, with the final
manuscript completed in September, 2004. The objective: to publish STRIKE THREE! at
the beginning of the 2005 baseball season. And to have the uncorrected proofs of the
book available by March, 2005 in order to have it included in the all-important USA
TODAY Baseball Weekly review of baseball books, which is published annually at this
time.

Travers has personally acquainted himself with the issues surrounding the use of steroids
in sports generally and now in Major League Baseball. He has trained in gyms in which a
majority of the men were on steroids for little reason other than cosmetic vanity. He
knows a number of healthy young men who are now a shell of their old selves, haggard
and "washed up" in their early 30s because of steroid use.

Travers will engage in a far-reaching investigation, interviewing doctors, trainers,
nutritionists, coaches, athletes, bodybuilders, and experts in the science of sports
medicine. His goal is to use this research to expose every facet of steroid abuse to the
harsh light of public knowledge. One of the most startling facts he plans to unveil is just how easy it is to mask steroid use. Hiding steroids occurs through two main functions. First of all, the official governing bodies of sports have a vested interest in keeping steroid use on the down low. The NCAA, the International Olympic Committee, Major League Baseball, and other groups, realize that scandal hurts ticket sales, television contracts, and disrupts the money machine that is the mother's milk of modern sports. The second way to mask steroid use is through a combination of cheating and masking. Players sometimes know when the tests will be ahead of time, so they cycle off of it in time. Or they mix results, sometimes with the "wink of an eye" knowledge of a trainer or official. Furthermore, many steroids, like THG (which was Anderson's specialty), are "masking agents," not detected by current testing systems. There are also water-based steroids, which are more difficult to detect.

Steve's law background will be helpful, since the subject matter is of a sensitive, on going legal nature regarding public, and in some cases, private figures. He would like to assure the publisher that he will be highly cognizant of all potential libel, and his ability to produce chapters on an on going basis will allow for unhurried vetting. He will use all his available resources to cajole the truth out of players who in many cases are aching to present their side of the story. All of this will be in conjunction with the continuing BALCO investigation and trial, which promises to dominate headlines for the next year.

As a former pitcher himself, Travers will use his special connections with hurlers such as the A's Barry Zito and Tim Hudson, and superstars Greg Maddux and Curt Schilling, to get the perspective of the "last clean baseball players." Pitchers are engaged in an activity that is so delicate, so much an act of finesse, that steroids have not permeated the position, although Roger Clemens has been the subject of accusations, particularly after his testosterone-fueled bat-throwing altercation with the Mets' Mike Piazza in the World Series. Over the past seven years, pitchers are the David vs. Goliath heroes of baseball, battling everything that seems to work against them. The baseball itself has been said to be “amped” beyond its normal liveliness, and now they are facing hitters who are so strong that even when jammed and forced to pop up — sometimes with broken bats — they are able to hit home runs over increasingly shortened outfield fences. Since pitchers are the oppressed class of baseball, they will talk to Steve Travers about steroid use. They have ulterior motive, and in Travers they will find a kindred spirit.

Travers will also seek out and interview ex-athletes, in baseball and other sports, because this is where the true tragedy of steroids manifests itself. Former stars who cannot function sexually, stricken with bad knees, feet, shoulders, spines and bodies, no longer in the limelight, their lives and marriages in shambles. Ken Caminiti, for instance, has been described as a man barely above living on the street, despite million-dollar contracts and success at the highest level of his profession just a few short years ago.

Travers will follow the BALCO trial very closely, and as it plays out he will draw upon the ever-growing list of witnesses and experts, personally interviewing them for the book. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein were able to get to the bottom of Watergate because many of the witnesses they pursued felt the psychological need to tell the truth about something they did not wish to be associated with. Travers has the similar advantage of being on the right side of a bad issue. He believes many will speak to him
openly in order to clear their own own consciences, and to warn the next generation and their parents just what is at stake: The health of our influenced kids!

Chapter Synopses

CROSSING THE RUBICON

Chapter one will set the tone of STRIKE THREE! in the non-narrative, dramatic style of a fast-paced novel, segueing from major public events, like Barry Bonds' breaking of Mark McGwire's home run record, to the private meetings of individuals, the personal choice to use drugs that culminated in their doing so in other locations, and in the places where the Justice Department and Senate investigations of BALCO take us. Travers will endeavor to find out personal facts about individuals, and the details that surrounded their decisions to take such dangerous steps in their lives and careers. The title of the chapter offers the theme that steroids were something contemplated and available, and when they finally accepted and ingested them, they crossed the "point of no return." Travers shall endeavor to discover the exacting details of the individuals' choices to take this step. It will examine the Giants' slugger and his relationship with Greg Anderson, Victor Conte, and BALCO. The role of BALCO in the building of Bonds' body, which coincided with his late-career improvements and emergence as a major home run slugger, will be very enlightening.

ORIGINAL SIN
(HISTORY OF STEROIDS IN SPORTS)

An overview of steroids throughout sports history. The innocence of sports was lost over time when steroids reared its ugly head, like Satan offering Eve an apple in the Garden of Eden. First scientists, then Soviet athletes, then others, all engaged in their own version of Original Sin by taking fateful, gradual steps that have led us down the "path of good intentions." This chapter will first look at the growth and popularity of American sports, and its effect on our culture. It will examine the importance of records and the attachments of fans and communities to players and teams, and intertwine this with the growth of steroids, first discovered in the 1930s. In the 1950s and '60s Communist athletes performed with the help of illegal drugs, followed by bodybuilding in the 1970s, and football in the 1970s, '80s and '90s. Ben Johnson brought to light the fact that steroids could improve the performance of "non-power" sports, which opened the door to steroid abuse in baseball. Once muscular players like Jose Canseco, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa had passed Barry Bonds as marquee attractions, Bonds made his own fateful decision to keep up with them.

CAUGHT LOOKING
(BALCO TRIAL)

The on going trial involving Anderson, Conte, and the elite athletes involved, who include Bonds, Jason Giambi, Gary Sheffield, Bill Romanowski, and numerous others.
These players were left flat-footed because baseball had an anonymous testing system, offering little real accountability. They were further seduced by the government's offers of limited immunity for testifying, but when it was discovered that Anderson had "ratted" them, they found themselves in a firestorm of public controversy in which perjury charges may be inevitable.

IF WE BUILD THEM…
(THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY)

Testimony from top doctors, scientists and nutritionists on the effects of steroids, and the enormous changes in what we know, continue to know and to learn about performance-enhancing drugs and how they are "hidden" or "masked." What is learned will be applied to the actions of Conte, Anderson and no doubt more names of medical, nutrition and training experts who are just waiting to get caught.

THE LAST PURISTS
(PITCHERS)

The victims of steroid abuse in baseball vent their frustrations over juiced-up sluggers, juiced-up baseballs, and shortened fences. One of the pitchers Travers plans to speak with is Curt Schilling, who is already an outspoken critic of steroids, "enhanced" sluggers, and is an advocate of tough testing. Schilling has been battling Bonds for years, and now he is in Boston, where he is surrounded by the media hailstorm that engulfs the red-hot Yankee-Red Sox rivalry. The rivalry will be heightened (if that is possible) by the existence of Giambi and the adding of the new Yankee, Sheffield, into the cauldron.

STEROIDS, SLUGGERS AND SALARIES
(AVERAGE PLAYERS SPEAK OUT)

What about the middle infielders, or just those who play by the rules, but are paid millions less than steroid-busting sluggers? Do they have something to say? This issue is further exacerbated by the fact that Barry Bonds is very disliked, particularly by the journeyman class of baseball. Years of pent-up frustration over salaries and now the unfair use of steroids will provide fodder for controversy.

CORNFED MEAT
(COLLEGE AND PRO FOOTBALL)

The tragedy of competition for scholarships and professional contracts, particularly among interior linemen who often sacrifice their health for careers. The genesis of steroids at the college level may very well originate at the University of Nebraska, where in the early 1980s a legendary strength coach led the Cornhuskers, pumping his players up in a new, state-of-the-art weight room.

OUR CORRUPTED YOUTH
The shocking truth about prep baseball is that football linemen are not the only ones taking drugs. Every parent needs to know that when young baseball players see the likes of Bonds, McGwire and Canseco rise as "steroid superstars," they arrive at the conclusion that these drugs can help them stand out. As other athletes see how steroids help baseball players, they will realize they can "help" in their sports, too.

THE THRILL OF VICTORY AND THE AGONY OF DEFEAT (OLYMPIC SPORTS)

Ground zero in the steroid game; how drugs dominated first Soviet sport, then crept its way into international competition, and finally into all other sports. While the Olympics have seen gross abuses of steroids, their testing system may just be a template for the way other sports should approach it. Baseball became an Olympic sport in 1984, when McGwire, an All-American from the University of Southern California, led a talented U.S. squad at L.A.'s Dodger Stadium. Baseball hopes to eventually field a basketball-style Dream Team in future Olympics, but the rigorous testing system may not muster with the Major League Baseball Players Association.

GRAND ILLUSION (BODY BUILDING AND THE WWF)

With the rise of Arnold Schwarzenegger and the mainstreaming of the sport, drugs came to dominate bodybuilding and its hybrids, fitness training and the WWF. USA TODAY recently reported that a shocking 65 men who over the years participated in the popular "sport" have died prior to the age of 45!

CLOUD OF SUSPICION (THE FANS)

How drugs affect the perspective of the fans, and the way gamblers (who make up a billion-dollar betting industry) could use information about who is juiced and who is not to "fix" games. The role of race and popularity plays a part in the perception of the public as they opine about Bonds, McGwire and other players. Fans, ultimately, fuel sports through ticket sales and merchandising, yet they are given little real respect. The relationship of fans and their sports makes up a social contract that is unraveling. This book also will give them a new perspective, which is that steroids do not affect a mere relative handful of elite athletes, but rather, once it spreads to the schools, it affects their kids, their teammates, their brothers, sisters, friends and classmates.

GLORY DAYS (OLD-TIMERS AND RETIRED PLAYERS)
After the glory: Pain, debilitation, dysfunction and disillusion. Is it worth it? Then there are former superstars, like Aaron and Mays, two veterans who do not begrudge the likes of Barry Bonds breaking their records. They are happy to see a fellow African-American benefit after they blazed the trail for him, but if they are convinced Bonds, and others, are cheating, how will they truly react to their records falling artificially? What about players who never made the kind of money players make today, or used steroids only to live in pain now?

DEALING WITH THE DEVIL
(ROLE OF THE BASEBALL UNION, AGENTS, MLB AND THE GOVERNMENT)

Nobody has contributed to all the things that are wrong in sports more than the unions and the agents, and none are worse than in baseball. Nobody knows this better than the ex-agent, Travers. Barry Bonds is the product of this culture of sycophancy, of lackeys who cater to his every need, whose job it is to tell him how great he is, and he believes it all. It is not realistic to believe that under these circumstances such a man would not feel entitled to break the law to get ahead, just as it was unrealistic that with his gifts, advantages and upbringing he would not be arrogant. It is time to crawl so far up their butts that the truth oozes out of their nostrils.

In light of the Caminiti allegations and the 2002 agreement between players and owners, baseball began a system of testing, and also limited the access of personal trainers, nutritionists and assistants to the players on the field and in the locker rooms. U.S. Senator John McCain (R.-Ariz.) represents a state in which half of the Major League teams train. Many players, active and retired, live and train in Arizona. The state is home to several minor league teams, the big league Diamondbacks, and some of the most successful high school, junior college and college baseball programs in the nation. He has taken the lead on investigating steroid use in baseball, warning Commissioner Bud Selig and union leader Donald Fehr that if they do not clean their own house, the Federal government will do it for them.

FUTURE SHOCK
(AFTERMATH OF A SCANDAL)

The question is whether baseball will recover from this scandal in the manner of their recovery after the Black Sox disaster, or whether they will crumble in a heap of cover-ups and union greed. At the heart of this question is the single theme that will be intertwined throughout the book, and that is the evolving story of Barry Bonds and his impact on Our National Pastime. Beyond Bonds lies a Brave New World of sports science. We are glimpsing a "future is now" look at a Toffler-like world, but we ain't seen nothin' yet. Beyond Barry Bonds and his records lies a world of stem cell research, designer children, a world of haves and have-nots in which much of the world we live in, including sports, is divided between the "naturals" and the "superiors." This nation once fought and defeated an enemy that promoted just such a Master Race, yet because we so willingly forget the past, we condemn ourselves to repeating it. Instead of a world of Josef Mengele's, we are looking at a world of bright-eyed, "well meaning" sports doctors who,
for a price, will take us down a path that delivers the future George Steinbrenner's of the 21st Century "victory" - at any cost.
Does this book aim to warn the world of the dangers of such a world? You bet it does!

Marketing

STRIKE THREE! is a book with an unlimited audience. It is not just a "fan's book," providing "inside baseball" details involving highly paid superstars. It is also a book which is concerned with the health of our nation. And, it involves every age group at every level of sports, from high school to the "majors." Clearly, this is not a problem restricted to the United States. The issue is every bit as important internationally as it is in professional and collegiate sports in the United States.

Steroids have already become a major subject of discussion not just in the sports media, but it is a "political football" as well. President Bush mentioned it, and it has been discussed on all the major talk shows. There is little doubt that the individual states, the Federal government, and international bodies will respond to this crisis with varied forms of legislation. It seems to be a naturally "conservative issue," since the concept of "illegal drugs" is one that Republicans have always had success politicizing. In addition to Senator McCain, one can just imagine politicians with conservative political and sports ties, like former Congressman Jack Kemp of New York and Kentucky Representative Jim Bunning, making a new round of "just say no" to steroids advertisements.

STRIKE THREE! promises to be the biggest, hardest-hitting exposé of sports since Jim Bouton's "Ball Four". In an age in which most people are no longer shocked at revelations at the highest levels of sports, politics and business, this book will alert the public to a danger that exists not only in the sports palaces of America, but in the gym down the street, the locker room of the local high school, and even in the bedrooms of our young children. This is the dramatic story of the end of innocence, one in which our heroes are broken down to moral, Hamlet-like choices: To use steroids or not use steroids. It is the first book to deal with the issue of steroids in our oldest, most cherished game. STRIKE THREE! could very well become mandatory reading by every coach and athletic director at every high school and college in the nation.

In the course of his research, Travers will seek out well known medical professionals, such as Dr. Sanjay Gupta, who appears regularly on CNN, and in so doing he will be creating opportunities for additional publicity that relates the subject to his book. He will be seeking knowledge from such well-respected institutions as the University of Southern California Medical School and the U.C.-San Francisco School of Medicine. Travers also has many contacts in the bodybuilding and fitness training world who will enlighten readers on this subject. The focus on the book will of course center around Bonds, the game's greatest player, and two huge New York superstars, Giambi and the recently acquired Yankee, Sheffield. The BALCO investigation promises to have long tentacles, and there is little doubt that many, many athletes, coaches and owners are nervous right now. However, the overall book will give additional attention to football, the Olympics, college sports, and perhaps most wide reaching, prep sports. The idea is to alert the public to a problem that is societies' problem, not just something to be concerned about in the sports world.
This is a book with potential promotional tie-in possibilities, to be exploited by newspaper and magazine outlets such as the San Francisco Chronicle, the New York Post, the New York Daily News and Sports Illustrated; television and radio outlets such as ESPN, ESPN2, Fox Sports Network, CNN, HBO Sports, and WFAN Radio. For instance, in soliciting for subscriptions, S.I. could offer a promotional tie-in for STRIKE THREE! Furthermore, Travers will likely be generating publicity through interviews conducted with each of the media.

In today's competitive book market, an author is expected to be more than mere writer, who distances himself from promoting and publicizing his book. As a result of his promotional and publicity efforts with his first book, BARRY BONDS: Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman, Travers has become an experienced and savvy marketer. He has compiled:

A list of 8,000 email addresses, organized into groups of people who are readers of his work and media members, able to be sent to in a few clicks of a button.
300 fax numbers to every major newspaper and magazine in America, all in a computerized system that allows him to send all of them faxes with a few clicks of a single button.
1,500 postal addresses, all pre-organized on labels, which combines a personal mailing of his fans with editors and media personalities.
An up-to-date listing of sportswriters and book reviewers of sports books.
Phone numbers of every major media outlet in the country.

Travers maintained all the information and contacts from his successful book promotion tour in 2002. This includes the names and phone numbers of key individuals in every independent and mega-bookstore in California where he conducted book signings. Travers is sought out frequently by the print and electronic media because of his knowledge and background in sports and his ability to communicate baseball information and concepts to fans of all ages in a “down-to-earth” manner. He has been interviewed on numerous occasions by major newspapers, the wire services, the key news weeklies, and general periodicals. And, he has appeared extensively on television and radio. He did more than 40 radio and TV interviews, including appearances on the Jim Rome Show, CNN, ESPN, the Armed Forces Radio Network, all the major stations in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, plus WFAN in New York, the nation’s premiere sports radio station. Because of his experience as a public relations professional, Travers is capable of handling many of the PR duties that will no doubt increase the marketability of STRIKE THREE!

THE AXE

CAL VS. STANFORD

Book proposal by
After the Gold Rush, the new citizenry of California knew that in order to join the Union, they needed first class universities. Thus was born a land grant college, the University of California at Berkeley. A few years later, a private institution, Leland Stanford Jr. University, built on farmland across the bay.

The co-existence of these two schools rose in conjunction with the great new game of football which swept the land in the late 19th Century. Cal and Stanford became natural rivals. Through this game the growth of the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California directly mirrored the growth of college football as played out on the green plains of Berkeley and Palo Alto.

Long before USC-UCLA or USC-Notre Dame; long before Michigan-Ohio State or Alabama-Auburn; Cal and Stanford made their mark with every bit as much fervor and passion as Harvard-Yale. The games were played for an archaic symbol of frontier life, The Axe.

In 1901, Stanford entered the national picture but lost to Michigan in the very first Rose Bowl. Four years later in 1905 they were back, this time winning the West Coast's first national title. When the Rose Bowl became popular, before the Rose Bowl in Pasadena or the Coliseum in Los Angeles, both Cal and Stanford built colossal football arenas. Stanford bid hard to have the game transferred to Palo Alto.

In the first half of the 1920s, the Bay Area was the football capitol of the world. Cal's Wonder Teams of Brick Muller were unbeaten over 55 games and captured three straight national championships. In so doing, they modernized the art of recruiting. In 1925, Stanford, led by coach Pop Warner and All-American Ernie Nevers, took on the Four Horsemen of Notre Dame in the Rose Bowl.

By World War II, Cal had four national championships to Notre Dame's one. In 1940, Stanford won their third national title. Coach Clark Shaugnessy invented the T-formation. Over the years, the Big Game has seen some of the greatest moments in college football history, including The Play in 1982 when Cal's kick return team made their way through the Stanford band to score the most improbable game-winning touchdown of all time.

This book tells the fascinating story not only of the Big Game, but of the fierce rivalry between Cal and Stanford in baseball, basketball, track, volleyball and women's sports. It tells the story of great Olympians who have toiled in Berkeley and Palo Alto. It tell the story of two great universities who represented a growing country and an exciting state. Their story is the story of America.
Rivalries. It is what makes sports go around, what makes life worth living for many. Here it is, in one book: the greatest rivals in all of American sports.


Here it is. All the greatest match-ups, battles and games of the century, a panorama of American sports displayed in all its glory and splendid agony. The fans, the traditions, the stories behind the legends. Great pennant races. Games of the century. Inexorable Forces vs. Immovable Objects. Tall tales.

We read Bill Terry asking if the Dodgers are still in the league, only to have lowly Brooklyn upset his Giants in 1934, knocking them out of the pennant race; thus is born the great Dodgers-Giants rivalry of the 1940s and 1950s. See it transfer with greater intensity to the West Coast.

Here we have the Hollywood glamour of the Lakers and the Old World Irish green of the Celtics, in which the titanic battles between Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain are brought in, made part and parcel of the Boston-L.A. struggles.

Here we have Army and Navy, symbols of American supremacy in war and peace, playing for a nation. Here we have the hated Raiders of Al Davis taking on the buttoned-down Chiefs of Hank Stram. Here we see the two great young quarterbacks, Joe Montana of the 49ers vs. Dan Marino of the Dolphins in a test of statistics vs. titles. Here we have Mays squaring off against Koufax after Roseboro has been beaten down by Marichal's bat.

Rivals tells the story of what makes sports tick; the passion, the hopes and dreams of millions. In all its glory.

IT'S AN IRISH AFTERNOON
NOTRE DAME VS. THE WORLD
Book proposal by
STEVEN TRAVERS

The Alpha and the Omega. That is what the Notre Dame Fighting Irish are to college football. It was the tradition established by Knute Rockne; his modernization of the forward pass in the stunning 1913 upset of Army; followed by his unmatched record as head coach in the 1920s; all the way up to Charlie Weis and the current Irish, battling for continued supremacy with the same USC Trojans who Rockne started the game’s greatest rivalry with decades ago.
The Irish are more than wins and losses; Heisman winners and national championships; legendary coaches and players. They are a mystique, a way of life unlike any in college football, and perhaps unmatched in the intensity of devotion from their fans within the annals of all sports, pro or amateur, American or international. The hopes and dreams of a nation, a faith, a great church, have been invested in the Irish. The stunning, mystical, oft-miraculous events that have transpired on the green plains of South Bend lend credence to the notion that their greatness goes beyond any “luck of the Irish,” but rather is directed by a Higher Calling.

Sometimes our greatest admirers are our rivals. In the 1830s, it took a Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, to come to America and describe precisely what makes our nation great in his classic Democracy In America. Sports historian Steven Travers is a USC graduate who has known the joy of victory and the agony of defeat, rooting for his Trojans in their yearly struggle with Notre Dame. The profound respect of USC for the greatness that is Notre Dame is precisely what elevates that rivalry above all others. It is what makes this such a unique, loving tribute from somebody whose admiration for Notre Dame – its football tradition, its students, its alumni; the faith he shares in the Lord Jesus Christ – such a genuine work and must read for all Golden Domers.

But while Southern California is Notre Dame's greatest rival, the fact is that Notre Dame's rivals are the world! Michigan, Michigan State, Ohio State, Nebraska, Alabama, Georgia Tech, Carnegie Tech, Florida State, Boston College, Army, Navy, Stanford, Oklahoma, Texas; throughout the decades these and almost all other major college football powers have engaged in battle royales with the Fighting Irish. The prospect of Notre Dame on a team's schedule - whether it is a trip to the hallowed grounds of South Bend or girding for the Irish empire's invasion of their stadium - causes mixed reactions of anxiety and intense excitement years in advance, talked about until the ultimate day comes to pass!

This book will paint a portrait of Irish football against the backdrop of a country, for th two are inextricably linked. Notre Dame always has been "America's team." Love 'em or hate 'em, you can't ignore 'em. Never count them out, for the Irish will always "win one for the Gipper."

**Introduction**

Alright, here I go. Let me get this out of the way right off the top.

I did not go to Notre Dame. I graduated from the University of Southern California.

That being said, I want all of you Notre Dame supporters to suppress your initial instinct, which might be to neither buy nor read this book. I want to impress upon you this fact; that sometimes our greatest admirers come from beyond our walls. Sure, Notre Damers love Notre Dame and write lovingly about it. I do not claim to have produced a work that is greater than the many paens to Irish football that precede it. But consider that those who struggle to defeat you; who have been heartbroken in noble defeat against you, and know the price that must be paid to overcome you; those are the folks who have the greatest respect for you. To say that I, and my millions of Southern Cal brethren, have profound respect for you, a respect that even calls itself love (at times) is not an exaggeration.
The tradition in my family goes as far back as Knute Rockne himself. My father, Donald E. Travers, in some ways is a typical example of what Rockne set out to accomplish, and was so successful at attaining.

The University of Notre Dame was a small school in a small town without a stadium in the 1920s. Rockne looked at what he did have, however: a great Catholic Church and following to attract fans, and a great football team to make that happen.

We will get to the details about how the Notre Dame-Southern California rivalry started and cut to the quick here. Rockne wanted to play a national schedule in metropolitan cities to attract a wide, mostly Catholic audience in the East, West and the Midwest.

This meant playing Army at Yankee Stadium and USC at the Los Angeles Coliseum, then at Chicago’s Soldier Field. The games were wildly successful, thrill rides, capturing the imagination of a sports-crazy public who ate up the antics of Rockne’s Irish, of Red Grange’s Packers, of Babe Ruth’s Yankees; all with a giant spoon.

The games were given national syndication by such stalwarts as Grantland Rice of the New York Times; broadcast from coast-to-coast by legends like Graham McNamee and Ted Husing.

Enter my father, who growing up in California was one of those sports-crazy Americans of the 1920s.

“By 1931, we lived in the upstairs apartment,” he recalled in a story told countless times. “The Irish Catholic family lived downstairs. They had a radio and let me listen to the 1931 game between USC and Notre Dame.”

No, my dad was not Catholic. Yes, he rooted for USC. It is not known whether the “Irish Catholic family that lived downstairs” ever let him back in after he rooted for the Trojans to beat the Irish on Johnny Baker’s field goal, 16-14. That is not really the point. The point was that memories were made. The fervor of Notre Dame, what it meant to play them, what they meant to so many people; that was the point. That was the point when a few years later my old man waited in long lines to see Pat O’Brien and Ronald Reagan star in Knute Rockne: All-American.

The point, again: whether you rooted for Notre Dame or not, you could not help getting caught up in what they were all about.

So, when I grew up, I rooted for Troy with my father, and perhaps at first I was a little mean about it. But as I matured; as I became a student at the University of Southern California and saw the rivalry up close and personal, I then came to regard the Irish and the rivalry with the most profound respect. You see, USC had other rivals: UCLA, Cal, Stanford, Big 10 teams in the Rose Bowl, other national powers who played us in non-conference games. All worthy foes, but I always noticed something different about the rivalry dynamic in those cases, especially from Pacific 10 opponents.

Class envy. Jealousy. Waving credit cards. Political divisiveness. Swear words, foul language, sexual innuendo. A general lack of class, and truth be told sometimes the USC side got drawn into the pettiness of it all.

But when it was Notre Dame on the other side, all that went out the window, for the most part.

“It’s like when Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey first see each other across a crowded room,” was the way Sports Illustrated writer Austin Murphy once described it.
“It’s like the Republican National Convention,” was the way my pal Kevin McCormack, who has the unique distinction of having attended both schools, once put it.

I found it to be a mutual admiration society, albeit one with plenty of emotion, passion and good-natured ribbing, but almost never a Dumbellionite Festival of stupid kids yelling, “Notre Dame sucks” and “USC sucks” at each other!

“Mutual respect,” ex-USC quarterback Craig Fertig said of it in reverent tones.

John McKay grew up rooting for Notre Dame. Heck, when the Irish come a-calling in Los Angeles, they recruit a band from a local high school – Sherman Oaks Notre Dame – and every Catholic from Barstow to Brentwood shows up. The home field edge at the Coliseum; it’s there, but it is negated. Somehow, that makes it part of the fun. It’s not Caesar parading the prisoners from Gaul. It’s more like Patton vs. Rommel; Napoleon matching armies with Wellington. It does not get any better than that!

After graduating from USC, I got to know my friend Kevin McCormack’s parents, Frank and Shirley McCormick. I had been to Kev’s house when his folks were not around and seen the Irish memorabilia and the Notre Dame football VHS. We joked about Digger Phelps’s wild speech to a student rally, capped by an it-almost-doesn’t-matter-what-else-we-do admonition that, “But we beat Southern Cal!”

Now a young adult, I became friends with the McCormick’s. Naturally, our banter always had the locker room conviviality of the Irish-Trojan rivalry. Frank is a man’s man, a Southerner who flew jets for the Marine Corps after graduating from Notre Dame. I always joked that he “planned” his retirement for one week prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis. He remarked of my Army service that “West Point’s a fine trade school.”

His wife, Shirley, also a Notre Dame graduate (and from photos I deduced that she must have been the most beautiful girl on campus in 1956) would enter the fray with just the right touch of light-hearted humor.

These were the days when Notre Dame was taking it to Southern California. 11 straight losses. 13 straight winless years. Notre Dame: national champions; Tim Brown’s Heisman; ending Miami’s 36-game regular season win streak; Lou Holtz and 19 straight number one rankings. Southern Cal: Todd Marijuanavich (as Frank called him), losing streaks to the Irish and the Bruins; a defeat at the hands of Memphis State in 1991.

As you can imagine, Frank’s ribbing ranged from gentle to bruising with an emphasis on the former. I would make mention of Anthony Davis or Craig Fertig and he’d respond in that Southern drawl of his, “Why son . . . that’s just ancient history. Why I have to go to the Smithsonian to see something like that. That’s just grainy TV footage.”

Oh, it was rich.

Each year, when the Irish beat us again (sometimes by a little, sometimes by not so little), old’ Frank would announce something like, “Why son . . . my youngest boy; why, he simply cannot remember the last time USC beat Notre Dame,” or “Do you realize that still another entire class has come and gone at Notre Dame not having experienced defeat at the hands of Southern Cal?” Over time it became, “Two entire classes,” and beyond.

Well, when a man cares about something and it is not going well; when he suffers at the hands of another, three options make themselves apparent. He can hate the oppressor; he can join the oppressor; or he can try and figure out why the oppressor is so darn good at oppressing and try to reach that level, too.
I chose option three with just a touch of option two. Hatred? That gets nobody anywhere fast. Our political landscape is Exhibit A of that. Option two: if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em. No, I did not join ‘em, but these were formulative years in my development as a man. I saw a couple of things in Notre Dame. One, I saw a basically conservative institution in which it being a patriotic American was not outlawed, as it seems to be on so many our “elite” campuses. My political instincts led me to find kinship with Notre Dame in this regard, and to make happy note that USC shared a similar, against-the-grain attitude in which love of country is on the curriculum there, as well.

Second, I became a devout, True Believing Christian. Not a New Age Christian, not a do-it-yourself-Christian, not the kind who only sees in Christ what he wants to see – the love, the compassion, the mercy – but a Bible reader, Old and New Testament, who also fears the wrath of God.

I never switched from the Lutheranism of by infant Baptism, but I did identify with the heavy, dogmatic faith of Catholicism. With that came deep respect and kinship with the University of Notre Dame!

When I took my daughter to see the Trojans beat the Irish at the Coliseum in 1998, I exposed her to the whole circus atmosphere of the rivalry. She fell in love instantly, totally embracing the tradition, just as I had from my dad. When we got home to Hermosa Beach, I had her call Frank McCormick’s home phone, knowing she would get his answering machine.

“Hi Mr. McCormick,” she announced in her sunny young girl’s voice, “it’s Elizabeth Travers. I went to the USC-Notre Dame game with my dad. Wasn’t it great? I just thought I’d call and let you know how great I thought it was.”

After years of Frank’s Southern “why son . . .” admonitions, I felt no remorse at using my daughter to exact some form of . . . compensation from Frank McCormick.

In the years in which Pete Carroll’s team has added new chapters to USC’s tradition, I have found that Frank and Shirley apparently have misplaced my phone number, fax number, email and postal address. I have resisted any declarations to them that my daughter cannot recall the last time the Irish beat Troy. This I have done for two reasons: one, I prefer to let the events speak for themselves without augmentation. Two, I know the Irish will keep coming on every year like Patton’s Army.

So, this book is for the McCormick’s. It is written out of respect for them and for the millions like them; men and women of total class. Football teams that play the game the right way. Great coaches worthy of emulation and adoration. But more than anything, it is for an institution that produces leaders and champions in every field; sending them forth like water irrigating a barren valley, not not just with a first class education, but with The Word!

May God bless America, and may He bless the Notre Dame Fighting Irish!

NEBRASKA VS. BOSNIA

WHY CORNHUSKER FOOTBALL IS WAR, NOT JUST FOOTBALL
"Forget about Iraq, forget about Bosnia. It's Nebraska vs. Oklahoma."

Those words were famously uttered by the great college football broadcaster Keith Jackson, and they perfectly sum up what Nebraska Cornhusker football is all about. When the 'Huskers strap it on each fall Saturday, their fans are partisans, the Fifth Column in a Long March whose outcome has life-and-death implications.

Battles with the Sooners over the years more resemble France and England in the 16th Century. The memory is flooded with these death struggles between an Inexorable Force and an Immovable Object. The gauzy sight of Johnny Rodgers running that punt back to win the 1971 Game of the Century on grainy old TV footage; in the mind's eye of the Cornhusker faithful it is tantamount to the miracle at Fatima or Lourdes; Rodgers a modern Joan of Arc hero.

Back in 1925, the Cornhuskers started the USC-Notre Dame rivalry. How did they do that? By beating Knute Rockne's Fighting Irish, 7-6, on a freezing afternoon at Lincoln. Rockne wanted no more of Nebraska in that atmosphere and opted for the sunny climes of Los Angeles in a famed train ride home to Chicago after the game.

It has always been that way for Nebraska. In the little college town of Lincoln, the football team dominates life. The weather, the conditions; none of it matters. Somehow, playing in a tiny town in a little-populated state, competing against traditional powers with every conceivable advantage in recruiting, weather and glamour, the 'Huskers have forged a tradition every bit as magnificent as their more-ballyhooed rivals on the national stage.

Bob Devaney came along and turned Nebraska football into something the entire state could be proud of. In 1970 and 1971, the 'Huskers captured two consecutive national titles and their fans were in nirvana. Behind Johnny Rodgers and Rich Glover, the 1971 Cornhuskers earned the heady moniker Greatest College Football Team of All Time. The game vs. the Sooners played that year in Norman is to this day considered by many the greatest ever played.

Along came Tom Osborne, and in the 1980s Nebraska harnessed the new science behind weight training, creating a paradigm shift in power football embodied - literally - by massive linemen like Dave Rimington. Behind Heisman winner Mike Rozier, they fought back to the top of the college football mountaintop, but it paled in comparison to the period between 1993 and 1997.

During that extraordinary five-year run, the Cornhuskers were 70-3 and won three national championships. No program - not Notre Dame, USC or any of the other great powers - have ever matched it before or since.

Here in one place is everything the true Cornhusker football fan could want. All the hopes, dreams and glory of the Big Red within one cover.

BOOK IDEAS - SELF-HELP, MOTIVATION
BILLY BEANE RE-VISITED. I could probably get Billy Beane of the A's to agree to let me do another book, a follow-up to MONEYBALL. He knows me and likes me (huge SC fan, political kindred spirit, reads all my books). I'm a former A's player, he wrote the foreword of my A's book; I could probably get him to agree.
- HOW PETE CARROLL DOES IT probably would be a go, but so far Pete has not authorized anything like that despite repeated inquiries.
- HOW (BLANK) DOES IT is great except that it requires getting the person in question to authorize it, which can be time-consuming and problematic.
- BUSINESS AND SPORTS. Interviews with business execs who played sports. What employees are better, ex-athletes or non-athletes? My best friend, Terry Marks, is president of Coca-Cola. I spoke to another friend who runs a company who says he only hires ex-jocks because they are "team players," willing to work overtime, meet goals better, et al. He says they are less selfish.
- WOMEN IN SPORTS. In speaking to my daughter I thought I could use her to help tap into the psyche of women, particularly young women. Many girls have low self-esteem and "give up trying on myself." Are girls who played sports less likely to despair, to compete, to overcome the odds?
- RELIGION AND SPORTS. To what extent is religion/faith a factor in sports, in business and in life.
- HIGH SCHOOL COACHES. A book by, or a chapter by, Bob Ladoceur, head coach at De La Salle H.S., the greatest prep football program of all time. He is a John Wooden type who teaches theology and uses Christianity more than football in forging his success. Bill Redell, almost as successful at Oaks Christian H.S. in Southern California, has already approached me about a book "about religion and football." Ladoceur is easy, I live near him.
- WOMEN WHO LOVE FOOTBALL. A book about women and football; why they love it, the men they fall for, how it affects their lives, what plusses/minus emanate from it.
- X-GAMES. The people who veer towards this alternative to traditional sports; its rise and political side, its marketing/business.
- WHEELCHAIR/PARAPLEGIC SPORTS.
- INTERNET AND SPORTS.
- HOLISTIC APPROACH TO LIFE/SPORTS. A study of the concept that work is life, and life is work. Encompasses the idea that everything is inter-related to each other.
- JUST DO IT. Procrastination-busting is best accomplished when one KNOWS THEY ARE CAPABLE OF DOING IT. A fitness guru can get in shape because he/she knows what it takes and how long it will take to reach a certain level because he has done it before. A writer can write a book because he has done it before and knows the formula. It is not a mystery. They have moved beyond Plato's "cave allegory" and are no longer paralyzed by fear of the unknown.
- RECOVER FROM ILLNESS. A heart victim recovers through a change in lifestyle. How to use the motivation of desperation in everyday life.
- HOW VINCIE DID IT. Interviews with numerous former Green Bay Packers who were successful in business; the lessons learned from Vince Lombardi.
- NON-REVENUE SPORTS. Two things come to mind though off of the top. Specifically I think that a book that charts successful coaches in non-revenue sports would be very eye-opening. Men and women who do what they do for the pure enjoyment. You could tie in the aspect of motivating and coaching females. Working with high level women is an incredible joy, but mid-range is a much greater challenge.

- THE YANKEE WAY. How George Steinbrenner took over a near-bankrupt franchise, unloaded by CBS, and turned it into a multi-billion-dollar machine.

- BETTER LIFE/BUSINESS THROUGH GOOD HEALTH; NUTRITION, RECOVERY FROM INJURY, HEART ATTACK, ETC.

The portion of the list that focuses on books for fans of the game will come at them from some sort of self-help/motivational/business perspective.

Let's do it this way: I've got a pile of fall manuscripts that I need to get edited and out the door if I'm going to get them to press on time. Stew on it for about a week or two and see what approaches you can come up with, and then the week after the Superbowl we'll schedule another long conversation to see what you have and what we can try to bring forward.

The direction I've gotten more than anything else is that my superiors want the sports books I publish to give readers something beneficial they can take from them. It can be lessons applied (business, performance--We did HOW LANCE DOES IT two years ago, and are following it up with HOW TIGER DOES IT, both looking at their respective athletes and doing a competitive analysis of what makes them tick); straight-up motivational/inspirational; or maybe (BIG MAYBE) behind the scenes from a business perspective (the sort of machinations that played as much a part in drawing people to MONEYBALL as the stats; I hear Bruce Feldman's new book does something similar).

THE SECOND AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

2061-2065

This is a novel that combines futurism, science fiction, politics and Christian Revelation. It covers the period from May 21, 2011, when a Christian scholar's prediction of the Second Coming fails to materialize, and goes to the period between 2061 and 2065, when exactly 200 years after the first American Civil War, the second Civil War takes place. The Christian prophet's predictions of the 2011 end of the world eventually are proved correct; he simply mis-calculated the date.
One by one, between 2011 and 2061 America's enemies fall by the wayside. Terrorism fades away. The economy explodes. China renounces Communism. Oil becomes cheap and plentiful until alternative fuel sources make the nation energy independent. The environment becomes pristine; world hunger, poverty and disease are alleviated, and Christianity hits boom times. The 21st Century is dubbed "the Second Enlightenment." Conservatism becomes the dominant world political ethos, but the Left, frustrated by their failures at the ballot box and loss of power, become increasingly militant. This leads to the assassination of an American President and a civil war in which forces of the Left want certain "blue states" to secede from the U.S. Just when America achieves her greatest power and influence, she is torn asunder by this division.

The two rivals in this struggle are Neb Fowlman, the Iranian-born anti-Christ, smuggled into America by Satanic disciples to lead radical Leftist forces in a battle to denigrate and destroy all traditional values of patriotism, valor and righteousness; and his unlikely opponent, Stephen Thomas.

Thomas is the last possible person who would be thought to lead a battle against Satan. He is utterly depraved, an atheist devoted to hedonism and selfishness, but the birth of his daughter (saved from death only by an abortion clinic protest) begins his redemption. Year by year he grows as a Christian until he becomes a leader in a worldwide Revelationist movement.

When the Civil War breaks out, Stephen finds himself leading an army of "freedom fighters" who refuse to allow the Bay Area to secede from America, thus depriving them of their citizenship. He must confront his nemesis, Neb Fowlman, in a final battle between Christ's followers and Satan's disciples.

In the weeks and days prior to May 21, 2011, the supporters of Brother Harold Camping gathered throughout the world for the rapture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brother Camping himself ascended to a hilltop near Fish Ranch Road, above the Caldecott Tunnel in Oakland, California, along with thousands of his supporters. Brother Camping’s radio show continued via live remote as his followers bowed and prayed, overlooking the magnificent view of the San Francisco Bay spread out before them; the city's skyline and lights, the recently-renovated Bay Bridge, all twinkling in a perfect, starry, Indian summer night. A few miles to the southwest, a baseball game was held at the old McAfee Coliseum, between the Oakland A's and the Chicago Cubs. The A's, scheduled to move to a new stadium in nearby Fremont in 2012, beat the Cubs while Camping's supporters urged the fans to repent.

Camping continued his broadcast non-stop for 24 hours, telling his listeners he was unsure of the exact timing of the Lord's return. Would He come back at 12 midnight? Greenwich mean time? Eastern standard time? As the hours passed, the believers prayed, but midnight came and went. Camping told his supporters and listeners to remain vigilant, because the calendar could be incorrect, that indeed today might not be May 21 in the Lord's calendar. When the night came and went without the Lord's return,
thousands were disappointed. Many hung to the belief that He would come back, but weeks went by and nothing happened. Eventually, the believers dissipated and Brother Camping told his radio audience that he had not incorrectly read scripture, but would need to re-evaluate it, just as he had when his first prediction of the Apocalypse in 1994 had not materialized.

Well into his 90s, Brother Camping gamely tried to continue his program, but his audience withered. A few years later he announced that he had used all his remaining energies to study the Bible for the time of Christ's return, and while he was unsure exactly when, he had re-worked his calculations and determined that Christ would return some time between 2061 and 2065. Camping died shortly thereafter and nobody remembered his prediction.

At high noon on May 21, 2011, just as Brother Camping's followers were gathered on an Oakland hillside, across the bay at Marin General Hospital, Stephen Thomas was born. Thus begins the story of *The Second American Civil War: 2061-2065*, for the events that lead to this war are events that encompass the life of this one-time "doubting Thomas" who becomes a True Believer, a disciple of Christ, and a leader of "Christian armies" in the final battle between Good and Evil. This is a novel of just such a concept, of Christ and Satan; of sin and redemption; of God's use of countries, empires and armies to do His will; and finally the Battle of Armageddon as told in the Book of Revelations.

The two nemeses of the book are Thomas and Neb Fowlman. Fowlman is the anti-Christ, born amid a secret cult in Iran, but smuggled by his disciples to the United States as a baby, where he is adopted by an American family, the Fowlmans. He is purportedly raised a Muslim, but in truth his adopted parents are Satanists and, over time, Fowlman's true identity is revealed to him.

The America Fowlman and Thomas grow up in is a conservative, Christian empire. After the Iraq War is finally won by American forces, the electorate becomes increasingly exasperated with liberal Democrats, seemingly proven wrong by history again and again, all the while painted as unpatriotic by the Republicans. Under Republican leadership, the nation ascends to a period of greater peace and prosperity than ever before. Islamic Jihadism ceases to be a major threat. As industry becomes "greener," the world weans its way off its long-time addiction to oil. With oil profits down, terror cells in the Middle East do not have the funding they once they had. Conservatism becomes the leading political ethos of the entire world, leading to lower taxation and greater liberties. Christianity grows to greater popularity than ever before. Roe vs. Wade is overturned and abortion eventually becomes all-but extinct. The Democrats break up. Organizations like NOW and the ACLU disband.

It appears that the United States is the "winner of history," and that conservatism has ultimately triumphed. In the Middle East, Iraq stands alongside Israel as our sturdiest of allies. A student revolution leads to a "friendly takeover" of Iran, which becomes the Persian Republic, a steadfast friend of the U.S. China renounces Communism, as pundits state that in so doing America has completed its "mop-up operation," closing out the Cold
War once and for all. All nations verifiably destroy their nuclear arsenals, with the sole exceptions of the U.S. and Israel, two colossuses standing astride the world stage in ultimate triumph.

One by one, America's "enemies" and concepts long espoused by the Left fall by the wayside, but amid the hubris and overconfidence there are fissures of corruption, for men are sinful and therefore subject to fallibility. Amid these fissures, two lonely forces oppose America. Led by Neb Fowlman, scientists have been able to smuggle nuclear material into the Iranian desert, and in 2049 nuclear jihadists manage to detonate a bomb in Israel, killing some 300,000 people. On that same day, a wing of the same terrorist network manages to poison the water supply of Houston, Texas, killing 27,000 citizens. Israel retaliates and drops a nuclear weapon on the terrorist "villages" in the Iranian desert, a major act of overkill that seems to completely eliminate the terrorists from the face of the Earth, but oddly plays into the terrorist "prediction" of a nuclear Armageddon.

The Israeli nuclear detonation re-activates long-dormant Leftist political dissent. Gays, child molesters, criminals, atheists, women's liberationists, neo-Nazis, and all the old elements of the radical Left emerge, this time coalescing behind a movement led by Fowlman, who merges every anarchist group in an organized manner. The dominant theme behind their protests is that America is too powerful, Israel is to militaristic, and capitalism is too corrupt. It is a revival of ancient Communist rhetoric reacting to American hegemony half-way into the 21st Century. Out of this movement grows a sense of frustration from the Left that feeds a secessionist movement in which the San Francisco Bay Area and other "liberal hotbeds" seek to break away from the United States.

For years, Stephen Thomas has little interest in politics or religion. He grows up in Marin County, a wealthy, very liberal section of the San Francisco Bay Area that finds itself increasingly at odds with the Right-wing politics of America in general. Thomas is blithely liberal, in that he supports abortion rights, clings to belief in "global warming" long after it is disproved, and lives a hedonistic lifestyle. Thomas's father is his basketball coach, and at first they are close, but over time they grow apart. While still in high school, Thomas learns that his father is bi-sexual. He discovers his father masturbating over a male friend of Stephen's staying at his house, and overhears his dad having homosexual "phone sex" with various gay lovers. Stephen never confronts his father about this, and the old man never knows his son has discovered his secret, which his wife Ana never learns of either.

Stephen must live with this secret, choosing to keep it to himself, but the knowledge eats away at his soul. He develops a hatred of his father, and with it a sense of dissipation in his life. He is blessed with athletic ability, and after starring in high school earns a basketball scholarship to the University of Southern California, but after sports he finds no passion, nothing to hold onto. He pursues sex, alcohol and drugs in a constant desire to attain pleasure, but when he is injured his sports career ends; with it dreams of money and glory. Stephen embarks on a life of dissipation; alcohol, cocaine, strippers, porn stars,
sluts, bars, cheap fun. His father tries to moralize to him but Stephen's knowledge of the old man's sexual predilections make his dad a figure to be mocked.

Stephen falls in with a porn slut and gets her pregnant. He enthusiastically urges her to abort the child, which she endeavors to do by going to a clinic in Las Vegas, one of the few remaining places where an abortion can be had. There, Right-wing pro-lifers block the entrance and the slutty girl returns home, where she re-evaluates her pregnancy and decides to have the child. Stephen goes ballistic and vows that the kid is not his; he won't support her. A few years later, the porno girl is killed in a fiery car crash and her parents deliver the child to Stephen's doorstep, forcing him to take responsibility for her.

His life takes downturn after downturn; failed career, failed health, alcohol, drug and sex addictions; total immorality. The existence of his daughter only exacerbates his sense of failure, until one day Stephen decides to end his life. He goes to the Golden Gate Bridge and is about to jump off when an angel of the Lord appears before him and tells him he has been chosen to lead an army of the righteous in an upcoming battle against the forces of wickedness.

Over the next decade, Stephen becomes a devout Christian and Biblical expert. His reading and prophetic revelations lead him to predict the upcoming Apocalypse. He becomes a leader in the Christian community and popular media personality. His daughter becomes a "golden child" of sorts, a young prophet with visions that she communicates to her father. In the mean time, Neb Fowlman continues to lead a Left-wing attack against American institutions of religion, family values and patriotism. In 2061, Republican President Virginia Manaseh, the first woman President, is assassinated by his sect, and it begins a civil war between the forces of the Left and the conservative factions fighting for America. The Leftists want to start a "blue America" that breaks away from the Union. The epicenter of the Leftist war is the San Francisco Bay Area, where Stephen Thomas lives. Stephen leads a concerted effort to keep the Bay Area in the Union, and therefore to maintain his American citizenship, along with all others in the Bay Area who insist they wish to remain Americans.

The war de-stabilizes America just when the nation is at its strongest; when history has accorded it greater power than any previous nation or empire, yet the divisions within its borders cause the country to fray. This de-stabilization causes terrible world unrest, resulting in various wars and rumors of wars. This is accompanied by "signs and wonders," and millions turn to Christianity in response to Stephen's prediction of the Lord's return. A huge Christian reformation takes place all over the world, including Israel, and on May 21, 2065, Christ returns. Stephen and all True Believers are raptured to Heaven. This is followed by a six-month war in which the Leftists, the radicals, the wicked and the unrighteous are left to contemplate their fate, until the world comes to its end on October 21, 2065.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: 2061-2065
TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET

IN 2008: John McCain/Mitt Romney ticket defeats Barack Obama for Presidency. Al Franken defeated in Minnesota Senate campaign.

IN 2009: Senator Ted Kennedy resigns from the Senate due to illness.


IN 2011: Osama Bin Laden is killed by a predator bomb.

Air America goes off the air.

John McCain announces he will not run for re-election, citing age and fatigue.

Iraq and Afghanistan Wars end with peaceful resolutions. The Taliban disbands and Pakistan begins to take control of their mountainous regions. A huge ticker tape victory parade welcomes American troops home. "Peace" breaks out in the Middle East.

October 21 comes and goes; Brother Harold Camping's prophesy of the Apocalypse does not materialize.

Raul Castro dies.

IN 2012: Mitt Romney defeats Barack Obama for Presidency. Hillary Clinton splits Democrat Party, forming the New Democrat Party. It helps Romney win the election, and causes the Democrats to lose a huge portion of their Congressional majorities in House, Senate. Clinton and Harry Reid leave office after November elections, never to return.

Palestine achieves independence.

Cuba renounces Communism and welcomes political unity with United States. American and international casinos, resorts and businesses begin to re-invest in the island. Millions of Cuban ex-patriates flock to their ancestral homeland.

IN 2013: Huge Chavez ousted as president of Venezuela. Oil prices come down drastically.
IN 2016: Mitt Romney re-elected to Presidency. Republicans re-gain control of Congress; Democrats continue to splinter in wake of Iraq War victory and its effect on their party, until they are no longer a viable national party.

Kim Il Sung assassinated.

IN 2017: Roe vs. Wade overturned.

North Korea renounces Communism and begins process of re-unification with South Korea after weapons inspectors confirm destruction of their nuclear arsenal.

IN 2020: Republican General David Petraeus elected President. GOP gains filibuster-proof majorities and achieves the "permanent majority" status of American politics.

IN 2022: China renounces Communism, announcing capitalist economic reforms and free elections.

IN 2025: Cuba becomes 51st state, re-named New Florida.

IN 2028: Republican Michael Steele becomes first black man elected President of the United States.

THE 2020s: Oil prices drop precipitously as America consolidates Middle East political ties, drills in Alaska, and hybrid cars become commonplace. Arab oil states become bankrupt, with the result that funding for terrorist organizations dries up.

"Global warming" never materializes, as weather returns to normal patterns amid clean air solutions introduced by worldwide industries.

U.S. tax rates are reduced to historic lows. The U.S. balances all its budgets; the trade deficit favors the U.S. and the dollar reaches historic highs. The stock market reaches 100,000. American as the economy explodes beyond all previous levels; decade is dubbed "Roaring '20s."

By 2027, abortion outlawed in all but 10 U.S. states.

European Union breaks up. Conservative talk radio becomes a big hit throughout Europe, especially in the U.K. Conservatives are elected to majorities in European parliaments. Low tax rates power European economies. Press dubs it the "Second Enlightenment." Christianity re-popularized in Europe, and abortion bans are instituted by various governments.
Student revolution leads to civil war in Iran, with elements friendly and backed by America battling the Islamic government. Assad ousted in Syria. Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and eventually other Arab states join Israel and Iraq, twin leaders of Middle East Cooperative, a political organization of American allies. American stands more powerful than ever and are dubbed by historians as the "winners of world history."

Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas and other Middle East terrorist groups disbanded.

BY 2033: All nations except the U.S. and Israel destroy nuclear weapons arsenals. Iran continues to have clandestine nukes.

IRS reduced to one-third its 2008 size.

Traditional Democrat party disbands.

ACLU disbands.

THE 2030s: "Student reformers" win the civil war and return Iran to a friendly alliance with the United States, changing name to the Persian Republic. They allow weapons inspectors to destroy all nuclear weapons and development. Rogue elements continue to operate within its borders and other "safe havens" in the Middle East. Reports that these elements still have nuclear capabilities spread.

By the decade's end, radical Islamic Wahabbi elements, long-dormant in the wake of Iraq War and Afghanistan War victories by the U.S., begin to re-surface in the Middle East with a series of low-level terrorist bombings that draw little attention. Islamic terrorists gather in former Iran and establish a presence in the region.

Hollywood, higher education and the media are now conservative in nature. Leftists are accused and in some cases even convicted of treason. McCarthyistic tactics used and "blacklist" is rumored to exist.

FROM 2030s-2040s: Christianity allowed to be promoted in Islamic states. Christianity grows in popularity and becomes dominant world religion, replacing Islam and Hinduism. Growing Christian movement takes root in Israel, and by end of the 2040s, estimates are that half of country is Christian. Growing "end times" prophesies sprout up everywhere.
IN 2049: Terrorists operating in rogue areas of the old Iran explode a secret nuclear weapon in Jerusalem, killing 300,000 people. On that day, the same terrorist group poisons the water supply of Houston, Texas, killing 27,000 people. One week later, Israel drops a 30-megaton nuclear bomb on the known Iranian terrorist haven, killing virtually everybody. This effectively wipes out the terrorist movement.

FROM 2049-2061: In the wake of Israeli nuclear bombing of the "Iranian" terrorist haven, the United States stands stronger than it ever has; indeed, they appear to have finally removed all enemies from the face of the Earth. There are no wars in the world.

Republicans, holding all the power in a virtual one-party system, becomes increasingly corrupt and triumphalistic. Radical Leftist elements emerge, critical of American power and furious that Israel used a nuclear bomb. Democrat party re-establishes itself as a radical liberal wing of American politics using many principles of Communism. Many Democrat rallies display the old "hammer and sickle" flag.

The Left finally takes action, ultimately frustrated that they have lost a political voice, all their most precious causes - civil rights, environmentalism, anti-war protests - seemingly defeated or credit given to the Right. Left-wing American terrorist groups align with Islamic elements and begin a series of attacks against symbols of "American hegemony." Similar groups emerge in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel become virulent throughout the world.

Radical Leftists join forces with neo-Nazi groups in America; they begin to develop military capabilities and establish base camps in Northern states. Debate rages over division of the country, with Democrats, seeing a chance at power, advocating for Northern secession from the Union. The Bay Area of Northern California is taken over by militant Democrats who declare "independence" from the United States and establish a "capitol" on Treasure Island. Americans living in the Bay Area take arms and fight for their U.S. citizenship and engage in an amphibious invasion of Treasure Island, and slaughter the Democrat leadership. The violence arouses great anger on the Left throughout the country and the world.

FROM 2061-2065: The "Battle of Treasure Island" is catalyst for a series of terrorist hit 'n' runs, resulting in a North vs. South "civil war," fought exactly 200 years after the original Civil War, between the U.S. government and a rag-tag rebel "army" who fight under the "hammer and sickle" banner.
Aside from the "Second American Civil War," other wars and rumors of
wars spring up throughout the world. A civil war threatens to begin in
Israel between "new Christians" and Jers.

"Signs and wonders" take place all over the world in the form of odd
weather, prophesies, miracles and Biblical events.

IN 2065: 200 years after Abraham Lincoln's assassination, the President of the
United States, Miss Virginia Mary Manaseh, is assassinated by Leftists.
Amid the chaos, the Democrats capture the White House by force. Their
leader, an Islamic-American originally from Persia who goes by the name
of Neb Fowlman, and who was smuggled by Satan's disciples into
America after his birth in 2011, raised in a conspiracy of evil, is the anti-
Christ. He declares himself ruler of the world. On May 21, 2065 the Lord
Jesus Christ returns to the Earth and raptures the saved into Heaven.
Chaos and hell await the rest. Those who fought for Fowlman's cause, the
political Democrats, Communists, neo-Nazis and Left-wingers, are killed
en masse by Fowlman's Satanic minions, and the "devil's army" runs
rampant from one end of the globe to the other between May 21 and
October 21. The End Times, and the Four Horsemen of Apocalypse, rears
its ugly head until the world ends on October 21.

NEB FOWLMAN

Iranian-born illegal alien who rises up to lead a "Jihad" of Islamic radicals, Communists,
Leftist anarchists and neo-Nazis, all driven by a hatred for Israel and America, in a civil
war that expands to a worldwide conflagration that leads to the Apocalypse. Fowlman is
the anti-Christ.

VIRGINIA MARY MANASEH

A Republican and the first woman President of the United States, whose assassination
begins the Second American Civil War in 2061.

STEPHEN THOMAS

Born in California, he is not raised in a religious household, but slowly transforms from a
hedonist in his youth to a devout Christian. A prophet, he hears from an angel of God of
the coming civil war and is told to fight against the enemies of righteousness in order that
as many people can hear the word of God as possible. Thomas lives in Marin County, the
heart of the secessionist movement, and when the Bay Area attempts to secede from
America to become the Pacifist State, he forms a rebel army of loyal Americans bound to
prevent it.
Born on October 21, 2011, in Marin County, California; the day prophesied by Harold Camping as the last day of Earth. His parents, Richard and Ana, are not religious. Richard is Anglo, Ana a Jew originally from Israel, but they are secular. They baptize Stephen anyway. Richard is a former high school basketball coach who now practices law. He is an alcoholic and a secret bi-sexual, but Stephen learns of it at a young age. He never lets his father know, nor anybody else, harboring the knowledge throughout his life. Ana never learns of it.

Stephen grows up an only child. At 6-6, 240 pounds, he is a fine athlete and plays basketball at Redwood High School, earning a scholarship to USC, but in his sophomore year he injures himself, ending all his aspirations for a pro career. Bitter over his fate, he engages in a life of dissolution. He never graduates from college and lives a life of alcohol, loose women and immorality. At the age of 25 he engages in a one-night stand with a porn star named Madonna in Las Vegas and gets her pregnant. He begs her to have an abortion and she enters the clinic, but a protest by Christian activists closes the clinic. She never has the procedure and daughter Destiny is born in 2035. Stephen refuses to acknowledge she is his. In 2040, when Destiny is five, Madonna is killed in a fiery car crash and her step-mother shows up at Stephen's house with Destiny, forcing him to take her off his hands.

Stephen lives at home with his parents but is a bad parent at first, forcing his parents to care for the child while he drinks and whores about. Everybody hates everybody. In 2040, Stephen decides to kill himself. He goes to the Golden Gate Bridge and is ready to throw himself off of it when an angel of the Lord appears and tells him that he will lead an army against the forces of wickedness, in order that many who otherwise would not hear the word of God will hear it, so that "a multitude may be saved that no man can number" before "God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah."

At first, Stephen does not believe it, thinking the vision an alcoholic dream, but he does not kill himself. The next day he wakes up from his hangover and Destiny stands above him. She looks like an angel, then says, "I hate you," and walks away. Stephen cries. He fumbles about the bookcase and finds an old Bible that has been in the family for decades but nobody has ever read, and starts to read it.

Over the next 10 years, Stephen becomes more and more of a Christian, until finally in 2051 the angel of the Lord appears before him again and utters only the following words: "The end of the Church Age is upon us."

Stephen becomes a street prophet, preaching the Word of God wherever he can. He starts a web site and becomes a popular voice and eventually a Christian talk radio host, warning of the end of the world and for Mankind to repent. As the secessionist movement heats up in the Bay Area, Stephen's Christian message becomes more and more of a threat to the secular, increasingly atheistic Leftist movement. Efforts are made to silence him and his security is threatened. Destiny becomes a Christian, too, and with her father takes on the fight against the secessionist movement.
As the revolution heats up, Stephen becomes a leader in the effort to fight against the anarchists and when combat breaks out in 2061, he becomes a leader in the fight to maintain the Bay Area within the Union. He constantly warns that the "church age" has ended.

Stephen utters the following scriptures:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whose readeth, let him understand, then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains." Matthew 24:15, 16.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God." - 1 Peter 4:17

"After this I beheld, and, lo a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." - Revelation 7:9

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the Earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." - Zephaniah 2:3

Stephen does not actually take up arms, but becomes the spiritual leader of the "American Union" movement. He tells his followers that God is coming; that the Lord has favored his beloved America but that He has used the nation for his purposes; to free the world so that the most possible number of people can become Christians before He returns. Finally, Fowlman captures Stephen, but Destiny escapes. Stephen is tortured just as his namesake, the martyr St. Stephen was, on May 21, 2065. Just before he dies, he sees the coming of the Lord.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," he exclaims. "Halleluah." Fowlman is horrified as Christ appears, rapturing Stephen, Destiny and billions of true believers to Heaven. A terrible war ensues as the forces of hell are unleashed upon the Earth in a desperate attempt to evade God's final wrath, but on October 21, 2065 they are all thrown in the lake as God's final victory is attained.

WHAT IF NIXON WON IN 1960?

THE SHAKESPEARAN TALE OF RICHARD NIXON VS. THE KENNEDYS

By STEVEN TRAVERS
CONCEPT

The premise of this book is contained within its title; quite simply, What If Nixon Won In 1960? There is inherent in that question greater possibility than perhaps any "what if?" scenario of the 20th Century. Rife within this question are Shakespearean, maybe even Biblical, possibilities that beg to be philosophized over while examining such eternal questions as good vs. evil; God and Satan; and how Divine Intervention plays its hand in the affairs of Mankind.

Other Presidential elections were close and rife with such possibility. The 2000 George W. Bush-Al Gore race, for instance, offers a similar tantalizing possibility, but had 9/11 occurred under Gore's watch, he likely would have invaded Afghanistan as Bush chose to do. The Iraq question may be different, but so far the multiple millions of dead that evolved out of the differing Richard M. Nixon-John F. Kennedy equation has not materialized.

Even the fascinating "what if John Kennedy had not been assassinated in 1963?" or "what if Robert Kennedy had not been assassinated in 1968?" questions only emanate from the genesis that was 1960.

This book dives into the question, producing not only the first, obvious answers - the difference between a Nixon Administration between 1961 and 1965(69), the murder of JFK that would not have happened, and the differing responses to the Cuban Missile Crisis and Vietnam - but goes well beyond all of that. Possibilities include the legacies and different lives that would have been led by Nixon and all three Kennedy brothers, John, Robert and Edward.

MARKET

Conspiracy theorists, historians, Nixon lovers and haters, Kennedyites, and interested people of all stripe will find the endless possibilities to be fascinating.

COMPETETITION

Competition? There is none. This has never been written before. It has never even been attempted. This is brilliant in its original intent.

THE BOOK

The book will give a biographical sketch of Richard M. Nixon and the Kennedy family. There may be no greater contrast in the history of American politics, yet inherent in their differences are keys to America's greatness. In the United States, a man from the most humble of backgrounds (Nixon) can rise up, competing toe-to-toe with the product of America's "royal family" (JFK).

Nixon was poor and had to work for all he ever attained. Kennedy was rich and skated through life with seeming ease. The first ironic twist is that while Nixon came from nothing, he came to be known as a politician representing a Republican ideology
favoring wealth and status. The Kennedy name, on the other hand, would come to be synonymous with its Democrat leanings in favor of the poor and underrepresented.

Yet the differences morph with similarities. Both were Navy men, of approximately the same age, elected to the "veteran's class" as 1946 freshmen. Both were fiercely anti-Communist, and in the beginning at least found great kinship with each other. They were "like brothers," Nixon later lamented when he felt he had been stabbed in the back by the hardball politics of JFK's father, "Old Man Joe" Kennedy.

History slowly but surely inched their ultimate confrontation closer and closer throughout the 1950s. With the world changing dramatically in 1960 they faced each other in the mother of all Presidential elections. It is now rendered common knowledge that "Old Man Joe" orchestrated the stealing of the 1960 election for his son. Multiple, fraudulent votes in Democrat-heavy Cook County, Illinois (Mayor Richard Daley's Chicago) and "tombstone ballots" in Texas, just like the one Kennedy's Vice-Presidential running mate, Lyndon Johnson, used to win the 1948 Senate campaign, made the difference.

The first great question is raised out of the 1960 election. Benjamin Bradlee was a high-ranking member of the Washington press corps. His boss was Katherine Graham, publisher of the influential Washington Post. Despite the obvious fraud, neither Bradlee, Graham - both personal friends of Kennedy - or anybody else at the Post chose to investigate the greatest political crime in American history. 13 years later, when Watergate hit and the shoe was on the other foot, they went after Nixon with partisan fervor above and beyond previous conception, therefore re-writing the way politics is covered and handled by all parties. The rabid efforts by Republicans at "getting" Bill Clinton in the 1990s can in many ways be traced to Watergate. Clinton's ability to evade ultimate removal from office can be traced to lessons he and his wife, a Watergate-era Democrat aide, learned from it.

Despite all the shenanigans, Nixon still might have won in 1960 but-for a fatal error that went against his best political instincts. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wallowed in a Birmingham, Alabama jail cell. Nixon, who as a Duke University law student argued on behalf of black civil rights with his Southern classmates, chose not to intervene in King's jailing in order to avoid "white backlash" against him. Kennedy, fighting against the tide and an experienced favorite, did intervene. King and his wife, Coretta Scott King, were grateful and threw their support to JFK. More importantly, perhaps, baseball great Jackie Robinson switched to Kennedy. Robinson was like Nixon a fellow Californian, who had by then become a Connecticut Republican, speaking out vehemently against Communism. Robinson's decision can be viewed as the first major shift in racial politics; when the black vote, which only favored the Democrats with 55 percent at the time, grew to become a 90 percent voting bloc.

After several intense debates, Kennedy did win in November of 1960, the closest election help up until that time. In April of 1961 he authorized the Bay of Pigs. It was a CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba, aimed at deposing the new Communist dictator Fidel Castro. During the campaign, JFK was briefed on the plan, which had been in the works for years. He was told not to reveal or even advocate it, for to do so was to violate national security. Seeing opportunity, he made veiled accusations that the Dwight Eisenhower-Richard Nixon White House had failed to protect the region because they
had not done precisely that with which they were planning to do! Nixon, committed to
maintaining the plan's secrecy, was forced to fumble over his answer. Kennedy won
important national security points, especially vital since his party was battling a "soft on
Communism" image still resonating from the McCarthy era.

Despite Kennedy's bluster, his heart was not in the plan. Since Operation
Mongoose had a life of its own, the Central Intelligence Agency was filled with "sacred
cows" from World War II, and the young President was not confident enough to buck the
Establishment. The Bay of Pigs operation was launched. The key was air cover. When
the Cuban exiles who made up the invasion met resistance, all was lost when Kennedy
refused to let U.S. pilots annihilate the Communist opposition. His fear was that the
operation would be revealed as an American one, which it was anyway, within a matter
of days.

Had Nixon been President, the planes would have been allowed to provide vital
cover, and in so doing the operation very well might have succeeded despite a number of
blunders and even leaks that bordered on treachery. Nixon was a virulent anti-Communist
at the height of his Red-baiting vitriol. He had advocated the use of "battlefield nuclear
weapons" at the relatively low-level conflict between the French and Vietnamese
Communists at Dienbienphu in 1954. He was an ardent advocate of American military
power, not afraid to use it (as he demonstrated in his later Presidency). Had Castro been
removed in 1961 and Cuba freed, the entire dynamic of the Cold War and the fate of
Latin America would have been drastically different.

The Communists would have been set back on their heels, much less willing to
engage in adventure in Latin America, Africa . . . and Southeast Asia. Instead, the Third
World became a battlefield of proxy wars. Soviet Premier Nikita Khruschev immediately
sized up the young playboy Kennedy, decided he was a "rookie," and hatched plans for
just such adventures. Having launched Sputnik, at the time winning the "space race,"
having found the United Nations to be a forum in which he could advocate his position
and even find a fawning Western media, he was ecstatic.

He met Kennedy at a summit in Vienna and found JFK to be badly shaken by the
Cuban fiasco. Khruschev dominated the meeting and saw a grandiose future for
Communism. Over the next two years this manifested itself in the building of the Berlin
Wall (1961) and the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). Had Nixon been in office, not only
would Cuba likely have been freed, Khruschev would have been set back by that event
and not tried to wall off Berlin, much less plant nukes in Cuba. Khruschev knew of
Nixon's "battlefield nuclear weapons" advocacy in Vietnam. If he was willing to go to
such extremes over a tiny place like that, what would he do to protect his own
hemisphere or Europe? Nixon had backed General Douglas MacArthur's call for nuclear
weapons in Korea. Khruschev did not simply respect Nixon, he feared him, a well-
cultivated reputation that Nixon, especially in his later years with Henry Kissinger, used
as an effective form of foreign policy.

But with Nixon out of the way, Khruschev felt free to poke sticks at young JFK.
While Kennedy's performance during the Cuban Missile Crisis was tremendous, had
Nixon been in the White House there would not have been a crisis. Had he been in office
and the weapons were discovered as they were, then a very different scenario may well
have played out; that with which was advocated by Air Force General and Chairman of
the Joint Chiefs of Staff "bombs away with" Curt LeMay. LeMay's aggressive plan for a Cuban invasion may well have launched World War III, but in reality the Soviets probably would not have felt such a risk was worth it, especially over tiny Cuba. They may well have sacrificed Castro and the Bay of Pigs disaster might have been rectified, just as many felt the failure to march on Baghdad in 1991 was finalized by President George H.W. Bush's son, George W. Bush, in 2003.

Had a Nixon-LeMay invasion plan been launched with a resultant victory, then the world would have looked much different. Would it have been a decisive blow that the Communists could not recover from? Would it have dissuaded them from pursuing further aggression in Vietnam? Or, would it have, as Robert Kennedy warned, remove the mantel of moral superiority worn by the United States when it came to world opinion? What of Castro? Would he have been killed, exiled, jailed? Would he have become a martyr of Third World Leftists, or just a face on T-shirts like Che Guevara?

These are just the first, most obvious scenarios that beg to be explored in What If Nixon Won In 1960? Beyond that the question revolves around the following issues:

- Lyndon Johnson and the Vietnam War.
- Barry Goldwater and the conservative revolution.
- The anti-war, free speech, civil rights, women's liberation and gay liberation movements that emanated mainly from Vietnam angst in the 1960s.
- The assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy in 1968.
- Ronald Reagan and how his future would have been altered by a successful Nixon strategy; by either winning the Vietnam War, or if the war had never really gotten off the ground; and the lack of campus protest that emanated from it, thus giving him his law 'n' order image in fighting it.
- Other prominent Democrat standard-bearers who would have emerged had JFK lost.
- Chappaquidick: the scandal that might not have happened.
- Watergate: the scandal that never would have occurred.
- Southern politics and Christian Right.
- World War III and the Cold War.

FILM POTENTIAL

Steven Travers is already the author of One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, a 2007 release from Taylor Trade Publishing. This is the true story of the 1970 USC-Alabama football game and its effect on the integration of the American South. It is a fast-paced narrative similar to Tom Wolfe’s The Right Stuff. Like that book, it is now under option to a major Hollywood producer and slated for production.
Travers is a veteran of Hollywood who writes with a flair for the dramatic, lending itself to a screenplay format. This book is the perfect vehicle to do just that.

**DELIVERY**

February 2008: sign contract  
January 2009: deliver completed manuscript  
November 2009: publication date

**PROMOTION PLAN**

The author will make himself available for any and all publicity.

**BOOK IDEAS**

**WHAT IS TRUTH?**

Steven Travers

Based on the famous words of Pontius Pilate to Jesus Christ, this would examine the great political divide in America, and worldwide, between the Left and the Right. The essential rise of conservativism, of McCarthyism, of Barry Goldwater, the Reagan revolution, and talk radio, starts with Whittaker Chambers and the Left's reaction to him.

Chambers was a Communist spy whose handler was Alger Hiss, an erudite Harvard lawyer and high-ranking member of the Franklin Roosevelt Administration. When Chambers had a religious epiphany and became a Christian, he was compelled to turn in Hiss to the FBI. Because of on-going investigations of Soviet infiltration, the FBI did not act on the Hiss case because they did not want to reveal to the U.S.S.R. what they knew.

The case went to Republican Congressman Richard Nixon. Nixon was told by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover that Chambers was right, but he would have to forge his case without the FBI's help due to their on-going cases. Nixon and Chambers were excoriated by the Democrat establishment, but despite all efforts to stop an discredit them, were able to prove Hiss's guilt, leading to conviction.

This is the genesis of the political divide which still lasts today. At the core of it is a deep psychological truth. The Left lined up 100 percent behind Hiss and against Chambers. It was not just a political matter but a religious one, with Chambers's Christianity making the case one of good vs. evil. In order to be justified, Chambers had to be proved a liar. Otherwise, Hiss's supporters would be exposed not merely as loyalists to a man and a party, but actually on the side of evil; enemies of America; "fellow travelers" or "useful idiots" of atheistic Communism.
When Chambers won and Hiss lost, the Left was forced to examine its conscience, and this is the essence of the divide. The facts of the case left them in the wrong, and the obvious reaction to this would seem to be: apologize, make a mea culpa confession, convert to the Chambers’ cause. This, however, is not human psychology.

When human beings invest themselves into a cause with all their heart and soul; when they believe something as infallible truth; when all their hopes and dreams are committed beyond doubt to a belief system; and when that system is proven wrong by their hated enemies (Nixon and the conservative Republicans); the natural reaction is not to admit wrongdoing. The natural reaction is to get "backed up" and fight with whatever means at their disposal. This can include lies, distortions, and all form of libel and slander. The Left "lost face" as the Orientals refer to it. To bow down in shame was, as mentioned, not the natural human reaction. Instead, they fought back.

Over the next decades, amid McCarthyism, Vietnam, and Watergate, the Left refused to admit Hiss's guilt. They were bent on destroying Nixon and discrediting McCarthyism. They could not admit the threat of Communism and therefore could not support Vietnam.

When they finally "got" Nixon, forcing his resignation and leading to Democrat sweeps behind Jimmy Carter in 1976, the Left felt that an "end of history" of sorts had finally been won by them. The Cold War was replaced by détente. Conservatism was "dead." The Republicans were all-but destroyed. A new social paradigm based on 1960s social concepts - abortion, civil rights, women's and gay liberation, drug use, new morals - had replaced traditional concepts.

When Ronald Reagan swept to victories and therefore rolled back all those concepts, thus reinvigorating conservatism with unimagined strength, this infuriated the Left who had come to see their power as a manmade right to govern. When the Cold War was won and the Venona Project was uncovered with the opening of KGB files, thus finally confirming Hiss's guilt, the Left's complicity was again exposed.

Conservatism has never allowed the Left to "save face." Instead, a standoff has lasted for 50 years. Revenge has replaced bi-partisanship in a vicious cycle ever since the Chambers-Hiss case.

This book will examine the viciousness of this on-going cycle using the Chambers allegations as its "genesis" that has never abated and may not abate in our lifetimes.

COURTESY OF THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE

In the past 10 years, country music has become the most popular form of American entertainment, and in so doing it has become much more than a pastime. Country music is now considered an arm of American patriotism, a wing of the Republican Party, the "official" sound of conservatism, and in so doing has gone well beyond pop art to become a social statement.
One considered "hick music," with inherent strains of racism and backwardness attached to it, country music has gone mainstream and inculcated itself in all sections of the nation; its cities as well as its natural rural constituencies; the South and the cowboy West.

Country music and country music awards shows have become open endorsements of Christianity, America's involvement in the Middle East, and the military. Renegades from this concept like The Dixie Chicks have been ostracized, forced to find an audience elsewhere.

Stark contrasts between country music and other forms of entertainment are now open sores. Seen as fun-loving yet wholesome; sexy yet faithful; alcohol-fueled but anti-drug; country music has a broad appeal that seems to have moderated into an "open tent" available to all.

The All-American image of country music is compared to the social antagonisms of rock'n'roll and the perceived anti-Americanism of Hollywood. Country music is also seen as a pure form of American advocacy abroad, where the image of the cowboy - rugged individualism - has always been a benign advertisement of the American Way.

CHILDREN OF THE PORN

What is pornography? The Supreme Court says it cannot be defined, but "I know it when I see it." It has been called evil, Satan's greatest temptation. It has split up marriages and ruined relationships. It is the "dark side" of the Internet. Every day it becomes more and more "mainstream," with porn actresses appearing in Hollywood films. Talk radio hosts routinely talk about their favorite porn stars, movies, directors, even producers. It seems that, literally, "everybody's doin' it."

Despite openly acknowledging that pornography is an offense to God, many Christians watch it. People with the self-discipline and the moral fibre to overcome alcohol, drugs and myriad bad habits find themselves utterly, hopelessly addicted to it. Millions lose themselves in its fantasy world, which allows them to take hours from hum-drum lives and live a wild, Hugh Hefner existence of beautiful girls, orgies and sex parties. For gay people, it is a chance to live out their fantasies without fear of recrimination from the prying eyes of society.

Children are drawn to, often getting their first understanding of sex through its images. Pubescent boys and girls, once aspiring to be baseball players, firemen, and nurses, now see porn stars as role models, hoping to someday be "famous" just like their "heroes."
College fraternities and sororities are dens of pornography, imitating wild scenes of sexual excess in "initiations" and rites of passage. Girls who once prized their chastity now engage in pornographic acts just to fit in, to belong, to be a member of a club.

Aspiring Hollywood actors and models quickly abandon hopes of a Shakespearean future on the stage or the glamour of the runway when easy money is available in X-rated films in which they are depicted as being more beautiful than Hollywood or the fashion scene can make them look.

In Eastern Europe, high-fashion models are porn stars, interchangeable with one another. In this post-Communist world, where atheism ruled society and religious morals were swept aside by 70 years of totalitarianism, the biggest heroes and multi-millionaires are porn stars. In Poland, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia and other "breakaway republics," porn stars are some of the most recognized faces. Their production companies are enormous companies, suppliers of high-paying jobs in what is more than a cottage industry. Young girls idolize them, boys lust over them.

Pornography is everywhere; in hotels, on cable TV. Parents fight a losing game trying to keep it away from their kids. The sports pages of major newspapers advertise porn stars appearing at local strip clubs.

While porn has always been around, it came to be popularized in America during its "golden age," the 1970s. In the 1980s, video made it available for private viewing. The Internet and DVDs expanded its reach in the 1990s and 2000s. Magazines once were "hardcore" or "softcore," but in recent years society has given up trying to tell the difference.

So who is behind pornography? It is no longer a closed world of "dirty old men," but rather a multi-billion dollar global, corporate enterprise. But it is also for the young. 19-year-old girls hit the scene, advertised as "the next big thing," each outdoing the previous hot stars, their sex acts getting wilder, more uninhibited and "gonzo" every year. It is a world in which enough is never enough. Each genre must be more outrageous than what audiences have seen in the past.

Whereby once some porn actresses were considered "prudes" who only performed with girls, or with their boyfriends, or engaged in limited sex acts, those days are gone. A hot young girl is expected to outdo all previous acts of "sluttiness," because if they will not there is a long line of sexy chicks willing to.

Whereby once veteran male stars could perform well into their 30s because they could be relied on to "rise to the occasion," Viagra has made every man a stud and left the old-timers out in the cold.

Pornography has seduced millions into its vortex, both viewers and performers. For the performers, youth is a god to be worshipped. Girls are has-beens at 25, but must face the
rest of their lives with an unerasable stigma. Old VHS cassettes are preserved on DVD. Photos images live forever. Their sex acts live on in infamy forever on the world wide web.

For the ex-porn star, every day is a challenge. A new boyfriend, a husband, parents, relatives, friends, associates, colleagues . . . children . . . nobody is safe from finding out everything. It is Original Sin in its modern form, the apple bitten from the Tree of Knowledge, and once the images are in one's head, they remain there forever. The more prominent or respectable a member of society, the harder the fall when secrets are revealed.

Now, porn stars of the 1970s and 1980s are 40, 50 years old. Many are married. Many have found religion. Many have children. This book wants to know, why did they do it? How has it affected their lives? What is it like to be the child of a porn star? How does it affect peoples' lives? Regrets? Advice for others?

This book will be an unflinching look at this industry, focused on the glamour and the despair; the thrills and the heartaches; and most of all the after-effects of porn, which in so many cases was little more than a couple of sessions in a San Francisco or San Fernando Valley studio, its ramifications felt 35 years later.

Was it worth it?

EXEMPLARY FROM "A TALE OF THREE CITIES: NEW YORK, L.A. AND SAN FRANCISCO IN OCTOBER OF '62"

San Francisco

"... And it's bye, bye baby . . . !"  
- Giants announcer Russ Hodges's standard call of home runs

In many ways, the story of Alvin Dark is the story of America: a nation’s reconciliation, redemption and new understanding, followed by socio-political restructuring. This describes how the American South struggled to find, as Abe Lincoln called them, “the better angels of our nature.” In many ways through sports, the South came to grips with new racial realities, then saw the Republican Party husband the region “back into the Union” until they became not a marginalized New Deal voting bloc, but “rose again” to emerge as an economic and political powerhouse.

Al Dark was that walking conundrum of Dixie: the hardcore Baptist Christian burdened by racial prejudice. Through baseball, he was able to get out of the South and become a man of the world. It first led him to New York, where he starred for the 1954 World Champion Giants. A great picture exists of Dark and the black superstar Willie Mays, smiling in each other’s company during the team’s Broadway ticker tape parade.
The Giants of the early 1960s were one of the first truly integrated teams. Mays, Willie McCovey, Felipe Alou, Juan Marichal, and Orlando Cepeda were black and Latino stars of the first order.

Dark, who lived in Atherton, appeared at religious functions. The Holy Bible went everywhere with him and he read it... religiously. The Giants were in contrast to the secular nature of The City. Aside from Dark, they had a large number of Christian players. The Latinos, in particularly, were strong Catholics. Mays and McCovey, while never known for being outgoing Christians, were from the Bible Belt and could not help but be influenced by that upbringing.

Despite that, Dark refused to make the Giants' clubhouse a church. "He had a rule against presenting his Christian testimony to any of the players while in uniform, a rule I was also to abide by," said Felipe Alou. "He told me he felt there was ample time to talk about my beliefs, but that while I was in the clubhouse and on the field I was to be dedicated to winning baseball games."

Dark was particularly careful about talking religion with the San Francisco press corps, among which there were Jews and Left Coast secularists. In Spring Training he did draw a parable, calling the cut-off play "just like the Bible. You don't question it, you just accept it."

Off the field he neither smoked nor drank. On the field he was aggressive, a gambler who "instilled an aggressiveness in that ballclub," recalled catcher Tom Haller. "He wanted us to play hard. Alvin loved to win, but hated to lose. And he did curse. He'd get hot under the collar and could get quite angry at times."

After screaming profanities to umpire Shag Crawford, he "confessed" that "the devil was in me," that it was "not a Christian thing to do," to the San Francisco Examiner. "Never before have I so addressed any man - and with the Lord's help, I hope to have the strength to never do so again." Dark could be a martinet, lumping the good in the with bad after a tough loss which embittered all.

Dark was born on January 22, 1922 in Commanche, Oklahoma, the son of an oil well engineer. The family moved to Lake Charles, Louisiana where he grew up in a staunch religious household. Life in the Bayou state of his childhood was heavily Baptist, with strong racist and segregationist overtones. Laws outlawing integration had been on the books since the Civil War era. When Felipe Alou played in Louisiana in 1956, he and a minority teammate were banned from future action by a law forbidding whites and blacks from playing with or against each other.

Dark's religious convictions were the shield against instinctive racism. His years in New York with black and Latino teammates certainly moderated him further. "Since I had been a kid, the ways I have used to express myself have been mostly physical... I was not good at expressing my thoughts verbally or on paper," said Dark.

Dark was not alone in the Southern white's interpretation of the racial dynamic. "I felt that because I was from the South - and we from the South actually take care of colored people, I think, better than they're taken care of in the North - I felt when I was playing with them it was a responsibility for me," he said in Jackie Robinson's 1964 book Baseball Has Done It. "I liked the idea that I was pushed to take care of them and make them feel at home and to help them out any way possible that I could playing baseball the way that you can win pennants."
Alvin played football and baseball, but his love was baseball. At age 10 he played against 19-year olds. He was all-state in football, captain of the basketball team. LSU beat out Texas A&M for his services. He played football and baseball for the Tigers. In 1942, his sophomore year, Dark was the running back along with Steve Van Buren, later a Hall of Famer with the Eagles.

Dark was in the Marines during World War II, and was assigned to officer candidate school at Southwestern Louisiana State, where he earned football All-American honors. He played halfback on an overseas team in 1945 before going to China. Sports kept him out of major combat, as it did for numerous college and pro athletes. Despite being drafted by the NFL and the All-American Football Conference, Dark went for the Boston Braves, breaking into the big leagues in 1946. He played all of 1947 at triple-A, then helped lead the Braves to the 1948 World Series at age 26.

The middle infield of Dark and Eddie Stanky was distinctively Southern. Stanky taught the youngster the intricacies of the game. Dark's .322 average earned him Rookie of the Year honors over Philadelphia's Richie Ashburn. In 1949 Dark and the Braves tanked. Manager Billy Southworth lost his son and drank heavily. Dark learned from Southworth things not to do. Dark and Stanky were too opinionated. Both were traded to the New York Giants.

Leo Durocher loved Dark's fiery ways. When Dark turned down $500 to make a smoking commercial, Durocher paid him the money and made him captain. He thought of Dark as a player-coach, a manager on the field.

Over the years, Dark played for Gene Mauch, Charley Dressen and Fred Hutchinson, all respected baseball minds. "You get the chance to learn managing from a Durocher or a Mauch - that's a pretty good education," he said.

Dark helped New York win two pennants and the 1954 World Series before being traded to St. Louis. He later played for the Cubs, Phillies and Braves. Whenever a new man joined teams Alvin played for, Dark would take him out to dinner, which was "something as a player that only one other man in baseball did to my knowledge," said ex-teammate Lee Walls, who played for the Dodgers in 1962.

In 14 years he had more than 2,000 hits and batted .289. In late 1960 Milwaukee traded him to San Francisco for shortstop Andre Rogers, and he took over as their manager in 1961.

"I never thought I'd say this about anybody," Willie Mays told writer Charles Einstein a few years later, "but I actually think more of 'Cap' <Dark> than I did of Leo. You know what he did when they made him manager? He sent me a letter, telling me how glad he was we were going to be back together again. How can you not want to play for a guy like that?"

Dark's hiring both fell in line with but deviated from owner Horace Stoneham's normal methods. On the one hand, the Stoneham family had hired former Giants players in the past; Bill Terry, Mel Ott and Bill Rigney. They liked loyalty and tradition. There was a feeling that to be a Giant was something bigger than to be a Phillie or a Red. But Stoneham also liked hail-fellow-well-met types who he could share a cocktail and camaraderie with. Leo Durocher had not played for the Giants, but was certainly not averse to drinking. So was the Irishman Tom Sheehan.
"Normally, Horace insists that his managers drink with him," recalled Bill Veeck. "It goes with the job. When he drinks, everybody drinks. Especially if he is paying their salaries."

Dark, 39, did not drink. He was loyal to Stoneham and would perform his job 100 percent, but he would not drink. Stoneham understood and did not press the subject. Dark's coaching staff, hired in 1961, came straight out of the great 1951 pennant winners: Larry Jansen (40), Whitey Lockman (34) and Wes Westrum (38). The coaches as well as Dark were all active players in 1960.

"He had a lot faith in our judgment," said Jansen. "Wes was a solid defensive catcher and a great guy. Lockman really knew how to deal with people, and I guess Alvin thought I knew enough about pitching to help him."

"I know what each of us can do," Dark told the media. "When I assign them their work at Spring Training, I can relax. I know the job is getting done because they know what I want done. And they do it."

Dark's temper was difficult for him to control in those days. "We were playing the Phillies and lost three straight games by one run," Dark recalled. "We had our opportunities, but couldn't score. After one of those ballgames I heard some guys at the other end of the clubhouse laughing. What they were laughing about, I don't know. It was probably something I should have found out before I got so mad. But it hit me all at once. How could anybody laugh in a situation like this?"

Dark picked up a stool and threw it with full force against a door. His finger had lodged into the chair and he lost the tip of his little finger. On another occasion Dark turned over the food trays in Houston, ruining one of Willie McCovey's cherished suits. Willie Mac was a clothes horse. Dark provided the first baseman with a check the next day to pay for a new outfit.

Dark had not been away from the playing field long enough to gain the proper perspective for managing. He wanted his players to play as he had, and was upset at the "new breed" of athlete that was just starting to emerge in the 1960s. It was not just a matter of race, although the game was rapidly changing its "complexion"; but the modern player was different, less intense, more worldly.

Great managers and coaches have always been identified as those who could change with the times. That was the key to John Wooden's success at UCLA, and Bear Bryant's at Alabama. Dark was old school. San Francisco Chronicle columnist Charles McCabe said that Dark's attitude was a "very dangerous thing," that the manager felt that he needed to "win every game himself."

Dark stood in the dugout "like Washington crossing the Delaware," one writer quipped. He did not have time for jokes or tobacco-jawing, saying that he had seen too many managers let the games pass them by. He had no use for individual achievements, even though his team had some of the greatest individual stars in baseball. It was a challenge for him.

Dark immediately noticed at his first Spring Training that the team was divided between whites, blacks and Latinos. He had equipment manager Eddie Logan mix the cubicles so that blacks would be next to whites, Latinos next to blacks, and the like. "It went over like a lead balloon," Dark admitted.
Dark also had a sign posted in the clubhouse that read: "Speak English, You're in America." Dark had a meeting of the Latinos and said the others complained that they jabbered in Spanish. There were worries that they were telling jokes or hatching plots behind teammates' backs. But Cepeda called Dark's complaints "an insult to our language," and the Latinos kept talking in their native tongue.

Felipe Alou understood what Dark was trying to do, which was to assimilate these players into the culture, their new country, and with their teammates, but said it was forced. "Can you imagine talking to your own brothers in a foreign language?" he said, and he should know; brothers Matteo and Jesus were all in the Giants' organization. Besides, many of the Latinos spoke poor English, so it was hard for them.

Dark, however, was not rigid. When he imposed an edict that did not work, he realized it and stopped the practice, as he did with the cubicle-assignments and the "only English" rules.

"My intentions were good but the results were bad, so I stopped it," he said.

Unlike Walt Alston, Dark was not a "by the book" manager, said pitcher Billy O'Dell. He thought out every move and had reasons for them. He liked using defensive replacements and went to his bullpen early by the standards of the day. He juggled his batting order, tried to apply defensive strategy based on his interpretation of the shifting Candlestick winds, and warmed up relievers just to bluff opponents.

"Alvin overmanaged, but even he admitted that," said Charles Einstein. The writers called him the "mad scientist." He had fake pick-off plays and other gadget maneuvers.

"I don't think I ever managed thinking some move was the 'safe' thing to do," said Dark. He said he wanted to "have some fun. But you only have fun when you win."

Dark was competitive at everything; gin rummy (which he was taught by Leo Durocher, a master) and golf. He beat his players on the greens and used that to extract a psychological advantage.

Dark could play "little ball" even with the slugging Giants, and had a grading system that awarded points to players whose obvious statistics were not comparable to a Mays, McCovey or Cepeda. If a player moved a runner along 30 or 40 times in a season, Dark had kept a record of it and the players were able to use that in contract negotiations.

When Dark told the writers that third baseman Jim Davenport's plus/minus record was excellent, but that Orlando Cepeda's was "terribly minus," he asked that it not be printed in the headlines. The papers ran it anyway. Look magazine printed Cepeda's so-called "minus-40" rating, and the sensitive first baseman sued for defamation of character. He lost.

In March of 1962, the conflict between Cepeda and Dark took a turn for the worse when, after a brilliant 1961 campaign, Orlando held out of Spring Training for $60,000.

Dark's biggest concern entering Spring Training was the age of his pitching staff. Sam Jones and Billy Loes, both effective pitchers in the 1950s, had nothing left. Dark was relying on 32-year old Don Larsen and 35-year old Billy Pierce. Larsen was a hard drinker whose lifestyle made him a decade older. Pierce had been an outstanding pitcher with the Chicago White Sox, but in the Cactus League he was terrible. His spring ERA hovered around 16.00. He gave up a plethora of home runs.
Billy O'Dell held out and Jack Sanford was an unknown quantity; maybe excellent, maybe a bust. Stu Miller was the bullpen ace. A host of untested young pitchers included Jim Duffalo, Bob Bolin and Gaylord Perry. 23-year old Mike McCormick offered huge potential but was always seemingly troubled with arm injuries. Juan Marichal was worried sick about his girlfriend, Alma. Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo had been assassinated, and violent extremists threatened to throw a bomb through the window of her families' home.

Marichal requested a leave so he could go to the Dominican Republican, marry Alma, and bring her to America. Dark never hesitated. "He was terribly unhappy and needed to get that gal up here," recalled Dark. Marichal was deeply grateful and wanted to do something for Dark. He asked Willie Mays for advice. "Win," said Mays.

Dark certainly could count on Mays to provide veteran leadership, hustle and his usual brilliance. Ed Bailey was a veteran catcher. Tom Haller was a youngster. 32-year old Harvey Kuenn could still hit. Jose Pagan would provide good defense. Jim Davenport was solid at third base. Chuck "Iron Hands" Hiller was the second baseman. Dark decided to make him a project in Spring Training; to improve him defensively. "That showed me that Dark could be a teacher, and he made Hiller into a second baseman," said San Francisco Examiner sportswriter Harry Jupiter.

First base was a festering controversy, albeit an embarrassment of riches: Orlando Cepeda and Willie McCovey. After Cepeda finally signed, Dark needed to find a place for Willie Mac. Left field was the only solution, but his outfield was also full: Kuenn, the Alou brothers, and of course Mays in center.

Team trainer Frank "Doc" Bowman posted a sign on the clubhouse wall in Phoenix: "Work hard this year - and eat corn on the cob all winter." It did not make a lot of sense but its meaning was clear. They had potential, and if they made the most of it a championship was theirs for the taking.

Felipe Alou, 27, averaged .274 in four previous seasons. When he was out with a sore elbow, the club lost six of eight. When he returned they won eight straight. In June Alou was hitting .345, one point from the National League lead. "I just am hitting better through the middle than I ever did," he said. "I have no worry about whether I hit .170 or .300. I have great confidence since Al Dark play me regular. Don't worry. I just swing."

Batting fifth instead of first as in 1961, the six-foot, 195-pounder said "This year I like where I am batting. I am too big for a lead-off man. I cannot try to get walks. I am a swinger, not a waiter."

Alou embarked on consecutive-game hitting streaks of 11, 10, nine, and eight games in 1962. He was also very mature; a solid influence on moody fellow Latinos Cepeda and Marichal; as well as a pathfinder for younger brothers Matty and Jesus. "Felipe was a very classy person, and a good team ballplayer," said Billy Pierce. "He led a great life and carried himself well. He would try to work with the guys. If some of the Latin fellows got a little excited, he would be the man to calm them down. I don't know if Felipe would ever swear about anything."
Felipe carried his Bible with him at all times, which helped him form a bond with Dark. But he spoke up to writers and was no "shrinking violet," according to writer David Plaut. When Dark kicked over the food table, Alou picked the food off the floor and ate it while staring at Dark. The message was clear: food was a gift from God. Born into poverty, Alou never wasted it.

Alou was born in the fishing village of Haina, Dominican Republic in 1935, the eldest of four sons. His father, Rojas, was a blacksmith and, like Jesus of Nazareth, a carpenter. He made hand-carved bats for his sons, who practiced by hitting lemons.

In high school Felipe was a track star, but played baseball in the summer leagues. At 16 he worked in a concrete mix facility and became a legend when he wrestled sharks with his bare hands! His grades were excellent and he attended the University of Santo Domingo to study medicine. He played on the baseball team, coached by a Giants "bird dog" named Horacio Martinez. Alou's father lost his job and Felipe quit school to support his family. He signed a $200 bonus for the Giants and went to Lake Charles, Louisiana of the Evangeline League.

He was barred by his color and sent to Cocoa Beach, where he led the Florida State League at .308. He impressed the Americans by learning English and in 1958 made it to San Francisco. In 1961 he became a starter, but pitchers could get him out on the outside corner.

He arrived at Spring Training in 1962 and closed up his stance. It paid off immediately. He hit .500 in the Cactus League and stayed hot in regular season play, was moved from lead-off to fifth, and displayed power. Alou went on a 12-game tear. His homer in Cincinnati shattered the letters on an advertisement atop the Crosley Field scoreboard.

He killed the Dodgers in an April series, prompting a Dodger fan to send a telegram to San Francisco: "Roses are red, violets are blue . . . we'll give our team for Felipe Alou."

He continued hitting well in the first half and made the All-Star Game. He had nine straight hits at one point.

For all of Alou's on-field exploits, however, his greatest contribution might have been when he saved Juan Marichal from drowning off the coast of Haina.

Jim Davenport made the National League All-Star team in 1962. He finally came into his own after years of injuries. He already was generally viewed as the best-fielding third sacker in the senior circuit. If he could stay healthy he was destined for greatness. The press dubbed him "a man for all lesions."

His injuries were an anomaly, since he had been a college safety at Southern Mississippi without any health problems. Alabama originally recruited him but 'Bama had a rule against married players. Since Davenport was wed, the scholarship was rescinded and he ended up at Southern Miss instead. In his sophomore and junior years he led his team to upsets over the Crimson Tide. The losing quarterback both times was Bart Starr.

Davenport was an original 1958 Giant, but suffered rib and ankle injuries. In 1959 it was an eye infection. On his 26th birthday he tore his knee up in a collision with then-Reds catcher Ed Bailey. Larry Jackson’s pitch cracked his collar bone. Bleeding ulcers
landed him in a Milwaukee hospital. He hurt his groin. His injuries made it tough to run and train properly. The lack of conditioning affected his stamina. The writers speculated that the missing ingredient between 1958 and 1961 was Davenport. Despite his injuries, he led the league in fielding percentage three years in a row.

"Here was a guy who was so quiet, and he never sought out publicity, but he is still the best fielding third baseman I ever saw," said Bob Stevens, a legendary baseball writer for the Chronicle who eventually had the press box named after him.

Second baseman Chuck Hiller, on the other hand, was a defensive liability who would lead the National League in errors in 1962.

"One time in Cincinnati, we went to see the very first James Bond movie," recalled Tom Haller. "At the end of the picture, it was discovered that the bad guy, Dr. No, had no iron hands. So poor Charlie got nailed with 'Dr. No' for awhile."

That was inter-changed with "Iron Hands." The play-on-movie-words repeated itself two years later with San Carlos, California-born first baseman Dick Stuart of the Boston Red Sox. A power hitter with zero defensive skills, Stuart was given the nickname "Dr. Strange glove" after the title character of the film Dr. Strangelove.

Hiller had actually led two minor leagues in fielding after being signed by the same Cleveland scout who had inked Bob Feller. The Giants picked him up in 1959 and he hit over .300. Hiller was a talker who Cepeda called "Abner," as in Doubleday, because "he talked like he invented the game."

But Hiller began to press, and the more he pressed the more it affected his play at the plate and in the field. After spending 1961 at triple-A, Hiller was told by Dark he was the starter in 1962. Hiller spent the spring fretting over whether he would blow the opportunity, but when the season started and he was the starter, he was his old "Abner" self again. His fielding, despite the errors, was adequate and he was adept at turning double-plays. None of the Giants pitchers was a strikeout artist; certainly not like Koufax and Drysdale, so they needed those twin-killings.

Hiller's partner was Jose Pagan, who "has been making me look good on double-plays . . ." said Hiller in 1962. "When <he> gained confidence in me, we started to function as a combination. We're at ease with each other now."

Pagan was probably the least-publicized player on the team. He was a Latino on a team of high-profile, high-temper Latinos, but he remained quiet and reserved. "With big stars like Mays, Marichal and so many others, it's too bad Jose never really got the recognition he deserved," said Cepeda. "He was there every day, made all the plays and he could hit."

"You didn't have to worry about Pagan at all," said Billy O'Dell. "He was in the right place all the time. Some of the other guys, you might have wanted to move them a little bit, but not Jose."

Pagan had been signed by Pedro Zorilla, credited with the Cepeda signing. He played five years of minor league ball, and stuck in 1961 when he beat out Ed Bressoud for the job. Teammates called him "Humphrey" as in Bogart because of his non-plussed facial expressions, which the actor effectuated on-screen.
When the club had a scare flying to Chicago in 1962, the cabin went silent until Pagan broke the quiet with a blessed joke: "I say we should take a vote. I'm for taking the bus."

The remark eased the tension. Pagan hit eighth but drove in a lot of clutch runs. His fielding percentage in 1962 led the National League.

Harvey Kuenn was a former American League batting champion. He had hit .300 in eight of the previous nine seasons. Kuenn graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1952 and announced that he was accepting bids for his services, which came in. Detroit won the "bidding war," signing him to a $55,000 package.

After 63 minor league games the shortstop was brought up in September, 1952. In 1953 he was named Rookie of the Year. The 21-year old picked up the tab for a lavish team party at his hotel. He was barely old enough to consume the alcohol that flowed, and in some ways Kuenn was the first of the "new breed"; college-educated, rich and savvy.

He hit .300 every year, switched to the outfield and was a perennial All-Star. On a team that included Al Kaline, he was the captain. His .353 batting average in 1959 won the batting title.

In 1960 a controversial trade sent Kuenn to Detroit for Rocky Colavito. Kuenn was booed, but he batted .308 and was the player representative. Cleveland fell below .500 after years of success and general manager Frank Lane traded him to San Francisco for Willie Kirkland and Johnny Antonelli. Harvey chewed Red Man on the field and smoked big cigars off it. Sports Illustrated did a piece on him. Writer Tex Maule said he kept the team loose, entertained and united.

"I don't think there was anyone on the club who enjoyed life or playing in the big leagues more than Harvey," said Billy Pierce.

One day Mays arrived to find a gift-wrapped package in his locker. The box of candy was opened to reveal two dozen decoratively wrapped pieces of horse manure.

"I know you done it," giggled Mays at the laughing Kuenn. "I know you done it."

At mid-season Kuenn's dad died, but the club rallied around their friend.

"He taught the younger players about hitting, volunteering his own time which was something Mays didn't do," said Bob Stevens. "He also became very close to Stoneham. He loved drinking margaritas with Horace during Spring Training."

Charles Einstein noted that Kuenn was effective "drunk or sober."

Matty Alou, the younger brother of Felipe Alou (and older brother of Jesus Alou) was born on December 22, 1938 in Haina, Dominican Republic. At 5-9 and 155 pounds he was much smaller than his powerful brother. He grew up with Juan Marichal and was part of the wholesale exportation of Dominican baseball talent to the United States that has become more than a cottage industry.

Matty played four Major League games in 1960 and 81 in 1961. He was a decent outfielder who threw and batted left-handed.

Carl Boles's only year in Major League baseball was 1962. He was called up from El Paso in mid-summer. He would play the rest of his career in Japan. He had one distinctive trait, one reason for being memorable: he was a dead ringer for Willie Mays.
"It was really noticeable when we made a trip back to the Polo Grounds," said Boles. "Willie would get these huge ovations there. That night I came out through the center field bleachers before he did and the crowd thought I was Mays."

The Mets' fans gave him a standing ovation, until they noticed that his number was 14, not Mays's 24. Then they booed him. After games, fans wanting Willie's autograph would mob Boles. Sometimes he would sign Mays's name as a joke. He got excellent service at restaurants and roomed with Willie McCovey, which further made people think he was Mays, since the two Willie's from Alabama were linked.

Catcher Ed Bailey, 31, loved to talk about women, which is the favorite subject of most athletes anyway. His spicy descriptions of girls, alcohol and his golf game earned him the nickname "Words" and "Mr. Clean."

"He loved to give guys the hot foot," said McCormick. Wes Westrum was his favorite target because he fell asleep on the team bus.

Hailing from Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, Bailey broke into the bigs in 1953 and developed into a three-time All-Star catcher. In 1961 he was traded to San Francisco to make room for Johnny Edwards. The Reds won the title but Bailey was still happy to be in San Francisco. Cow-milking contests were occasionally held in big league stadiums, and the country boy Bailey usually won.

Just as Bailey had been traded to make room for young Johnny Edwards, he discovered a young catching sensation on his new team. Tom Haller, 24, had been a quarterback at the University of Illinois. Born on June 23, 1937 in Lockport, Illinois, he was the prototypical athlete/catcher. Haller was boyishly handsome, the All-American type possessing great leadership skills; a first rate throwing arm; and a powerful left-handed bat. He was 6-4, 195 pounds, and had been called up to play 30 games in 1961. He was the Giants' future behind the dish. Bailey was there in case he was not ready, but Haller was ready in '62.

"Alvin told us we were both going to play, but it's only natural for them to want to go with the youngest guy they've got and look to the future," recalled Bailey. "And Dark liked having me available to come off the bench."

Bailey was involved in several "pier six brawls" in his career. In 1962 he followed Cepeda after a homer, and Pittsburgh's Bob Friend went after him. Catcher Don Leppert tackled Bailey. He and Friend exchanged shouts while being restrained. Then Bailey hit a 400-foot home run, giving rookie Gaylord Perry an 8-3 win, the first of his career. It started a 10-game winning streak.

Bailey and Haller provided 35 homers and 100 RBIs out of the catching position.

Billy O'Dell liked Bailey so much that the two operated without signals. Theirs was almost a telepathic relationship.

O'Dell was from Newberry, South Carolina; like Bailey south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Baltimore signed him out of Clemson. Given the name "Digger" after the main character in Life of Riley, he never pitched in the minors.
He gained needed weight in the military and in 1957 made the bigs for good. He was an All-Star in 1958. Pitching for Baltimore in front of the Orioles' fans, he threw three scoreless innings in a 4-3 American League win, but hurt his back the next year. O'Dell's back injury plagued him, and eventually he and Billy Loes were traded to San Francisco.

At first he and Dark feuded over how he was used. He was fined and they had shouting matches. Dark wanted to put him in the 1961 expansion draft but Stoneham insisted he be kept.

In 1962 Spring Training Dark told him he was the fourth starter "until you show me you can't do it." After an awesome spring he started game two of the regular season, beating the Braves with a four-hitter. The key was his relationship with Bailey. He was effective and consistent all season.

"He never really got credit for being a good catcher, but I thought he was a great receiver," said O'Dell.

Billy O'Dell's catcher was Ed Bailey. Jack Sanford's guy was Tom Haller. Sanford was 33 years old and won 16 games in a row in 1962, his best year in the big leagues by far. The six-foot, 196-pound right-handed pitcher from Wellesley, Massachusetts had been the 1957 Rookie of the Year with the Phillies before a 1958 trade to the Giants.

"Jack wasn't the easiest guy to know," said Haller. Sanford was from the "wrong side of the tracks" in a rough Boston neighborhood. Like all Boston Irishmen, it seemed, he had to "battle for everything in his life."

He was not a prospect in high school, which in cold Massachusetts was not much anyway. The Red Sox rejected him in a try-out, but Philadelphia took a shot at Sanford. He spent eight years in the minors and even drove the team bus. He was the hardest thrower in the Philadelphia organization, but could not control his emotions. He almost punched a club official when told he was being sent to minors. When traveling secretary Johnny Wise told him he was being sent down on another occasion, Sanford tried to plead his case, but Wise just told him he had a bad attitude. Then the Army drafted him. He hurt his arm pitching in an Army game and developed a clot in his pitching hand after a fight. The Army wanted to operate and cut into his clavicle, which would have ended his pitching career. He got up and left.

Out of the service he came back and, in 1957 at 28 Sanford won Rookie of the Year honors with 19 wins and a 3.08 earned run average. But he had worn out his welcome in Philly and was traded to the Giants, where he was 40-35 over the next three years.

He was surly on game days and his family avoided him. He maintained silence all through the pre-game routine. He was a loner anyway. The clot made it hard for him to complete games and he was called a "composer of unfinished symphonies." The Candlestick weather did not benefit him, and his reputation was that of a "six inning pitcher," a bone of contention during contract negotiations.

In Spring Training of 1962 Dark told the hard thrower to worry less about strikeouts. This and Haller's influence helped him reduce his pitch counts, maintain stamina and pitch longer into games. He went less for the big strike and more for ground ball outs on the corners. He became one of the best pitchers in baseball, compiling his 16-
game streak between June and September. He refused to celebrate it, however, calling it a "fluke." Rube Marquard of the Giants had won the all-time record of 19 straight, but Sanford just said it was "ridiculous" and that the record meant nothing to him. It was his nature to be surly.

Billy Pierce was already a veteran star pitcher by 1962.

"If he didn't win, it didn't quite cut him as bad as it did people like Sanford," said O'Dell. Perhaps that was because Pierce had never made a practice of losing much; not in Chicago, certainly not with the Giants, and at Candlestick Park in 1962: never. Twice a 20-game winner with the White Sox, he was a seven-time All-Star and helped the Chisox to the 1959 American League crown, only the second time since 1948 a team other than the Yankees won the flag. He lost a perfect game with two outs in the ninth inning against Washington in 1958.

At 35 the White Sox decided his best years were behind him and he found himself San Francisco-bound. Pierce wanted number 19, Dark's number. Dark said fine. In Spring Training, however, Pierce was awful, and the Giants had second thoughts. When the regular season started, however, Pierce won his first eight decisions.

Pitching coach Larry Jansen was convinced that the cool Candlestick weather was the key to Pierce's success. Chicago was brutally hot in the summer and could wear a pitcher out. Dark used Pierce as Casey Stengel used Whitey Ford, holding him out for homestands.

"And the results were about as good as I could expect because I won 13 in a row at home," said Pierce.

He missed a month of the season with a spike wound, but that made him fresh late in the year.

The player who came over in trade with Pierce was Don Larsen. He is a legend in New York because he pitched the only perfect game in World Series history, but the native of Point Loma, California near San Diego was a legendary drinker. His buddies were Billy Martin, Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford, major drinkers all. They called him "Goony Bird."

Mike McCormick said drinking was more common in baseball then than today, but "even I marveled at how much he could consume."

After the perfect game, great things were expected of Larsen, but he never found his form in New York. He was traded to Kansas City then went to the minors. In 1961 Larsen was 7-2 at Chicago, giving life to his career. When the Pierce trade was negotiated, San Francisco insisted on Larsen's inclusion. He pitched effectively in 1962. Against Pittsburgh, Larsen came in with the bases loaded and none out, striking out the side on nine pitches. Larsen enjoyed frog-hunting in the Sacramento Delta and cooked the delicacies.

Stu Miller never threw more than 85 miles per hour, but his junk was effective as a closer.

"Stu had the best off-speed pitch of anybody in the history of baseball," said Ron Fairly of Los Angeles.
Choo Choo Coleman went from the Phillies to the Mets in 1962. He said when he swung at a Miller pitch "the ball was THERE! I swung where it was. How could I miss it?"

They called Miller "the Killer Moth" because his pitches resembled one. Dark had felt in 1961 that the staff relied on Miller too much, and forced pitchers to go the distance instead of bowing out in favor of the reliever.

Miller loved crossword puzzles. Miller and Mike McCormick, a native of Los Angeles with great promise, were the only former New York Giants on the staff. Bob Bolin was "the hardest thrower on the staff," according to Bailey. Gaylord Perry was a rookie from North Carolina. At 6-4, 205 pounds he was the younger brother of Jim Perry, who was a star pitcher for Cleveland.

Bob Garibaldi was a huge prospect from Stockton who had starred at the nearby University of Santa Clara, where he pitched the Broncos into the College World Series and earned Most Outstanding Player honors. At the time of his signing, he was considered "can’t miss."

"A TALE OF THREE CITIES"

BOOK PROPOSAL

Dear:

It is my great honor to announce representation of an exciting new client, the prolific sportswriter Steven Travers. The quintessential retrospective book of the 1962 baseball season has never been written. This is a story not merely of baseball greatness, but rather the story of New York City, California and America during the changing times of the 1960s and 1970s.

Just as the story of the 1962 season has never been made into a film, this book has never been written and could easily be made into a movie depicting that incredible season.

Steve Travers is the author of six well-placed sports books. This includes Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman, nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of 2002, which made Best Seller, went into multiple re-print, and is now in paperback. His current four histories of the A’s, Dodgers, Angels and Diamondbacks are part of the Essential line from Triumph Books, a division of Random House. In the fall he has two more books slated for publication and three more in 2008. His book One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, will be published by Taylor Trade in August. The true story of how the 1970 USC-Alabama football game helped usher an end to segregation in the South, it has already been featured in two documentaries by College Sports TV (a division of CBS) and is under option to be made into a major Hollywood motion picture.
Steve is the hardest-working writer I know of, a Type A personality and gifted scribe who writes in the non-narrative style of Tom Wolfe with an eye for historical metaphor reminiscent of David Halberstam. I am proud to be associated with Steve on this project and offer this proposal herewith. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

PETER MILLER

A TALE OF THREE CITIES
NEW YORK, L.A. & SAN FRANCISCO IN THE SUMMER OF ‘62
By STEVEN TRAVERS

CONCEPT

The idea for this book has its genesis in several places:

1. In 1962, the great Roger Angell wrote an article in the *New Yorker* called *A Tale of Three Cities*. It covered the end-of-season pennant chase between two old New York teams now in California, the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco Giants; and subsequent seven-game Fall Classic between the Giants and the one New York team still in the Big Apple, the Yankees.

2. A screenplay I wrote about modern California surfers transported by a giant wave back in time to *The Summer of ’62*.

3. A screenplay I wrote called *Once He Was an Angel*, about former Los Angeles Angels’ pitcher Bo Belinsky and the 1962 baseball season.

4. Two of my recent books, *Dodgers Essential* and *Angels Essential*, which both cover the 1962 baseball season extensively.

There are certain years that stand out in American and world history (over the past three centuries’ one and the same): 1776, 1812, 1865, 1914, 1927, 1945, 1951 . . . and 1962. This is a baseball book, but it transcends athletics just as the year 1962 is a cultural touchstone separating America’s last age of innocence from all that followed: Vietnam, Watergate, drugs, the sexual revolution, political divisions.

Some years stand out, creating in the minds’ eye an image of something that James Earl Jones called “magic waters” in *Field of Dreams*; something “good,” a sense of nostalgia people will do anything to recapture. For Baby Boomers, no single year touches their soul like 1962, the year George Lucas re-visited in *American Graffiti*; the year school children were told to “duck and cover” while the two heavyweight champions of nuclear bellicosity were contemplating a “title fight” in Cuba. It was the year movie audiences romanticized to Peter O’Toole in *Lawrence of Arabia*; Chubby Checker had school kids doing The Twist; and fans flocked in record numbers to
gleaming new stadiums and shrines of baseball’s past, to watch tradition and modernity converge on the future.

In California, the Dodgers and Giants had taken their ancient rivalry from the borough of Brooklyn and the slums of Harlem; from the subways and the saloons of New York City; to the Promised Land. Now Big Sur separated Los Angeles and San Francisco by 400 miles, yet the psychosis of John McGraw-Wilbert Robinson; the turf battles of Jackie Robinson-Leo Durocher; this regional conflict, like Saravejo in 1914, was now a “world war” drawing everybody and everything into its cataclysmic orbit. Transfixed, the roles of Clemenceau and the Kaiser; of Hitler and Ike; were now played by Willie Mays and Don Drysdale; by Sandy Koufax and Willie McCovey. The political and social dynamics of Los Angeles and San Francisco, forever antagonists, filled with “second city” jealousies, Hollywood put-downs, battles of style vs. sophistication, became an all-out battle of the West Coast that still exists today.

Back in New York, the mighty Yankees stood like Caesar overseeing the Roman Empire. Still standing in the wake of the Dodger-Giant exodus of 1957-58, it was as if they won a war of attrition, outlasting Hannibal until the Carthaginians starved in the Italian countryside. Now, in October 1962, like the Romans who chased Hannibal all the way back to North Africa, destroying the last vestige of Carthaginian pride and resistance, the Yankees trekked to California. The Giants had done the “dirty work” of knocking off L.A. Now they needed to be dealt with like resisting Gauls.

The result was a seven-game “battle royal” that goes down as the ultimate in Fall Classics, two storied traditions marking a new era with the same result: Yankee hegemony. It was as if God Himself gave imprimatur to this Olympian struggle, inundating the Golden State with a week-long Pacific storm, sidelining the warriors during a month in which the climate is normally the most pleasant of the year.

The entire drama, half Shakespeare, half Cecile B. DeMille, played out against a kaleidoscope of events marking the era and spawning the refrain, “Where were you in ’62?” The Yankees themselves, having beaten back San Francisco, returned for their triumphal procession only to be stunned over the next years by the least of their concerns, the lowly Mets. They had drawn almost as many fans as the Yankees did in 1962. In 1963 the Dodgers emerged from the dead to do to the Yanks what Brooklyn never did, complete a sweep. By decade’s end the Metsies were all the rage, leaving the Bronx Bombers asking, “What happened?”

All glory, as the saying goes, is fleeting.

This book captures that fleeting snapshot of time and place; of emotions, attitudes, political and social paradigms. After touching on the essentials of New York and California sports and some political history, it covers the 1951 death struggle between the Giants and Dodgers, resulting in Bobby Thomson’s “shot heard ‘round the world.” The 1950s plays like the Zapruder film, as if in the re-telling somehow, this time Robert Moses agreed to built a stadium in Brooklyn. This time Walter O’Malley stayed in the Big Apple and worked it all out.

After the “last exit from Brooklyn,” the Dodger-Giants exodus seemed to open up a floodgate of world-shaking events: Sputnik, Castro in Cuba, Kruschev’s shoe at the U.N., JFK’s stolen election, the Bay of Pigs, the “space race,” the Berlin Wall, advisors in Indo-China, John Glenn defying death, Nixon’s “last press conference,” and finally the
Cuban Missile Crisis, which represented the very essence of the “arms race” and the Cold War.

Somehow, like the Greeks holding games during the Peloponnesian War, Americans compartmentalize these things and find room to worship sports like no other culture on the planet. The book will take the two converging events of October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the World Series, and intersperse short chapters on each:

- Kennedy asking his brother to set up a meeting with the Russian ambassador; Chuck Hiller hitting an improbable grand slam at Yankee Stadium.
- JFK pondering whether a letter was written “by Krushchev or the Politburo”; Juan Marichal getting hit in the thumb, knocking him out of the series.
- Dean Acheson announcing “the other guy blinked” when the Naval blockade works; Bobby Richardson spears Willie McCovey’s Series-ending liner.

“It was a helluva year,” said Mets’ manager Casey Stengel of ’62.

The entire California mindset was in full order by that year. In the NBA, the recently arrived Los Angeles Lakers of Jerry West and Oscar Robertson play Boston in the first of many memorable play-off finals. The colleges are ahead of the curve on integration. The Southern California Trojans return to glory under coach John McKay, winning the national championship while giving greater opportunity to black players than any school in the nation. Across town, John Wooden has his UCLA basketball program, given the advantage of his pick of great black athletes unavailable to segregated Southern programs, poised for a decade-long dynasty

The athletes had been coming from California for years, but always to ply their trade elsewhere, often following Frank Sinatra’s advice and letting their “vagabond shoes” take them to “New York, New York,” because if Joe DiMaggio, Lefty Gomez, Jackie Robinson, Duke Snider and Frank Gifford, to name a few, could “make it there, they could make it anywhere.”

Now, Don Drysdale was pitching in his hometown, and Sandy Koufax, so nervous and discomfited in his original Brooklyn surroundings, found the wide-open spaces gave him the confidence to knock the eyelashes off flies with 100 mile an hour heat; but only after he convinced his manager that his Jewish intellectualism did not deter his competitiveness.

Hollywood takes to the Dodgers. They are invited to barbecues at Jane Mansfield’s house. Maury Wills performs nightclub banjo acts. Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, Cary Grant; all flock to Dodger Stadium in a pre-cursor of the Lakers “Showtime” extravaganza two decades later.

Here is slick, amoral Leo Durocher, the baseball version of Javert from Les Miserables, playing the role of l’accuse against the homespun Ohioan, Dodger manager Walt Alston, in the most intense clubhouse lockdown ever following the play-off loss at Dodger Stadium. For good measure, Don Drysdale is beating on the door trying to get at Alston, who stays huddled inside like a survivor from Night of the Living Dead. Enter another literary character, Melvin Durslag of the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, the Iago in this version of Othello, writing Leo’s “Letter to my Friends” for Look magazine, thus fueling the fire-Alston-and-replace-him-with-Leo rumors to the extreme.
Here we see Willie Mays in his prime, when asked who would win the pennant, replying in that whiny voice of his, “Hey man, that’s why we se plays the games.” We see this baseball god worn out by the pressure, informing reporters he played 100 percent all the time, “Because I don’t know any other way” after being hospitalized for exhaustion. There is Mays, announcing to the clubhouse his marriage plans, met by stunned, silent teammates... half of whom had slept with the loose woman, who was with him just for his money.

In San Francisco, we see a turf war play out between Orlando “Cha Cha” Cepeda and Willie McCovey for the first base position. Cepeda, the original fan favorite when the town disliked the New York import Mays; the single guy who liked to dance in The City’s Latin night clubs and formed an immediate bond with the crowds. Here is McCovey, another man about town, interrupting a dinner date to stop people on the street listening to Vin Scully on L.A.’s KFI - which carried in San Francisco at night after the Giants played day games - for Dodger up-dates.

We see the last of original San Francisco, which calls itself The City, in its heyday as a society town of old Eastern ways, a town where people still dressed up, shopped downtown, attended the opera; disdaining the car culture of L.A., the music of the Beach Boys, SoCal’s overemphasis on physical beauty over NoCals’s cultured mind.

Meanwhile, we have the New York Yankees, standing like the Colossus of Rhodes, fending off the pesky Angels, brushing aside the Twins, clinching early and watching who would win the National League play-off only to lose to Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris and Whitey Ford, as each had done in New York so many times before.

This is New York before the fall, on its last legs, the Big Apple dressed up to hide its scars. “Fun City” has lost two Major League teams essentially because their neighborhoods were riddled by crime, but they have yet to come to grips with this reality. The Yankees themselves still play in the Bronx, a burgeoning war zone, but they pretend not to hear the gunshots or the police sirens. It is, as the Mob boys say, “bad for business.”

But New York is teetering on the edge of its worst years in which bankruptcy, the Son of Sam, police corruption, and incompetence will mark its reputation. We see the destruction of the neighborhood ethos which will result in Kitty Genovese murdered in plain sight of her apartment complex, her pleas for help ignored by New Yorkers “who don’t want to get involved.” But we see what makes this old town tick, why it will be battered but never unbowed, and will make a come back down the road.

We see the future, the Mets, and the groundwork of their modern stadium in Queens being built under Yankee noses, while the Bombers act like nothing is wrong. We see New York’s master architect, Robert Moses, who like the mythical hero of Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged, seemingly holds a city on his shoulders, his signature on virtually every building, freeway, bridge... and stadium.

This is a book that will go far beyond “hits, runs and errors” to tell a story of a time and A Tale of Three Cities – New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco - using the 1962 pennant race and World Series as a metaphor for a changing society. This book will explain the America that emerged after 1962; after Vietnam ended our notions of hubris; after a California President with a Wall Street pedigree is ousted from Washington; and
how in the years after the fabulous “summer of ’62,” New York, and this great nation, landed on its feet.

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3. The New Rome
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4. The Taj O’Malley
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5. The walls of Jericho
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6. A big league town
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8. Feud
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10. Amazin’ Mets
The Dodgers and Giants sweep the Mets in New York, but their fans love these losers. New York’s master builder, Robert Moses, breaks ground for Shea Stadium.

11. The finger
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12. The Bo and Dean Show
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13. The poets
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14. 1951 redux
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14.“Bobby, I want you to talk to your friend the Russian ambassador”
October. The Cuban Missile Crisis hits.

15. The walk heard ‘round the world.
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16. “I have to know who wrote this letter, Kruschev or the Politburo”
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17. “This too shall pass.”
The Giants and Yankees open the World Series, the two greatest franchises ever – the ghosts of McGraw and Ruth, Mathewson and Gehrig, Terry and DiMaggio, Ott and Stengel – all in a trans-continental heavyweight bout now featuring Mantle vs. Mays; until a Biblical storm inundates San Francisco at a time of year normally reserved for 80 degree temperatures and Indian summer sunshine.

18. “The other guy blinked”
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19. “‘Tis better to have lost and lost than never to have loved at all”
Lord Alfred Tennyson’s words apply to San Francisco, losers in seven games when McCovey’s liner is caught by Richardson for a 1-0 Yankees win; Giants fans figure there will be many more opportunities

20. Innocence lost
JFK is assassinated; Vietnam; the rise of conservatism
21. Legacy
The Mets make the Yankees “New York’s other baseball team,” but the Bombers come back; Giants fans thought they would be back, but have never won a Series; the Dodgers come from no where to sweep New York in 1963 and establish themselves as darlings in L.A.

INTERVIEWS, PROMOTIONS

I will interview, to get perspective and possibly acquire the promotional help, of such people as Tom Seaver (a California high school student then who lives half an hour from me), Bruce Macgowan (current S.F. media personality, then a Marin County junior high student), Maury Allen (legendary New York scribe who helped me with my Bo Belinsky screenplay), Whitey Ford, Willie Mays, Willie McCovey, Orlando Cepeda, Vin Scully, and Glenn Dickey (longtime S.F. sports columnist).

I have also conducted past interviews with keys figures of the era who have since passed away, including USC coach John McKay (whose Trojans won the national title that year), L.A. Herald-Express sports editor Bud Furillo (author of my Dodgers Essential foreword), Bo Belinsky (a key sports figure of ’62) and former Giants manager Bill Rigney (manager of the ’62 Angels).

MARKET

This is not a small book, a boutique book, or a niche-market book. This is the ultimate New York-California-national sports book. It is a big book that will require a big New York publisher and a major media push. It is about something that is huge in the three biggest media markets in the world. It is a book tailored for the biggest, most literate audience.

It is also not just a sports book. It is a book about men, their times, their life, the way they shaped the world around them and the way the world around them shaped who they came to be.

Baseball fans will buy this book. New Yorkers, Los Angelenos and San Franciscans will buy it. Yankees, Mets, Dodgers, Angels and Giants fans, of course, will buy it, but also people who delve into politics and history will want to view 1962 through the prism of the decade, bathed in the nostalgic glow of this era.

COMPETETITION

With David Halberstam gone, these kinds of books are less likely to appear. It will be similar to Halberstam’s October 1964 and my own One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation (soon a major motion picture)

THE BOOK
This is a book about not merely one superstar, but teams that were one collective superstar. It was the three greatest traditions in baseball history, the Yankees, Dodger and Giants, capturing the imagination of the “city that never sleeps,” Hollywood and The City all at once. It has never come close to happening in all the years since. Never have the “stars been aligned” as they were that magical, miraculous summer and fall of 1962.

**FILM POTENTIAL**

I am already the author of *One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation*, due for an August 2007 release from Taylor Trade Publishing. This is the true story of the 1970 USC-Alabama football game and its effect on the integration of the American South. It is a fast-paced narrative similar to Tom Wolfe’s *The Right Stuff*. Like that book, it is now under option to a major Hollywood producer and slated for production.

This book also could easily be made into a documentary and film, an ESPN *SportsCentury*, a TV movie like *The Bronx is Burning*, or a major such as *Glory Road* or *Remember the Titans*.

I am a veteran of Hollywood who writes with a flair for the dramatic, lending itself to a screenplay format. An enormous focus of this book will be the unbelievable events surrounding the “summer of ’62.” This story has never been told on the screen. This book is the perfect vehicle to do just that.

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This will allow me to tell the story of 1962 in a flowing manner. It will give me the freedom to express the story in a parade of words and images meant to place the reader squarely into Manhattan, Hollywood and the Golden Gate circa 1962. Interviews with all the key subjects of the era will be interspersed throughout. The concept of this book is to go well beyond baseball, and tell the story of America through the prism of New York, California, baseball and the 1960s.

**AUTHOR’S QUALIFICATIONS**

Steven Travers is a USC graduate and ex-professional baseball player. He is the author of the best-selling *Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman*, nominated for a Casey Award (best baseball book of 2002). He is also the author of *The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty* (a National Book Network “top 100 seller”); *College Football’s All-Time Top 25 Traditions*; five books in the Triumph/Random House *Essential* series (*A’s, Dodgers, Angels, D’backs, Trojans*), as well as *The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Los Angeles Lakers, The Good, the Bad & the Ugly San Francisco 49ers, and The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Oakland Raiders*.

In August 2007, Taylor Trade will publish *One Night, Two Teams: USC vs. Alabama and the Game That Changed a Nation*. This is the true story of how the 1970 USC-Alabama football game ended segregation in the modern American South. Travers was interviewed on College Sports TV (a division of CBS) for a documentary on former
Alabama football coach Bear Bryant. CSTV then did a documentary, Tackling Segregation, based on Travers’s book. The book is now under option to Kerry McCluggage, a top Hollywood producer and USC graduate.

Steve was a columnist for StreetZebra magazine in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Examiner. He also penned the screenplay, The Lost Battalion. Travers coached at USC, Cal-Berkeley and in Europe; attended law school, served in the Army, and is a guest lecturer at the University of Southern California. Steve has a daughter, Elizabeth Travers and resides in California.

Praise for Steven Travers

Steve Travers is the next great USC historian, in the tradition of Jim Murray, John Hall, and Mal Florence! . . . the Trojan Family needs your work. Fight On!
—USC Head Football Coach Pete Carroll

In this book . . . USC graduate Steve Travers tells us all about the exciting and remarkable football contest that not only changed the way the game is played; it changed the way Southern whites looked at their black brethren, and therefore changed the world.
—Winston Groom, author of Forrest Gump

Steve Travers combines wit, humor, social pathos and historical knowledge with the kind of sports expertise that only an ex-jock is privy to; it is reminiscent of the work of Jim Bouton, Pat Jordan and Dan Jenkins, combined with Jim Murray’ turn of phrase, Hunter Thompson’s hard-scrabble Truths, and David Halberstam’s unique take on our nation’s place in history. His writing is great storytelling, and the result is pure genius every time.
—California sports media personality Mike McDowd

Steve Travers is a great writer, an educated athlete who knows how to get inside the player’s heads, and when that happens, greatness occurs. He’s gonna be a superstar.
—Dave Burgin/Ex-editor, San Francisco Examiner

Steve Travers is a phenomenal writer, an artist who labors over every word to get it just right, and he has an encyclopedic knowledge of sports and history.
—StreetZebra magazine

Steve Travers is a Renaissance man.
—Jim Rome Show

He is very qualified to continue to write books such as this one. Good job.
—Marty Lurie/”Right Off the Bat” Oakland A’s Pregame Host

Steve’s a literate ex-athlete, an ex-Trojan, and a veteran of Hollywood, too.
—Lee “Hacksaw” Hamilton/XTRA Radio, San Diego

You’ve done some good writin’, dude.
[Travers is] one of the great sportswriters on the current American scene.
—Joe Shea/Radio Talk Host and Editor

Travers appears to have the right credentials for the task.
—USA Today Baseball Weekly

A very interesting read which is not your average . . . book. . . . Steve has achieved his 
*bona fides* when it comes to having the credentials to write a book like this.
—Geoff Metcalfe/KSFO Radio, San Francisco

This is a fascinating book written by a man who knows his subject matter inside and out.
—Irv Kaze/KRLA Radio, Los Angeles

Travers . . . established himself as a writer of many dimensions . . . a natural.
—John Jackson/Ross Valley Reporter

Steve Travers is a true USC historian and a loyal Trojan!
—Former USC football player John Papadakis

Pete Carroll calls you “the next great USC historian,” high praise indeed.
- Rob Fukuzaki/ABC7, Los Angeles

Your a great writer and I always enjoy your musings. . . particularly on SC football - huge fan!
- Oakland A’s general manager Billy Beane

**Also written by Steven Travers**

* A’s Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real Fan!
  * Trojans Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real Fan!
  * Dodgers Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real Fan!
  * Angels Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real Fan!
  * D’Backs Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real

* The USC Trojans: College Football's All-Time Greatest Dynasty

The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Oakland Raiders
49ers: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly
The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Los Angeles Lakers
Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman
College Football’s Top 25 All-Time Greatest Traditions
God's Country: A Conservative, Christian Worldview of How History Formed the
United States Empire and America's Manifest Destiny for the 21st Century
Angry White Male
PROMOTION PLAN

A full public relations blitz should accompany this book, with Steven Travers making himself fully available to the media via a media and book signing tour. In order to advance the book beyond the mere sports genre, it will be written and promoted as a philosophy of life, not simply a reflection of a great baseball season.

DELIVERY

This book will be ready by March 2008 with author Steven Travers making himself fully available for meetings, consultations, re-writes and edits at any and all times throughout the process. Travers will be happy to travel to New York City to meet with editors and also do the necessary research, since so much of not just the story but feel of the book will be literally dripping with Big Apple nostalgia. Travers is a full-time author of books, not tied down by newspaper or magazine deadlines. He will devote himself to this project full time and place all other future books to the side until this is a completed to the satisfaction of the publisher.

The perfect schedule would be:

- August 2007: sign contract
- March 2008: deliver completed manuscript
- March 2009: publication date in coordination with the Yankees’ and Mets’ opening brand new stadiums amid full-on New York baseball madness.

EXCERPT FROM "THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY LOS ANGELES LAKERS"

Daddy dearest

THE ROYAL CANADIAN

Jack Kent Cooke – who like so many who succeeded in Los Angeles was not from there - was a microcosm of L.A. in the 1960s. The old ways were out. The new ways were in. The new ways were ways of excellence, productivity and creativity. The Lakers were a haphazard operation under Bob Short, but became an efficient operation under the perfectionist Cooke.

He was brusque. He wrote memos. He was detail-oriented. He noticed everything and expected it to be corrected, pronto. He shouted. He was like George Steinbrenner before Steinbrenner, a new kind of owner at a time when owners were rich old guys who bought teams so they could invite their drinking buddies to watch games with them.
“He was the number one a—hole who ever lived,” said “Hot Rod” Hundley, who was a Laker broadcaster under Cooke. “He was totally, absolutely, unbelievably wrapped up in himself and had no respect for anyone but himself.”

“Everybody was on eggshells,” recalled John Radcliffe, a Laker statistician. “We were afraid to make a mistake, because we were gonna get yelled at. It was his style. He didn’t hold anything back.”

“Mr. Cooke shouted and screamed at anyone who didn’t give him perfection,” said scout Bill Bertka. “He was interested in the bottom line, in success, in winning. That’s all he wanted.”

Cooke once invited Bertka to his home for a breakfast meeting and asked him if he wanted a cup of coffee, to which Bertka replied, “That would be nice.”

Cooke responded that he did not care whether it was nice or not: “Do you want a cup of coffee?”

Bertka said that Cooke’s goal was to put people on “the defensive.” Legendary basketball guru Pete Newell, who coached California to the 1959 national championship, helped build the Lakers dynasty, modernize basketball, and re-structure the dynamics of center play in the NBA (his “Big Man Campuses” became a model for development of post players), took to Cooke’s style. The owner insisted on recording every phone call, a tool Newell found valuable to him when talking trade or contract with fellow executives or agents.

Like A’s owner Charlie O. Finley, Cooke required his employees to be “on call 24 hours a day, because Jack was on call 24 hours a day,” said Newell.

In an age before cell phones, Cooke demanded that his key people be near a phone and to stay in contact so they could be reached at hotels, restaurants, dinner parties and the like. He wanted discipline and punctuality. Still, Cooke understood the “big issues,” according to Newell; letting an “honest $50,000 mistake go by without comment,” then yelling over “pocket change.”

Cooke was not the type to get flustered, and this attitude carried over to his employees, much the way a calm general or President exudes control in a time of crisis. At first, Cooke’s greatest contribution came in the form of marketing and promotions. But he was so hands-on he could not help but “learn” the inner game of basketball.

Few owners have ever succeeded at this, no matter how hard they try. The only exception seems to be Finley, who despite having only played some American Legion ball was either a baseball genius or the luckiest man in the world when every move he made fell into place during his building of the three-time World Champion Oakland A’s.

Cooke studied and listened. His ego got the best of him. He came to the conclusion that he knew basketball the way a Pete Newell, a Tex Winter, a Jerry West knows basketball.

“He didn’t know,” said West.

Cooke hailed from Canada. He was a self-made man, a natural salesman who by dint of hard work succeeded in the capitalist shark tank. He made his mark in the radio business and moved, like so many others with a dream but no pedigree, to California. Once he made his money, he seemed to try and re-invent himself as an “old money” figure, effectuating the three-name affectation. He no doubt would have loved to be Sir or...
Lord Jack Kent Cooke, as his benefactor, Lord Thomson, a British media magnate, had been known.

Cooke’s uniform design, the choice of purple that he called “Forum blue,” and vision of a stadium modeled after the Acropolis, gave the scent of a man who thought of himself as vaguely European and indeed aristocratic.

He saw sports as the leisure activity of a king, so to speak, and went after the Angels franchise that Finley and Short wanted, but Gene Autry landed. Denied a spot in baseball he set his sights on basketball and ice hockey, the latter a natural for a Canadian but alien to the Southern California landscape.

It was his pursuit of a hockey franchise that led him to the building of the Forum. In 1965, the Sports Arena was only six years old and perfectly acceptable for basketball. But a minor league hockey team played at the Sports Arena, and the city rebuffed Cooke’s attempts to secure an NHL franchise for the building. He then went out and built the Forum for the Kings and the Lakers.

When Jack Kent Cooke opened his “Fabulous Forum” during the 1967-68 season he became a symbol of “can-do” L.A.; the city of the future where private enterprise could solve the woes of society. The Lakers were the “new breed,” ushering an old league into modern times. His team, like actresses in nearby Hollywood, underwent a facelift in their first season. Throughout the year it looked like it was a winning formula. Bill van Breda Kolff took over as the coach. The team changed their color scheme, in accordance with Cooke’s love of the color purple. The reason he called it “Forum blue” was because he loved the color, not the word. It would be the Lakers’ uniform style until the Shaq O’Neal-Kobe Bryant era.

**Nicknames**

Elgin Baylor was called “Motormouth” because he talked so much. He nicknamed Jerry West “Zeke from Cabin Creek,” because he grew up next to Cabin Creek, West Virginia. Jerry was kidded about his background a lot. Some people called him “Beverly Hillbilly” after the popular TV show of that era.

**Trading places**

Jack Kent Cooke was the driving force behind the trade that involved the Lakers sending two first round draft picks, plus Elmore Smith and Brian Winters, to the Bucks for Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in 1975.

**By the numbers**

14 – the number of times Jerry West was selected for the All-Star Game.

**THE LAST ICON**
CONCEPT

It is the biggest city in the world. “If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere,” as the Frank Sinatra song goes. But by 1969 New York City and all it represented was in disarray; criminally, politically, athletically.

“Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?” sang Simon and Garfunkel. Then a modern Lancelot rode forth to lead the New York Mets to heights above and beyond all sports glory, before or since. It was the biggest sports story of the twentieth century. One man embodied what it was all about.

This book tells the complete, unvarnished story of the great Tom Seaver, that rarest of all American heroes, the New York Sports Icon. In a city that produces not mere mortals but sports gods, Seaver represents the last of the breed. His deeds, his times, his town; it was part of a vanishing era, an era of innocence. In 1969, six years after John Kennedy’s assassination, Seaver and the Mets were the last grasp at idealism before free agency, Watergate, and cynicism.

Despite his great status, his years in the sports media, his persona – half rock star, half political figure – the quintessential Tom Seaver book has never been written! Here is the Seaver story from start to finish; his formative years in California, his close association with black athletes at USC during racially divided times; his ascendancy to big league stardom; then mythical greatness followed by a career seemingly so perfect it appeared to have been guided by the hand of destiny.

Now in his retirement years back in California, Seaver is able to reflect on his political, religious, sociological and racial views, all imbued by 40 years of experience in America during her most challenging times. It was Seaver who stood astride issues such as Vietnam, free agency, the “new breed” of black athletes, all the time using his natural intelligence and education to lead not just on the field, where his credentials for the Hall of Fame were impeccable, but off the field as well.

It was Seaver who rode the whirlwind of fame and celebrity after the “Amazin’ Mets’ ” triumph of 1969, but unlike many teammates he was able to maintain a steady course in his life and career. He was helpful to his wife in an environment where such a thing is almost impossible. For his steadfastness he was both criticized and deified. Here was a baseball player admired by America in the way only heroes like Dwight Eisenhower and John Glenn were admired. In this book we hear the story of a real man dealing with the emotions, pressures and expectations of such a life.

Despite his public image, Seaver has jealously guarded his privacy and family. Here, for the first time, America learns the unvarnished truth about a human being elevated to ultimate hero status in New York City, a town that builds them up only to tear ‘em down. Incredibly, Seaver never was torn down. He stayed at the top for twenty years,
retiring to the broadcaster’s booth where his caramel rich voice, smooth intellect and veteran experience made him a popular, admired character to generations beyond his playing days.

This is also a nostalgic look back at the hero machine that is New York City. Tom Seaver remains one of a tiny handful of ultimate sports superstars who stand out in the Big Apple above all others. This tells the story of how he got there, stayed there, and why, when the times changed, it became virtually impossible for others to follow in the footsteps of Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Joe Namath, and finally Tom Seaver, the last icon!

NOTE: While the original concept is an authorized biography, should the publisher desire it to be in autobiographical form that would be equally doable.

MARKET

This is not a small book, a boutique book, or a niche-market book. This is the ultimate New York sports book. It is a big book that will require a big New York publisher and a major media push. Just as it is about the New York Sports icon, the last truly iconic sports figure of an innocent age, it is a book tailored for the biggest, most literate audience in the world.

It is also not just a sports book. It is a book about a man, his times, his life, the way he shaped the world around him and the way the world shaped who he came to be. Seaver is that great rarity, the intellect who not only was a great athlete, but rather the very best of the best. Seaver did not succeed on guile, brains or work ethic alone. He was a physically gifted hardball pitcher in the tradition of Nolan Ryan and Randy Johnson. Most athletes who possess this kind of skill do not have the mind to go with it. Seaver is the great exception.

Baseball fans will buy this book. New Yorkers will buy it. Mets fans, of course, but also people who delve into biographies and politics will want to view Seaver through the prism of the 1960s and 1970s, bathed in the nostalgic glow of this era.

COMPETETITION

The biggest competition for a book of this sort would normally have been Seaver’s previous big book, except he never wrote it and it was never written about him. Rather, this is the Seaver book millions have been waiting years to read. Think of David Maraniss’s Clemente, Mark Kriegel’s Namath, or David Halberstam’s October 1964.

THE BOOK

When mythic Hollywood movie star Marilyn Monroe returned from a tour of Korea in the 1950s, she declared to husband Joe DiMaggio, “Joe! Joe! You never heard such cheering.”
Joe D. coldly replied, “Yes I have.” This exchange encapsulates something unique in America and in the world. In so doing it summarizes why this book, the quintessential, never-before-written authorized Tom Seaver book, will be a national Best Seller!

In today’s world, celebrity is cheap and comes in many varieties, courtesy of cable TV, the Internet and the scandal sheets. Hollywood has a refined process of producing, assembly-line style, its celebrities. But beyond this kind superficiality lies true celebrity status. No living movie star attains it. Few ever have, even beyond the grave. It is something beyond celebrity. Call it greatness. This kind of person, while not solely American, remains a historical figure in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who, aside from Winston Churchill, can only be a larger-than-life figure in a country as big and full of swagger as America.

There are those lauded for their greatness in Mt. Rushmore style; George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, perhaps John Glenn. But beyond national heroes – Presidents during great crisis, generals in a desperate struggle, and astronauts embodying Cold War pride – there is one very select group of uniquely American celebrity-heroes.

This is that tiniest, most elite group known as The New York Sports Icon. Even this gaudy title does not tell the true story, for many athletes who play in New York City are superstars, but do not rise to the heights of the true, recognized-by-history New York Sports Icon. To live in this rarified air one must have achieved things above and beyond the mere mortal. They must have done so in the most crucial manner possible, and risen to a place in the spotlight - The Arena as Theodore Roosevelt called it – that minimizes all other accomplishment.

To understand this status, one must understand that very few non-New York athletes achieve this level. In Boston, Ted Williams took years to rise to this place in history, while Bill Russell, Carl Yastrzemski and Roger Clemens never did. In California, Sandy Koufax did what Willie Mays and Barry Bonds did not. Most of the legends are regional in nature: college football stars at Southern California or Oklahoma; Tony Gwynn toiling away in obscurity in San Diego; Hank Aaron breaking records in comparable silence. A Michael Jordan, a Joe Montana; these kinds of figures achieving their bona fides without benefit of the Big Apple’s stage are rarities. In fact, it is usually only when they are recognized by New York – cheering crowds at the Garden, “The Four Horsemen of Notre Dame” at the Polo Grounds, or on Madison Avenue – that the imprimatur comes to them. But The New York Sports Icon achieves his status in an almost religious manner; their moments in the sun say what words fail to accomplish. Theirs is a truth which, when witnessed in an American arena, is never misunderstood.

Who are these gods of the New Greece, gladiators of the New Rome? In the biggest city, on the biggest stage, the list is oh-so-short. As Christ says in the New Testament, “many are called, few are chosen.” The Chosen Ones are Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Frank Gifford, Mickey Mantle, Joe Namath and Tom Seaver.
It is the list of those who are so close, yet do not make the cut, which makes this group all the more impressive. John McGraw, Bill Terry, Mel Ott, Willie Mays, Whitey Ford, Yogi Berra, Casey Stengel, Jackie Robinson, Duke Snider, O. J. Simpson, Walt Frazier, Willis Reed, Reggie Jackson, and Derek Jeter are just a few of the all-time greats, the Hall of Famers who have toiled in New York City and New York state; achieved fame, fortune and honor; yet remain ever-so-slightly below the hallowed shrines of these eight players (Mathewson, Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, Gifford, Mantle, Namath and Seaver).

The last of these represents the crux of what makes this book so unique, so compelling, such a nostalgic memory of a town, a team and a time that is no more. Gone like the wind, like the Old South, is the age of the superstar. Lost to free agency and player strikes. Records still get broken, but somehow the heroes of yesteryear stand above and beyond their successors, untarnished by steroids or, at least in the comparable mind’s eye, greed. All that is left is the last of the true New York Sports Icons.

**METHODOLOGY**

George Thomas Seaver embodies the New York Sports Icon in the modern manner, yet his story is curiously familiar. Like Gifford and DiMaggio, Seaver was a golden boy from the Golden State of California. Like Gifford, he matriculated at the University of Southern California, the great sports factory of Hollywood. There was a charisma to Seaver, as there was to Gifford, both of whom were sports versions of JFK in the 1950s and 1960s. There greatness went beyond mere “hits, runs and errors,” to use common parlance.

Many of the Chosen Ones exemplified something that statistics could not capture. DiMaggio was not Ted Williams’s equal as a hitter. Gifford’s on-field records are overshadowed by his contemporary, Jim Brown, or fellow USC legend Simpson. Namath, beset by injuries, fell far short of Johnny Unitas’s career accomplishments.

Willie Mays is considered better, but unlike Joe D. and Mantle – who won the world championships that with one lone exception eluded Willie - his New York years were short, his personality no match for his talent. Jackie Robinson unfortunately is an Elvis or James Dean figure, his myth like Martin Luther King’s elevated by untimely demise. Yogi Berra and Casey Stengel seemed oddly out of place. Willis Reed had one bright shining moment but lacked longevity. Reggie Jackson strode to the top of Mt. Olympus but did not heed the warning that “All glory is fleeting,” his brief stop marred by the ugliness of free agency. Derek Jeter remains on the cusp, but in the ESPN era, as he competes with Britney and Mariah and Angelina for attention, the very limelight he bathes in reduces him.

Mathewson, Ruth, Gehrig, Mantle and Seaver remain untainted by modern celebrity that is more indifferent disdain. Their records are pure, the shadow they cast unchangingly huge. It is Mathewson who Seaver most closely resembles.

Matty was the first hero athlete, the collegiate All-American who combined good looks with intelligence and breathtaking ability. In breaking down Seaver’s record in light of modern constraints (which make winning 30 games, which Mathewson regularly did, virtually impossible today), “Tom Terrific” rates among the most elite of all-time
hurlers. His place in the New York pantheon is not merely a result of his looks, intelligence or unique role in the saga of the 1969 “Amazin’ Mets.” His pure baseball records hold up to any and all scrutiny.

This places him with Ruth, Gehrig and Mantle as winners with a New York swagger to them; the very best on the field, champions with panache off it. Whereas Ruth and Mantle were libertines, their place in the pantheon is either tragic (Mantle) or laced with that ‘ll-never-happen-again wonder (Ruth’s speakeasy life). Finally there is Gehrig, the hero after Ruth’s departure shed light on his glory, his memory a sainted one after early death. But Gehrig was “second fiddle” to The Babe, whereby Seaver embodied his team.

Tom played “second fiddle” to nobody. He was Lancelot riding to the rescue on a white steed. The great tragedy of the Dodgers’ and Giants’ California departures wreaked havoc on Big Apple sports sensibilities, leaving the Yankees alone like Rome having won a war of attrition with Hannibal. As with all great empires of history, “pride goeth before the fall.” The Yankees folded and a proud city bowed down.

It was the late 1960s. The sports landscape was egalitarian, with champions spread throughout the Fruited Plain: Los Angeles, Detroit, Boston, Baltimore, Green Bay and points beyond. In New York a famous stadium suddenly was old, decrepit, its Bronx neighborhood overrun by crime. Drugs, prostitution, promiscuity and racial division now sprung forth, replacing the old veneers of respectability. This monied metropolis was in debt, its citizens racing to the suburbs in what was known as “white flight,” the old neighborhoods quickly deteriorating into a Martin Scorsese film *noir*. A terrible war tore at the fabric of a great society that just a few years before had enough *hubris* to call itself the Great Society.

Enter into the mix a stand-up comedy act called the New York Mets. In a city where only the sports version of Caesar’s triumphant return from Gaul was considered worthy of public admiration, the fumble house Metsies were so bad New Yorkers laughed at ‘em, but even this was a predicament telling of a city’s downfall. Was this the level New York had fallen to?

But a stadium was built which by 1960s standards was modern. Slowly but surely the Mets’ front office began to come around to the idea that, in order to built a lasting fan base past the anybody-but-the-Yankees Brooklyn crowd, which mostly lived out on Long Island by now anyway, actual on-field accomplishment must be attained.

In reality, it looked like the old Soviet “five-year plan.” In 1969, it seemed the most anybody could reasonably expect would be contention by 1974. A World Series seemed an impossibility, something that might happen some time between a decade and a century from that point in time, if ever. It was a preposterous idea.

Seaver was only 24 years old in 1969. He was “new breed” all the way. People were talking about the “new breed” among the black athletes. The “old school” black athletes were generally quiet, Christian family men who did not “rock the boat.” The “new breed,” symbolized by St. Louis ace Bob Gibson, were proud, outspoken and articulate.

But among white players there was a “new breed,” too. More and more players were college-educated, hailing from the suburbs, and Seaver embodied the California athlete whose societal views were cutting edge. Seaver was from an affluent home. He
had graduated from Fresno High School, which in his day produced some of the best players around, only he was not one of them, at least in his time. There were no scholarships and no pro contracts offered. He joined the Marines and a funny thing happened. Seaver gained 25 pounds in lean muscle mass and about three inches in height. He returned from the Marine Corp, establishing himself as the ace at Fresno City College.

From there he earned a scholarship to USC. His hero was Hank Aaron, a telling sign. Most white kids loved Mickey Mantle or some other white star, but Seaver chose the enigmatic black superstar of the Milwaukee Braves. It is telling also that he preferred the reserved Aaron to the more famed Willie Mays, starring at the time for the San Francisco Giants on radio broadcasts heard in the Seaver household.

At USC, Seaver roomed with Heisman Trophy-winning running back Mike Garrett, a baseball star too. It was through his relationship with the black Garrett that Seaver developed further discernment, an understanding of other races and cultures beyond his suburban upbringing.

After starring at USC, Seaver found himself in the New York Mets’ organization. He did not buy into the Mets’ clown reputation, forged in the early years of Casey Stengel, “Marvelous Marv” Throneberry, and “Choo Choo” Coleman. It was not funny to him.

He broke into the Major Leagues in 1967, earlier than he would have had he been toiling in most other organizations. He pitched in the All-Star Game, earned Rookie of the Year honors, and dispelled notions of Met inferiority by instilling a winning attitude in his teammates. In 1968 things began to change as Seaver again starred and a young corps of talented players asserted themselves.

But there is no explaining 1969. In the film Oh, God! George Burns is asked what His last miracle was.


It is not an exaggeration to state that the 1969 “Amazin’ Mets” or “Miracle Mets,” or whatever adjective is attached to the story, represents the most incredible, unbelievable, impossible story in all the history of sports. Nothing was more improbable, nothing more unexpected, nothing more unlikely to predict. They won the World Series. It was the greatest top-to-bottom upset ever; not just beating 109-win Baltimore in the Fall Classic, but the entire “rags to riches” tail from Spring Training to Game 5, when New York’s 5-3 win gave them the title before a world’s disbelieving eyes.

But the story is only half about an improbable team. The New York setting, the desultory fall of the Yankees, the still-smoldering loss of the Brooklyn Dodgers, all placed against the landsdcape of the Vietnam War, protesters, hippies, drugs, a battered but unbowed city, and a country changing at warp speed; this is what makes 1969 the year, the Mets’ team, and the Seaver story a compelling Hollywood drama. Furthermore, the 1969 Mets saved baseball. The game was dead, boring, unsexy before Seaver and the Mets turned it into the Age of Aquarius.

Despite all the religious qualities of the 1969 Mets, however, Seaver’s rise, in contrast, is straightforward. He did it with talent, work ethic, and a competitive streak second to none. Throughout baseball history, there have been few players ever locked in like Seaver in ’69. He took that team on his back and carried them. The list of those who
have done it in like manner is: Joe DiMaggio of the Yankees in 1949, Carl Yastrzemski of the Red Sox in 1967, Orel Hershisher of the Dodgers in 1988 . . . the list is this short!

The hoopla, the excitement, the sheer joy of 1969 has never been matched before or since. It was the greatest New York sports experience – and the most incredible baseball story - bar none. It was a time of utter legend. Seaver rode the whirlwind of fame, celebrity and fanatical adoration more than any in the pantheon; Ruth, Gehrig, Mantle, and the like. Only Namath, whose image is as much about those swingin’ times as it is his performance on the field, achieved such god-like status. However, Namath’s injuries prevented him from ever building much beyond the foundation of the New York Jets’ Super Bowl win over Baltimore.

Seaver, on the other hand, went on in the 1970s and 1980s to mold a pitching career that may be the finest of the post-World War II era. When combining individual seasons, longevity, records and historical impact, Seaver ranks with any pitcher the game has ever known. When the Hall of Fame vote came up, he went in with more than 98 percent. To this day, it is the highest percentage attained by any player, and this includes the likes of Ruth, Williams, DiMaggio, Mays or Koufax.

The “new breed” Seaver expressed outspoken opinions about the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, religion and politics during the turbulent times of Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Martin Luther King Jr., and Watergate. When ballplayers read comic books, Seaver read Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.

But Seaver’s intellectualism, All-American image and superstar status created problems. 1969 was a “fairy tale” season, but succeeding years were “real life.” He was the highest-paid, highest-profile player on the most famed team in the world, surrounded by New York media and East Coast adulation. Seaver was married to a beautiful blonde California girl, and the glamour machines turned them into the “it couple” of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Furthermore, Seaver was perhaps that rarest of all sports breeds: the faithful husband.

Without preaching, his avoidance of road temptations served as a silent example to teammates who, unable to resist their lustful desires, saw in Seaver something they could not be and resented him for it. It was an age of sexual infidelity, drug use, alcohol excess, and moral depravity. Seaver, like a Colossus, rode above all of it. On his teams in New York and later in Cincinnati, young pitchers tended to be his disciples, but other free-wheeling teammates could not relate to a man so together in every aspect of life.

Seaver was the ultimate role model. His work habits were legendary. He was the greatest interview subject in the game, his intelligence proving to be another sore spot with teammates who could not comprehend a baseball player who knew so much about history, political theory and world affairs.

Somehow, Seaver did not change with the times; the times changed in conformity with him. He was the “square” kid, the All-American who came out of the innocence of the pre-Kennedy assassination 1950s. When the world changed, his rock solid traditional values helped steer him through treacherous times. When those traditional values found their voice after some 15 “wilderness years” it was as if Seaver’s Norman Rockwell style was vindicated.

Yet, Rockwell he was not, not entirely. His Christianity, his Marine background, his patriotism, was always tempered by a1960s awareness, an empathy for the poor, the
working man, the downtrodden. Yet he was never a “bleeding heart liberal.” Seaver did not suffer fools easily. Some thought of him as corporate, a Wall Street baseball player. He took what fame gave him, but to be in his inner circle, to earn his trust and friendship required a sense of intelligence and accomplishment. One did not merely assume Seaver’s respect, and it has always been that way.

When Seaver was at the height of his fame, everybody wanted a part of him, and he sensed that there were those who tried to freeload off of him, his image, his reputation. He resisted that, not always without damage.

FILM POTENTIAL

Steven Travers is already the author of One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, due for an August 2007 release from Taylor Trade Publishing. This is the true story of the 1970 USC-Alabama football game and its effect on the integration of the American South. It is a fast-paced narrative similar to Tom Wolfe’s The Right Stuff. Like that book, it is now under option to a major Hollywood producer and slated for production.

Travers is a veteran of Hollywood who writes with a flair for the dramatic, lending itself to a screenplay format. An enormous focus of this book will be the unbelievable events surrounding the 1969 “Amazin’ Mets” world championship run. What is almost as “amazin’ ” as the ’69 Mets is the fact this story has never been told on the screen. This book is the perfect vehicle to do just that.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

As a biography, this will allow author Steven Travers to tell the story of Tom Seaver in a flowing manner absent the kind of modesty Seaver would employ if it were a pure autobiography. It will give the author the freedom to express the story in a free-flowing parade of words and images meant to place the reader squarely into Manhattan circa 1969. However, this being the authorized Seaver bio, it will contain stand-alone Seaver sections in which he will describe in his own words the chapters Travers expounds upon.

If the publisher insists on an autobiographical format, however, this can be adapted easily.

AUTHOR’S QUALIFICATIONS

Tom Seaver is alive to tell his story which, incredibly, has never been told before; not in its entirety. Not in the soft light of true reflection. There has never been a quintessential Tom Seaver book, neither an authorized autobiography or biography. Seaver, the golden boy from California who went to New York, New York and “made it there,” lived in the Connecticut suburbs for decades after retirement. His knowledge as a TV baseball announcer for NBC, the Mets and the Yankees made him a respected national and New York baseball figure for generations of fans who never saw him unwind a 95-mile and hour fast ball.
But Seaver made the proverbial journey home, where today he lives in splendid retirement, a gentleman vintner in California’s Napa Valley, where celebrities like Francis Ford Coppola and Joe Montana, just to name two, have found solace after a life of fame. His Napa residence, as if directed by the hand of God, has placed him a half-hour’s drive from the home of sportswriter Steven Travers, who lives in nearby Marin County.

Travers grew up idolizing Tom Seaver. The 1969 Mets were a Holy Grail for Travers, who saw in Seaver all that he aspired to be. It was originally because Seaver had gone to USC that Travers became a huge fan of the Trojans, where he eventually graduated from.

Travers followed every aspect of Seaver’s great career. His life is known to him in thorough and great detail. He is the man to capture that life, three thousand miles removed physically from the glory days of Manhattan, but re-captured in the non-narrative style of Tom Wolfe, within the pages of this, the great Seaver book everybody has long waited for.

Furthermore, as a former professional baseball pitcher himself, Travers will develop a rapport with Seaver unlike that of any other writer-sports subject.

**EXCERPT FROM "PIGSKIN WARRIORS"**

**THE WEST, THE GAME, AND SOCIETAL EVOLUTION**

As the sun went down on New Year’s Day 1980, the landscape of college football had shifted. The pretenders were gone. The Ivy League was no longer a factor. California, Georgia Tech, Army and Minnesota, traditional powers of yesteryear, were mediocre programs.

Michigan and Ohio State made strong bids but had fallen short. Three champions of the 1920s returned to glory and stood at or near the top: Notre Dame, USC and Alabama. A fourth program, Oklahoma, which had risen in the 1950s, re-emerged as a serious contender for the position with an almost-as-fabulous run in the 1970s. Pittsburgh, after years of poor showings, was a contender once again.

In the previous two decades, Alabama had the better overall record. In the 1960s they were 89-16; in the 1970s 103-16-1 for a total mark of 192-32-5, the height of Bear Bryant’s glory. USC was 76-25-4 in the 1960s, then 93-22-1 in the 1970s (169-47-5).

They were titans of the game during a golden age. Determining who was better is not an easy task. By pure win-loss records, it would appear that Alabama was, but many other factors detract from that view. In the 1960s, Alabama was segregated and played a ninety percent segregated schedule. They hardly traveled outside Dixie and appeared to have turned inward in light of Alabama Governor George Wallace’s “stand in the schoolhouse door” speech of 1963. That speech had been delivered just below the office window of Bear Bryant, who observed it in the company of school president Frank Rose.

USC traveled far and wide, including trips to Waco (Baylor), Dallas (SMU), Austin (Texas), and Miami in the 1960s. The Pac-8 Conference was arguably the
toughest in the nation. Included on their schedule were yearly bloodbaths with Notre Dame during the “Era of Ara,” and UCLA in their best decade.

In the 1970s, Sam “Bam” Cunningham and USC traveled to Legion Field, defeating Alabama, 42-21. The doors were opened thereafter for black players in the South. Bryant may or may not have said of Cunningham, “This here’s what a football player looks like.”

In fact, the game was carefully planned by Bryant and McKay with the hopes that it would pave the way for two blacks already recruited by Bryant, freshman Wilbur Jackson and junior college transfer John Mitchell. Furthermore, if Bryant said that Cunningham was “what a football player looks like,” he said it in a crowded hallway, not in front of his beaten team in the dressing room. Apocryphal or not, Bryant’s reaction to the defeat was gracious, his speedy acceptance of black players and coaches in succeeding years, more so. A man considered an enemy of integration, a man whose only legacy may have been wins and losses (much like Kentucky basketball coach Adolph Rupp), now became a legend for all the right reasons. The schedule Bryant’s Tide faced in the 1970s was national and integrated. He led the way for others, to the great relief of many white coaches who long wanted to do it but felt they were restrained.

The two teams played each four times, splitting two each (both on the road). USC’s five national titles were all legitimate, coming with impressive Rose Bowl victories over Big 10 juggernauts (Wisconsin ’63, Ohio State ’73, ’75) and Michigan (’79). ‘Bama, as has been chronicled, claims six championships under Bryant, but of course this is a misnomer. Two came with bowl defeats. Four were the real deal. Alabama arguing this would be like USC saying they really were the 1968 national champions, not Ohio State (who beat them in the Rose Bowl). The Crimson Tide could argue persuasively they deserved the 1966 and 1977 titles, but it can be more persuasively argued that they did not deserve the shared 1978 title with the Trojans. USC could easily have been the national champions of 1969, 1979, and some services called them champions of 1976.

USC boasted Heisman Trophy winners Mike Garrett (1965), O. J. Simpson (1968), Charles White (1979) with a fourth, Marcus Allen, playing on the 1978 national champions before winning the award in 1981. Alabama’s Heisman winners: zero. USC far out-numbered the Tide in All-Americans, first round draft picks (a record five in 1968), number one overall picks (Ron Yary ’68, Simpson ’69, Ricky Bell ’77) and overall draft choices (eleven in 1969, fourteen apiece in 1975 and 1977).

The Trojans dominated the Rose Bowl. It could be said that, if not for the obstacle posed by USC, both Ohio State and Michigan might have been the best teams in the 1970s, a decade in which these schools very possibly fielded the greatest juggernauts in their respective histories. Alabama was winless in bowl appearances between the 1967 and 1973 seasons. For these reasons, USC was the “Team of the Decade” in both the 1960s and 1970s, while their two-decade run between 1962 and 1982 is considered the greatest of all time. The Tide still has a legitimate argument. Notre Dame has less of one since they were dominated by USC for most of these two decades. Oklahoma (two national titles, one Heisman winner) can cite some very compelling statistics favoring themselves in the 1970s. Penn State also went on a run of amazing proportions, but when
all the factors are carefully weighed the Trojans reign supreme. This has been their way of doing things for decades.

There have been periods where other teams boasted better win-loss records or had gaudier runs, but Troy has been steady, spectacular when it counted (big games, bowl games), while offering just a little more Hollywood excitement and Heisman star power. When USC defeated Notre Dame for the fifth straight time in 1982, they had for all practical purposes “caught up” with Notre Dame as the greatest of all traditions. Perhaps the Irish still held the slightest of edges, but USC was on the verge certainly of making a “breakthrough.”

So close, and yet so far. Over the following thirteen seasons, USC never beat Notre Dame. Troy had some very good teams. In 1988 they entered the Notre Dame game at the Coliseum one win away from playing for the national title only to lose. In 1989 promising freshman quarterback Todd Marinovich, reputed to be the most heralded prep player who ever lived, led them to a Rose Bowl triumph. But overall, once head coach John Robinson and his legendary Trojan assistant, Marv Goux left in the wake of NCAA penalties in 1983, USC experienced down times by their lofty standards.

The rise of Southern California in the John McKay era, like so many other periods, mirrored American society. After World War II, an enormous population boom occurred. The growth of California suburbs resulted in the state producing a “mother lode” of great athletic talent in all sports.

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<th>Bowl victories</th>
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<td>Teams that have won national championships since World War I (1919-2006)</td>
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<td>1. Alabama 30</td>
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<td>2. Southern California 29</td>
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<td>3. Penn State 25</td>
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<td>19. Clemson (through 2004) 14</td>
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<td>30. Michigan State 7</td>
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<td>30. Texas Christian 7 (through 2004)</td>
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<td>33. Illinois 6 (through 2004)</td>
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<td>34. Minnesota 5</td>
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The Big 10 dominated the Rose Bowl, which became a contractual affair with the Pacific Coast Conference beginning with the 1946 season. Between January 1947 and January 1952, the Big 10 won every time; sometimes in routs, sometimes in close games. It was a tremendous setback for Pacific Coast prestige. The conventional wisdom held that Big 10 and Midwestern teams were “tough” and “physical,” while California kids were “soft,” they had “gone Hollywood,” and were made lazy by the hot sun, inviting beaches, the temptation of girls, night life and “LaLa land.”

Then the kids in all those West Coast Baby Boomer families started to graduate from high school, entering USC, UCLA, California, Stanford and Washington. In January 1953 Southern Cal finally ended the Big 10’s dominance with a 7-0 shutout of Wisconsin in Pasadena.

But the conference stubbed its own toes, first by instituting a short-lived “no-repeat” policy on its champions (depriving the country of a “national championship” Rose Bowl game between unbeaten Ohio State and unbeaten UCLA in January 1955). Then, a recruiting scandal blew the lid off of the PCC and college football. Stanford, as guilty as the rest of the conference, essentially became the “star witness” for the NCAA, turning in Washington, California, USC and UCLA. Players were suspended, coaches fired, games forfeited, reputations lost.

It was the proverbial “end” for California. Under legendary coach Pappy Waldorf, the Golden Bears were among the nation’s elite in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Their failure to win any of their three straight Rose Bowl games badly hurt the conference, however. Perhaps put of a sense of desperation, Cal began to pay its players in the form of subsidies, supposedly to cover higher rents in Berkeley (the excuse UCLA made for doing the same thing in Westwood). When caught in the vortex of NCAA sanctions in the mid-1950s, Cal made the conscious decision to downgrade the importance placed on intercollegiate athletics. It was part of a growing political climate manifesting itself in California. Sides would be taken.

A great athletic department became mediocre. California had won the 1947 and 1957 College World Series in baseball, and the 1959 NCAA basketball championship under coach Pete Newell. Their track program under (Olympic coach) Brutus Hamilton had been second only to USC.

In the wake of Cal’s self-imposed “mediocrity campaign,” USC and UCLA built not just great football programs but all-around athletic departments, dominating every aspect of NCAA sports competition over the next two decades. Much of their success came about because of the “vacuum” created by Berkeley. Certainly great Bay Area athletes no longer considered Cal a worthy choice. UCLA’s 1967 Heisman winner, Gary Beban, and USC’s 1968 recipient, O. J. Simpson, were both from San Francisco.

Opportunities for black athletes, embodied by two “modern Moses of progressivism,” John Wooden at UCLA and John McKay at USC, typified the two schools, explaining much of their dominance. The University of San Francisco won two straight NCAA basketball championships on the strength of the liberal recruiting of black players like Bill Russell and K. C. Jones.
Tackled by segregation

The 1951 University of San Francisco Dons were 9-0, considered one of the best teams in the nation. In those days, USF was a sports powerhouse. Their basketball team, led by Bill Russell and K. C. Jones, would win 60 straight games and consecutive NCAA championships in 1955-1956. A number of small colleges on the West Coast had stellar football teams until the 1950s, among them Santa Clara, St. Mary’s and Loyola. They were known to play competitively against California, Stanford and USC. Schools such as Montana and Nevada were early members of the Pacific Coast Conference. Santa Clara had won the 1937 Sugar Bowl, St. Mary’s the 1946 Sugar Bowl. The 1951 Dons were led by the great Ollie Matson and featured future 49er Hall of Famer Bob St. Clair. Their SID was Pete Rozelle. The team was invited to a bowl game but asked not to bring their black players, of which Matson was one. They refused and stayed home. A few years later, Pitt’s black fullback, Bobby Grier played against Georgia Tech in the 1956 Sugar Bowl. For USF, however, the loss of revenue from the bowl disinvite, combined with decreased ticket sales to the new NFL franchise, the 49ers, forced them to give up football.

But another major factor was the social dynamic caused by the Vietnam War. California became a hotbed of radicalism. Athletes, coaches and sports were viewed as tools of “bourgeois capitalism,” pseudo-military endeavors to be despised. The downgrading of sports, started in the 1950s in the wake of NCAA sanctions, was furthered by a “dirty play” incident with USC that made Sports Illustrated headlines and led Berkeley to view USC as a tyrant of Caesarian proportions. The anti-war protest movement enveloped the campus all but destroyed the school’s competitiveness in sports, especially football, for years.

Black pioneers

Brice Taylor, C. R. Roberts, Willie Wood and Sam “Bam” Cunningham (Southern California), Jackie Robinson, Kenny Washington and Woody Strode (UCLA), George Jewett and Willis Ward (Michigan), Frederick Douglass “Fritz” Pollard (Brown), Paul Robeson (Rutgers), Oze Simmons and Jack Trice (Iowa), Fred Moore (Northwestern), Wimeth Sadat-Singh and Jim Brown (Syracuse), Ed Williams (New York), Johnny Bright (Drake), Buddy Young (Illinois), Prentice Gautt (Oklahoma), Sidney Williams (Wisconsin), Sandy Stephens (Minnesota), Bobby Grier (Pittsburgh), Jerry LeVias (Southern Methodist), Julius Whittier and Roosevelt Leaks (Texas), Lester McClain (Tennessee), Wilbur Jackson, John Mitchell and Sylvester Croom (Alabama).

The fact that USC and to a lesser extent UCLA continued to emphasize their sports programs were viewed as political acts. A curious sense of class envy, built on years of jealousy resulting from second-class sports status, fueled the northern California versus southern California divide of the 1960s. A conservative Republican from Los Angeles, Ronald Reagan was elected governor, achieving popularity largely on the strength of his hard-line approach to the protests at Berkeley. Later, it was revealed that
he cooperated with the FBI in their investigation of Cal’s chancellor and faculty regarding suspected Communist activity. The school, long regarded as just plain “Cal,” now found itself more often referred to by the moniker “Berkeley,” with attendant social meaning.

Stanford briefly filled the vacuum left by Berkeley. They won the Rose Bowl following the 1970 and 1971 seasons, with quarterback Jim Plunkett capturing the 1970 Heisman Trophy. However, the politics of the era brought them down, too. Their band chose to become radicalized, going so far as to pay a “Tribute to Chairman Mao” at the height of China’s Cultural Revolution, when an estimated thirty to fifty million Chinese were murdered by Mao.

The suburban, Sun Belt demographic shifts of the post-World War II era were still occurring in the 1970s. The same power that propelled Californians Richard Nixon and Reagan to four successful elections to the White House manifested itself on the fields of play. It was a golden age in the Golden State, at least in the Southland. The Trojans and/or Bruins dominated in football, basketball, baseball, track, swimming, tennis, volleyball and just about everything. Had either school been a country at the 1976 Montreal Olympics, they would have been among the medal leaders.

The state produced professional champions, too: A’s, Dodgers, Raiders, Lakers. With attendance down throughout the country, Los Angeles filled the Coliseum and its marvelous new arenas, Dodger Stadium and the Forum.

College football grew much more in the 1980s. There was an expansion of bowl games. The Fiesta Bowl became a major New Year’s Day game. Network and cable TV expanded the game’s reach. The state of Florida entered the picture in a big way. Some traditional powers faded, new traditions began.

With home prices rising to out-of-control levels, the family-friendly growth rates of suburban California began to trend backwards in the decade. The South saw a major rise in every aspect of the region. Once considered backward, the South initially made strides after the invention of air conditioning, which made it possible to do business in the summer time.

EXCERPT FROM "THE LAST MIRACLE: TOM SEAVER AND THE 1969 AMAZIN' METS"

The birth of a true New York Sports Icon

On July 9, 1965, the Houston Astros defeated the New York Mets for the seventh straight time that season, 6-2, behind a sensational teenager named Larry Dierker. Houston scored five runs in the second inning when Mets second baseman Chuck Hiller and shortstop Roy McMillan made errors.

29 hours and 45 minutes after Lindsey Nelson announced, “It’s absolute bedlam. You could not believe it. It’s absolute bedlam,” when Ed Kranepool drove in Cleon Jones to beat Chicago 4-3, another event occurred which utterly eclipsed that one. It was at 9:55 P.M. on Wednesday, July 9, the Year of Our Lord 1969. In the pantheon of greatness reserved
only for that most heroic of all heroes, the New York sports superstar; “in the arena” as Theodore Roosevelt liked to call it, the bright lights of Broadway, the Great White Way . . . and Shea Stadium illuminating him in all his splendor; well, he is rare indeed and rarer still is his debut.

Olivier as Othello, the audience gasping in astonishment at his range.

MacArthur returned from the wars, our freedoms his gift, our thanks washing over him.

Gehrig telling a full house of sobbing mothers, kids and grown men that he was the “luckiest man on the face of the Earth.”

By 5:45 P.M., Shea Stadium’s parking lot was full and the stands were mostly full. The excitement and air of anticipation was at a fever pitch. It was a World Series atmosphere. Leo Durocher, who saw it all long before this night, was non-plussed, playing gin rummy in his office with old friend Barney Kremenko of the New York Journal-American. With a mass of writers and TV people on hand, Joe Reichler, an assistant to new Commissioner of Baseball Bowie Kuhn, entered to ask if, maybe, possibly, could he, uh, come out and say a few words? Durocher gave Reichler the “bum’s rush” in favor of his gun rummy match. Reichler asked if Durocher would sign on to a post-season tour of Vietnam. Durocher ignored him.

Jimmy Qualls was a 22-year old rookie who had just been called up from Tacoma of the Pacific Coast League. He was only now starting to get his swing down, having missed two weeks to serve with his Reserve unit in Stockton, California. In the Mets’ clubhouse, Qualls’s surprise start left Seaver, Grote and pitching coach Rube Walker looking for a scouting report. Without any computer databases or Internet searches available, they had to rely on Bobby Pfeil, the only one to have seen him hit. Pfeil recommended “hard stuff” – fast balls and sliders – as opposed to curves and change-ups.

“He can get his bat on the ball,” he told Seaver.

At 7:48, Seaver began to get loose, but he was experiencing trouble. There was a twitch in his shoulder. He went through 103 pitches, trying to get the kinks out. “It still feels a little stiff,” he told Rube Walker as he made his way to the dugout.

“Do the best you can,” Walker replied.

Outside the stadium, a group of about 50 kids, described by a policeman as a “raving mob,” managed to sneak into the park when Jerry Koosman’s wife, Lavonne arrived and the gate was opened for her. It was a portent of future events. The game was a sell-out – 59,083 - with standing room only packed shoulder to shoulder, some fans having waited since 7:30 in the morning. Outside the stadium, hundreds of fans stood in fruitless lines, hope against hope that they would catch a break; an extra ticket, scalpers, some just soaking up the atmosphere, listening to transistor radios. The excitement was as high as for any conceivable sporting event: a USC-Notre Dame game at South Bend with the National Championship on the line; a Final Four
in basketball; or a pro football contest at Shea Stadium. The tension was as so thick it could be cut with a knife.

Baseball was back!

Finally Tom Seaver, now stiffness-free and throwing easily, took the mound. His fast ball simply exploded. The Cubs’ hitters stared at it, or at what they heard of it, since they could not actually see the thing. They went down like the French Army circa 1940, one-to-two three in the first inning.

New York then faced Ken Holtzman. Holtzman had gone 9-0 in 1967 but was 11-14 in 1968. With Chicago sprinting out to an early lead in 1969, Holtzman was their best pitcher, at least as effective as the redoubtable Jenkins. He won nine straight again, but entering the game he had lost three straight.

Holtzman was a streaky pitcher. There was no mystery to him. He threw real hard with little else in his repertoire. He relied on location, in many ways the baseball version of USC’s famed “student body right,” or Vince Lombardi’s adage that trick plays do not win football games, “blocking and tackling does.”

When Holtzman won nine straight, all was right. If his velocity was off, his fast ball straighter than usual, his pitches out over the plate, trouble found him, and it did this night. Tommie Agee lined the first pitch like he knew what was coming, down the right field line for a triple. Shea was awash in sound, and out of that a thunderous chant, “Let’s go, Mets!”

Bobby Pfeil, who Ron Santo did not think could hit his way out of paper bag, did his best imitation of Rogers Hornsby: first pitch, double in the left field corner, 1-0. Seaver’s admonition for a 9-0 first inning lead so he could “finesse” the rest of the way looked possible at this point. They were teeing off on the Cubs’ southpaw.

Durocher, who sat cross-legged while Jenkins battled nine complete innings the previous day, immediately called for submariner Ted Abernathy to get loose quickly down in the bullpen. With Cleon Jones coming to the plate, fans began to climb over the fence. Park police cleared some away from the “batter’s eye,” the black background behind center field so hitters did not have fans blurring the pitch.

“I have been to every ball game here, and I have never seen anything like this,” broadcaster Lindsey Nelson told the hundreds of thousands tuned into the television broadcast. “People are everywhere.”

Then, just like that, Holtzman settled down, striking out Jones and Donn Clendenon in the process of pitching out of the jam. But he had no time to gather himself on the bench. Seaver retired Chicago one-two-three in the second inning, causing Rube Walker to tell Gil Hodges that he had “no-hit” stuff. Indeed, Mets fans were seeing something very, very rare.

Many a well-pitched game marks an average baseball season, but Seaver was out of his shoes, above and beyond even his best games over the course of his first two-and-a-half years. He was bringing it in the high 90s, maybe breaking 100 miles per hour, with perfect control and rhythm. What these fans were seeing was Koufax on his best night; Gibson in full domination mode; or any of the all-time legends, whether it be Walter Johnson, Lefty Grove or Bob Feller. They say “good pitching beats good hitting.” It does, but it has to be exceptional. Seaver was beyond
exceptional. He was simply unhittable. His stuff could not be touched, merely waved at, gawked at, stunned by.

Poor Kenny Holtzman, a mere mortal in fruitless opposition to a god, took the mound in the second. With one out, he induced Grote to hit a sharp bounder to Santo, who chested it to the ground with his customary grit, but for some reason could not pick it up. Grote reached. Then Al Weis’s perfect double-play ground ball skimmed through Kessinger’s glove. The “god” Seaver now stepped in against his one-time Alaska Goldpanners teammate. As if to demonstrate it was no fluke that Seaver had gotten the final roster spot in 1964, he tomahawked a line drive between first and second base, scoring Grote. Then Agee doubled off the right field fence, scoring Weis and moving Seaver to third. Chicago’s Rube Walker (the brother of Mets pitching coach Rube Walker; some things had not changed since the days of Rube Waddell, Rube Marquard and Rube Bressler) went to the mound to remove Holtzman, who was not a rube. Durocher sat in the dugout, disgusted.

Shea was frantic. With Seaver knocking the eyelashes off flies from 60 feet, six inches, plus swinging the bat like he was Bobby Clemente, the outcome of the game was utterly without doubt. It was full throttle momentum and Chicago was as done as an overcooked Thanksgiving turkey.

“Break up the Mets!” began to be heard. It was a strange plea that fans occasionally chanted in Seaver’s rookie year, when he for the first time demonstrated such unaccustomed excellence that the people conceived in jest that he had made them too good for the rest of the league. In past years, fans and writers had legitimately asked for the Yankees’ dynasty, or Connie Mack’s greatest A’s teams, to be “broken up.” In Mack’s case they were, mainly when the Great Depression made it impossible for him to keep paying his high-salaried stars. But no such luck with the Bronx Bombers, at least until now. What was going on up at Yankee Stadium was attrition, a decaying empire.

Abernathy was effective and held New York without further scoring, but that was immaterial, especially when Seaver mowed through Chicago in the third, one-two-three. In the stands, Dick Schaap and Paul Zimmerman were roaming about, looking for fan reaction, trying to figure out what made these special, lively baseball fans tick. They approached George Hubela, in his early 20s from Brooklyn, sitting in the loge section back of home plate with his brothers, Louis (14), John (13) and friend Ralph Vilardi (14). Hubela displayed a Mets banner.

“The Mets are the greatest,” said Hubela. “They’re the team that’s happening, baby. This is it – the ‘new breed.’ Jets and Mets, Mets and Jets. That’s it. No other teams. The Mets have already gone all the way. They’re here. They’re going to the Moon, the next flight to the Moon.” He managed to sound like a famous TV Brooklynite, Jackie Gleason’s Honeymooners character, Ralph Cramden.

Hubela had already mailed in for World Series tickets. “Just wait,” he said. “I’ll be here.” Hubela was typical of the Mets’ fans. Indeed, the team itself was not the only thing that was “new breed.” Hubela and the other fans, none of whom sat on their hands like Yankees fans always had, were decidedly different.

In the fourth inning, Seaver faced the top of the Cubs’ order - Kessinger, Beckert and Williams – for the second time. A strikeout and two easy grounders to Ed
Charles made quick work of them. In the fifth, Santo, Banks and Al Spangler went down – a fly ball, a grounder to shortstop and Seaver’s eighth strikeout. In the sixth, as he went through the Cubs’ order for the second time, Ed Kranepool said it: “He’s got a perfect game.” The tradition in the dugout of a pitcher with a no-hitter, much less a perfect game, is to say nothing, but it was obvious to every player and fan in Shea Stadium that evening.

At the offices of the Associated Press in mid-town Manhattan, baseball writer Ed Schuyler was dispatched to Shea Stadium in case Seaver pitched a perfect game. Schuyler had done the same thing in 1968, arriving just as Orlando Cepeda of St. Louis broke it up.

On Long Island, Nelson Burbrink, the scout who signed Tom Seaver off of the USC campus a mere three years earlier, got in his car after scouting a prospect. As the car eased onto the Long Island Expressway, he heard Lindsey Nelson on WJRZ say, “Tom Seaver will get quite a hand when he comes up to bat here. He’s faced 18 Cubs and retired them all.”

Sitting in a box seat near first base, Nancy Seaver began to cry. Seaver glanced at her and saw the emotions start to spill out. The atmosphere was utterly electric, almost indescribable, a buzz of sound and anticipation bubbling to the surface, threatening to swallow up a stadium, a whole city.

Kessinger led off the seventh; the top of the order for the third time. Seaver had been pounding fastballs on Chicago all night, but thinking that he should give them a little wrinkle he curved the Cubs’ shortstop, who sliced a liner to left field. At first Seaver thought it was their first hit, but the ball hung and Jones grabbed it easily. Beckert popped to Swoboda, sweating bullets of nerves in right. Williams bounced to Charles. Shea exploded.

With one out on the top of the seventh, Jones lined a homer, an “insurance” run on a night Tom Seaver did not need it. The score was 4-0. In the bottom half of the inning Hodges send Rod Gaspar to right field in place of Swoboda; Wayne Garrett to second; and Bobby Pfeil moved to third, replacing Charles.

“You go into a game like this, cold and everything, and you’re just hoping you can do the job if the ball is hit to you,” Gaspar was quoted saying in The Year the Mets Lost Last Place. “It’s a perfect game. We’re going for first place. All the people in the park. It’s frightening.”

In the eighth, Seaver induced Santo to fly to Agee. Then, facing Banks and Spangler, he seemed to jet it up a half a notch. The middle innings were over, his pitch count low, the game in hand. There was no holding anything back. Incredibly, he started throwing harder. The Mets’ fans watched; loud, crazy, boisterous, yes, but by now in awe. They were observing a baseball Michelango, a sculptor of the mound. Seaver, who admired his brother the sculptor, and wanted to somehow duplicate in baseball what he could do with clay, was now accomplishing this task.

Old-timers, who had seen it all over the past 50 years of baseball in the golden age of New York, knew instinctively that the 24-year old Californian was a new Koufax, a Ford, a Newcombe; maybe better than any of those guys! A “new breed.” After Seaver rocketed a heater past Spangler to end the eighth, he walked off the mound to insane cheering. Announcer Bob Murphy then stated, “LADIES AND
GENTLEMAN, AFTER EIGHT INNINGS, TOM SEAVER IS WALKING INTO THE DUGOUT WITH A PERFECT BALL GAME.”

Grote grounded out but Weis singled. Seaver donned a batting helmet, undid the donut from his bat, and gave his warm-up jacket to the batboy. It was 9:55 P.M., Wednesday, July 9, the Year of our Lord 1969. The seminal moment in which George Thomas Seaver entered the pantheon.

The crowd rose; they had been continuously cheering all through Seaver’s dominant eighth inning, building to a crescendo that rocked the five-year old stadium to its very core. It was the sound Marilyn Monroe wished she heard when she gyrated before the boys in Korea. The sound Joe DiMaggio had heard when he was at his heroic best at Yankee Stadium, the knowledge of which he so contemptuously informed the breathless Marilyn when she tried to tell him, “Joe, Joe, you never heard such cheering.”

It was the rafter of the old Stadium when Gehrig told them how lucky he felt, or Ruth circled the bases having hit a towering shot in the Series. It was what Namath heard less than a year earlier, but according to all the pundits, all the experts and futurists during this age in which Alvin Toffler’s Future Shock was being taught in schools, it would never be heard again at a baseball game! That was yesterday, passe, old school. But here it was. Tom’s official entrance and acceptance into the pantheon of that with which was and remains the rarest of rare air: the true New York Sports Icon.

The Packers’ fans treated Bart Starr and Vince Lombardi like pagan idols. In Los Angeles, Sandy Koufax and Magic Johnson have been given the star treatment. Many cities have their heroes, and of course they cheer wildly, they are loud, and it gets electric.

But this was New York.

“If I can make there, I can make it anywhere. . .”

This was the biggest of the big time, the ultimate stage, the winning over with the most impressive of all bravura performances the most cynical, loud-mouthed, hardcore, hard-to-please sports aficionados on the face of the Earth. In this we get to the heart of what made this different, what made this a miracle. The winning over of the crowd, the total, childlike exuberance of the hard-bitten seen-it-alls, had a Pentecostal touch to it. They were children, all of them. The middle-aged men, who toiled for big bucks on Wall Street or union wages in a delivery truck; the grandmothers wondering what was happening to kids these days — all the drugs and sex and lack of respect — yet it all came together here, with Seaver a Pied Piper who did not quite know what was happening himself, so magical and mystical was it. The young man who old folks related to, the sex symbol who was faithful to his wife, the sports hero who seven years earlier was 6-5 pitching for the Fresno High varsity.
So the sound washed over Tom Seaver. 9:55 passed into 9:56, and it kept coming like baptismal firewaters, like a revival, like the Holy Spirit. Above the stadium, Christy Mathewson, John McGraw, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Branch Rickey, and Mel Ott formed a ghostly Hall of Fame, granting approval, imprimatur to the newest member. Ruth called Seaver “Keed.” Matty told McGraw, “He reminds me of me.” Rickey saw the perfect harmony of black and white teammates, the stands a diverse mix of New Yorkers, and nodded approval over that which he had wrought.

In the Mets’ dugout, Yogi Berra understood that a new guy was joining that exclusive fraternity of guys he belonged to, the one that included Joe D. and Mick and Whitey and Casey. In the Cubs’ dugout, Durocher looked enviously at the 24-year old from USC, knowing this mere child was ascending, before thine eyes, to a place he could only dream of being; a place where Bill Terry, Carl Hubbell, Mel Ott and the “Say Hey Kid” were; a place where names like Jackie and Duke and Roy resided in regal splendor; a club he was barred from entering into no matter how expensive his silk suit, or how stylish the dame on his arms. It was like Frank and Dean entering the room, turning and saying, “Sorry, Leo, not tonight” just as a giant bouncer stood between him and the entrance to the hallowed palace they were in and he was not.

Somewhere in America, Joe Louis and Rocky Marciano knew that Tom Seaver felt that special sense of recognition they had worked so hard to attain during all those nights at the Garden. Somewhere in Manhattan, probably at the center of a social whirl that had stopped itself in its tracks to watch the Mets’ game on television, Frank Gifford was smiling at the TV image of another Trojan entering the pantheon he had forged in the previous decade. Out in California, a Glendale banker named Casey Stengel was most likely asleep when it happened, but upon his awakening and perusal of the *Los Angeles Times* the next morning, the “Ol’ Perfessor” surely knew that a Met was in his cherished, exclusive club. Somewhere else, in temporary retirement after Pete Rozelle told him it was Bachelors III or football - not both – was Joe Willie Namath. He had a blonde on one arm, a brunette on another and a bottle Johnnie Walker Red in the middle. His sense of inclusion, his egalitarianism forged in a tough Pennsylvania upbringing, honed in segregated Birmingham where he walked the streets of the “colored section” like Huey Long, made Joe Willie smiled.

*Sure, New York’s big enough for the two of us. Welcome to the club, Tom.*

So be it. So it was. The latest true New York Sports Icon, the savior then laid down a perfect sacrifice bunt. The runner moved to second as he jogged off the field, cheered as if he had just moved a mountain.

An estimated two-and-a-half million New Yorkers were now watching Seaver trot off the field. Over the past innings, phones rang, doors were knocked on, people left all forms of human endeavor to rush home; to a bar, to a car radio, anywhere to hear or see this happening. It was like Orson Welles’s re-creation of *The War of the Worlds*.

“Housewives not the least interested in baseball have been dragged to the set by their husbands to watch history,” wrote Dick Schaap and Paul Zimmerman. Little kids, boys and girls, foreigners, people of all stripe who call themselves “New Yorkers,” found
a common bond in Seaver and the Mets at this instant. Schaap and Zimmerman
informed readers that a Chrysler commercial played in between the bottom of the eighth
and the top of the ninth, urging carbuyers to “dream the impossible dream.” The song
“The Impossible Dream” from Don Quixote’s *Man From La Mancha* was popularized at
that time in part because it was associated with Boston’s “Impossible Dream” pennant
chase of 1967. Now it applied to the Mets.

Nancy Seaver wept as she watched her husband take the mound for the ninth. Next to her was Tom’s father, Charles. Tom’s body was floating with pure adrenaline. He
had thrown a perfect game as a little leaguer, then had all his hopes and dreams for a
baseball future seemingly dashed when he made the move to the “big diamond.”; then
high school, where the likes of Dick Selma – now a spectator sitting in the opposing
team’s dugout – had surpassed him by leaps and bounds.

59,000 fans chanted “Seav-uh, Seav-uh.” It was beyond incredible, beyond
heady. He later said his arm was light, as if detached from his body. He was in touch with
his feelings. His heart pounded furiously, but the crowd noise was somehow so great as
to be silent. He was in a zone. Few ever reach such a zenith. It is the zone that Barry
Bonds was in when he hit 73 home runs in 2001, or Joe Montana was in as he drove the
San Francisco 49ers down the field in the closing minute of the 1989 Super Bowl vs.
Cincinnati. It is the rarest of air, the highest peak in the mountain range.

But with all of this going on, Seaver still had a job to do, and it required
concentration. Amid all the furor, he dropped, drove and delivered furious heat to Randy
Hundley. Hundley, as if acknowledging that to actually swing and hit Seaver was by now
beyond conception, tried to bunt his way on. The ball came right back to Seaver, the
easiest play in the world, except that under such intense pressure some people stiffen
right up. Grote told him he had plenty of time, and Seaver threw out Hundley as if he did
not have a care in the world.

Bud Harrelson, his best friend on the ball club, was watching the game at a
restaurant called Giovanni’s in Watertown, New York, where he was stationed for two
weeks of summer training. Nobody knew who he was. Now, he was a fan like everybody
else.

At seven minutes after 10 Jimmy Qualls strode to the plate. Qualls was the only
Cub to get decent wood on a Seaver pitch all night, hitting a sharp line drive caught at the
warning track, then a liner to first base. A left-handed batter, he had 47 Major League at-
bats prior to his stepping in against Tom Seaver. Tommie Agee in center fielder was not
sure where to play him. Seaver was throwing so hard that it seemed implausible that
Qualls would pull him, but he seemed to be on Tom’s pitches in a way no other Cub was
on that night.

Bobby Pfeil’s “scouting report” – hard stuff - was all Grote and Seaver had to go
by. Seaver had dominated with the best fastball in the game, and that was what he and
Grote agreed on. As he nodded yes to the sign, Ed Schuyler of the Associated Press
arrived in the Shea Stadium press box.

Tom Seaver went into his wind-up, dropped, and delivered. Instead of sinking
action, down and away, the pitch came in waist high. All night, Seaver was perfect with
his location, but his heat was so great that he could get away with a mistake. The Cubs
simply could not hit what they could not see. Major League hitters feast on fast balls,
much prefer it over curves and off-speed stuff. Their reflexes are the best in the world. They are the most skilled of athletes, those who engage in what Ted Williams called the “single most difficult act in sports,” the hitting of a “round ball against a round bat at 95 miles per hour,” as Pete Rose described it.

In little league, high school and college, the overwhelming fastball artist dominates with speed alone. His competition cannot touch it. At some point, usually in the minor leagues and especially when he reaches The Show, he discovers, sometimes alarmingly, that he is now dealing with the only 400 or 500 men on the face of the planet who are capable of dealing with his heat. An adjustment, an accommodation must be made. This decides whether he will continue with a successful big league career, or become a coach, a scout, a salesman . . . a writer?

Seaver was throwing so hard that the best-hitting team in baseball during the first half of the 1969 season was stopped cold, unable to get around on it. That rarest of feats, the fast ball they knew was coming, could not be hit. It was like an overwhelming army that blasts past all defensive positions, but cannot be stopped by tricks, decoy or espionage.

But Seaver; dropping, and driving, dropping, and driving . . . all night, over and over, expending all that energy . . . now, in the ninth, he was just a quarter-inch off with his fast ball. Qualls was the one Cub who seemingly felt no pressure. Little was expected of him. He had not been around all season, subject to Leo Durocher’s demands and psychological games. Suddenly, he was Ted Williams or Duke Snider, seeing the ball, and reacting to it.

Bat connected, solidly, and the ball carried on a fly to deep left-center field. New York Mets center fielder Tommie Agee broke after the ball, but quickly snuck a look at his boyhood pal from Mobile, Alabama, Cleon Jones, as if to say, “Hey man, you better get to it ‘cause I ain’t got it.”

Jones just shook his head.

More than 59,000 people groaned as the ball dropped in for a single. Nelson Burbrink and Bud Harrelson swore. A few boos for Jimmy Qualls were replaced by a cheer, louder than ever, for Seaver, now a solitary figure on a mound of dirt surrounded by green grass. Another prolonged standing ovation. Seaver later called it the biggest disappointment of his life, “within my grasp,” knowing he might not, probably would not, ever get another chance at something this close to perfection.

With a 4-0 lead, Seaver straightened up, took the mound and worked to the next two Cubs hitters, retiring them easily. The celebration on the field was muted, but the crowd let forth still more outpourings of adulation. A star was born, that was for sure, manifested more like it; a self-evident truth right before thine eyes. Seaver disappeared into the clubhouse. Later the crowd, not wanting to leave, chanted, “We want Seaver,” but he was gone. The 59,000 made their way into the parking lot, the subways, the bars of Queens and Manhattan, to celebrate and talk it over. What a night!

Seaver was immediately met by Nancy, still battling tears. “I guess a one-hit shutout is better than nothing,” she told him. Tom Seaver’s greatest triumph was a melancholy moment. Despite the incredible flow of electrical energy, despite now being a mere three games out of first place, the New York clubhouse had a subdued quality to it, but it was nothing compared to Chicago’s.
“Nobody was going to beat Seaver tonight,” Durocher told the writers. “I never saw him throw so hard. If he keeps throwing that hard, nobody’s going to beat him. But I don’t think he will.

“We’re still three games ahead. And from now on the Mets are going to find the going rougher. They’re going to see the best pitchers in the league.”

Gentle Leo refrained from predicting “100,000 suicides” if the Mets let their fans down after such a big build-up. He had made his suicide remark in 1952 when the Giants threatened a repeat of their 1951 “shot heard ‘round the world” comeback. Then he smiled. “That Qualls ruined you guys,” he said. “He made you re-write your stories.”

“There was no pressure on me at all,” Qualls told reporters. “All I wanted to do was get a base hit and get something started.”

“Dear Diary, last night I sat in, with 60,000 other rabid believers, on the birth of a folk hero,” wrote sportswriter Ray Robinson “The folk hero . . . was Tom Seaver, a right-hander, possessing the virtues of Prince Valiant.”

THE RAIDER MYSTIQUE

There are many great dynasties in sports. The Raiders - of Oakland and also Los Angeles - are one of them. While they may not be the greatest of all pro football dynasties, it is difficult to argue that any other franchise has ever been as exciting or as colorful.

What marks the Raiders, aside from their three Super Bowl championships, are an eclectic group of athletes whose dynamism on and off the field define the team's history. These disparate personalities have all had one thing in common: they played and coached for, and therefore reflected the personality of, the team's legendary owner, Al Davis.

Davis himself is an enigma. Growing up in Brooklyn, he never played football, but he studied it. AT VMI he was a student assistant, but fudged his resume to make it look like he was an assistant coach! This led to a low-level job on Don Clark's staff at USC. Davis parlayed three years at USC to somehow talking a group of investors into putting him in charge of the new AFL franchise in Oakland.

The league succeeded, in large part because of the vision of Davis and a group of maverick owners. In the same town that founded the Hell's Angels, during the time the Hell's Angels grew - the 1960s - the silver-and-black became the Hell's Angels of football.

They defined the new style of the pro game, marked by the "bomb," long passes eschewed by conservative coaching philosophies of past decades. Quarterback Daryl Lamonica and coach John Madden developed the Raiders into the winningest team in pro football by the early 1970s. As great as they were, the Raiders were known for two things: they lost the "big game" and were wild off the field.
Year after year, Oakland lost in the AFL and then the AFC championship games. Some questioned their off-field activities. During pre-season training camp in Santa Rosa, the Raiders partied wildly at the team's hotel. Women came from all points to make themselves available. Long-haired behemoths and playboys - John Matuszak, Ken Stabler, Fred Bilitnikof, Lyle Alzado - played hard and lived hard.

During the season, the party was transferred to an airport hotel near the Oakland Coliseum. Davis never complained about the partying, declaring that he simply wanted them to "just win, baby."

Gonzo journalist Hunter Thompson arrived and wrote a telling piece about the "Hell's Angels" of football, further cementing their renegade reputation.

In 1976, the team finally broke through to win the Super Bowl. Over the next 10 years, the team won two more and established themselves as the best team in the game. Over time, the Raiders changed coaches and players, moderating their off-field behavior in accordance with changing times. This occurred in confluence with the strangest 12-year period in the franchises history - the L.A. years. In Los Angeles the team won their third Super Bowl, but a strange thuggishness pervaded the team through the gang affiliation of their fans at the L.A. Coliseum.

When the team moved back to Oakland in 1995, the Raider Nation was defined by their fans' unique behavior, embodied by their "Black Hole" behavior. The history of the team has not always been defined by champions, but it has always been defined by passions unlike any other franchise. No team has more passionate fans, more dynamic leadership, or more colorful personalities.

**EXCERPT FROM "THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY OAKLAND RAIDERS"

**THE "MAD BOMBER"

Daryle Lamonica is well known in Raider lore as “the Mad Bomber,” because of his style of throwing the long ball. Lamonica and his team helped to revolutionize the game. What Knute Rockne and Sammy Baugh had done before them, the Raiders improved on.

The aerial game marked the difference between the AFL and the NFL. The older league had its share of great passers, of course—namely, Johnny Unitas and Sonny Jurgensen—but even those talented quarterbacks played within more restricted offensive schemes.

The Green Bay Packers dominated the NFL. Bart Starr was certainly a good passer, but the Pack played a conservative style, emphasizing the run to set up the pass. Many coaches believed passing was too risky. An incomplete pass netted zero yards, and of course an interception was disaster.
The AFL teams, however, went to the air with regularity. Sid Gillman started it. Al Davis instituted it. Daryle Lamonica perfected it. Lamonica, interestingly enough, played at Clovis High School in Fresno. He grew up watching the Clovis Cougars do yearly battle with the Sanger Apaches. Sanger had a talented quarterback named Tom Flores. Flores went on to star at UOP, then helmed the Raider offense in the early 1960s.

“Tom started it all with the Raiders at quarterback,” recalled Lamonica. “He went through some real tough years in Oakland, but when I got there, everything was in place.”

Flores ranks fourth in Raider history with 92 touchdown passes and set a single-game mark that still stands, with six versus Houston in 1963. In 1966, Flores passed for 2,638 yards and 24 touchdowns, but in the offseason, he was “shuffled off to Buffalo” in exchange for the younger man from the San Joaquin Valley, Lamonica.

For Flores, it was a bitter pill. The Bills, one of the stronger AFL teams of the early years, were on the descent. The Raiders, a joke in the beginning, were on the rise. Davis had seen Lamonica rally his team in relief of Jack Kemp and knew that he was the man to lead his team in 1967. Despite returning to his native California, Lamonica did not at first realize what a break it was for him. But, upon his arrival, Davis enthusiastically painted a portrait of what the Oakland offense could do under his leadership. Lamonica “got excited pretty quickly.” Having his family able to see him play also was a plus.

Lamonica led the team to a 13–1 record in 1967. He was the best player in the American Football League. Whereas Kansas City had won the championship in 1966 and was Oakland’s “Chief” rival, when Lamonica arrived he was the margin of advantage for Davis’s team. His greatest season was in 1969, when he passed for 34 touchdowns, tied Flores’s record with a six-TD game against the Bills, while throwing at least one touchdown pass in 25 straight games between 1968 and 1970.

“It was an exceptional offense because we could throw deep to not only the wide receivers, but [also to] the tight ends and the running backs,” Lamonica said. “Clem Daniels could come out of the backfield and outrun most defensive backs, and Al Davis turned Billy Cannon into a tight end who could do the same thing.”

Lamonica went deep on either side of the field. If he was in enemy territory, he eschewed ball control, going for the end zone. His passing percentage was usually below 50 percent, which was immaterial to Davis.

“Our philosophy was attack, attack, attack,” Lamonica said. He went early and often for Fred Biletnikoff, Warren Wells, and later Cliff Branch. After Cannon, Raymond Chester from Morgan State was brought in to great effect. Despite the seemingly “mad” approach, the Raider mindset was mathematical. The idea was to create 24 points out of seven or eight plays, which would be difficult to beat. Lamonica had a cannon arm, but the Davis scheme was the difference. Lamonica was not fast nor a good scrambler, but the tight ends and running backs available for outlet passes meant that even if blitzed, Oakland could pull off a big play. However, the key to the Raiders’ passing attack was born of necessity: the strong front line.

“The Raiders were the forerunners in stressing physical strength up front, and that emphasis has proved out,” observed Dallas Cowboy coach Tom Landry.
Jim Otto had been with the club since 1960. His emergence as a star was not a sure thing. Otto was a workaholic who developed great strength in the weight room. Combined with intelligence and experience, he became one of the greatest centers in the game’s history. But it was the emergence of Kansas City’s 6’7”, 280-pound defensive right tackle Buck Buchanan that created the urgency to stop him.

Davis realized his team would have to face Buchanan twice a year for 10 years. “We wanted to make damned sure we had somebody to line up against him,” he said. “So in the first round of the 1967 draft we selected Eugene Upshaw from Texas A&I and made him our left guard. He was 6’5”, 255 pounds.

“Everybody said we were crazy because in those days they were using short, squatty guards. I wanted big men up front to protect the quarterback.”

It was the presence of protectors like Otto and Upshaw that gave Lamonica the extra split second to find an open man, but it was his own “poise” in the pocket that allowed him to make maximum use of speed—in the case of Wells—or moves, as in the case of Biletnikoff.

Lamonica was not an extraordinarily big man, but he was tough, willing to take a hit after he released the ball. It paid off, time after time. He took some criticism, however, mainly because he never won the ultimate “big game,” a Super Bowl. Lamonica led his team to many great victories by large margins, but lost clutch games, too. The 1968 Super Bowl was one, although, at least on that day, the Raiders were outmanned. His “fumbled lateral” against the Jets in the 1968 AFL title game ruffled feathers. Lamonica was seen as having lost in a head-to-head confrontation with Joe Namath, even though he passed for 401 yards on a blustery afternoon at Shea Stadium.

His hand injury against Kansas City in the 1969 AFL championship game is less remembered than his failure to move the team in a low-scoring loss. In 1970, when the AFL and NFL merged into inter-conference play, Lamonica and his team fell, prompting many to say the game, now dominated by fancy defensive schemes designed to prevent his long-ball style, had passed them by.

Indeed, the great Raider comebacks and ultimate Super Bowl victory came with Ken Stabler—less physically gifted but considered a “gamer”—at the controls. Nevertheless, Lamonica remains a Raider great. He was exciting and extraordinarily successful.

<<TH>> TRIVIA
<<TQ>> How many times has a Raider been voted league Player of the Year or MVP?
<<TA>> Five Raiders have been voted league Player of the Year or MVP. Quarterback Daryle Lamonica was named AFL Player of the Year in 1967 and 1969. Quarterback Ken Stabler (1974), running back Marcus Allen (1985), and quarterback Rich Gannon (2002) were named NFL MVPs.

<<SBH>> Did You Know…
<<SBT>> That Howard Cosell gave Daryle Lamonica the nickname “the Mad Bomber”?

<<SBLH>> TOP 10 GREATEST AFL QUARTERBACKS
1. Joe Namath, Jets
EXEMPLARY FROM "TROJANS ESSENTIAL"

The Thundering Herd

Greatness also followed the Trojan players in the years after the 1931 season. Ernie Smith went from All-American to All-Pro and then the NFL Hall of Fame. Without his USC teammates, however, “I never would have achieved what I did,” he said.

He and Aaron Rosenberg were the great off-tackle blocking combination that fueled the Thundering Herd. Smith also had the utmost respect for Jones.

“He was called the ‘Head Man’ and he was that in all respects,” said Smith.

In 1932 a movie was made called The Spirit of Notre Dame. It was filmed at Loyola College in Los Angeles, and the football sequences were shot using Trojan and Loyola players (Smith among them).

In 1970 Smith was inducted into the College Hall of Fame along with the great Notre Dame coach Frank Leahy. His work with the Tournament of Roses Committee led to the foundation memorializing Howard Jones. Out of that grew scholarships for deserving USC students, leading to a number of football players going on to dental and law schools.

“There’s a tendency to shove the greats of the past into the past,” said Smith.

Nineteen thirty-two was the height of the Depression, and Los Angeles was hit as hard as most American cities. However, when it came to the world of sports, and especially college football, L.A. was “fat city.” Dean Cromwell’s magnificent track program was at full throttle, making the Olympic Games, held at the Coliseum, resemble a USC home meet of sorts. A Trojan had earned a gold medal in every Olympics since 1904 at St. Louis. The great Fred Kelly had taken gold in the 110-meter high hurdles at Stockholm in 1912. Charles Paddock, the “fastest man alive,” had competed in the famous Chariots of Fire Paris Games of 1924, where he came up empty after having earned gold in the 100 meters and four-by-100-meter relays of 1920. Frank Wykoff had earned gold in the 1928 four-by-100 meter relays, and Buster Crabbe had won a bronze in swimming.

The L.A. Games were a Trojan extravaganza, with ’SC trackmen taking five golds. The great Frank Wykoff took two of those, and Crabbe went for the gold and got one in the 400-meter freestyle swimming event.
Fresh off the glory of the Olympics, which by virtue of its being held at the Coliseum turned the campus into the Olympic Village, showing off the school, the city, and the greatness of its athletes as well, defending national champ USC and Los Angeles itself was flush with success as the 1932 football season got underway.

The participants and fans in L.A. simply had decided not to participate in the Depression. USC become not just a great football school, but a world-famous institution, in large part because it was showcased at the Games with Hollywood as its backdrop.

The 1931 team, number one and bathed in glory after beating the Irish and winning the Rose Bowl, were the epitome of college grid excellence. The 1932 team was even better, if that can be believed.

A new superstar, Aaron Rosenberg, emerged—an All-American defensive guard who powered one of the greatest defensive juggernauts of all times. Eight opponents were shut out (after six had gotten goose eggs in 1931). In 1938 Duke would be unbeaten, untied, and unscored upon in the regular season. So, too, would Tennessee the following year. Both those teams were beaten and scored on by USC in the Rose Bowl. In light of that, the '32 Trojans must rank as one of the truly great defensive teams ever.

“Aaron Rosenberg is still considered Troy’s mightiest guard—on defense he stopped everything that came his way and charged viciously on offense,” was one appraisal of the era.

Smith was described as “headline material,” a “hammer-’em-down 200-pounder.”

“I give credit to Rosenberg for playing a big part in the success of the team’s defense against Notre Dame and Stanford in 1931 and 1932,” Coach Jones said. Of the fullbacks he was assigned to tackle, he “cracked him and messed him up.”

“The 1932 team was the strongest defensive team that USC ever had,” stated former USC publicist Al Wesson. “There were only two touchdowns scored on us all season—and they were both by passes. No one could move, no less score on the ground against us. Smith was one of the greatest tackles we ever had. Rosenberg was a smart, fine athlete. You couldn’t buy a yard against this team. I’d say without qualification that the offense of the 1931 team and the defense of the 1932 team were the best produced by Jones.”

Captain Tay Brown was an All-American tackle. Left end Ray Sparling made huge plays in crucial situations. New recruits of equal strength, an indication of Jones’s enormous recruiting ability, replaced the players from the 1931 champs who had graduated. There is little doubt that USC had gotten to the point where they enjoyed a huge advantage in attracting players to their school for reasons that went well over and above football. It was also obvious that the modest but steady success of UCLA was not preventing the great stars from wanting to be Trojans.

“If any of these players of prominence show signs of lagging,” wrote one football magazine, “Jones will have somebody else in there in a hurry.”

Jones knew that team competition was a very good thing that pushed everybody. “Players get one or two chances to make good, and if they fail it is a long time before they land on the first string again,” the magazine continued. Shaver was thought to be the player most likely to be missed, and the backfield might “lack cohesion” early.

A new superstar emerged in the USC backfield. Cotton Warburton quickly became a Trojan legend. He was only 140 pounds, but the sophomore from San Diego
was a scatback, a term that applied to a number of great runners of the decade. Ted Williams, the great baseball star who also grew up in San Diego, had seen Warburton as a high schooler, would follow his career at USC, and later in his life counted Cotton as one of his all-time favorite athletes.

Warburton scored a touchdown in a 9–6 win over Washington and scored in the 13–0 defeat of Notre Dame. He scored twice in a 35–0 pasting of Pitt in the Rose Bowl.

“I was responsible for the one and only blemish on our undefeated, untied, and almost unscored on record,” Warburton did admit. He slipped in the Cal game and let the Bears score. Against Stanford, Warburton knocked down multiple Stanford passes.

“The USC defensive power was absolutely astounding; their ability to out-dazzle Mr. [Pop] Warner’s razzle-dazzle was uncanny,” wrote Mark Kelly of the Los Angeles Examiner.

USC opened the year with five straight shutouts before Warburton slipped and Cal broke the string in ’SC’s 27–7 victory. Cal was said to be desperate to win, or at least show, against the Trojans, so perplexed were they by their loss of football prestige over a decade against the team that they wanted to beat more than any. Stanford of course is their biggest rival, but USC is the top of the mountain. Perhaps they took some solace in that they ended USC’s scoreless record, but the loss was hardly a “show.” USC no longer even looked at the Bears as anything more important than the rest of the schedule. Oregon and Washington fell, and Notre Dame came into town.

Warburton returned a punt 39 yards to set up a touchdown pass, and USC recovered an Irish fumble to create another score. The game was not the dramatic extravaganza of 1931, but the Trojans faithful of 93,924 were happy to observe a good old-fashioned whuppin’.

Sophomore quarterback Homer Griffith out of Fairfax High had mostly handed off to Warburton, but toward season’s end he came into his own against Notre Dame and Pitt. He hit Ford Palmer for a 50-yard first-quarter touchdown in front of 78,874. Warburton starred on both sides of the ball. He scored twice late.

Pitt went home with their tales between their legs, 35–0. USC was the back-to-back national champion, and at that point, if a poll were taken to determine the greatest program of the century up to this season, it would very well have been a tie between USC and Notre Dame, with a slight edge to ’SC.

Four years later, Pitt returned to Pasadena to play Washington. Coach Jock Sutherland ordered the bus to a stop on the hill overlooking the Arroyo Seco and announced, “There it is. There’s the place two Pittsburgh teams were beaten by a total of 68 points.”

<did you know . . . >That a tradition at USC in Ernie Smith’s day was the “haircut?” A player would take to the barber’s chair. “Barber” Smith gave him the works: a shave, hot towel, but really a full body massage with extremely rough use of the hands,
leaving black-and-blue marks on the poor guy. One day Smith gave the “haircut” and a
teammate rose and pulled the towel off the “victim’s” face.

It was Howard Jones, who had been duped into thinking he was getting a real
haircut.

<did you know . . .>That in 1971 USC fielded the best basketball team in the
school’s history? Led by Paul Westphal, they only lost two games—both to national
champion UCLA—and were number two in the nation.

<did you know . . .>That Minnesota pitcher Dave Winfield, a future Hall of Fame
outfielder with San Diego and the Yankees, had struck out 14 Trojans and was leading 7–
0 heading into the ninth inning of a 1973 College World Series game? USC rallied to win
it 8–7 en route to a fourth straight NCAA title.

FOREWORD OF "TROJANS ESSENTIAL" BY ANTHONY DAVIS

I was a very fortunate athlete at that time. Now, this might sound overconfident
of me to say, but I believe I played during the greatest era of the school’s history. I only
say this because the school was winning titles in all sorts of sports: swimming, golf,
baseball, football, we even had a great basketball program. And I got to play for two
legendary coaches, John McKay and Rod Dedeaux. Of course, John McKay won four
national titles during his tenure, and I was lucky enough to be on two of those teams. The
1972 national football title team has been called the greatest team of the century. I was
also very fortunate to play for Rod, who won eleven national titles. In the 1970s he had a
five-year run going, and I was blessed enough to be on two of those winning teams.

My fondest memories as a football athlete are, of course, the 1972 game against
Notre Dame, in which I scored six touchdowns, as well as the 1974 game, which is called
the greatest comeback in collegiate history. We came back from 24-0, to win it 55-24.
In baseball, I played with some pretty awesome guys like, Fred Lynn, Rich Dauer, Roy
Smalley, Ed Putnam, Marvin Cobb, and Pete Redfern. My fondest baseball memory is a
division playoff game we played against California State, Los Angeles. I hit two
homeruns that game, switch-hitting, and since we were battling to go to the NCAA
tournament, if I didn’t hit those runs, well, then we weren’t going. I can say, that was my
most important contribution to USC baseball, amongst all those great athletes with whom
I played. Years later, I saw George Milkey, and he was telling the story of that game to
Daryl Evans, of Detroit Tiger fame. George spoke of how my homeruns not only kept us
alive for the NCAA tournament, but also preserving his victory as winning pitcher
against CalSt, LA. I was like, a kid listening to his father tell a story, because I never
thought George Milkey would elaborate like that in my presence; and I was content, I
was a proud Trojan that day.

I think back to 1972 and my start as a University of Southern California football
player. We were playing against the Oregon Ducks, in Eugene, Oregon on a rain soaked
field. I was not a starter; I was a third-stringer. The 1972 Trojans were battling Oregon,
0-0 and both our first and second-string tailbacks could no longer play do to injuries they
received. John Robinson, the assistant coach at the time, walked up to me as I sat on the
edge of the bench. He looked my square in the eye, and with some serious concern he
said, “AD, you have to go.” And that was a terrible thing for me to hear. It was cold, and raining, and my entire body was tight. But, with that demand, the adrenaline ran through my body like a NASCAR racecar. Entering that football game, I thought they would let me adjust to the game, and figure out the flow; but they didn’t. They called my play right away: “HAW 48 pitch left.” I heard those words and all I could think was, this is a terrible call, and cold rain. But all the stars and planets must have been aligned, because when that ball was snapped, I got a couple of blocks to the endzone and I was on my way for a forty-eight yard touchdown. I could finally breathe a sigh a relief when I sat back down on that bench. All my teammates were proud. Although I had entered cold and tight, I went in there and scored a touchdown. It was the first time I had touched the ball. My rest would not last as long as I would have hoped, for less than sixty seconds later I was back on the field. The Oregon Ducks had fumbled on the forty-five yard line, and we were back on the field with the ball in our possession. Again, I figured they would let me settling into the rhythm of the game, and they would call the play for someone else. In the huddle, Mike Rae, Sam Cunningham, Edesel Garrison, Lynn Sawn, Charles Young, and Pete Adams were all looking at me, and I figured they knew something I didn’t. Mike Rae barked out the play: “HAW 28 pitch.” To myself, I thought, that’s a terrible call, why me, are they testing me? They pitched the ball left, I caught a block off tackle, picked up a block from Edesel, who happened to be our fastest guy on the team, and he kindly escorted me to the endzone, for a fifty-five yard touchdown. Through that performance, we preserved our undefeated status. I rushed for 206 yards on twenty-five carries. We beat Oregon, 18-0. And that would be the start of my Trojan football tradition experience.

Many people thought I was brash and cocky, but that is what made me the football player I was. And my teammates knew this. All my years at USC, that was my attitude along with my teammates: team first, individual accomplishments second. Out of the three teams I played on, two of them national champs, there is one player that stands out in my mind. Richard “Batman” Wood was a defensive player, and he fit his name. He was built like a bat. The amazing thing about Richard’s accomplishments at USC is that he is the three time All American in the school’s history, both then and now. No one else has accomplished that. To this day, I admire that in him.

Trojan readers and football fans alike, you should enjoy this book, not only for the factual information provided, but also for the entertainment of the writing.

Fight On!
Notre Dame Killer
Notre Dame Nemesis

EXCERPT FROM "THE USC TROJANS: COLLEGE FOOTBALL'S ALL-TIME GREATEST DYNASTY"

THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Outlined against a blue, gray October sky the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore they are known as famine, pestilence, destruction and death. These are only aliases. Once named Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden, the gladiators of the New Millennium are men of youth, color and American diversity. Their real names are: Leinart, Bush, Jarrett and White. These new Four Horsemen of Southern California came to the land of destiny riding their famed white steed Traveler, that dreaded Coliseum sight of Irish past. They relegated the old Notre Dame ghosts to their place and time, a time when the only color was white, myths were protected, lies told as Truths. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another Fighting Irish team was swept over the precipice at Notre Dame Stadium on the afternoon of Saturday, October 15, 2005. 80,795 spectators peered down upon the bewilderling panorama spread out upon the green plain below.

These fans observed the changing of the guard, the team of the New Age, the University of the 21st Century. For the better part of the previous century their team held that loftiest position on the grid landscape. No more. Their ancient rivals arrived at their house of worship, paid homage to their shrines, and honored their traditions. Their skill, class and guts emanated like water pouring forth upon a barren valley, informing all whose eyes saw that Truth, when witnessed in an American arena, is never misunderstood.

The Truth of October 15, 2005, in that most perfect of settings, was that the Trojans of Southern California had taken over from the previous title-holders, the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, the lofty moniker Greatest Collegiate Football Tradition of All Time! They did as their legendary old coach, Marv Goux, advised countless legions to do. They did as Goux's beloved granddaughter asked them to do. Four games in four years passed since Kara Kanen advised that future Trojans, "Win one for the Goux!"

For four years now they took on the Irish at home and away. Each time they left them heartbroken in noble defeat. On this day, they would take more than a shillelagh back to Heritage Hall. There was no plaque, no crystal football, nothing inscribed.

There was only pride and knowledge that what they did secured for them everlasting glory. Legends were made. Expectations had been met. 80 years of excellence had not only been lived up to, but exceeded by a new generation. They took the foundation laid brick by brick by decades of Trojans, erecting a higher statue than ever before.

A modern Lancelot led them, for indeed the times he was living in were those of a Camelot quality. His name is Leinart. The similarity to "Lion Heart" is not insignificant. It is, rather, cosmic, for he does not lace his cleats in a land of mere mortals. He is part of something ancient and utterly sacred The standards this tallest and sturdiest of the new Horsemen set under that blue, gray October sky, with the wheat of an Indiana harvest swirling about like so much stardust, are standards that nobody will ever be expected to meet. To strive for, but not to meet.

The second new Horseman's name is Bush. On a field of play where 81 years ago he would have been invited to leave, this step-son of a preacher man stepped up and took a nation, a Trojan Nation, and with his loyal partner with the "Lion Heart" he thus moved mountains on the flat Midwestern plains.
The third new Horseman's name is Jarrett. A babe in the woods, a child
desperate to return to his Jersey roots rather than accept the challenges that God graced
him with the ability to meet, he did meet them on the green plains of South Bend. He met
them; soft of hands and swift of feet did he meet them as he raced through the gauntlet set
forth before him. His was a moment of mystery and wonder, a Shakespearean marvel:
"There are more things on Heaven and earth, Horatio, than can be dreamt of in your
philosophy."

Finally, in the "most Gracious" Shakespearean of seasons, did the fourth new
Horseman emerge. His name is White, a famous last name and one he lived up to, as he
had taken the previous man's number, 12, and turned it around: 21. In the glare of the
spotlight, Mr. White did what makes him splendid. He sacrificed for his team. His name
will not be synonymous with the glory and memory of this challenge met under the
watchful eye of "Touchdown Jesus," but his mates knew that they would not have been
there without his sacrifice.

Thus was history made. Leave no doubt? Thus is the statement made. USC was
not tested, they were out-played. But championship teams do what championship teams
do. On the game's final play, Leinart pushed into the line, then did a spin move that
looked like something he learned in a Tuesday night ballroom dancing class. With three
seconds left, he found a seam to score the winning touchdown. Number one USC escaped
with its 28th straight victory, 34-31 over the ninth-ranked Irish. The game more than
lived up to expectations. It was the greatest game in the history of the storied rivalry that
goes back to 1926. Depending on one's perspective, and considering the pressure, the
stakes, and the atmosphere, it may have been the greatest football game ever played,
college or pro. It was watched by the largest TV audience of any regular season college
football game in a decade. To say it meant the rivalry was revived was as obvious as
saying Pamela Anderson possesses sex appeal. The college football world, increasingly
complaining about Trojan hegemony, now saw a reason to tune back in.

When the teams lined up as Leinart approached the line for the last play, Carroll
could be seen making the "spike it" motion. Apparently it was a deke. In the NFL,
Miami's Dan Marino approached the line against Carroll's Jets, looking to spike the ball
to stop the clock, luring the Jets off-balance before throwing a touchdown pass.

Leinart looked at the stack of Notre Dame defenders. The play called was a sneak.
He turned to Bush.

"What should I do?" he screamed. "I don't think I can make it, Reggie, what
should I do? You think I should go for it?"

"GO FOR IT, MATT!!" yelled Bush.

Then the Irish crowded the line. Bush had second thoughts.
"NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!" he screamed. Leinart never heard him.

Leinart took the snap, heading into the line. It was not even close. He had no
chance to muscle through the pile. But it was all in one place. He pirouetted. The ball was
precariously held halfway tucked against his shoulder and halfway in the air, where it
could be swatted away. He somehow found a hole.
IT IS DARKEST JUST BEFORE DAWN

Cliché time: it is darkest just before dawn. Richard Nixon: “To appreciate what it is like to be on the highest mountain top, one must tread through the lowliest valley.”

For the San Francisco 49ers, the period from 1973-80 represented the longest, darkest night of their history; a period in which the team tread in the “lowliest valley.” The 49ers were born into the old All-American Football Conference as part of the post-World War II expansion. They were adopted into the National Football League beginning in the 1950 season. AAFC teams Los Angeles (Cleveland, now the St. Louis Rams) and the Cleveland Browns (now the Baltimore Ravens, not to be confused with the new Cleveland Browns) were immediately successful. The 49ers were not, but they were competitive.

They had a good season in 1957. In the 1960s the Rams dominated, but San Francisco fielded entertaining teams with star quality players like John Brodie, Jimmy Johnson and Dave Wilcox.

From 1970 to 1972, San Francisco had play-off teams, but after the disastrous fourth quarter blowout loss against Dallas in the first round in ’72, they got old, discouraged and bad . . . fast.

From 1973 to 1979, San Francisco was terrible. Only the birth of the expansion Tampa Bay Buccaneers prevented them from being the worst team in the league, but even Tampa under coach John McKay rose to the NFC title game by 1979. The 49ers stayed mired in mediocrity.

San Francisco was a failed team. Their young players did not develop. Veterans came in by trade, only to show their age. What made the period even more galling was that it represented a golden era in the league and in the state. San Francisco’s failure was accentuated by the fact that their rivals attained the heights of glory.


Obviously this period encompasses 49er greatness. There were the three division titles of the early 1970s and the five Super Bowl titles of the 1980s and ’90s. The Giants were strong in the 1960s. The Angels contended in the 1980s. The Rams were excellent, for the most part, in the 1960s and ‘70s. Stanford went to two Rose Bowls (1970-71). The Chargers of Dan Fouts were a high-powered early ‘80s offense.

But the proverbial “glory days” are centered in the 1970s. The cross-bay Raiders were dominant in the 1960s, more dominant in the1970s and 1980s. USC football was probably as strong from 1962-81 as any collegiate power in history. Their best teams were in the 1970s. UCLA basketball under John Wooden (1964-75) put together a string
like none other, highlighted by an 88-game winning streak in the '70s. The Lakers were contenders in the 1960s, champions in the 1970s, a dynasty in the 1980s. The Golden State Warriors won the 1975 NBA title. The Dodgers were terrific in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Then there were the Oakland Athletics. While the 49ers stumbled and bumbled, the A’s put together one of the great sports dynasties in history. All these champions relegated the Niners to the back of the newspapers.

In addition to all these great teams, the 1970s saw a rise in California prep, junior college and “other” sports. Redwood High of Marin County and Lakewood High of L.A. County had dynasties in baseball. Verbum Dei of Los Angeles rose to unprecedented prep basketball heights. High school football in the Southland took on a new status above and beyond Texas, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Cerritos Junior College enjoyed a baseball run like none ever seen, and Fullerton College was a JC football powerhouse. Stanford tennis became a juggernaut. USC and UCLA track dominated (Cal won the 1971 NCAA track title before losing it to academic ineligibility). Had USC or UCLA been countries, they would have been among the top medal winners at the 1976 Montreal Olympics. USC baseball captured five straight College World Series titles. After Title IX, women’s sports took a giant leap forward, with California being the trendsetter.

The mid- to late 1970s were tough times in San Francisco. Greatness abounded all around them; across the bay and in hated Los Angeles. But the Giants and 49ers represented mediocrity. Candlestick Park, not yet 20 years old, was immediately declared ancient, dirty, a symbol of all things second rate, low rent, unimpressive.

The Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum was considered safe, warmer, more comfortable, fan friendly and accessible. The adjacent Coliseum Arena was modern and filled to capacity. Down south, Trojan, Bruin and Ram games at the Coliseum were played before enormous throngs at a stadium considered a shrine of immortality. Anaheim Stadium and San Diego Stadium were modern marvels. The Fabulous Forum was home to Hollywood’s “in crowd.” Dodger Stadium was the Taj O’Malley.

Then there was San Francisco itself. The city was dirty, corrupt, seemingly taken over by organized crime and peep show booths. Tourists found other, better destinations. Homeless were camped out on the streets, at city hall, and in front of restaurants that patrons chose not to patronize. Once vibrant, a city famous for its wild celebrations at the end of World War II; a favorite of sailors and other servicemen, San Francisco by the 1970s was a moribund hangover in the aftermath of the drug-addled Summer of Love, the hippie revolution, the drop out generation, and the protest movement.

The fan base at Candlestick was not generally from San Francisco, anyway. Their people came from the suburbs of Marin, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. The teams they fielded gave them little incentive to drive through dangerous Bayview streets, leaving their parked cars to the tender mercies of tire thieves and vandals. There was certainly nothing worth doing after the game near Candlestick, and little incentive to venture into heart of The City itself.

Amidst this desultory atmosphere, a football team lived down to expectations. 1973 marked the end of John Brodie’s and defensive tackle Charlie Kreuger’s careers. Injuries killed the club in a 5-9 year against the league’s toughest schedule. Center Forrest Blue and linebacker Dave Wilcox were rare bright spots, both voted All-Pro. Tight end Ted Kwalick out of Penn State was a top performer. That year the Rams made
a big comeback. New coach Chuck Knox installed a conservative, ground-oriented offense around the experienced veteran John Hadl, obtained from San Diego when San Francisco native Dan Fouts took over. Los Angeles was 12-2. The Rams success symbolized the difference between the two cities. L.A. was the “city of the future,” hailed as innovative in the arts and technology, a place that supposedly had “gotten it right” in terms of harmonious race relations.

In 1974, heir apparent quarterback Steve Spurrier was injured, and his four replacements failed to make the grade. After opening with two hopeful wins, they dropped seven straight in a 6-8 year. One bright spot was Rookie of the Year Wilbur Jackson. Jackson is a historic figure. He was the first full scholarship black player ever recruited by Bear Bryant at the University of Alabama. In order to “grease the skids” for Jackson’s acceptance, Bryant scheduled a game against integrated powerhouse Southern California in 1970. When the Trojans won big at Legion Field, ‘Bama fans were clamoring for fast black players . . . like Wilbur Jackson. By the time his Crimson Tide career was over, Jackson had been voted team captain and the South had rose again.

“Football’s religion in the South,” said Jackson. “When I got out to California I heard about the Big Game <Cal vs. Stanford>. I checked it out. It wasn’t like any game in the SEC in terms of excitement. Fans out there were laid-back, but I enjoyed my time in the Bay Area.”

Dave Wilcox finally had to retire when a knee injury ended his excellent career. The Rams again won the Western Division, but the balance of power had shifted well in favor of the American Football Conference, winners of eight of 10 Super Bowls in the decade.

In 1975 the Rams were a dominant defensive team, but Dallas ended their momentum in the NFC title game at the Coliseum. San Francisco was an after-thought at 5-9, although their 24-23 win over L.A. ended an embarrassing 10-game losing streak to the Rams.

New coach Monte Clark seemed to have turned things around in 1976 (8-6). Enormous hopes were pinned on quarterback Jim Plunkett. A local product from James Lick High School in San Jose, Plunkett captured the 1970 Heisman Trophy at Stanford. After leading the Indians to a Rose Bowl upset of Ohio State, he was selected with the first overall pick of the 1971 NFL Draft by New England.

In his first game at Foxboro Stadium, Plunkett engineered a victory over the mighty Oakland Raiders, but went downhill after that, losing his job to Steve Grogan. Still youthful, the move to San Francisco seemed a natural fit for Plunkett, and indeed in 1976 improvement was made. But after a 6-1 start that had everybody excited, the Niners tanked.

Running back Del Williams rushed for 1,203 yards and UCLA center Randy Cross made the All-Rookie team. The great Jimmy Johnson retired after 16 years. A four-game losing streak ended play-off hopes and left Plunkett subject to much criticism. The Rams again captured the West, but even worse, the cross-bay Raiders finally broke through after years of dominant, yet ultimately disappointing seasons, to capture the Super Bowl, which was played in Pasadena sunshine.

In 1977, Eddie DeBartolo Jr. bought the team and brought in Joe Thomas as general manager. There was little indication that this would improve things as the club
lost their first five in a 5-9 campaign under new coach Ken Meyer. But there were indications, in faraway places, that something new was in the air.

Halfway across the country, junior quarterback Joe Montana led Notre Dame first to a green-shirt upset of Southern California, then a Cotton Bowl win over Earl Campbell’s Texas Longhorns, en route to the national championship.

Closer to home, a short drive down the 101 Freeway, the former coach at Washington High in Fremont, who had been an assistant under Marv Levy at Cal, under John Ralston at Stanford, under Al Davis in Oakland, and under Paul Brown at Cincinnati, finally got his chance as a head man. His name was Bill Walsh. When he returned Stanford to respectability after a few down years, people started to take notice of his “new ideas.”

1978 was the nadir of the decade. Plunkett was discarded like stale French bread, but hope was placed on another local legend. Orenthal James Simpson grew up in the Potrero Hill section of San Francisco. He prepped at Galileo High, then set every junior college record imaginable at City College. At USC his legend was made: a national championship and a Heisman. National icon status came to him in Buffalo, where the first overall pick of the 1969 draft broke Jim Brown’s single-season rushing record, becoming the first ever to gain 2,000 yards in 1973. In his prime, O.J. had many pundits contemplating whether he indeed had replaced Brown as the greatest football player ever. While he probably fell just short of that, O.J. was a hero and major superstar; not just on the field but a Hollywood hero, a commercial spokesman, the most popular sports figure in the pre-Michael Jordan era.

He was brought home to San Francisco in 1978 along with his Potrero Hill, Galileo, CCSF, USC and Buffalo Bill teammate Al Cowlings. O.J. was well past his prime, however. He was cheered, but offered no magic in a 2-14 season. Failed coach Pete McCulley was let go, and the decision was made: a youth movement, a new direction, no more failed, injured veterans. O.J. hung up his cleats, heading to Hollywood and an unfortunate destiny.

This meant two things. First, Walsh was hired after leading Stanford to a bowl win and two strong seasons. Then Walsh drafted Montana, still available, incredibly, in the third round. He considered his own Stanford signal-caller, Steve Dils, but was impressed by Montana’s winning ways at Notre Dame.

Walsh installed a high-powered passing scheme, and quarterback Steve DeBerg was effective with Montana learning the ropes behind him, but their 2-14 record had nobody thinking that greatness lay just around the corner.

In 1980, progress was sure. They started out strong and finished strong in a 6-10 year. Wide receiver Dwight Clark set the club record with 82 catches. Montana took over as the starter and completed 64 percent of his passes. Heading into 1981, the 49ers were hopeful. Nobody could predict anything like what would transpire in that and subsequent seasons, but one thing seemed apparent. After a long, black night, the first dawn of a new day was peeking over the horizon.

*So Close and Yet So Far*
After winning three straight division titles, there was still hope that Dick Nolan’s team could continue to hold their own, and that the transition from John Brodie to Steve Spurrier would be a winning one. It was looking good after the second half of the first game of the 1973 season when the 49ers were threatening to end world champion Miami’s winning streak, but in searing heat and humidity before 68,276, the Dolphins recovered to win 21-13. Their streak was ended the following week at Cal’s Memorial Stadium in a 12-7 loss to Oakland, playing away from the Coliseum because the A’s had a game that Sunday.

**Winners**

There were good players on the bad 49er teams of the 1970s. Wide receiver Gene Washington had been one of Jim Plunkett’s targets at Stanford. Tight end Ted Kwalick was a former All-American at Penn State. Defensive end Cedrick Hardman and center Woody Peoples were All-Pros. Defensive tackle Charlie Kreuger was a picture of the tough pro football player.

**Did You Know . . .**

That Monte Clark, who coached in San Francisco for one year (1976), had been a star player at the University of Southern California?

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**EXCERPTED FROM "ANGELS ESSENTIAL"**

**FALLEN ANGEL**

If his off-season activities were any indication, this hope looked to be more of a “pipe dream.” Bo spent the winter performing in a Vegas lounge act surrounded by young lovelies dressed in skin-tight “baseball suits.” He did screen tests for movies, which according to every Hollywood agent and producer were in the offing. Plans were made for him to star in a Western which he dubbed “The Last Shoot-Out at Bo’s Corral.”

Spring Training got off to a . . . rough start when Belinsky met up with a “companion” in Palm Springs. They retired to his hotel room, where they ordered a full array of room service hors d’ouvres and champagne, all charged to the ball club. They then started to “go after it hammer and tongs,” until somebody’s feet knocked over the tray, causing bottles and dishes to fall in a crashing of broken glass.

The next day they tiptoed around the crash scene, the girl departing and Bo headed to the ballpark. A maid discovered the broken glass and informed the hotel manager, who contacted Haney.

“Don’t tell me who,” said Haney.

“Yes,” the manager said, “It’s him again.”

A fine ensued. 1963 was a bad year. The team’s veterans got old fast. The fast ‘n’ loose style of the Angels caught up with them. Bo was 1-7 when the team sent him to the minor leagues.
Salt Lake City? Albuquerque? Omaha?
No. Honolulu.
“It was the best place of my career,” Bo said. “Hawaii’s better than a lot of big league towns. I’ve been happy to play my whole career there. It was relaxing for me, it got me out of that whole Hollywood scene. I pitched great there, and I’ve never seen so many beautiful girls in my life.”

Belinsky did pitch well in Hawaii; well enough to earn a promotion back to Los Angeles, which of course got him right back into the limelight of publicity, Hollywood and all those starlets.

One of those starlets was the actress Mamie Van Doren, a blonde bombshell who at the time was being groomed by the movie industry into becoming the “next” Marilyn Monroe and Jayne Mansfield. Stardom eluded Mamie, but she and Bo became a major item. She knew Bo was great publicity for her career. The two became inseparable items around town, their images splashed all over the trade papers.

Eventually, Mamie told Bud Furillo that they were engaged. Furillo ensured that the headlines were the same size as “FIDEL DEAD,” but it was all news to Bo. Pressured, he bought Mamie a big rock, but they immediately began to argue and the engagement was called off. Relieved of the pressure, the romance bloomed again, but neither one was faithful to the other, so they decided to call it quits before hurting each other further.

Bo wanted the ring back but Mamie refused, until Bo hired a private dick who presented evidence that she was not exactly lonely.

“Mamie’s got a little class,” Bo told the media. “Very little.”

In 1964, Dean Chance put together one of those seasons that happens every so often. Like Ron Guidry in 1978 and Orel Hershiser in 1988, Chance caught fire and could not be hit. His sidekick, Belinsky, seemed to pick up Dean’s momentum. In the first four and a half months of the season it seemed that, finally, their collective potential had been reached.

Bo continued to party. His success on the field had little to do with his off-field “success.” By this point he was a personality separate from his baseball persona. Every bar owner, every actress and model, every socialite, wanted him to be a part of the scene, and he obliged. Somehow, he seemed in ’64 to have managed a way to compartmentalize this life with the demands of a baseball career.

He was only 9-8 in August, but as his 2.87 earned run average demonstrated, he pitched great ball, the victim of brutal offensive support from an Angel club that had lost all their offensive firepower from the magical “Summer of ’62.”

Thanks to Bo and Dean, the team was still popular. Sandy Koufax was out for the season with an injury. Without him the Dodgers fell by the wayside, giving their junior tenants a unique chance to grab some serious market share in the “City of Angels.”

Looking back to that August, it seems the events which transpired that month changed the very nature of the franchise. An age came to an end, replaced by a strange twist of fate, a change in the very character of the club. They would move to a new stadium in the suburbs, and suffer varied misfortunes. In the mythological sense, it almost seems that had an unfortunate, easily avoidable incident at Washington’s Shoreham Hotel not happened, the “Camelot” nature of the Angels might have been allowed to live on.
On August 13, 1964, Belinsky lost a game at Dodger Stadium. He was the victim of poor defense, and after the game Associated Press reporter Charlie Maher found him to be discouraged and distraught over his performance. He was having a season worthy of a 20-game winner but without better support he was more likely to be a .500 pitcher. It was a crucial point in his career, and telling of the “new Bo.” He now took the game seriously, had a chance to make some real money at it, and did not want to let the opportunity of a lifetime – heretofore a fantasy in his mind – slip away.

Bo poured his heart out to Maher, who wrote a national story quoting the southpaw as depressed over his team’s poor play behind him, unhappy with his own performance, and contemplating retirement. Maher pointed out that Bo’s words needed to be taken with a grain of salt, coming on the heels of an emotional defeat in the “dog days” of August, but it all made coast-to-coast headlines.

The Angels and the press corps covering them boarded a plan owned by the Dodgers, which they rented for road trips. A nine-hour flight to Washington, D.C. ensued. One of those writers was Braven Dyer, the 60-year old dean of the L.A. sporting scene.

Dyer, who wrote for the Los Angeles Times, had seen it all. His vivid descriptions of the “Trojan Wars” with Notre Dame and in the Rose Bowl elevated Southern California football into the realm of myth and lore. He was of a time past, and never took to the likes of Bo Belinsky, who in his mind was a playboy of dubious character, holding out for money he did not deserve; a recalcitrant who failed to realize how lucky he was.

Dyer could pull a cork, and by the time the plane arrived in muggy D.C., he was snookered. The players, on the other hand, were kept to a two-drink limit. At 1:30 in the morning on a hot night the players dispersed to their rooms. There were no women waiting for Bo. Still operating on West Coast jet lag, he and Chance decided they were hungry, taking in a late meal at the Black Steer.

At three A.M. they dragged themselves in for the night. Teammate Jimmy Piersall told Bo, “Dyer’s looking for you.”

Dyer had gotten ahold of an East Coast paper with Maher’s story, quoting Bo about retirement. Fueled by drink, Dyer felt that Bo “owed” him the exclusive “retirement” story, not the Associated Press.

The phone rang when they got to their hotel room. It was Dyer, who according to Bo immediately started swearing. A shouting match followed. Bo threatened to “put your face in the toilet” if Dyer came near him. Dyer allegedly declaring that he was going to come to Bo’s room to give him the opportunity.

Chance was taking a bath when Dyer arrived, after having taken his coat off, putting it on the doorknob of the next room and knocking on Bo’s door despite a “Do Not Disturb” sign hanging on it.

Dyer stormed in. Bo tried to mollify the old man, who told him, “Go ahead, tough guy, let’s see you put me on my ass, let’s see you.”

With Dyer on him chest-to-chest, Bo threw a glass of water on Dyer to “sober him up and make him leave.” According to Bo, Dyer reached into Bo’s attaché case, pulled out a bottle of hair tonic and swung it at Bo, grazing him in the face. Bo flattened him with a left hook. Dyer claimed it was Bo who called him, and denied he ever swung hair tonic at him.
Dyer fell back, hitting his head on the wall. Blood spurted from his ear and he was unconscious. Chance thought he was dead, until they heard Dyer snoring. They called Angels’ trainer Freddie Frederico, who called Rigney.

Frederico immediately thought Dyer was dying of a fractured eardrum, but he was not hurt seriously, just cut. Rigney arrived and did not believe word one of Bo’s – or Dean’s – stories. The papers got hold of it and it was big news, complete with photos of old man Dyer in bandages. The public assumed the worst; an old man beaten up by Bo Belinsky.

“Dyer had it in for Bo,” said Maury Allen. “He was a crusty, nasty, aggressive person, and he was jealous of him. Bo avoids people like that. You had to ‘get’ Bo.”

**TRIVIA**

The Angel players were once invited to Eddie Fischer’s birthday party at the Coconut Grove. Where was the Coconut Grove?

A: It was located in the Ambassador Hotel, located in the mid-Wilshire District. It was the most famous of the old style L.A. clubs, a hangout for actors, musicians, mobsters and politicians in the tradition of New York’s Copacabana. Richard Nixon celebrated his Congressional and Senatorial victories there. In 1968 Senator Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan at the Ambassador. It eventually closed and was torn down.

*DID YOU KNOW . . .*

That the Angels and Dodgers were not the only teams to share a stadium? The Yankees and Giants both played in the Polo Grounds before Yankee Stadium was built. The Yankees also played at Shea Stadium while Yankee Stadium was being renovated. Other teams that shared stadiums included the A’s and Phillies in Philadelphia; and the Braves and Red Sox in Boston.

*1960s All-Angels Team*

P Dean Chance
P Andy Messersmith
P Ken McBride
P Jim McGlothlin
RP Minnie Rojas
C Buck Rodgers
1B Don Mincher
2B Bobby Knoop
3B Aurelio Rodriguez
SS Jim Fregosi
OF Leon “Daddy Wags” Wagner
OF Albie Pearson
OF Rick Reichardt
EXCERPTED FROM "DIAMONDBACKS ESSENTIAL"

Man in the middle

Jerry Colangelo’s rebuffing of Barry Bonds is indicative of who he is. Colangelo is a man who means well. He legitimately tries to achieve things the right way. Being someone who has dealt in the upper corridors of power, business and politics for many years, he has had to swim with the sharks, to be sure. He has made mistakes, but he has maintained his integrity as well as anybody who does what he does.

“I grew up on the south side of Chicago in the 1940s and ‘50s in an area called Chicago Heights,” he said. “The people there labored in the steel mills and in the factories. They were honest, hard-working people who took pride in their work and in their heritage. My family lived in the Italian neighborhood everybody called Hungry Hill. When you talked about your family on ‘the Hill,’ you were talking about the whole neighborhood. People respected one another. They took care of their own.”

Colangelo went to work delivering newspapers twice a day to help his family. His old man was abusive. When Jerry became a teenager he “threw him out of the house,” according to Len Sherman in Big League Time, Big Time.

Colangelo was an outstanding athlete who turned down numerous professional baseball offers, choosing to play basketball at the University of Kansas. When Wilt Chamberlain left the Jayhawks early to play for the Harlem Globetrotters, Colangelo came home to the University of Illinois, where he made All-Big 10. He married his girlfriend, Joan, but did not make it to the NBA.

Colangelo went into the haberdashery business while playing semi-pro basketball on the side. Colangelo then went to work for a man named Dick Klein, who was a successful businessman with designs on owning a pro sports franchise. When Klein purchased the Chicago Bulls, Colangelo was his right-hand man. He did well in that position. In 1968 the expansion Phoenix Suns offered him the job of general manager. Colangelo decided to take the Suns job, in part because it was 20 degrees below zero when he departed Chicago’s O’Hare Airport, and 70 when he arrived in Phoenix.

The standard biographical profile reads like this: “He came to Phoenix in 1968 with six suitcases, three kids, no car, no furniture and less than $1,000 in his pocket.”

Basketball was the last sport that seemed to make sense in Phoenix. Played in-doors, it works against the great outdoor weather that makes baseball and football such a pleasant spectator activity. The Phoenix ownership group did not live in the area. Colangelo was given the chance to run the Suns
“his way.” Colangelo put his stamp on the franchise, utilizing his own background as an all-conference collegian. He knew the game, but he also took to the marketing of the Suns.

In their first year, Phoenix made the play-offs, pushing the star-studded Los Angeles Lakers of Jerry West, Elgin Baylor and Wilt Chamberlain to seven games. Over the years, Colangelo functioned as general manager, on occasion even handled coaching duties, and was the de facto owner of the team. He built the Suns from a sideshow into a major part of the community. They enjoyed success on the court and at the gate.

In the late 1980s, Colangelo turned “lemons into lemonade.” A drug and gambling scandal shadowed the Suns, almost costing Colangelo his job. He weathered the storm, but the Beverly Hills ownership group decided they had enough. They wanted to sell.

Several groups emerged as potential buyers. Colangelo had made a good living over the years, but had not accumulated the kind of money needed to buy a sports franchise. But he headed an investment group that successfully purchased the Suns. He was “first among equals” within the ownership structure, a situation not unlike the one Al Davis created for himself with the Oakland Raiders in the 1960s.

Under Colangelo’s leadership, the Suns moved up. Phoenix was by this time a thriving sports market. The Sun Devils and Wildcats joined the Pacific 10 Conference in 1978. The St. Louis Cardinals moved to Arizona in 1989. The NHL, improbably, entered the Phoenix market with the Coyotes. The Southwest was the fast-growing region in the nation. Many Californians were moving to the state in order to avoid crime, smog, overcrowding and exorbitant home prices.

In 1992, Colangelo oversaw the completion of the fabulous America West Arena. It was his savvy political leadership that created the public-private partnership necessary to build the basketball arena. It was considered the finest facility in the country.

As Len Sherman aptly points out in Big League, Big Time, the naming rights of America West Arena and the successful marriage of corporate sponsorships between the team, the city and the business world, in many ways started what became a major trend. Today, we see stadiums named after corporations, for better or worse.

In the case of Phoenix, it was definitely for better. In 25 years, Colangelo had turned the Suns from an expansion franchise, barely more than a minor league operation, to a cutting edge pro juggernaut; the very ideal for financial success in the athletic world. In so doing, he was an integral part of the growth of the National Basketball Association, which had ridden the Larry Bird-Magic Johnson 1980s to enormous popularity.

While all of this was happening, Los Angeles was experiencing some down years. The very nature of California politics shifted its power base from the south to the north. Orange County, a symbol of SoCal prestige, declared bankruptcy. New York in the pre-Rudolph Giuliani
era was similarly faced with seemingly insurmountable problems. But Phoenix prospered and grew. Colangelo was the face of this growth, as demonstrated by his 1994 profile in *Forbes* magazine.

Perhaps Colangelo’s greatest asset, throughout the years he was building a great business and sports empire, was his reputation for honesty. At the heart of that was his Christian faith; honed by the Catholics in his youth, and later of the evangelical variety after his marriage. In the mid-1990s, Colangelo finally let the free-living Charles Barkley go. A core of Christian players made up the successful Suns’ squad in the second half of the decade, after replacing him.

When baseball pursued expansion to Florida and Colorado in 1993, Colangelo was too busy dealing with America West Arena to get actively involved. But when MLB decided to pursue two more cities by 1998, Colangelo was approached as the man to head the Phoenix bid. A veritable who’s who of businessmen and investors, in and outside the state, rallied to Colangelo. By now, everything he touched turned to gold. He was able to make a bid for the new franchise using mostly “other people’s money” while retaining a majority share, just as he did with the basketball operation.

With a vote up for stadium funding, Colangelo was under the gun. He was also perturbed to discover that the other owners saw the purchase price of two expansion teams as a way to make up for lost profits from the 1994 player’s strike. The price for the club skyrocketed to almost twice that of the $95 million paid for the Florida and Colorado franchises a few years earlier. Eventually, Colangelo was able to reduce the price to $130 million plus deferred TV revenue.

Then a controversy arose over a stadium tax assessed on the citizens of Maricopa County. Colangelo used all his powers to work out a deal, but not without engendering some public disenchantment. He was now more out front politically than he ever had been. He made mistakes a season politician would avoid.

Colangelo weathered that period just as he had the drug-and-gambling scandal of the 1980s, but immediately found himself at odds with his new fellow owners, namely George Steinbrenner. Colangelo insisted that his team be placed in the National League West, refusing to consider any other possibility. He also signed several big money free agents. He went after Buck Showalter and other former Yankees, a move Steinbrenner took exception to.

The building of Bank One Ballpark, like any major undertaking, had its share of headaches, but when all was said and done it was completed in time for the team’s 1998 inauguration. Colangelo may have ruffled some feathers along the way, but he was a hero in Phoenix. He had created an arena and a Major League stadium considered to be pure state of the art. He had overseen a downtown renaissance that was responsible for numerous business expansion.
“Would I have gotten into this knowing what I do now?” he asked rhetorically in the first issue of the team’s magazine of February 1998. “I’m not sure. But when they play the National Anthem with 49,000 fans standing in the ballpark – fathers, mothers, kids, grandparents – I know it will be worth it, and then some.”

Did you know . . .

That Jerry Colangelo played on a high school baseball team in Chicago Heights that also featured future Yankee and Ball Four author Jim Bouton?

Trivia

Who was named “Arizona’s Most Influential Sports Figure of the 20th Century”?

A: Jerry Colangelo.

By the numbers

Top 10 Arizona sports figures (Diamondbacks in bold)

1. Jerry Colangelo
2. Lute Olson
3. Frank Kush
4. Randy Johnson
5. Charles Barkley
6. Del Webb
7. Paul Westphal
8. Jake Plummer
9. Bobby Winkles
10. Curt Schilling

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

SONGS OF STEVE TRAVERS

"THE ONE I LOVE"

When I think about the joys of life
One thing is perfectly clear
Never am I happier
Than when you are near

The one I love
My little one
That perfect feeling I get

When the one I love
My little one
Gets her hair all wet

It's such a pure, unconditional love
So pure and true

It's you

The one I love
My little one
And God knows it's true

It's you

My Sweetie
My joy

The one who makes me pure

You love me
I love you
And God knows of this I'm sure

DON'T GIVE UP

I was born lucky
I was born free
I was born in America
God was lookin' out for me

I got no complaints
I got no beefs
But life takes twists and turns
Down some different streets

I had size
I had strength
I could throw a baseball hard

My Daddy told me
"Son, you got a gift
But there's still a price to pay
Cause someone's always out there
To take your job away."

But mostly Dad was right about
One thing most of all
He told me about things that lasted
And never would grow old.

Don't give up
He told me
No matter how hard the task

Don't give up
He told me
You're a winner through and through

Don't give up
He told me
If you think that you are right

Don't give up
He told me
Just to lessen a bumpy road

Don't give up
He told me
Just to lighten a heavy load

As the years went by
My arm hung
And I turned in my old spikes
But the things Daddy said
Resonated in my life

The things we do
Ain't always measured by
Hits and runs

Sometimes we don't know the score
'Cause life is like a ball game
Nine innings we gotta play
A pitcher's duel
Or a few runs scored early
The results ain't in
Until the end of a long day

And money ain't the answer
Not entirely
I think it's more important
For God to shine his
Grace on thee

Raisin' kids the right way
And walkin' a righteous path
That's what we aim to do
When we're think of things that last

Sometimes I get down
Sometimes in the dumps
My plans and aspirations
Have taken some heavy lumps

But always I do try
To look at life the right way
And make no alibi
'Cause Daddy told me
Never quit
"Quitters never win
And givin' up's the only sin."

Others get the laurels
Others get the prize
But don't forget
The game's not done
'Till we finally close our eyes.

So Dad was right about
One thing most of all
He told me about things that lasted
And never would grow old.

Don't give up
He told me
No matter how hard the task
Don't give up
He told me
You're a winner through and through

Don't give up
He told me
If you think that you are right

Don't give up
He told me
Just to lessen a bumpy road

Don't give up
He told me
Just to lighten a heavy load.

**PUTTIN' UP WITH ME**

Lo these many years it seems
We've had differences, two or three
But for all the pain I've caused

I am amazed

You're still puttin' up with me

My opinions
My problems
Myriad and complex

My little girl
So sweet and true
And even a wife I now call ex

Why didn't you just
Send me on my way?
I think I know the answer
It's just as clear as day

'Cause it's how I feel about my own
Flesh and blood
The same way you look at me
For all my human faults
A bond that's deep and true
Unbroken to the end
A love that never dies
Each day you send

So I say to you
On closing this corny phrase
I thank you for puttin' up with me

Lo these many days

"YOU ASKED ME TO LOVE YOU"

Words by Steven R. Travers and Bradley T. Cole
Music by Bradley T. Cole
(Revised, 1997)

For a long time now I just went along
For a long time now I just lived alone

For a long time now

Then along you came
A part of my life
So different, so exciting

For a long time now

You asked me to prove myself
You asked me to love you
So you could love yourself

You asked me to love you

And now there's no one else

(CHORUS)
You asked me to love you
You asked me to love you
You asked me to give my life to you

(REPEAT)
You asked me to love you
You told me to be true

You told me to be true
You want me to say I do

You asked me to love you
Now you asked me to give my life to you
And you know I do

So I did
Oh, yes I did - I fell
In love with you

Now I can't go back
I just can't go
To the way we were before

A love like ours - so special
So much love you got's to know
So much love stored up inside

You asked for my love
Now let's go for a joyride

(SCORE)
So now my love
I ask of you
A very simple question, too
Where do we go go from here?

Because I can't turn back
And neither can you
Because you asked me to love you

And I do

You asked me to love
And I do

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE
Blake and I broke up and never were married. All that is left is this article, which I basically ghostwrote for her.

Blake Young is scheduled to marry StreetZebra columnist Steven Travers on Sunday, November 26, 2000. Why on Sunday instead of Saturday? Because the U.S.C.-Notre Dame game is scheduled on Saturday. That’s all you need to know about falling in love with a sports fan.

“Let’s stop procrastinating and set a date.”

When the man you love, in my case StreetZebra sports columnist Steven Travers, says he wants to stop wasting time and set a wedding date, you set a wedding date.

“Why don’t we get married November 25?” I asked.

“November 25!” Steve repeated excitedly. How sweet, he remembered that is the date I met his family.

“I think that’s the date of the U.S.C.-Notre Dame game,” he continued.

Of course, the U.S.C.-Notre Dame game. Steve’s family said I brought them luck because S.C. ended a long losing strike against Notre Dame the day I met them.

“Don’t print the invitations yet,” said Steve. “Let me call the S.C. sports information office first.”

It’s not always hearts and flowers.

Sure as heck, Steve’s beloved Trojans were scheduled to play their archrivals, the Fighting Irish, on the date I picked.

“My friend Phil Smith got married the day of the U.S.C.-U.C.L.A. game,” Steve advised me. “Nobody showed up.” He thought about it a second. “What about having the ceremony at halftime?”

Our wedding is scheduled for the day after the football game, and I am fretting that it will be a happy occasion only if the Trojans’ can knock off Notre Dame. Is this for real?
Ladies, it is for real, and if you have fallen in love with one of America’s rabid sports fans (like me), then you had better realize right now that it is guerrilla warfare out there. You will not change them. They may pay lip service to change, they may go to counseling, chick flicks and Lord of the Dance with you, but their hearts will always be with their favorite teams.

I once asked Steve if he remembered the day of the week of our first date. I was so happy when he remembered.

“The Bears were playing on Monday Night Football,” he then said. Oh.

My birthday?

“February 3,” said Steve. “That’s easy to remember, because Babe Ruth was born that day.”

Are you seeing a pattern develop here?

If your man is like mine, do not despair. You have one advantage. You know there is one thing that they care about even more than those teams. Maybe it has been dormant for awhile, but you can wake that sleeping giant up.

<ital>It’s not just football<end ital>

In Steve’s case, he is into the real minutiae of sports. All American males are expected stay glued to the tube on New Year’s Day and get drunk with their buddies on Super Sunday. Many women consider the final gun at the Super Bowl to be symbolic of their liberation, a sort of Domestic D-Day. They can hold out during the spring and summer (digging in for the N.B.A. Finals) until the real mistresses’, football and the World Series, rear their ugly heads in the fall.

Not so with Steve. He is into <ital>college baseball<end ital>.


Sure, why not? What else is there to do on a gorgeous spring Saturday in Southern California.

But that is not all. He is into high school sports, too.

“I interviewed that kid,” he says, pointing to a very tall young man playing basketball on our television set. “Coach wouldn’t return my call, so I just drove out to Dominguez High, parked my car and looked for the first seven-footer I could find.”

“Honey, would you like dinner at home, or do you want to go out?” I ask.
“Oh, jeez honey,” answers Steve. “Didn’t I tell you? The Daily News wants me to freelance the Newbury Park-Nordhoff game. We can use a few extra bucks.”

I am not complaining about a few extra bucks, but I think he really just wanted to watch the Newbury Park-Nordhoff game. “Hey honey,” he said, “why don’t you come with me?” How romantic!

Of course, that meant leaving at 4:00 p.m., entering rush hour traffic, driving two hours, and once the sun went down it got cold.

“How much time left?” I asked in the fourth quarter.

“Five minutes,” said Steve. When you factor in time outs, getting out of bounds and players’ faking injuries to buy time, five minutes can become 30.

Plus, he had to write up the story after the game, the school turned off the lights and locked up the gates, so we had to climb a barbed wire fence to get out of there. That might be cool for a guy, but I was dressed in nice designer jacket and jeans with expensive boots. After that we had to stop at the office, and we made it home after midnight, in time for a beer to relieve the stress.

**Battle plans**

Dwight Eisenhower planned the Normandy Invasion for years before pulling it off. The English and the Prussians’ got together and thought long and hard about how and when they would confront Napoleon at Waterloo. I am told that MacArthur did not just decide to make an amphibious invasion of Inchon overnight. All great battles require planning, preparation and practice. So does the act of keeping your man interested in you instead of Eric Karros.

*See the catalogues’, be the women in them*

You have all seen them. Victoria’s Secret. Frederick’s of Hollywood. Flirt, Touch of Romance. Photos of beautiful women in lingerie and sexy outfits. I have even modeled for them. These catalogues are for the guys’. If your guy buys you clothes from these catalogues, it is not for you, even if it is Christmas or Valentine’s Day. It is for him.

Now, you can complain about it and chastise him all you want. The National Organization for Women can swing by and picket his house. You can take him to Sensitivity Training, and he may pronounce himself cured, but he will always lust for the girls’ in those catalogues. So, if you want to keep the home fires burning, you had better use them to your advantage.

Now, ladies, I know what you are saying. You are saying that those women represent an unfair vision of female perfection, my suggestion that you try to be like them is not realistic, and will end badly for all involved. The point is, your man does not expect you
to be Tyra Banks or Pamela Anderson. He knows it is unrealistic, too, and that on the open market he could never get Tyra or Pamela himself. What he does want is a woman who is fit, sharp and sexy. Regular, fruitful trips to the gym (or wherever you go to exercise), combined with a healthy, sensible diet, can make you desirable. When you know you are desirable, you can prance around like those models feeling good, and knowing that in his eyes at that moment, you are just as appealing. Remember that he is with you because he does desire you. Not just that, he will quickly realize it is a two-way street. If you make the effort to look good, it should inspire your man to make himself look good, too. It should inspire your kids to live a healthy lifestyle, as well.

When Steve and I go to the gym, we make it a fun thing to do together, and he doesn’t mind if I dress a little sexy for him, either. I am of “a certain age,” and I do not look like a supermodel, but that does not bother me, because I know how to keep him interested.

**Full frontal attack**

If you ever read Sun-Tsu’s “The Art of War”, you know that you attack depending upon your relative strength. The same thing when it comes time to get your man looking at you again (instead of “Wild On the Bermuda Triangle” on the E channel). Therefore, prepare and be at the top of your game when you make your move. If you are going to wear that camisole or those fishnet stockings with garters, see to it that you have it all together. Look your best.

A screenwriter does not write one draft, dash off to Kinko’s, register with the Writer’s Guild and show up at C.A.A. the next day. Put your best foot forward. Take the time to get in shape. Do not be afraid to have a tan. Men like women in make-up, whether they tell you so or not.

Be confident in yourself. He fell in love with you in the first place. If you commit yourself, you will discover that the you that once was can be again. All those t.v. images, all those catalogues’, all the sex that sells, really is about you enjoying who you are. Don’t fret it, relax, and enjoy yourselves.

Once you feel good about your body, get dolled up for action and pick your spot carefully. Get him when he is vulnerable to your charms, and attack head-on. He will appreciate being the object of your affection, believe me. There is nothing like a sexy outfit, romantic dinner and you offering him (or vice versa) a warm candlelight massage. Ladies, I do not care what size you are, you can be sexy to your loveable (but easily manipulated) sweetheart. He is worth it, and so are you.

What happens next? Well, that is up to you. I do not have the space, and this is not the kind of publication, in which I can properly go into details. If you do it right, though, your man will re-discover what, deep down, he has always known: That nookie beats the Knickerbockers every time!
CHAPTER THIRTY

ALL IN THE FAMILY

TRAILS ON THE PENINSULA

By ELIZABETH TRAVERS, age 14

My daughter, Elizabeth, was 14 when she wrote this article for StreetZebra.

The Palos Verdes Peninsula is part of Los Angeles County. People who live there commute relatively short distances to populated urban centers like downtown, the westside, and that stretch of the 405 from Orange County to the South Bay where all the aerospace companies are. That is why this is such a special place.

When it is 100 degrees in the Valley, it might be 85 up on “the hill.” The air is cleaner. Down below the cliffs, the water is less polluted. When traffic jams the freeways of the city spread out below, birds can be heard chirping in a natural setting. There are times when the tip of Santa Catalina Island looks to be only 10 miles out.

My Dad says that Palos Verdes is the best place to live anywhere. If you are lucky enough to reside there, I bet you will agree. Either way, I recommend making a day of it up with the whole family.

There are hiking trails all over Palos Verdes. The Palos Verdes Stables offers horseback riding, and it is great fun to ride those trails, with views of Catalina, the South Bay Strand, Los Angeles, and the mountains. However, walking is great exercise.

First, the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy (part of the Chamber of Commerce) offers children’s walks. The Bluff Cove walk starts in the 600 block of Paseo del Mar. Drive about half a mile beyond (south) of Neighborhood Church, continue up the hill, and park on the road. The moderate walk descends to a beautiful cove where there are tidal pools, and out beyond you will see the local surfers.

The George F. Canyon walk travels up a pretty canyon through riparian and sage scrub habitats to the only mainland exposure of the Catalina schist (the Peninsula’s bedrock). Park on Palos Verdes Drive East at the Palos Verdes North intersection.

Hikers can use some of the unmarked horse trails. These include the Crenshaw Dirt Trail. Park at Del Cerro Park in Rancho Palos Verdes. Backtrack on Crenshaw, keeping to the left side of a green metal fence until you reach the dirt trail that leads down into a canyon.
On Crest Road across from the Garden Center on Highridge Road & Crest is the clearly marked beginning of the McBride Trail. It is an easy walk, and you can see from San Pedro to the old Marineland property.

The Stein/Hale Nature Trail is a short walk on a self-guided trail that can be reached off Hitching Post Drive in Rolling Hills Estates. I also recommend the South Coast Botanic Garden, where comfortable trails with a variety of plant life are marked for easy identification. This is a bird watchers paradise.

Not all the scenery on the Peninsula is natural. If you park at Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall, you can make a walk in which you can see the locations of the Nike missile site and World War II bunkers located on the site. My dad likes this stuff, for some reason.

The Ocean Trail West is a 1.5 hour walk that takes you through one of the newest developments on the Peninsula. Many beautiful plants grown by the Land Conservancy have been planted there.

A spectacular 2.5 hour walk passes along the top of the Forrestal cliff and quarry bowl, and has some great coastal sage scrub habitat, and white Mariposa lilies that bloom in the spring among the flowers of the red Indian paintbrush, California bush sunflower, and yellow mustard. Wear good hiking shoes, it is steep.

The Lemonade Berry/Portuguese Canyon walk is a strenuous three-hour hike beginning at Del Cerro Park, traversing the Lemonade Berry parcel. A more moderate hike is a two-hour walk in which you can observe the Linden H. Chandler Preserve’s habitat restoration efforts while touring a 28.5-acre open space.

Other great walks include the 1.5 hour Chadwick Canyon exploration; an easy-to-moderate two hour hike to White Point; a strenuous walk all the way down to the beach at Sunken City; and an exploration of Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park and Machado Lake. The native Gabrielino Indians were thought to have had their largest settlement there.

The Palos Verdes Chamber of Commerce offers organized walks to all of these places. They can be contacted at (310) 377-8111, and they will be happy to send out a nice brochure. They also are trying to raise money to preserve these open spaces, and your donation is tax-deductible.

THE ADVENTURER

My brother, Don Travers, is just like you and me except for one difference: The man has no fear!
What kind of psychological profile fits a Naval submarine officer? Whatever the “right stuff” is, my brother Don has it going on. In spades. During his seven years in the service, he spent months on end underneath the Arctic ice.

“Never bothered me a bit,” he says nonchalantly.

Don was the kind of guy who scaled a rickety ladder teetering on unsteady legs to paint our house, a couple hundred feet above terra firma.

“Scared?” my Mom would ask. “I never think about it,” he would reply.

Of course, when he left the military he found that every-day life in California posed no challenges, so he built a boat. Big deal, right? Build a boat, sail it around the Bay. He did. He sailed it around the Bay…then down the coast…past the U.S./Mexico border…past the Panama Canal…past the Cape of Good Hope…and eventually around the world.

Did I mention the boat was about the size of a couple of living room couches?

Along the way, his boat was cut in half by a French ocean freighter that did not see him off the coast of Mauritius. Luckily, Don and his crew swam to shore.

“They arrested us for indecent exposure,” he explained, since they were sleeping at the time, “but we got it worked out.” Don’s round-the-world travels took him to French Polynesia, where he met the winner of the local beauty pageant. He remembered her after he left. So much so that when he returned to the States, he built another boat, and sailed it around the world again. At least, he intended to sail around the world.

This time, instead of checking out Africa, where he had dined with cannibals (“seriously, I did,” he says, and I have seen the pictures), he made that French Polynesian Island his first stop. The girl was still there, and she was still single. Not for long.

Today, Don lives in the Tahitian Islands with his wife, Ariaia and their two daughters, Heinarii and Vaihere, but he is the kind of guy who needs his fix of mountain adventure every couple of summers. After all, this dude once scaled the sheer face of Half Dome.

Now, he is introducing the pleasures of mountain climbing to his island family, and I caught up with him this year when he and Vaihere made one of their regular trips to Yosemite.

They made a round-trip hike of 21.4 miles, with a vertical rise of 6,135 feet. “It took us 14 hours, and we were glad we did it, but we were tired, tired tired!!!” said Don.

The hike started in the dark with four other hikers wearing small headband flashlights. “Most people climb Mt. Whitney as part of an overnight or longer backpack trip,” says
Don. “That includes making a day hike 10,700 feet high to Crabtree Meadows to the west on the John Muir Trail.”

After buying a t-shirt exalting the commitment of hiking from 836 to 14,496 feet, Don felt that he had to complete the hike. Oh, did I forget to mention that Don and Vaihere hiked Mt. Whitney after completing an eight-day backpack trip?

“That got us used to the high elevation, and got us in shape,” Don says. N.F.L. training camp should be so rigorous!

“We were at or over 11,000 feet most of the time,” Don explained, adding that he considered it to be a “moderately strenuous” trip of about 40 miles, including Bishop Pass (12,000), Muir Pass (12,000) and off-trail Lamarck Column (12,900).

“We caught lots of trout and climbed two 13,000-foot mountains easy along the way.” Easy!! “Our route was from South Lake, we got caught in a snow storm in August and stayed overnight in the Muir Hut, the only shelter on the John Muir Trail. We descended to the high Evolution Basin Lake, then off trail up to Darwin Canyon, where Vaihere caught a 16-inch trout.”

During the trip, Don and Vaihere encountered three parties of people hiking with llamas carrying their gear. Did they founded Shangra-La?

“Oh sure. We find it every time,” Don says. And he means it.

**COL. CHARLES T. TRAVERS: 1911-2005**

Col. Charles T. Travers passed away of old age in November 2005. His obituary is late in coming, but better now than never. His memory is worthy of praise, for Charles was a man who did many wonderful things for many people, and whose influence far exceeds most.

He was born in San Francisco, and as an infant attended his first University of California football game with his parents. Charles grew up an earnest young man in the San Francisco of the “Roaring ’20s,” but divorce and the Great Depression then created hardships for his family.

The Travers’s are of proud English stock, said to have come to America while it was still a series of British colonies, and according to lore fought in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Books written about the family say they settled principally in Massachusetts and New York, and founded the Travers Stakes horse race.
When gold was discovered in California, some members of the Travers family journeyed west, and while there are no reports of gold wealth, Charles’ grandfather did find work as an attorney. The family settled in the Barbary Coast boomtown of San Francisco.

Charles’ father, Charles Stevens Travers, was born in 1880 in San Francisco and became an accomplished journalist. He covered the 1906 Great Earthquake for the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*. In the 1920s and 1930s he lived in Los Angeles, where he started a silent film magazine much like the current *Variety*, called *Out ‘n’ About In Hollywood*. He also wrote stageplays, as his brother, Reginald, was an accomplished Shakespearean actor. In later years, Charles S. Travers became president of the San Francisco Press Club, and editor of the Humane Society’s magazine.

Despite being an established California family, the Great Depression hit the Travers’s’ hard. Charles, his mother (known as Goggie), his brother Donald and sister Dorothy were destitute, but Charles determined to attend Cal after graduating from Lowell High School in The City.

“I had to work my way through the University of California in order to pay the $29 tuition,” he said in a 2005 interview. Charles was in attendance at the first football game ever played at Memorial Stadium. He was also there in 1926, the day famed coach Andy Smith, who helmed the fabulous “Wonder Teams” of the early ‘20s, had his ashes scattered over the stadium after succumbing to pneumonia.

Charles also joined the Cal-Berkeley ROTC, and was a commissioned Army officer when the United States entered World War II in 1941. He was an instructor at the Presidio of San Francisco, and stayed in the Reserves, retiring with the rank of colonel.

At Cal, Charles met the love of his life, Louise, who he married in 1934 and stayed married to until she passed away in 1995. After the war, Charles made his mark in business, rising to the vice-presidency of the Utah Construction Co. in San Francisco. Among the projects he oversaw were the Bay Farms landfill and housing development in Alameda.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Charles became active in Republican politics.

“I decided to run for state Assembly in what was known as a ‘silk stocking’ district in San Francisco,” he recalled.

His opponent in the GOP primary was a promising young attorney named Caspar Weinberger.

“Cap approached me and offered a deal,” said Charles. “Drop out of the primary to save him money for the general election, and in return become part of his ‘kitchen cabinet.’ “
Thus was a friendship started that lasted the rest of their lives (Weinberger passed in 2006). Weinberger won the Assembly campaign and became a rising star in California political circles. Through his association with Weinberger, Charles became an influential advisor and fundraiser. He was a close associate of U.S. Senator William Knowland, the former editor of the *Oakland Tribune*. He also entered the inner circles of Vice-President Richard Nixon of California, and another hot prospect of the Republican party: Ronald Reagan.

“I had a close affiliation with Dick Nixon,” Charles recalled in a 2004 interview. “Whenever I was in Washington during his Vice-Presidency, he would meet with me at the White House or Blair House for 45 minutes to an hour. I had a very productive relationship with him.”

As a fundraiser and domestic policy advisor, Charles’ influence grew, as did Weinberger’s, who was chosen as a member of Reagan’s Sacramento cabinet when Reagan was elected Governor of California (1966-74). When Reagan was elected President in 1980, Weinberger was named Secretary of Defense, a position from which he helped orchestrate victory in the Cold War over what Reagan called the “Evil Empire” of the Soviet Union. Charles maintained a close association with the Secretary of Defense.

Upon retirement from Utah Construction, Charles turned his attention not just to politics but to investments and his great love other than his family: Cal football. He became a stock market expert, and in turn donated much of his accumulated wealth to his alma mater.

In the 1990s, much of the renovation of Cal’s athletic facilities came courtesy of Charles’ donations. To honor him, the Charles Travers Big Game Room (for post-game press conferences) and the Louise Travers Memorial Room (for the football team’s training table) were built at Berkeley’s Memorial Stadium.

Charles was not pleased when Cal became the *de facto* staging grounds of American Communism in the 1960s and ‘70s. He endeavored to put his money where his mouth was, and started the Col. Charles T. Travers School of Ethics and Policy in Government at Cal. The idea of the school, run by the political science department, was to provide a fair, balanced view of politics in an environment – the collegiate campus – increasingly leaning to the Left.

The school started out small but quickly became the most popular series of electives at Berkeley, spurring further growth over the years. It has also been credited with a small but rising “conservative movement” at Cal, a heretofore unthinkable occurrence. By 2004, Cal’s College Republicans were said to be the largest student organization on campus!
Charles was regularly interviewed every November as part of the Big Game with Stanford. He is said to have attended every Big Game, and almost every Cal game – home and away – between the 1920s and early 2000s.

He missed only one Cal-Stanford game.

“My son, Chuck, was born that day,” he said.

In 2005, College Sports TV traveled to Charles’ Greenbrae, California home to interview him about his memories of the Big Game.

“Oh my, there’s nothing like the Big Game,” he told Meredith DePaolo of CSTV.

Charles indeed started a family tradition at Cal. Aside from his wife, Louise, his son, Chuck; daughter-in-law Beth; granddaughter Nancy; brother Donald; nephew Donald II; and brother-in-law Bill; all attended the University of California.

Charles passed peacefully in November. In December, a large memorial service was held for him at Memorial Stadium. A whose who of Cal dignitiaries from the world of sports, academia and political science paid their respects and made speeches.

“The first person I thought of when we were denied a 2005 Rose Bowl bid was the Colonel,” said Cal football coach Jeff Tedford.

“The Colonel took a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude with me at first,” said Cal’s athletic director, Sandy Barbour. “Then he found out I was the niece of Haley Barbour, former chair of the Republican National Committee and a U.S. Senator in Mississippi. Suddenly I had pedigree in his eyes.”

Charles was indeed a man of fierce self-reliance, an entreprenurial spirit and can-do American attitude. This great nation was built by men like him; men who despite the hardships of Depression rose through dint of hard work, talent and dogged persistence to the highest levels of accomplishment, only to spend his later years dedicated to giving back to the community he loved and felt he owed so much. He was a patriot; loyal to family and friends.

Former Cal football coach Joe Kapp once said, “The Bear will not die.” He could have been speaking of Charles, whose physical body is no longer with us, but whose spirit will live forever, particularly at Cal.

**TRIBUTE TO AUNT EMMY**

*music – Pie Jesu from the Requiem by Faure*
We meet to remember and to honour the life of Emmy Talbot who died in the 90th year of her life.

Friends who have made the journey to be here today represent all the many friendships of Emmy’s long life and you gather here with her family for this celebration of her life.

Although Emmy has only lived in Oxford for about 4 years, she has been characteristically active and more recent friends join those who have travelled from further afield.

This is a Humanist ceremony and some of you may be unfamiliar with this form of farewell. Although there will be no formal prayers or hymns, there is time for thought, time for you to make your farewell to Emmy, each according to your beliefs. And many of you may learn a little more about Emmy’s life – about the many phases that colour her story. The music has been chosen by the family or from Emmy’s own collection of music.

Usually I am the one person present who never met the person you all knew so well but in fact I have found that I too have a link with Emmy. For a few years, I used to attend a WEA Theatre Studies class in Harrow run by Miss Margaret Cottier. My class was on a Wednesday morning and I have found that Emmy went on Thursdays. Emmy will be remembered for her very active participation, her readings of Goethe to the class and also of Shakespeare in a German translation.

You can read at your leisure the biography that her children have put together and, as you listen to the tributes, will know how much Emmy was loved by all those who have known her.

TRIBUTE

Emmy’s 89 years were shaped not only by the circumstances she lived through but also by her own lively outlook and resourceful spirit. Her children have been looking back over the eventful and distinct chapters in her story.

There were the earliest years of semi-nomadic childhood and adolescence - the young woman who arrived in England as a refugee keen to fit in to a new country – the happily married mother of three with a settled lifestyle sadly cut short by early widowhood - then the confident and assertive middle aged woman building up a new and full life for herself - and
finding a new partner – and finally the formidable old lady, still with a zest for life and fighting indignantly against the onset of frailty and dependency.

Emmy’s life was strongly shaped by historical events. She was born in 1919 just after the First World War, the eldest of four children. She had a mixed background - Jewish father and Protestant mother. Her parents were Austrian but were living in Bulgaria at the time of her birth. When Emmy was nine, the family had to move back to Austria, where they lived in desperately reduced circumstances. Then, when she was sixteen, the family moved to Italy.

However, by 1939 it was not safe for a half-Jewish family to remain in Italy. Emmy’s father died prematurely. Her sister Klari got to Holland and the rest of the family managed to get to England with the help of a benevolent and kind sponsor in Reigate called Miss Mather, who had very strict ideas about English manners. Emmy - anxious to fit in - took very seriously what Miss Mather taught her.

After the war began, Emmy joined the army, where she met Eric. They married after the war, in 1946. Like her, Eric was a refugee but from a prosperous and established German Jewish family and, unlike her, he had benefited from a good education.

Emmy both loved and admired him. They settled in north-west London where their three children, Barbara, Tony and Viv were born.

Emmy became a housewife and devoted wife and mother.

She didn’t get a job, but was happy to be the hub of the family and the loyal support of her husband, who depended on her to read to him, as he had very poor eyesight. This was probably the happiest period of her life and she once said that she could never imagine life ever being so good again. She developed hobbies including the care of a large and beautiful garden.

Throughout her married life and beyond, she was part of a very close group of friends who shared Eric’s German Jewish refugee background. The group of friends met regularly for soirees and dinner parties where there was always lively intellectual conversation generally dominated by the men. Emmy, whose life had taught her to be adaptable, fitted in with this group quite seamlessly.

When Emmy was 53, Eric died after being lovingly nursed by her through a long illness. Although she was devastated, Emmy did not let herself fall apart. She was a survivor and built up a new life for herself. Having missed out on a career through circumstances and the conventions of the times, she began in her 50s as a Citizens Advice Bureau adviser.

Her schooling had been somewhat piecemeal so Emmy sought out continued learning through adult education and was strongly influenced by some of her WEA tutors. Later she
joined U3A and, by accident rather than design, became a teacher of Italian and a very popular one. In her 50s and 60s, Emmy was in the prime of her life.

Increasingly, Emmy became integrated into English life – with English friends such as her good friend, Sheila, close relationships with neighbours (such as John and Stella Chapple and Dawn and Ray Andrews), and of course her relationship with Alastair. Aged 58, she met Alastair at a WEA summer school in 1977 and, briefly, became a teenager again. His Scottish/English background and his interests – rugby and an aversion to walking further than the nearest pub - were in some ways the antithesis of hers, but they complemented each other well. Together they led a companionable life, pursuing their separate or sometimes mutual interests and hobbies. Emmy’s social life was filled with all sorts of activities – theatre trips, foreign holidays and entertaining at home. This hectic schedule carried on well into her 80s; it was a social life rather envied by her children!

Emmy was also an active and devoted grandmother to Barbara’s children Tom and Corrine and Viv’s two sons, Joey and Benny. They all enjoyed a wonderful relationship with Granny and returned her love in full measure.

On her 80th birthday, Emmy celebrated a wonderful birthday weekend with her family at a cottage in the country. For a rare moment she, the family matriarch, basked in the warm glow of everyone’s attention and she said, in a wave of emotion, that she felt truly lucky.

Alastair died in 2000, when Emmy was 81. As with Eric, Emmy nursed Alastair conscientiously and devotedly through his final illness. After his death, Emmy was again the survivor, but life was lonelier and she missed his companionship.

Having made the most of her ‘third age’, Emmy did not welcome the approach of the fourth age - that of dependency and frailty. She fought against it tooth and nail. With very mixed feelings, she had to leave her beloved house and garden in Kenton and move to Oxford to be near her son Tony and his wife Vicky and enjoy the company of her new granddaughter, Mara. Having gone on countless walking holidays well into her 80s, she had to endure the frustrations of reduced mobility and the indignities of using a stick. She could never see herself as a ‘poor old dear’. In her final years, she made it clear she wanted to die before reaching that stage. Fortunately for her, it never happened. She remained her own person. She carried on into her final days making new friends and impressing all those she met as a formidable and gutsy lady.

Emmy was as unsentimental about her death as she was about her life. She was a warm, loving but practical person. She was essentially modest about her own life and achievements, but contributed so much to those around her. The family will all miss her terribly but remember her life with love, appreciation and gratitude.

music – piece by Leoncavallo, sung by Luciano Pavarotti
Emmy’s three children have each written a personal tribute to their mother.

*Order of three tributes to be decided tomorrow*

---

**from Viv**

**Thank you, Mum**

Thank you, Mum. You’ve given me so much. I feel I know you almost better than I know myself and I’ve taken so much of you inside myself.

I wish I could have told you all this when you were still alive, but like you I found it hard to be so emotionally open. But I like to think that on some level, we both knew and understood.

You’ve given me a love of the countryside, going for long walks in nature and outdoor swimming in lakes and pools.

You’ve given me a love of languages and enjoyment of other cultures.

You’ve stimulated my interest in people and in understanding what makes people tick.

You’ve passed on your love of books and reading to me and a fascination for other people’s stories.

And all this has passed on not only to me but also, through me, to my children and generations to come.

It’s not all positive though.

Like you, I hate losing my way and driving in unknown cities.

Like you, I like to get things done my way and can sometimes be bossy and controlling.

Like you, I fill my life with too much busyness and then get stressed if I think I’m going to be late or not get through it all.

But here’s what really counts:

Throughout my whole life, I’ve always felt your love and acceptance of me.
You’ve always had complete confidence in my abilities
You’ve taught me to believe in my strength and robustness, my health and fitness and
my ability to cope with pain and difficulty

Above all, you’ve always made me feel wanted and you’ve always made me feel very
welcome and special to you

And however busy you’ve been, you’ve always, always had time for me.

For all that and far more, I want to thank you, Mum, and tell you with all my heart
that I’ll always love you and treasure your presence within me.

Tony

Dear Mummy - Dear Mum,

Here I am speaking at your funeral – very weird and how can that be actually. You are so
much a part of me, so how can I be standing here and speaking about you as some kind of
historical figure. It seems unreal.

When I was 17 and you and Daddy sent me to the vocational guidance because I didn’t
have a clue what I wanted to do, - and they asked me what are your parents like and I was
stuck because I’d never been asked the question before and they were just like – ‘my
parents’ and something that had always been there and couldn’t really be described. How
could I give some kind of objective view about them? I said my father was calm and my
mother got in a real state about silly little things for example if we were late going to the
dentist.

Much later when I was supposed to be a mature adult, I still had this feeling of unfinished
business with you – that you didn’t really understand how unhappy I had been as a
teenager. We went for a walk in Northwick Park and I talked about that and you listened,
and that feeling in me started to disappear, and I was free to prepare for the subtle shifting
of roles between us.

For so long I was still your little boy especially when I went back home to see you in
Kenton. But when you moved to Oxford aged 85 (where I had lived for years), you said
with some feeling that now you are going to be seen just as ‘Tony’s mother’, and I said
‘well that makes up for all those years that I have just been ‘Emmy’s son.’ It was meant to
be a joke (sort of), but you didn’t take it that way.
Those last few years in Oxford were very difficult and frustrating for you, I know. You fought tooth and nail against old age. You hated becoming small and shrunken. You hated using a stick and then you hated using a trolley and were determined to get back to the stick. You hated not being able to remember things or being left out. You wanted to remain part of the modern world but were sometimes driven to feel that it no longer had a place for you. You railed against those ‘bloody’ mobile phones that didn’t obey your faltering fingers.

These last few years in Oxford I saw more of you than I had since I was living at home many years ago. I got very used to you being around. We had our moments and sometimes we infuriated each other. Now that you’re gone, those moments have all become rather precious and I feel privileged to have had them. I keep expecting to see you coming round the corner as I walk in the park with Mara or to see you sitting in that favourite yellow chair in the front room, when I let myself into your house.

Being Talbots, we are all rather embarrassed about being emotional. We didn’t tend to say things like ‘I love you’ or ‘you are the best Mum in the world.’ Perhaps it’s easier for me now that you’re gone. What do I want to say to you? Well firstly, I will really miss you. You are quite irreplaceable. I will miss those little everyday moments that now keep coming to me at those times of the day that I used to see you.

I also admire you for the life that you made for yourself and the many people who think so much of you. Even in your last years in Oxford when life was hard and you couldn’t get around much, you made a real impression on the people you met. People saw you as a gutsy lady and so you were. Although you infuriated me sometimes for not growing old gracefully, actually I’m glad that you didn’t. You dreaded becoming a poor and helpless old dear.

So perhaps we should all be quite pleased – you too – that you had a full and eventful life, you lived to the pretty ripe old age of 89, you gave happiness and love to lots of people during your life and you received love and happiness back. And you had a reasonably good death – not painfully drawn out and with minimum inconvenience to others (as you would have wished).

You died in the spring, which I think is the best season to die because there are all the signs of growth and rebirth around and it reminds us of the endless cycle of nature. For me I see my daughter Mara growing up and whilst you and she could have known each other better (like with your other grandchildren), you did cross paths for six and a half years and she continues the line which comes from you and your forebears.

Thank you Mum – thank you for bringing me into the world and for caring for me always, for your love, and for just being there. I shall always remember you and I shall always miss you.
Barbara would like me to read her tribute.

from Barbara

How can I put into words the place you had in my heart and in my life, your boundless love and empathy and generosity? You were always there for me, to share my joys and triumphs and to support me through difficult times. Although I didn’t always give you an easy ride, especially in my rebellious teens, you never bore grudges; forgiveness was in your nature.

Your loving interest and concern for my happiness extended to my children too. As a grandmother, you were all I could have wished for Tom and Corinne. I know that you have enriched their lives beyond measure.

I can never thank you enough for what you gave us. I will think of you and miss you always. And I know that despite the pain of losing you, the memories I have will give me comfort and strength in times to come.

We are now going to listen to a short extract from the Pastoral Symphony. Emmy used to hum this tune and her children remember it from their childhood.

*music – extract from the Pastoral Symphony by Beethoven*

Emmy’s sister, Inge, now lives in California and has sent us this message

from Ingeborg Travers: My Sister Emmy

As a younger sibling I was always in awe of her. She travelled to interesting places, seeking knowledge and customs outside her environment.

Her active mind was always open. She would go to classes, lectures, book readings and debates.

She had the ability to communicate with young and old alike and especially with children who really responded to her. She was always happy to be surrounded by her growing family and kept me informed of all the news.

She was proud of all of them and especially her grandchildren.
We have lost a very strong and loving member of the family and I'm sure you will remember special moments you shared. I shall miss her very much but she will always be in my thoughts.

Some of Emmy’s friends might like this opportunity to share some thoughts with us

From Hilde and Ken Ambrose (good friends of Emmy)

We are sad to have lost a close and good friend with whom we shared good and hard times over many years. Emmy was full of wisdom which we valued greatly, and she was immensely proud of the achievements of every member of her family.

As our generation inevitably shrinks more and more we shall miss our long chats with Emmy who knew us so well.

We mourn with you your beloved Emmy’s death and celebrate with you her long and good life. None of us will forget her.

John Chapple

Finally, we have tributes to Emmy from the younger generation. Barbara’s son, Tom, Emmy’s eldest grandson, is on his travels in India. It was a very difficult decision not to return for today but he has sent us this tribute to his Granny.

I will miss:
Drinking endless cups of tea with you at the kitchen table,
Your long rambling monologues which spanned the 20th century and spiraled off at tangents,
The chocolate biscuit cake you used to make,
The accent you never lost,
Walks in the park, feeding the ducks and your endless fascination with the changing seasons,
Your not so subtle hints about wanting to become a great granny,
Your stories about distant relations and friends who i had never met and had long since died,
The breakfast ritual,
Your detailed instructions on how to complete the most menial of tasks,
Reminiscing about how you used to play pooh sticks and hide and seek with me when i was a child,
The way you spoilt your grandchildren with chocolate, meals out, and trips to the theatre
Your kindness, generosity and ongoing interest.
Granny i will miss you....
And our last tribute is from her grandson, Benny, who will read the poem he has written for his Granny.

Benny –

i would have liked to see her one last time
lying in bed, old
i would have smiled and held her hand,
and she would have smiled back

i know so little about her really
she lived in such a different time from me
but i loved her

i would listen to her stories,
childhood in europe, swimming in the danube
italy, england, the war
but more than that, she was -- just her.

i would visit her house as a child
eat cold suppers of pickled herrings
play in the garden
talk about politics

one day, i found an old box of silver cutlery in the attic,
cleaned it and polished it up
she would always use it when we visited

they didn’t tell her she was dying
it happened so fast
lying in the hospital but, nobody told her
and then she was unconscious
and didn’t wake up

maybe it doesn’t matter, that i never said goodbye
she knows how much i love her
she was beautiful
i loved her

i don’t believe in heaven or hell, but if i did
i would like to think of her, watching me
i would tell her how much i love her, what a good grandmother she was
even though she knows
but i would have liked to see her, one last time
to say goodbye
As you have been listening to these lovely tributes to Emmy, I know that you have also been remembering times you have shared with her.

There is time now for your own thoughts as we listen to a Catalan piece played by Pablo Casals. I shall then ask you if you would like to stand for the Committal and the curtains will close.

*music - ‘El cant dels ocells’ played by Pablo Casals*

**COMMITTAL**

But now the journey is over.
It was filled with adventure and wisdom,
    laughter and love, gallantry and grace.
So farewell, farewell.

We have been remembering with great affection and appreciation the life of Emmy Talbot. Now she is free from all hurt and anxiety, I commend your memories of Emmy to your hearts and I commit her body to its end.

**CLOSING WORDS**

You are all invited to join the family afterwards at Emmy’s house. Those of you who have been there will be familiar with the parking problems - it is suggested that you go in shared taxis or cars.

Emmy loved opera and our final piece is from the ’The Barber of Seville’ which it is hoped even those of you who do not share her enthusiasm will enjoy hearing. We shall sit and listen for these last few moments before we begin to leave the chapel.

May I wish you all peace of mind, strength and understanding as the pattern of your own lives continues to unfold.

*music - 'Una voce poco fa' from the Barber of Seville, sung by Maria Calla*

**CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE**
STAGEPLAY BY STEVE TRAVERS

EXCERPT FROM "THE COOL OF THE EVENING"

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

At a table in a dark dive of a bar, in a part of Los Angeles far removed from the glitter of Beverly Hills, HORACE B. MANNERS, a tall, athletic man, shares a pitcher of beer with SKOAL, shorter but with movie-star good looks.

The year is 1983. The name of the bar is the 502 Club.

A surly bartender, BERNIE, watches the Cubs on the overhead television. The place has a few scattered customers.

LAURA is a pale, middle-aged woman; her alcoholic companion, RAY; an elderly, slightly fey black fellow, FREDDIE; and an attractive young waitress, LESLIE.

HORACE
(To Bernie)

Hey Bernie, the Dodger games' on. Could'ja switch channels?

BERNIE
Fuck you.

HORACE
Thanks, Bernie.

LESLIE
Another pitcher?

HORACE
Ah, the serving wench...

(Horace and Skoal pour the last of the pitcher, produce the empty, and big smiles, for Leslie, who takes the pitcher to Bernie.)

LESLIE
Another pitcher.

BERNIE
HORACE (To Bernie)
Paper cups.

BERNIE flings two paper cups at Horace and Skoal. They gather them, stuff them with napkins, and use them for spittoons.

HORACE
As you were saying?

SKOAL
You've got to at least talk to girls.

HORACE
I talk to girls.

SKOAL
You recite lines from movies and spit into a cup.

HORACE
Look whose talkin'.

SKOAL
You see any talent in here? (Pause.) 'Nuff said. (To Ray.) Any results, Ray?

RAY
Psycho in the fifth got scratched.

HORACE
What about Laura?

SKOAL
How much alcohol would that take?

HORACE
By the time ya got drunk enough, you wouldn't be able to perform.

SKOAL
I can always perform.
FREDDIE
What are you guys yelling about now?

SKOAL
"Patriotism. Loyalty. Love of country."

FREDDIE
Oh, I got him started.

skoal
I gotta piss.

(He gets up and heads to the bathroom.)

HORACE
"The one-worlders, the intellectual dilletantes...but God help us...for this the United States of America."

FREDDIE
Bravo. Bravo.

RAY
Patton?

HORACE
Seven Days in May.

LAURA
You live in this electronic kind of world that's half real and half fantasy.

HORACE
Speakin' of fantasies, Laura, I know where those photos are.

(Skoal emerges from the bathroom.)

HORACE
(Churchill imitation)
"Never, in the course of human events..."

(Skoal turns right around and walks back.)

HORACE
Alright, alright already, I promise, no more.

(Skoal emerges and takes his seat.)
SKOAL
You will never get a chick doin' that shit.

HORACE
It all goes back, I s'pose, to the "Merkle Boner."

RAY
What's that?

SKOAL
Don't get him started.

LAURA
Did I hear "boner."

FREDDIE
Oh, yeah, let's hear more.

HORACE
Preeverts. Nineteen oh-eight, Polo Grounds, Fred Merkle of the Giants fails to run from first to second on Al Bridwell's single, bases juiced, two-two, bottom of nine. Johnny Evers, future Hall of Famer, sees it, steps on second with a ball outta the ball bag...

RAY
Horace, how the fuck would we ever know if you're bullshittin'

HORACE
Because, my barstool-sitting©bookie friend, as Casey Stengel once said, "You could look it up."

SKOAL
Who'd Evers play for?

HORACE
The Cubs, my Skoal. Mordecai "Three-Fingered" Brown won twenty nine that year.  Tinker-to-Evers-to-Chance...

BERNIE
(Looking at the "Baseball Encyclopedia")
It ain't in here, Horace.

HORACE
That's the "Baseball Encyclopedia", that's just stats. That book doesn't tell the whole story. Try the "Fireside Book of Baseball".
BERNIE
How many Christy Mathewson win that year?

HORACE
Thirty-four. Look up Jack Chesbro, nineteen oh-four, or oh Six--New York Highlanders.

BERNIE
Forty-one victories.

HORACE
Sixty-one homers, Di Mag's fifty-six game hitting streak, fuggedaboudit. Chesbro's single season record for wins ain't gonna get broke.

BERNIE
How's this guy all this shit?

(Bernie then picks up the "Fireside Book of Baseball").

This is the same guy who paid El Salvadoran busboys to do his Spanish homework.

HORACE
It was excellent time management. I watched games, talked ball, drank beer, and turned in enough work to get straight "C's."

BERNIE
(Reading the book)
"...Evers went to umpire Hank O'Day after Giants pitcher 'Iron Joe' McGinnitty threw the actual ball into the stands, and when O'Day refused to call Merkle out, Evers went to the Cubs ball bag and took out a baseball..." Christ.

HORACE
The "Merkle Boner" cost McGraw's Giants the nineteen hundred 'n' eight pennant, but in retrospect the real losers were the Cubs. They won the Series that year, and ain't won it since. Like Ruth getting traded to the Yankees, the Red Sox curse, same thing. This is the Cubbies curse, and it's why they can't win.

BERNIE
Fuck you.

HORACE
Thank you, Bernie.
LESLIE
Another pitcher?

ALL
Of course.

LESLIE
Re-fill, Bernie.

BERNIE
Assholes...

SKOAL
(To Horace)
Anyway, if you're not quoting movie lines or yakkin' into a cup, you're drunkenly starin' down some broads' tits. You gotta be cool. Yeah, you can't let 'em on to ya. You gotta give 'em mystery.

HORACE
Mystery?

SKOAL
Is there an echo in here? Jesus. Serving wench!

(Leesie appears.)

LESLIE
You rang.

SKOAL
Now take Leslie here.

LESLIE
Please don't.

HORACE
Leslie's way too...nice for the likes of us.

LESLIE
No I'm not.

HORACE
Come, come now Leslie, be honest. You've seen our...wanderings. The women we hang around with are, uh, let me see, for lack of a better word...
LESLIE
Questionable!

HORACE
Yes, questionable.

LESLIE
Just because you meet them calling nine hundred numbers and they take plastic.

SKOAL
It's not all that bad!

HORACE
Sure it is.

SKOAL
Anyway, try to forget what you know about us.

HORACE
Not to change the subject, but to change the subject, we're not being charged for any of this beer are we?

LESLIE
Of course not. Why on Earth would Kenny want to make a profit on his business?

HORACE
Just checking.

LESLIE
No problem.

HORACE
And we get free food later, right?

LESLIE
Nothing's changed. Skoal, I have actual paying customers, so what do you want to ask me?

SKOAL
It's about Horace here, do you?

HORACE
Last question: We get carrot cake free for dessert, too, right?

LESLIE
Why should tonight be any different from any other night the last two years.

HORACE
Just makin' sure Bernie keeps the endless pitcher flowing.

LESLIE
Well, just stop buggin' him about the Cubs.

SKOAL
Leslie, do you find Horace attractive?

(Horace flashes a huge, obscene grin, all teeth and jowls and flaring nostrils.)

The point is, if you didn't actually know Horace to be a total reprobate, would you go to bed with him?

HORACE
Wait a minute, Skoal. Maybe Leslie likes reprobates.

LESLIE
Money back?

HORACE
Reprobates, not rebates.

LESLIE
Oh yeah.

SKOAL
Leslie?

LESLIE
Go to bed with Horace?

(Horace just smiles the biggest smile in the world.)

Well, I s'pose if you didn't chew tobacco, spit in a cup and leave 'em all over the bar, piss in public, belch, exude and exhale various forms of bile...if you would clean your breath, stop calling hookers, lay off pornography, respect women as something other than something to jizz on...

Uh, let me see, if you'd drink something other than the endless pitcher every night of the week, not fart as loud as you could...
HORACE
Tell us how you really feel?

SKOAL
Would you shake his hands then?

LESLIE
Maybe.

(Leslie gives Horace just a twinkle of a smile. Just at that moment, into the bar strides BRUNO and PIT BOSTON.

BRUNO is a tall, handsome, swarthy Latin lover-type.

PIT BOSTON is a jowly, bespectacled, overweight chap.)

BRUNO
Are you trying to pick up on my girl?

HORACE
You have to excuse my friend BAROONO, hell, the man is stoned!

BRUNO
Only a little. For now.

PIT
"No bastard ever won a war..."

HORACE
"By making the other poor, dumb bastard die for his country."

SKOAL
Oh, God, you got him started again.

HORACE
Skoal, you remember Bruno and Pit Boston.

(Everybody exchanges handshakes.)

SKOAL
Of course. So what's new?

HORACE
Just waiting for the alcohol to take effect.
(Bruno and Leslie are an item, and they disappear into a corner to make nice-nice.)

PIT
Bernie, two pitchers.

(Bernie just sneers and pours.

Into the bar enters PAULA and GWEN.

Both girls are in their early 20s and beautiful. Paula is English. Paula eyes Skoal, who smiles at her. Gwen eyes him, too, and Skoal gives her a bigger smile.)

PIT
I suppose you did Paula, too.

HORACE
Jesus, you did her, Skoal? Christ, am I the last straight American male under the age of seventy-five not to take that woman to bed?

SKOAL
Paula screws everybody, but she's the only one who decides who she screws.

(With that he quaffs more suds.)

Excuse me, fellas, but I see something with a short shelf.

(Skoal spits out his dip, gets up and approaches Paula and Gwen. He is the picture of male cool.

Bruno leaves Leslie and joins Pit and Horace.)

BRUNO
Hor-ass! I brand thee dumbass.

HORACE
I deem and dub thee my asshole.

(Horace makes a big circular motion with his arms.)

PIT
Shut up and pour.

(Horace pours out of the endless pitcher.)

BRUNO
Within five years, I will accomplish two things.

PIT
You'll contract gonorrhea and...

HORACE
Star in a porno movie.

BRUNO
Fuck you people.

HORACE
Bruno is..the Girthmaster. I think you have a great future in pornography.

BRUNO
I'll own the five-oh and marry Leslie.

PIT
Leslie will never marry anybody who associates with Horace and ¡

HORACE
Bullshit. She admitted she'd shake my hand.

PIT
In that case I'd never marry her. At least you'll own the bar.

HORACE
What would you want to own this hellhole for?

(At that moment enters KENNY, a dark-haired, slick ladies man type who owns the 502 Club.

With him is REBECCA, 19, a gorgeous brunette in a sexy black cocktail dress.)

KENNY
What are you callin' a hellhole?

HORACE
Hellhole? Why, you mistake me, Kenny baby. You've got the best cockroaches in the neon league.

REBECCA
Do you have a dip?

HORACE
Excuse me?

REBECCA
Could I bum a dip off you?

(Everybody stares at her in amazement.)

HORACE
(He hands her the can of Copenhagen, and the fair maiden pops a nice chew, just like a veteran.)

Horace B. Manners, my lady, at your service.

REBECCA
Horace Manners?

HORACE
Horace Manners. The "B" stands for bad.

REBECCA
Sounds promising.

HORACE
Kenny, where'd you find this vision?

KENNY
Rebecca was specifically created for guys like us.

(Everybody just stares at her. The implications of this statement are quite awesome.)

HORACE
I take back every bad, lousy, rotten, slanderous, vile, foul thing I ever said about you.

KENNY
Thank you, Horace.

HORACE
Kenny, you still got that little room upstairs.

Kenny nods yes.

HORACE
To the right, right.

KENNY
Same as usual.

HORACE
(To Rebecca)
I'd like to show you something, my dear.

(Horace gets up and leads her to the stairs.)

REBECCA
Wait. I need a drink.

HORACE
Bernie, a...

REBECCA
Tequila.

HORACE
Tequila for the lady.

BERNIE
What lady?

HORACE
Stop being a dickhead for one second, Bernie. I take the curse off the Cubs...may they win the N.L. East in eighty-four. Rebecca here wants a...marguerite.

REBECCA
No, a bottle of tequila.

BERNIE
Whose gonna pay for it?

HORACE
Yeah, whose gonna pay for it?

KENNY
Yeah, whose gonna pay for it?

HORACE
What? I gotta pay for it?

BERNIE
I s'pose you forgot to bring money again.
KENNY
There's an a.t.m. outside.

HORACE
(Looking at Rebecca with lust)
Kenny!? Gimme a break.

KENNY
Shit, get outta here.

BERNIE
You're giving him a bottle?

(Bernie hands a bottle to Horace.)

HORACE
You are a prince among men, Kenny.

(Kenny throws Horace keys. Horace takes the keys, the bottle and Rebecca, and disappears.

Just as he exits, Skoal takes Gwen and leaves out the front exit, with Paula staring at them. pissed!

At that moment enters HARRY LUMPE, a big, dark-haired upstate New Yorker with a map of Ireland on his face.)

HARRY
Kenny, my good man.

KENNY
What's up, Harry. Where's the old lady?

HARRY
I did my manbeastly duty and put her to bed early.

KENNY
I can imagine.

(Harry joins Bruno and pit.)

Where's Horace?

PIT
Doing his manbeastly duty.
HARRY
Seriously?

PIT
Your sex hex must have worn off.

HARRY
What woman would take Horace?

BRUNO
The kind who bums chew.

HARRY
Was he drunk?

PIT
No more than usual.

HARRY
What'd she look like?

BRUNO
You'll see her when he's done.

HARRY
On the premises?

BRUNO
I can't believe the little woman gave you the night off.

HARRY
It took my very best efforts.

(They all laugh and toast Harry.)

Bernie, you get the Red Sox on the dish?

BERNIE
Fuck you.

HARRY
Thanks, Bernie.

BERNIE
Dodgers, Red Sox. Screwin' everything that walks. Make up your mind.

(Bernie works the satellite controls until the Red Sox game comes on the tube.)

LESLIE
Harry Lumpe. Where's Horace?

HARRY
Jack Nicholson, Ann-Margret...

LESLIE
Carnal Knowledge.

HARRY
Apparently.

LESLIE
Horace B. Manners?

HARRY
It had to happen eventually.

KENNY
I brought Rebecca by.

LESLIE
That explains it.

HARRY
Bernie, paper cup.

(A paper cup flies through the air, and Harry snags it, fills it with paper, pops a dip of his own, and spits into the cup.

PITT
Gimme a buck.

BRUNO
What for?

PIT
"Mack the Knife".

(Bruno gives Pit a dollar, which he takes and places in the nearby jukebox. "Mack the Knife" by Bobby Darin plays in the background.)
HARRY
How's your brother doing?

PIT
He just joined the Teamsters.

HARRY
The Teamsters? How could he get in so fast?

PIT
How do ya think?

HARRY
Ya know, I never bought this bullshit about you being connected. Just 'cause your brother's a Vegas labor lawyer, we're supposed to think you're Michael Corleone.

PIT
No, man, he is connected.

BRUNO
You'd believe anything anybody told you.

PIT
Suit yourself.

HARRY
Cynic.

BRUNO
I don't think a guy's in the Mob, and that makes me a cynic?

(Paula gets up and joins the conversation. Her accent is very upper class British.)

BRUNO
What's up, sister?

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

STEVEN TRAVERS ON SPORTS COLUMNS
What makes a great sports column? Beyond fancy lingo and entertaining tricks there must be a good opinion, written with the voice of authority, backed by top-notch reporting.

I think a column is less about the "who, what, why, when and where," and more about getting to the point quickly, moving through the narrative and bridge, and maintaining focus on a linear line of thinking that does not wander. It must be topical (what people are talking about), while maintaining an edge of analysis, practicality and, if possible, allowing for emotion - outrage or humor. Oh yes, it should not be afraid to break news.

A great writer is not necessarily a great columnist. Great prose in the style of Hemingway, Shakespeare or Jim Murray, to take three of my heroes, can be the focus of the reader's attention while diverting from the purpose of a daily column, which is to inform. The first impression of Murray is that he wowed readers with his wordplay and knowledge of history, but at the heart of his work was research, research and more research.

Good newspaper editors recognize that fancy words cannot replace hard facts. This is the daily newspaper version of the screenwriter who tries to trick the reader into thinking the story can be carried by phraseology, not character development and plot structure.

Bring wit, literacy, social conscience and pathos to the work. Sports columns that are above and beyond the merely ordinary may have some combination of great love for sports, political sensibility, historical reflection, Hollywood flare, American wit, and old-fashioned humor. Incredible knowledge is not enough, like the law student with a photographic memory and fails to analyze. It is not a substitute for the hard digging for quotes, second opinions, counter-voices and fact checking that tells readers something they did not know or think about before.

Style is intellect and love of language. Information implies reporting. Point of view, as opposed to opinion, means "where your head is at." Without point of view a column is a flat, boring story disguised as a column. First person can be used, but only at the risk of being egotistical. The objective is to inform (report) and entertain on subjects that are timely, important, and talked about. The great sports columnist is the one sitting in the press box with the fresh, brilliant, insightful ideas that nobody else has.

Two things can cripple a column: Cliché-thinking and clichés. Example: "It's time to fish or cut bait." Change it to "It's time to angle or cut the smelt."

The most important thing is to learn from every mistake, lump, and criticism.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

COLLECTING
Collector Jamie Michaels is passionate about authentic sports memorabilia.

In 1967, Jamie Michaels was a seven-year old girl growing up in Wisconsin. Like most girls her age, she was in to dolls. Then she got her first autograph.

"My first was from Bart Starr," Jamie recalls. "I got one from Vince Lombardi and the great Ray Nitschke. The players were more warm back then, they would promote the team."

That happened to be the final year of Lombardi’s great Packer dynasty. The Pack would beat Oakland in Super Bowl II.

"They took the time to embrace the community," recalls Jamie.

The autographs stirred something inside Jamie, identification with the individual signer more so than the team.

"I was never loyal to any team," she says. "I became interested in the individual players."

A biologist who lives in San Pedro, Jamie has turned her childhood experience into a lucrative side business. She painstakingly collects photographs and autographs.

Her wall is lined with classic pix:

*An autographed photo of Joe Di Maggio lining one during his 56-game hitting streak of 1941.
*A signed lovefest between Roger Staubach and Tom Landry after beating San Francisco in a 1972 play-off comeback.
*Autographed action shots of Dan Marino, Jeff Gordon, Wayne Gretzky, Michael Jordan, Brett Fahre and Troy Aikman.
*A lithograph of Mark McGwire, offered as a limited edition commemorating his 70-home run season.

"I like this one," Jamie says, pointing to a signed photo of Joe Montana, "because I attended the game, in 1990."

Authenticity is important to Jamie, who places intrinsic value on certain items because it may symbolize something personal to her--or a buyer. She mainly sells her photos for charity causes, like the Helen Marie Wildlife Foundation, taking a small cut to cover costs. She never sells her last photo, however.

"You never know," she says, "the guy may stop signing, it may be the last available item." The price depends on rarity, age and circumstance.

"Once, I was with my Mom in Racine, Wisconsin," she recalls. "She was shopping for a lampshade. We saw a commotion, and some Packers were signing
autographs. We had nothing for them to sign on, so they signed the lampshade, and my mother was never more proud of anything in the house."

Jamie is as knowledgeable of sports as any died-in-the-wool, beer-guzzling, sports-bar-hopping man.

"I have brought many women into the world of sports," she says. "One I know now has all her wall space covered with sports photos. Sports evokes emotions and brings back good memories."

It also can be a snapshot in time of a flawed individual, like Simpson, or of a controversial character like Ted Williams, depicted in a classic Jamie-owned photo standing with another imperfect human, the young Mickey Mantle.

Her dealing with legends at autograph-signing sessions has demonstrated these flaws to her up-close.

"Once Terry Bradshaw had to make a flight or something," she recalls, "so he got up promptly at two, leaving a lot of disgruntled fans standing there. Maybe he did have to be someplace, but people were still angry."

Certain little things can make a photo more significant, and therefore more valuable. Super Bowl photos are unique because it shows the players wearing a special patch that they do not wear during the regular season.

There is far more in Jamie's collection than I can see in one session. A photo of Lou Gehrig catches my eye. So does a collection of Muhammad Ali pictures.

"What is really valuable," she says, "is a Cassius Clay autograph. Those are hard to come by."

Who are the biggest names in autograph land?

"The Big Five are McGwire, Gretzky, Jordan, Ali, and whatever quarterback you like the most--Namath, Montana, Aikman, Fahre."

Jamie deals in authenticated N.F.L. cards, shown to be such by their certification stamps. On her coffee table is a likeness of John Elway.

"There are only five of these in the world," she says, "and I own all of 'em. A guy made these in his garage, and the N.F.L. saw that he was fined $50,000 so he wouldn't ever, ever do it again."

Autographed cards on her table also include Elway being chased by a U.S.C. Trojan; Ali wearing Dan Marino's warm-up jacket; and Mike Ditka when he was a Bears tight tend.

"Look at this," she enthuses. She points to <ital>Life</ital> magazine cover shot of the Frazier-Ali fight at Madison Square Garden in 1971. "Notice anything unusual?"

An examination of the cover indicates that the photographer is Frank Sinatra. Then there are photos of the Clay-Sonny Liston bout in 1964. First, the famous upper-cutting, scowl-faced Sports Illustrated photo of Clay putting Liston on the canvas. What is really interesting is a black-and-white photo taken seconds after that.

A Nolan Ryan Hall of Fame montage covers a side wall. On her table is another Joe Montana picture, with the figures "16/600" written on it.

"That means it is only the sixteenth of 600 he signed," says Jamie. "That is a mark of authenticity and identifies it as a unique item."
Jami's photos are available to admire and buy at a special sports memorabilia sale, benefiting the High Country Basset Hound Rescue, to be held November 13 in Colorado Springs. If a trip to the Rockies is a little far for you, feel free to call her at (310) 831-7443 to get more information.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

FITNESS

ELITE ATHLETES TRAIN AT VERT

Sinjin Smith, at 43 still one of the best volleyball players in the world, trains at VERT, which stands for Velocity Enhanced Resistance Training. VERT is located at 2300 Santa Monica Boulevard in Santa Monica (310-264-8385).

"VERT is different," explains Smith, "because, as an elite athlete, they help build my quickness and strength without putting pressure on my joints, like regular lifting. At 43 I don't need more joint pressure. Against the young guys I have to compete against, this gives me the edge. With computers, I can follow my progress and focus on my weaknesses. With normal weight training, I cannot identify the difference in my progress."

"VERT started as technical development in the 1960s," VERT founder Sean Harrington told StreetZebra, "but it was way ahead of its time. Computers were not reliable at the time. I got in two and a half years ago through a mutual friend and engineer, who helped create the software with Windows98 that allowed us to incorporate the technology into exercise machines. I was hired as a consultant to market the technology to the fitness business. I proved to the market that we had good equipment. We opened the center to specialize in the training of young, high-profile athletes.

"Wrestlers, for instance, have to meet weight limits, so they want only the muscles they need to utilize. Basketball players don't need big biceps. The key is to avoid losing muscle when losing fat. We work on nutrition with them, and it takes care of itself. The basis is easy to understand, given the amount of time they put in.

"Our system is to work athletes in both directions. That means that one rep is twice the amount of work as conventional weight lifting. We try to increase conditioning much more through these techniques. Research shows that the only way to increase explosiveness is to work faster. We don't operate on gravity-oriented resistance.

"One other thing we do is analyze the reps to see the range of motion, because we want the body moving at a high level of speed when pitching, jumping, etc. We can analyze
the range of motion to see where you lose speed. We build speed in a specific area of motion.”

Some of the other athletes who train at VERT include Laker superstar Shaq O'Neal, boxer Oscar De La Hoya, women volleyball players Gabrielle Reece and Holly McPeak, Olympic swim hopeful Byron Davis, and former Cub baseball legend Ernie Banks, along with numerous other athletes and actors.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

SPEECHES BY STEVEN TRAVERS

SPEECH TO MARIN GOP

STEVEN TRAVERS

I would like to thank Morgan Kelly, and all the members of the Marin County Republican Party, for extending this invitation for me to speak this evening. I am a lifelong Republican, a tried-and-true Ronald Reagan conservative who has been fighting the uphill struggle of his cause against the tides of Marin liberalism all my life.

I was heavily involved in California Republican politics in the late 1980s and early 1990s. I lived in Orange County and worked with Governor Pete Wilson, Congressman Robert Dornan, and other mainstays of the GOP. I also managed the 1990 Congressional campaign of Bill Boerum, a Greenbrae businessman who won a higher percentage of votes against Barbara Boxer than any of her House opponents over the years. It was of course an uphill battle, but we managed to get the San Francisco Chronicle to endorse us.

My late uncle, Charles T. Travers, was a close advisor to Vice President Richard Nixon in the 1950s and Governor Ronald Reagan in the 1960s. The Colonel Charles T. Travers School of Ethics and Policy in Government at his alma mater, the University of California at Berkeley, was instituted in the mid-1990s because the Colonel was tired of his beloved Cal allowing its campus to be the de facto staging grounds of American Communism. The Travers School of Ethics and Policy in Government has since become the most popular set of electives on campus, and is directly responsible for Berkeley's College Republicans becoming - if you can believe this - the largest student organization on campus.

I did not attend Cal. I am a graduate of the University of Southern California, and it is that connection which compels me to speak to you this evening. In the fall of 2007 my eighth book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, was published. This book is being made into a major motion picture by a
producing/writing team that has previously made *Miami Vice, Star Trek: The Next Generation, Coach, Patch Adams, Catch Me If You Can* and the upcoming *Indiana Jones* sequel.

While the book centers around a 1970 football game played between the integrated Trojans of John McKay and the segregated Crimson Tide of Paul "Bear" Bryant, the story also uses events of that year as a metaphor for a changing America. In so doing, I tell an important story of California, one that provides profound hope for our party as we approach the 2008 Presidential election and beyond.

John McKay and Bear Bryant were good ol' boys, Southerners who enjoyed pulling a cork. McKay was a conservative, iconoclastic, Republican from West Virginia (the only Southern state not to join the Confederacy, he was proud to say). His family was poor and the Ku Klux Klan once burned a cross on his lawn because they were Catholic. He became the head football at Southern Cal and his life experience made him fair-minded when it came to providing opportunity for black athletes in the 1960s. Because blacks were not allowed to play in the South, many African-Americans journeyed west to play for McKay. This helped USC become a major powerhouse in all sports.

Bryant was also from the wrong side of the tracks. Growing up in Arkansas, he befriended black kids and related to their underdog status. He served in the Navy and managed a blues band. When he took over at Texas A&M he tried to integrate and was told "That's the last thing we're gonna do."

"Well," he replied, "last is where we'll finish then."

Bryant took over at his alma mater, the University of Alabama, in 1958. His were tempestuous times and he had to deal with the racial politics being played by controversial Governor George Wallace, who after losing his first try ran in 1962 on a platform summed up by the words of his inauguration speech: "Segregation today, segregation forever."

Bryant knew that if he wanted to maintain success, he would need to integrate, but he also knew that he could only accomplish this goal when the timing was right. In the mid-1960s, Bryant met McKay at the Diamond B Football camp in Booneville, California. It was a camp for aspiring high school football players run by Redwood High coach Bob Troppmann. At the Diamond B camp in 1965, over late night cocktails, Bryant and McKay discussed the hoped-for integration of the Southeastern Conference. Bryant said he wanted to be the "Branch Rickey of college football." He and McKay decided that someday the Trojans and Crimson Tide would play each other, and this game could be used as a catalyst for integration. About 100 yards from where Bryant and McKay shared their hopes and dreams slept a 14-year old incoming Redwood High freshman named Pete Carroll.
In 1965, Black Muslim leader Malcolm X was assassinated after he announced that he would work with Christian leader Martin Luther King Jr. That same year, the Los Angeles ghetto of Watts exploded in riot. In response to radicalism in the cities and the campuses, Ronald Reagan was elected Governor of California in 1966. In 1968, Richard Nixon ascended to the White House on a similar platform. The Republican Party, and the conservative vision of Barry Goldwater, was viewed as an anti-dote to the revolutionary '60s.

In 1968, King was murdered and a few months later so was Robert Kennedy. The Civil Rights Movement took a violent turn. The non-violent Christianity of King, modeled after Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful resistance to British rule in India, was replaced by the Black Muslims and militancy.

In the winter of 1970, the National Collegiate Athletic Association announced that college football teams could add an 11th game to their schedules. Bryant immediately recognized that this was the opportunity he and McKay envisioned back in 1965 at Coach Troppmann's Diamond B camp. Bryant invited Southern California to open the 1970 season at the venerable Legion Field in Birmingham, site of so much civil rights angst in the previous decade. The social ramifications were immediate and obvious.

In August of 1970, George Jackson, a black man who thought of himself as a political prisoner, had a gun smuggled into the Marin County Civic Center by the Communist agitator Angela Davis. He proceeded to murder Judge Harold Haley and paralyze District Attorney Gary Thomas in a case that made national headlines. The photo of Jackson holding a gun to the head of Haley, a bespectacled grandfather, dominated the pages of Life magazine.

Around that same time, black members of the USC football team, several of whom hailed from the South, decided to bring guns with them to Alabama, which they planned to hide on the bench at Legion Field and use should racists in the stands take aim at them. In those days, there were no metal detectors at airports or courthouses, explaining how Davis could smuggle a weapon to Jackson, and how several black Trojans managed to bring guns to Alabama the weekend of September 12, 1970.

Alabamians viewed the game in mixed ways. African-Americans viewed the Trojans as modern-day Moses coming to lead them to the Promised Land. Many church services included prayers for the USC team, seen as doing God's work. Other blacks in the state viewed it differently, however. If the Trojans lost, they felt, it would set the cause of integration back years. It would, they felt, justify whites who thought the all-white Tide could win without them.

Whites in the South indeed did harbor that view, which was justified by the fact that Bryant's team had won national championships in 1961, 1964 and 1965. But Bryant played it from both angles. He had recruited his first African-American scholarship freshman, Wilbur Jackson, who was in school in 1970 but ineligible because of NCAA
rules against first-year varsity players. The game needed to succeed in such a way that Jackson's introduction to the program would be smooth. Many whites and blacks were not convinced that Jackson would ever play; that he would be a mere "token" black used to assuage criticism and threatened lawsuits. In Bryant's careful plans there was a scenario by which a victory over the Trojans, or a defeat at their hands, would play to his favor.

A political angle overshadowed the game, as well. For whites and blacks in the South, there were only two things that connected them: Christianity and football. Football, it was said, was a second religion in the South. The Jim Crow South was 100 percent Democrat and had been since the Republican Abraham Lincoln led the Union to victory in the Civil War. Aside from occasional forays into populism, as engaged in by Louisiana political brothers Earl and Huey Long in the 1930s, the Democrats were the party of racism and disfranchisement.

In 1964, when the Texan Lyndon Johnson won the Presidency, the Democrats swept to historic victories at all levels of state and national politics. They did this on the backs of a highly unusual conundrum: not only were they the party of the Civil Rights Movement, but of Jim Crow as well. In 1965, this unholy alliance began to fray when Johnson signed sweeping civil rights legislation. Republican President Dwight Eisenhower had tried the same thing in the 1950s but was blocked by Southern Democrats. It was only the courage of Republicans who crossed partisan lines that allowed the Civil Rights Act to pass, but LBJ turned to his aide, Bill Moyers, and said at the signing, "Bill, we've just handed the South to the Republicans for the next 50 years."

In 1968, Richard Nixon exploited Southern sentiment towards his conservative, Christian, anti-Communist persona to dig into the Democrat vote. He played himself off against the fiery Wallace, offering an alternative for people who wanted their votes to count. It succeeded, and by 1970 Southerners were increasingly attracted to both Nixon and Ronald Reagan. This phenomenon I call the "Orange Countification" of politics in Dixie. This theory says that Southerners found a kindred spirit with a region - Orange County, California, the conservative bastion south of Los Angeles credited with putting Goldwater over the top in '64 - and with the two Southern California political figures - Nixon and Reagan - who drew their strongest base of support from the county.

Orange Country represented an attractive image; the endless strand of surf; the music of The Beach Boys; beautiful girls and a vibrant lifestyle. It was viewed as a conservative, Christian enclave, a complete reversal from the radical TV images emanating from the campuses of Cal-Berkeley, Stanford, San Francisco State, and to a lesser extent, UCLA. The John Birch Society was strong in Orange County. At the height of the Vietnam War, it was seen by patriotic Southerners, who supported the war, as a reserve of anti-Communism. Reagan and in particular Nixon, who seemingly fought the Communists by himself, excoriated by the Left wing press and the Democrats, was popular in Dixie, where he attended a Billy Graham Crusade that drew scorn from the New York and Hollywood elites.
Enter the University of Southern California, for it was not merely the friendship between Bear Bryant and John McKay that made Bryant pick USC as the mixed-race team that would demonstrate excellence at Legion Field. Bryant did not want just any Northern or Western team coming to Birmingham. Cal, Stanford, Syracuse, Michigan; no, there was a reason he chose USC. Alabama fans knew that Bryant respected McKay and his program, and if Bryant respected them, they did, too. Here was a school, half an hour from Orange County, that was a microcosm of Orange County; a conservative, private school with a wealthy alumni base in the county. A campus that remained peaceful and patriotic while Berkeley and Columbia; Madison and Kent State and Stanford; burned with pro-Hanoi rage.

The Trojans arrived in Birmingham and, despite a few catcalls, were mainly treated with respect. Their black players, as if persuaded by God, mysteriously chose at the last second not to bring their guns onto the Legion Field. In the words of legendary Los Angeles Times sports columnist Jim Murray, "A hostile group of white and black American citizens invaded Birmingham to do battle with a hostile group of white American citizens." Instead of a riot, a fairly played football game broke out. It was not a contest. USC dominated from start to finish and won going away, 42-21.

As the game developed, transformation began to occur in the stands and in the neighborhoods surrounding Legion Field. White Alabama fans were silenced into watching in mute admiration of the excellence and teamwork of the Trojans; white players and coaches working together, demonstrating class, camaraderie and esprit d' corp. Throughout the stands, they could be heard saying things like, "I bet Bear wishes he had some a them black players," and "Bear better go out and get himself some of those colored players."

Then there was the reaction of the black fans. They made up a small minority of fans sitting high above the end zone. Despite being from Alabama, they rooted for USC. Amid the silence of the crowd, their cheers resonated. So quiet was it at Legion Field that the shouts of Trojan players and coaches could be heard. But then something else made itself apparent.

Gathered outside Legion Field were thousands and thousands of African-Americans from the surrounding Birmingham neighborhoods. They carried candles and Bibles. They sang gospel songs in a scene of amazing spiritual deliverance. Their singing and cheering eerily wafted into the stands, giving ghostly imprimatur to the proceedings.

When the game ended, the players shook hands. It was a display of fair sportsmanship. No debris or abuse was hurled at the black Trojans by the fans. Truth, as witnessed in an American arena, is never misunderstood! Liberalism and conservatism had met at the 50-yard line. The winner was America.
John McKay met Bear Bryant at midfield and thanked him for "helping our program". He knew that even though Southern Cal had won the game, the real winner was Alabama.

Bryant then approached the Trojans great black running back Sam "Bam" Cunningham in the dressing room. Cunningham, a sophomore from idyllic Santa Barbara, a naïve young man who had little real understanding of the plight of Southern blacks, was about to become an unlikely hero of the Civil Rights Movement. Bryant took him into the crowded hallway, and in front of reactionary alumni, administration and press, announced, "This here's what a football player looks like!" That story was mythologized into Bryant placing Cunningham on a stool in the 'Bama dressing room before his beaten, bowed team, but it did not happen quite that way. Bryant had taken a shot across the bow. He was saying that change was coming to the Old South.

Alabama assistant coach Jerry Claiborne then announced that "Sam Cunningham did more for civil rights in three hours than Martin Luther King did in 20 years." Cunningham was embarrassed at the gravity of this remark, but the spirit of the words did resonate. Somehow, a football game had accomplished more than a protest march. A paradigm shift had occurred, not on the fields of Gettysburgh but on the Legion Field, and in so doing, King's dream was being realized.

When the USC players showered, dressed and went out to their bus, they were met by thousands of grateful black people, who met them with tears in their eyes; holding their candles and Bibles, singing spirituals, and indeed telling the USC players that in winning the game they had delivered them to the Promised Land.

Bear Bryant had seen the shifting winds of change and taken advantage of it. He saw that George Wallace was no longer Governor, and that even he had moderated his rhetoric in his Presidential bids. The next year, Alabama played USC again, this time at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

The very first black player in Crimson Tide history was not Wilbur Jackson. It was John Mitchell, a lineman from Mobile, Alabama who had been recruited to USC by John McKay. When McKay bragged to Bryant about it, Bryant then found a phone, put a sell job on Mitchell, and talked him into coming to 'Bama. On the game's first play, as Mitchell raced past McKay, the Trojan coach turned to assistant Craig Fertig and wryly stated, "Well, that's what you get."

Jackson did play at Alabama, too. In 1973 he was one of eight black players on the Tide's Orange Bowl team. His white teammates voted him captain. He went on to play for the 49ers and, when asked whether his experience at Alabama was a good one, said that if it was not he would not have sent his daughters there. Mitchell played in the NFL and became the Steelers' defensive coordinator. Another black star, Sylvester Croom, became an assistant coach under Bryant and later the first African-American head coach in the SEC at Mississippi State.
Bryant fully integrated Alabama football, and the result was their greatest decade in the 1970s, a 10-year period in which the two dominant programs in the land were 'Bama and USC. The South did indeed rise again. Over succeeding years, blacks seamlessly integrated into all aspects of Southern society. They became college students, teachers, professors, political staffers, elected officials, and succeeded in all form of endeavor. The South became an economic and political juggernaut.

All the large Southern cities acquired major professional sports franchises. Huge corporations located and thrived there. The ultimate multi-cultural event, the 1996 Olympics, were held in Atlanta.

The day after the game, Jim Murray wrote, "We welcomed the state of Alabama back into the Union. The Constitution was ratified yesterday." The South was successfully husbanded into the Union by the Republican Party, led first by President Nixon, and later by Ronald Reagan. Two Democrats from the region, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, ascended to the White House, but in the final analysis it was the GOP that benefited from the South's transformation, and in so doing seemingly proved by scientific method the superiority of conservatism.

Plato may have invented the concept of political "science." The Greek philosopher wanted to get beyond opinion and find a professional political class, trained in the skill of "right conduct." While this may never have happened, Plato would nevertheless have observed the South and found an interesting dynamic. Lawyers would call it the "but-for" method of causation, and it goes like this:

In all the years in which the South was mostly rural, uneducated and in many cases ignorant, they:

- Were racist and,
- Voted Democrat.

Over time, as the Tennessee Valley Authority was created, modernization occurred, and its citizenry became educated, their world opened up by electricity, air conditioning, schools, books, cable TV, radio, the Internet, and actual knowledge of facts, they:

- Were no longer racist and,
- Voted Republican.

This development is particularly frustrating to the Left. The Civil Rights Movement was their crowning achievement, their greatest moral legacy, yet it was the Right, conservative Republicans, who benefited from it the most.

In understanding the role of California in the success of integration of the South; and in the growth of the Republican Party, of conservatism, from being little more than a few
intellectuals sitting around William Buckley's mother's Connecticut house for a reading of Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* in the 1950s; to the most successful political philosophy in the history of Mankind; in examining this I submit that there is hope that the Golden State will again be the home of the conservative movement in the 21st Century.

Recall the funeral of Ronald Reagan in 2004. Thousands of The Gipper's adoring fans lined the roadways as his hearse made its way to the Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley. Conservatism is not dead in California, despite our Left Coast image. The spirit of Ronald Reagan, the Orange County that powered Barry Goldwater over Nelson Rockefeller in 1964, is still alive and well. What is needed is that special man, a Reagan for our times. These men do not come around but once in a generation, but I submit that the time will come. The special spirit of California, which was the impetus that allowed conservatism to moderate beyond extremes and therefore become palatable to the South, the nation and indeed the whole world, still lives on in the Golden State. Let us find it, harness it, and ride it to victory. Like the Jews of ancient Israel, we wait for our political Messiah, and we wait with hope in our hearts.

We face a Presidential election in November. Our nominee, Senator John McCain, claims to be a Reagan conservative. He has been criticized for not being one, and I cannot offer that he is. But I would like to say this about the Senator.

Whether he is a true blue conservative or not, I believe that the Republican Party and America will be better off trying to find a conservative voice from within instead of being left out of power. The times; the challenge posed by Islamic jihadism, of terror and threats to our vital interests at home and abroad; require leadership that the Left has abdicated decades ago. We cannot afford to embolden our enemies, who I submit have not attacked because they know Republicans fight back.

While I give credit to President George Bush for being vigilant and preventing any attacks since 9/11, I also believe that our enemies mis-judged us. They did not recognize the profound differences between Republicans and Democrats. They felt, in my estimation, that Bush would react as Bill Clinton had; with impotent missile strikes aimed at some camels in the desert. I am convinced that Osama bin Laden got the exact opposite of what he wanted. Truly, if he thought the Taliban would be ousted; that he would be forced to live like a cave-dwelling refugee making occasional VHS recordings because he does not even have access to new DVD technology; that the U.S. would turn Iraq into a nascent Democracy, oust Islamic totalitarians, and neutralize the threat of Iran; well, he would not have launched those airplanes.

Did Bush run a mistake-free campaign? No. But this is what he did do. He observed the global landscape and saw that the United States was at war with Islamic terror, and that this war was being fought on planes, trains and automobiles. It was being fought in Western cities and suburbs. It was being fought in Europe, in Asia, in Eastern Europe. It was being fought in New York City, in our nation's capital, and in the skies over rural
Pennsylvania. He announced that he was taking the fight to the enemy, and that America would do so "at a time and place of our choosing."

He chose two places that were already war-torn, two places that were already devoid of freedom, two places that were already the staging grounds of evil, and transferred the war from New York, from the Pentagon, from America, to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. In so doing, he drew thousands of terrorists who previously would have been setting up operations from London to Los Angeles, instead gathered them all together in two evil places . . . and killed them.

Those that were not killed were captured. Those not captured have been studied; their phones tapped, their computers confiscated, their methods exposed. Those still left alive are disorganized, confused, beaten down, disillusioned, on the run. Things that are taught as mere theories at West Point have been learned in Baghdad; the lessons to be applied by the forces of freedom for the next 50 years. A victory by the United States over the Democrats in Iraq is rapidly approaching that moment in which it is not a contemplated future possibility, but rather an accomplished past act!

The terrorists are waiting for the Democrats to take over, knowing they will not have the stomach to defend American freedom. Knowing that the last patriotic Democrat was John F. Kennedy or Lyndon Johnson, that the modern Democrat Party has become the de facto public relations wing of Al Qaeda. We must make the terrorists wait in vain and deny them an ally in the White House, not to mention the Congress.

The current dynamic is a simple one. There does exist in this world good, and there does exist in this world evil. America fights on the side of good. The Democrats do all they can to make it as hard for us to succeed as possible. This not even an opinion. One simply makes an observation of the facts and therefore possesses this knowledge. Is further commentary really necessary?

After Ted Kennedy and his party abandoned the South Vietnamese in a post-Watergate power play, it backfired on them and the result was the Reagan Revolution, but when the Cold War was won at least the Democrats could to point to a few anti-Communists like JFK, Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson as partners in this victory. There are no Democrats like that on the current scene, not with Joe Lieberman abandoning their party. They will not share in our victory in Iraq, or over terror in general. I predict that this fact will eventually lead to the demise of their party as a viable force in American politics, if that has not happened already.

I believe John McCain is the man best-suited at this time in history to help us achieve our goal, and in so doing I believe the Senator is the worst-realized fears of Osama bin Laden, Mahmoud Ahmanidijad, and the fools who somehow believe the New York Times. But I want to go beyond that. McCain's Senate record contains many acts of psuedo-liberalism, but I am not convinced that this is a template for his Presidency. I use history as a guide. Richard Nixon was considered a rock-solid conservative, but it was he who
oversaw much of LBJ's Great Society; instituted price controls; and opened up Red China. I call this the "Nixon goes to China" theory. This worked similarly with Bill Clinton, whose hand was forced by a Republican Congress into reforming welfare. Sometimes opposites attract. Politics can make for strange bedfellows.

McCain has had to operate in a Senate with Democrat colleagues for several decades. It is very difficult to exist in such an environment without some compromises, but I also submit that the way a man votes and works in the Senate is entirely different than the way circumstances direct him to govern as President. Perhaps I am hopefully naïve, but I most assuredly submit that I am hopeful and optimistic. This may not be the greatest endorsement ever made on behalf of John McCain, but call it an endorsement nevertheless.

In closing, let me make a point that many of you may not have considered. The Republicans have an enormous national advantage over the Democrats. There are many states, perhaps 15 or 20, that are virtually unavailable to the Democrats; the entire South, Montana, Idaho, Utah, maybe a few others. The GOP, on the other hand, has the potential of sweeping the entire nation. Even blue states like New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and California, can be won by a Republican. We have seen this twice in the past 40 years; Richard Nixon in 1972 and Ronald Reagan in 1984, and a few other elections were near-sweeps.

Let me offer that perhaps John McCain is the right man in the right place at the right time to repeat this kind of sweep, or come close. I see parallels with Nixon in '72, and if you recall nobody saw that coming in the spring of 1972. Let me further offer that if McCain indeed has this kind of national appeal, he will have coattails that may allow us to re-capture the House and Senate.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to address you this evening, and would be happy to take questions.

STEVEN TRAVERS

SPEECH AT USC

Steven Travers graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in communications from the University of Southern California in 1983. He also studied in the School of Cinematic Arts and worked in Hollywood for six years, during which time he wrote the screenplay, The Lost Battalion. Steve is the author of The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty, which proposes that USC has replaced Notre Dame as the greatest college football tradition in history. Released in 2006, it made the National Book Network “top 100” seller list. His latest book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, tells the story of a 1970 football game in which the integrated Trojans traveled to Birmingham, beat the segregated Crimson Tide, and
thus created such a stir that full integration came to all aspects of Southern life in succeeding years.

This book has been the subject of two documentaries by College Sports Television (a division of CBS); one on coach Paul “Bear” Bryant and the other titled Tackling Segregation, which aired in 2006. It has also been optioned by a major Hollywood producer, Kerry McCluggage (USC ’74) of Allumination/Craftsman Films. His producing partners on the film include legendary Trojan Anthony Davis.

In addition to his writing career, Steve is a guest speaker here at USC who has been featured in Professor Dan Durbin’s class on “Sports, Culture and Society” at the Annenberg School of Communications. He played professional baseball, coached at USC and in Europe, attended law school, and served in the Army.

You are invited to stay for a booksigning after the speech. He also will be signing at the peristyle end of the Coliseum tomorrow for three hours prior to the Arizona game, and on Monday will appear at USC Collections, South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, at 12 noon.

Ladies and gentlemen, Steven Travers.

I dedicate this speech to U.S. Army Sgt. Gary Andrade, a dedicated Trojan fan from Anaheim, California. Gary, like many members of the Trojan Nation, is serving in Iraq. The loved ones of these patriots bought my book The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty, and sent it to them. I get emails from these great guys, who tell me that all they have to look forward to as they patrol Anbar province, Tikrit and Fallujah, is to read my book when they return at night. For what it is worth, Sgt. Andrade informs me that from where he stands “the surge” is working.

Students, parents, Trojans, lend me your ear and hear a tale; a tale of American excellence; a tale about an institution we all love called the University of Southern California. This tale starts in 1880 when USC was founded as a private college featuring Methodist religious instruction. Over the years it becomes non-denominational but retained a sense of religious morality. In 1912, Los Angeles Times sports editor Owen Bird covered a USC track meet, declaring that our men “fought like Trojans.” The nickname stuck.

In 1919, USC hires a coach named Elmer “Gloomy Gus” Henderson; so named because it was always, “Aw, we can’t block,” or “Our offense will never stop ’em.” Our first football All-American, Brice Taylor, is among his recruits. Taylor is living proof that a new era is upon us, that in California there is a progressive way of thinking. He is part black, part Cherokee Indian, and despite being born with only one hand, one of the best players in the land.
In 1922 the Tournament of Roses Committee and City of Pasadena build the greatest of all football stadiums, the Rose Bowl, in the Arroyo Seco. The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum is built adjacent to the USC campus in 1923. After the hiring of Henderson, who is immediately successful, USC has decided to become a big time program. In 1922 they join the Pacific Coast Conference and play in the very first New Year’s Day Rose Bowl game, a 14-3 triumph over Penn State marked by a peculiar portent of the future: the Nittany Lions are late for the game because they were caught in traffic. The next year the Trojans move into the Coliseum, which with its Roman motifs symbolizes American superiority; the New Centurions of a modern age.

The building of the Rose Bowl and the Coliseum become the defining impetus of Trojan greatness and allow Los Angeles to emerge as the sports capital of the world. It is the Rose Bowl that becomes the grandest of all games, its imprimatur built on the backs of spectacular victories attained by the Men of Troy over all comers East and South. It is the Coliseum that attracts the 1932 Olympics, the true “coming out party” of this, the city of the future.

Howard Jones, winner of the national championship at Yale and a coach whose Iowa Hawkeyes beat Knute Rockne’s Notre Dame Fighting Irish in 1921, is hired prior to the 1925 campaign. He is immediately successful. He decides that an inter-sectional rivalry with Notre Dame is what will separate his program from Cal and Stanford. He sends student assistant Gwyn Wilson to Lincoln, Nebraska, where Notre Dame is playing the final game of the 1925 campaign. The temperature in Lincoln is about . . . one! Nebraska beats the Irish, who get on the Sunset Limited to train them out of ice cold Lincoln. On the train, Wilson pitches Rockne on playing at USC in 1926. Rockne informs Wilson that the administration is already giving him a hard time; that he travels too much and the players miss too much class time as is. Thanks, but no thanks. Wilson goes back to his car with his tail between his legs.

“What will I tell Coach Jones?” he asked himself.

Enter Mrs. Marion Wilson and Mrs. Bonnie Rockne. On a train filled with football players, football coaches, football writers and football fans, they are the only two women; kindred spirits. Mrs. Wilson fills Mrs. Rockne’s head with glorious tales of the Rodeo Drive shopping boutiques in Beverly Hills, where the newest fashions from Paris are being worn by Hollywood movie actresses. Having spent the weekend in ice cold Lincoln, Nebraska, Mrs. Rockne is immediately captivated, excuses herself, and goes to exclaim to her husband how pleased she is that Notre Dame will be traveling to Los Angeles in 1926. Knute tells her he had to decline the offer. Mrs. Rockne immediately informs him that he will indeed accept the offer. Thus is born the USC-Notre Dame rivalry. Capacity Coliseum crowds watch the Trojans capture its first national championship by virtue of a 27-14 win over Notre Dame in 1928. 120,000 see Notre Dame beat USC at Soldier Field in Chicago in 1927; 112,000 at the same location in 1929.
Notre Dame is “America’s Team” in the 1920s, and by virtue of being their greatest rival, USC was able to create separation from California and Stanford. This caused great angst at Cal and Stanford. Pop Warner, unable to beat USC, left Stanford. Jealous of Trojan gridiron glory, Cal and Stanford accused USC of academic impropriety, of professionalism.

They said that USC football players were academic laggards. When those very players went on to sterling non-football careers in the law, in Hollywood, when All-American lineman Aaron Rosenberg became a leading Hollywood producer, others noted poets, architects, actors, and various other success stories, it was of no good value to Cal or Stanford. They were left to wallow in their perfidies and got used to it.

In 1931, USC traveled to South Bend to play for the first time at the new Notre Dame Stadium. They trailed the heavily-favored Irish 14-0 in the fourth quarter, then rallied. Trailing 14-13 late in the game, they lined up on fourth down within sights of the Irish goal line. Jones decided to try a play instead of kicking a field goal, since Johnny Baker had performed poorly in practice and missed a crucial extra-point attempt earlier. In a play reminiscent of USC’s winning touchdown against Notre Dame in 2005, the Trojans approached the line in normal formation, but at the last second switched to a field goal. Baker was straight and true. The 16-14 Trojan victory gave them the national championship. The train ride from South Bend to Chicago to Los Angeles took several days and resembled one of Harry Truman’s “whistle stop” Presidential tours. Between 300,000 and half a million Los Angelenos met USC when they arrived at Union Station. Speeches were made, a Mayoral procession held with a Manhattan-style confetti parade through the financial district all the way to campus.

USC won the 1931, 1932 and 1939 national championships. When World War II began, Howard Jones and USC had four national championships to Notre Dame’s three. While the rivalry had helped increase Trojan prestige, it had also done the same thing for the Irish.

USC has consistently been on the right side of history. Integrated Trojan-Bruin games, played before capacity crowds at the Coliseum, covered by a large metropolitan press and national media, made a visual social statement. In 1956, at a time when segregated Southern teams refused to travel north or west to play integrated schools, USC made the perilous trip to Austin, Texas with a black running back named C.R. Roberts. Despite a tremendous amount of turmoil, before and after the game, Roberts rushed for 251 yards in the first half to spur a stunning 44-20 USC triumph that induced the Longhorn players to shake Roberts’s hand afterwards in displays of good sportsmanship. An indication that the time for true integration had not yet come to the South is indicative of fan reaction to Roberts, who was catcalled to the end.

Notre Dame established itself as a dominant power in the 1940s, but by 1962, coach John McKay turned things around for Southern California. The ‘62 Trojans shut out Notre
Dame, 25-0 en route to an unbeaten season, a wild 42-37 win over Wisconsin in the Rose Bowl, and the national championship.

In the 1960s and 1970s, USC played a series of rivalry games that elevated themselves to the top of the pantheon, symbolizing a golden age of college football. Aside from the 1967 USC-UCLA game, the battles between cross-town rivals were titanic struggles, often with national championship implications in 1965, 1968, 1969, 1972, 1973, 1978, 1988 and beyond. As color television became the vogue, images of the green Coliseum plains under blue Southern California skies, fans dressed in beach attire frolicking in 80 degree temperatures, All-Americans dueling it out in front of “gold standard” cheerleaders and tanned, Beautiful People crowds, tantalized a nation.

Between 1962 and 1982, USC established the greatest two-decade run in the history of the game. Four Trojans won the Heisman Trophy: Mike Garrett in 1965, O.J. Simpson in 1968, Charles White in 1979 and Marcus Allen in 1981. In 1969, the Trojans’ defensive line was called “The Wild Bunch,” based on Sam Peckinpah’s Western of that same year. Under John McKay and John Robinson, Troy won five national championships. Trojan greatness was forged against the very toughest competition America had to offer. Between 1967 and 1982, the best Notre Dame teams coached by Ara Parsheghian and Dan Devine beat USC just twice in 16 seasons.

Year after year, legendary coaches Bo Schembechler of Michigan and Woody Hayes of Ohio State brought unbeaten teams to the Rose Bowl. Each time their national title hopes were rebuffed by Trojan juggernauts. USC traveled far and wide to take on all comers.

In the mid-1960s, John McKay met Alabama coach Paul “Bear” Bryant at a California coaching clinic run by Redwood High School coach Bob Troppmann. One night, Bryant and McKay were enjoying a late-night cocktail or seven when Bryant suggested that if McKay were to bring an integrated Trojan team to Legion Field, demonstrating that white and black players could be classy, disciplined and play great, it might have the effect of “opening eyes” in the South; enough to allow Bryant to overcome the politics of Governor George Wallace, thus integrating Alabama football at last. According to legend, Troppmann observed this exchange while a hundred yards or so away, sleeping in a bunk was his star player, one of the campers. That players’ name was Pete Carroll.

In 1970, USC went to Birmingham, Alabama. Another black Trojan running back, Sam “Bam” Cunningham, played the game of his life to spark a resounding 42-21 USC triumph. This time, unlike the C.R. Roberts game at Texas in 1956, the time was right. As the story goes, Bryant invited Cunningham into the ‘Bama dressing room, propped him up on a stool before a sea of white faces, and announced, “This here’s what a football player looks like.”

The story has been repeated as Holy Grail within Trojan circles for 35 years; by John McKay, Marv Goux, and by legendary USC announcer Tom Kelly on a 1988 video documentary of USC football history called Trojan Video Gold. There is only one
problem: it apparently never happened. Nevertheless, Bryant is properly credited with making integration successful at ‘Bama, and when it succeeded there, it succeeded in the rest of the country.

This is the story I tell in my book One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation. As I conclude, it was a moment in which liberalism and conservatism met at the 50-yard line – perhaps for the last time, it sometimes seems – and the winner was America.

The 1971 Trojans were 2-4, teetering on the brink of collapse. Notre Dame was 6-0, gliding toward the national championship. The week the Trojans were traveling to South Bend, a little-known offensive lineman named Dave Brown approached John McKay, told him he was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and would McKay allow a “demonstration” after practice? The Catholic McKay probably figured that at 2-4 it couldn’t hurt. Then the Trojans traveled to South Bend and, under the watchful eye of Touchdown Jesus, dismantled Notre Dame, 28-14. That group of players never lost again. Not that season, not in 1972.

The 1972 Trojans are generally considered to be the greatest team ever assembled.

Allow me to quote from my book The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty, with homage to the great L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray, regarding events of the national championship 1974 season:

“It was not a sporting event, it was a Roman orgy. USC was not a football team, they were Patton’s Army marching through the Low Countries, Grant taking Richmond, the Wehrmacht during the Blitzkrieg.

“For Trojans fans, it was not a game, it was a sighting. It was Fatima, Lourdes, and the Burning Bush combined.

“For Notre Dame coach Ara Parseghian, it was the Seventh Circle of Hell, The Twi-Light Zone, ‘Chef’s head’ in Apocalypse Now.

“For the Irish, it was their worst disaster since the potato famine.

“It was a 17-minute Southern California earthquake, epicentered at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on a fall Saturday in 1974. It was felt as far away as South Bend, Indiana, and the aftershocks reverberate to this day.

“For up in the broadcast booth, Ohio State coach Woody Hayes must have felt like a Prussian military commander with a binocular-view of Napoleon’s Italian Campaign, knowing he would have to face them in the Rose Bowl a month later. The USC rooting section started chanting, ‘Woody, you’re next.’
“. . . the Trojans had conquered Ireland, but before they could ‘roll over Austria, Poland, and Denmark,’ as Sports Illustrated stated it, McKay pulled his starters . . .

‘I have no idea what happened,’ said McKay. ‘But I guarantee I was there. And I clapped.’

“Parsheghian never coached after that season. Rumors have it that he sees a therapist to combat visions of a white horse constantly running around a field.”

25 years passed between USC’s 1978 national championship under coach John Robinson and Pete Carroll’s first in 2003. How great has Pete Carroll been in the 2000s? Let me count the ways. Here are the raw statistics:

Two consecutive national championships between 2003 and 2004.


The number one pick of the 2003 NFL Draft was Carson Palmer; numerous other Trojans have been selected in the first round.

A 34-game winning streak between 2003 and 2006.

33 consecutive weeks named ranked number one in the nation between 2003 and 2006.

Entering the 2007 season, a 65-12 record between 2001 and 2006, which includes a 4-1 record in BCS bowl games, three Rose Bowl appearances, and five straight Top Five finishes.

At one point between 2002 and 2006, USC was 51-2, the best record over a 53-game stretch in college football history. They have been, at varying points, 55-3 and 56-4 over 60 games between 2002 and 2006. They have not lost a home game since 2001, have beaten Notre Dame five straight times and beat UCLA seven consecutive times.

It is my considered opinion that under Coach Carroll, the University of Southern California has overtaken Notre Dame as the greatest of all collegiate football traditions. USC has won 11 national championships, the most of any program, tied with Notre Dame. (As an aside, USC’s track team has 26 NCAA championships, its baseball team 12, and UCLA’s basketball team 11). Prior to World War II, USC, Alabama and California had won four national championships. Minnesota had five, Notre Dame three.

When John McKay arrived in 1960, Notre Dame had seven national championships to our four. They also had five Heisman Trophy winners to our zero. Now, the modern era is upon us: face masks, black players, new standards. Since 1962, USC has won seven
national titles to Notre Dame’s four. Since 1965, USC has won seven Heisman Trophies to Notre Dame’s one.

Furthermore, each USC national championship is legitimate: won via victory against a national powerhouse, often Michigan under Bo Schembechler or Ohio State under Woody Hayes, in the greatest of all New Year’s Day games, the Rose Bowl. USC does not “back in” with bowl losses or non-appearances. On the other hand, seven of Notre Dame’s 11 national titles have come in years in which they did not play a bowl game. Surely in one or two of those years the Irish would have lost a bowl game had they played in it.

USC has by far the best bowl record of any team in the nation, and the best Rose Bowl record by an equally wide margin. Notre Dame, on the other hand, is 13-15 in bowl games and holds the current, on-going record for most consecutive bowl defeats. Alabama lost seven straight bowl games between the 1967 and 1973 seasons.

Despite the fact that USC’s football program got a late start and was not a major sport until after World War I, Southern California ranks among the all-time leaders in historical victories. USC is also in the elite class of college teams with an overall .700 winning percentage in all games played since 1888.

USC enters the 2007 season having been ranked number one the second most times of any college team. If they continue to be ranked number one throughout the season they will pass Notre Dame’s all-time record of 89. USC holds the record for most consecutive weeks ranked number one, 33 between 2003 and 2006. Miami is second with 20 between 2001 and 2002. USC was also ranked number one 17 straight weeks between 1972 and 1973.

USC’s 34-game winning streak between 2003 and 2006 is the second-longest in modern college football history, behind only Oklahoma’s 47-game streak between 1953 and 1957. Among the longest winning and unbeaten streaks in history, they have several of them, including streaks ranging from 23 to 34 at various times between 1931 and 1933; 1971 to 1973; 1978 to 1980; and 2003 to 2006.

Notre Dame has the most All-Americans with USC right behind; nobody else is really close. Notre Dame and USC have the most players in the College Football Hall of Fame, with a wide separation over the next programs.

The facts stack up this way in USC’s favor any way you cut it. Despite all of Notre Dame’s hype, or the passion for other storied traditions in Tuscaloosa, Ann Arbor and Norman, USC is college football’s all-time greatest dynasty.

In 1999, Rod Dedeaux of USC was voted “College Baseball Coach of the Century.” USC’s 12 College World Series titles tower above second-best Texas with five. USC has by far the most baseball players drafted, drafted in the first round, in the big leagues, in
the All-Star Game, in the World Series, Rookies of the Year, and winners of the Cy Young Award, with nine spread between Tom Seaver, Randy Johnson and Barry Zito. Fred Lynn won the 1975 American League Rookie of the Year and MVP awards.

USC and UCLA are roughly tied for the most Olympians, medal winners and gold medallists. Had either school been a country at the 1976 Montreal Games, they would have placed among the medal leaders.

USC has won the most men’s national championships in all sports. In 1999, USC was voted the “College Athletic Program of the Century.”

In 2005, USC beat Notre Dame, 34-31 at South Bend. I again quote from The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty:

“Outlined against a blue, gray October sky the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore they are known as famine, pestilence, destruction and death. These are only aliases. Once named Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden, the gladiators of the New Millennium are men of youth, color and American diversity. Their real names are: Leinart, Bush, Jarrett and White. These new Four Horsemen of Southern California came to the land of destiny riding their famed white steed Traveler, that dreaded Coliseum sight of Irish past. They relegated the old Notre Dame ghosts to their place and time, a time when the only color was white, myths were protected, lies told as Truths. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another Fighting Irish team was swept over the precipice at Notre Dame Stadium on the afternoon of Saturday, October 15, 2005. 80,795 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon the green plain below.”

On the surface, Notre Dame and USC appear to be quite different. Notre Dame represents Christian piety and Midwestern toughness. USC is “Hollywood’s school,” representing golden beaches, bikini-clad maidens and big city nightlife. But USC was founded as a religious institution and offered Methodist instruction until World War I. It has always been a conservative college in which people are not made fun of if they believe in God or root for America. Both Notre Dame and USC are patriotic institutions that have produced many war heroes, and offer a political environment that is quite rare outside of the South.

USC’s tradition as “Hollywood’s school” marks its roots with a tall, ruggedly handsome pulling guard from Glendale High School named Marion Morrison. Morrison was set to be a starter on the line for Howard Jones. In the summer before training camp started, Morrison and a teammate went to Newport Beach, where they were trying to impress a bevy of beach beauties. Morrison went bodysurfing. He chose a notorious stretch of breakwater known today as “The Wedge.” It’s notorious because ex-surfers in wheelchairs can be found on the Newport Pier wearing T-shirts stating, “Victim of ‘The Wedge.’”
Morrison separated his shoulder, and when football practice started he couldn’t block. He lost his starting job and with it his scholarship. Not a product of wealth, he began to accumulate debts from his fraternity brothers, who reluctantly told him he had to move out unless he could carry his weight. Morrison left school and went to Fox Studios, where he found work as an actor under the stage name John “Duke” Wayne.

One of Wayne’s acting sidekicks was Ward Bond, also a Trojan football player. Bond often played a friendly priest or drinking partner, the kind of guy who would get in “knock down, drag out” fisticuffs with the Duke, then afterward share a shot of whiskey with him.

In 1966, USC traveled to Austin for the season opener against Texas. Wayne was filming War Wagon in Texas at the time. Events of that wild weekend are so crazy a book or movie could easily be formulated to tell the tall tales.

The night before the game, Duke held court in the hotel bar, dressed exquisitely in a black three-piece suit, white 10-gallon cowboy hat, and snakeskin cowboy boots... with spurs. A Los Angeles sportswriter was at the bar, getting drunker and drunker. He was known to be quite liberal in his political views. Duke was an unabashed conservative Republican giving colorful descriptions in 1966 of what the American military was going to do with the Communists in Vietnam. Finally the old scribe had enough.

He walked up to Duke and his now-silent entourage, watching him ruefully.

“They tell me that they call you... The Duke!” said the writer.

“Waal, what of it?” replied Wayne.

“Waalll, Duke... you ain’...” I’ll delete the word he used which starts with an “s” and ends with a “t.”

Wayne took a swing at the drunk writer and a full brawl was avoided only when his people pulled him away.

Wayne drank whiskey all night and well into the morning. He ended up in the room of Nick Pappas, a fraternity brother of his and head of USC alumni groups. Around six A.M., Wayne told Pappas he wanted to address the team in the dressing room, and could he arrange it?

Pappas stuck his foot in his mouth and said, “Sure, Duke, whatever you want, I can fix it with McKay.”

Now Pappas was on the spot if he could not deliver. Figuring McKay was up early getting prepared for the game, Pappas called him in his room and told him he had a dilemma. McKay was a huge Wayne fan who said his favorite relaxation was a bowl of
ice cream and a John Wayne movie, and sure, The Duke was welcome in the dressing room.

Wayne apparently never slept or stopped drinking. He had a make-up man responsible for getting him ready, but the guy never showed up. It turned out later that the make-up had been mixing drinks trying to keep up with The Duke the night before. The stress was too much for the guy and he died. Wayne started calling all around trying to get the guy, and word got to McKay that Duke needed assistance, so he assigned assistant coach Craig Fertig the task.

Wayne did not know what to wear. Fertig told him he was known as a cowboy so why not don that look, so he dressed him in the suit-10-gallon-cowboy-hat-boots-with-spurs ensemble.

“I had him lookin’ good,” Fertig told me when I interviewed him about it.

In the dressing room, Duke gave the Trojans an incendiary speech filled with graphic descriptions of bloodshed and war imagery. According to legend, it was the model for George C. Scott’s opening monologue in *Patton* four years later.

The team was so fired up they charged out of the dressing room with all the passion of any Knute Rockne squad, and beat Texas in a defensive struggle, 10-6.

Before the game, Wayne drove around Memorial Stadium in a golf cart driven by Fertig’s father, Henry “Chief” Fertig, at that time chief of the Monterey Park, California Police Department. The whole time, Duke had a plastic cup that Chief kept refilling with a surreptitious bottle of whiskey. The Texas fans gave Duke a rousing ovation. Most did not know he was a former USC football player. Duke gave ‘em the “hook ‘em, horns” sign, the whole time muttering to Chief Fertig what they could do with their “horns.” He used a word that starts with an “f” and ends with a “k,” which was what he told Chief the Longhorns could do to themselves.

In many ways, 1966 was a golden year at USC. It was also when the famed School of Cinema and Television, now known as the School of Cinematic Arts, became a world class institution. Out of that class emerged two promising filmmakers, George Lucas and John Milius, and the actor Tom Selleck.

Lucas and Milius became friends with a film student at UCLA named Francis Ford Coppola, who took classes with Doors’ singer Jim Morrison and keyboardist Ray Manzarek. Another creative genius in that group was a kid from Arizona named Steven Spielberg.

All of these disparate characters got together and decided they wanted to make a movie about Vietnam, only it was not to be simply *about* Vietnam, it was to be *in* Vietnam. The idea was that they would take a film crew and loose script over to The ‘Nam, film war
scenes using a handful of actors and military personnel playing themselves. It was to be the ultimate cinema verite.

For some odd reason the Department of Defense turned it down, but a decade later it became Apocalypse Now. Lucas’s career is well known, but Milius’s less so. Milius was considered the most talented of the group, but he was a hardcore political conservative, which is verboten in Hollywood.

Turned down more often than not because of his politics, which were heavily anti-Communist and pro-NRA, Milius did write the screenplay Dirty Harry, considered one of the most reactionary right-wing law ‘n’ order films of all time starring Clint Eastwood. Milius also directed Red Dawn with Patrick Swayze and Charlie Sheen in 1984. The premise of that film was that country boys raised knowing how to use guns could survive as freedom fighters in the Colorado mountains after the Soviet Union invades America.

Robert Zemekis went to the USC film school. He directed Forrest Gump, a novel written by Alabama graduate Winston Groom. Groom wrote the foreword of my current book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation. Other leading Trojans in Hollywood include director Ron Howard, actor Henry Winkler and The OC creator Josh Schwarz. In the mid-1990s, USC did a very smart thing when they added a producer’s division to the film curriculum. This had the twin effect of teaching real world skills to producers on how to actually finance and make films, not merely conceptualize them, as well as pitting future producers, directors and writers with each other.

USC is a unique college. Despite its Hollywood pedigree and Left Coast location, it remains a patriotic institution where old-fashioned values are given the freedom to be expressed. Outside of the South, and especially in “blue state” California, this is fairly rare. For those of you who read Tom Wolfe’s 2004 novel I Am Charlotte Simmons, the notion of sending your precious children into such a maelstrom of overheated passions is daunting. I cannot assure you that USC is immune to such behavior, but can tell you that there is an independent streak at this university separating it from other institutions of higher learning.

The rivalry with California and Stanford, for example, has taken on political overtones. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, USC’s black football players were forced to listen to what John McKay told me in 2000 were, and I quote, “The most vile, disgusting racial epithets I’ve ever heard in 40 years of coaching; all of this coming from the supposedly enlightened Stanford student body. After that I wanted to beat Stanford by 2,000 points.”

In 1972, a Stanford student newspaper column claimed USC’s players were academic rejects lacking in proper civilian conduct. That group of “rejects” and “criminals” produced four Christian pastors, a school teacher, two network sportscasters, two corporate attorneys, entrepreneurs, coaches and the 2006 Republican gubernatorial
candidate of Pennsylvania, Lynn Swann. The writer of that column is probably with the New York Times today, still telling the yokels how to live!

USC’s Republican credentials have not always paved a smooth road. Numerous members of the Richard Nixon Administration were USC graduates, including First Lady Patricia Nixon, appointments secretary Dwight Chapin, Watergate figure Donald Segretti, and chief of staff H.R. Haldeman (although he transferred to and graduated from UCLA).

In the 1976 film All the President’s Men, the actor playing Segretti tells Dustin Hoffman, playing Carl Bernstein, about the “USC mafia” that dominated GOP politics on campus in his day.

In 1983, when I was student, I sat in a sold-out Bovard Auditorium and listened to one of the most fascinating, charismatic speeches I have ever heard. The speaker was Watergate “plumber” G. Gordon Liddy, and he was welcomed enthusiastically here during his book tour for his autobiography, Will.

In 1984, when I walked through graduation ceremonies, the commencement speaker was supposed to be President Ronald Reagan, an enormously popular figure on campus. Unfortunately, The Gipper had just come back from China and had to bow out due to exhaustion.

That fall, Democrat Presidential candidate Walter Mondale spoke at USC, but chants of “Reagan country” irritated him.

“You should be ashamed of yourselves,” he told the crowd. “This is the school that produced Donald Segretti.”

They just repeated the chant, “Reagan country!”

In 2004, controversial filmmaker Michael Moore screened Fahrenheit 9/11 at USC. I was not there but I have been told by student eyewitnesses that he was booed off stage, yelling at the USC crowd as he left, and thereafter took to wearing a UCLA cap.

I realize there are those in this audience who do not vote Republican, do not support the war in Iraq, and probably consider conservatism to be an archaic ideology. My point in discussing these political facts about the University of Southern California is not to tout it as a mouthpiece for the Grand Old Party. Rather, it is to point out the independence of USC. Here, the tides of easy sentiment are often bucked, trends that course unabated through other universities are not so easily allowed to go forth unquestioned. A student is free to get an education here that is not marked by the kind of radical indoctrination of so many other campuses, and that after all, is a good thing!

This is the greatest country God has ever graced Mankind with. Perhaps John Wayne was jingoist. Perhaps my speech contains some bias, but in the end I can say from experience
that I love this school. It made me into a man and taught me critical thinking, which is the key to persuasive discourse no matter what one’s leaning may be.

Finally, I leave you with this message: faith, hope and love are the most powerful tools you will ever have at your disposal. Many of you will join fraternities. Much partying and experience awaits you, and I say this to the parents as much as the kids: somehow you will survive, just as I did. Enjoy yourselves, have fun. You will never have a better four years than the four that await you.

But always remember who you are. I am a Christian. It is the rock of my life. As you deal with the perils of youth, peer pressure, and acculturation, find your rock. Cling to it. Know that there is something greater than you, something that connects us all. When things get confusing, when your mind is not right, when you begin to question long held beliefs, find that rock and cling to it.

Before I let you go, I would like to invite you to stay afterwards for a signing of my new book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, along with The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty. I will also be signing at the peristyle end of the Coliseum tomorrow for three hours prior to the Arizona game. I will be accompanied by the legendary Tom Kelly along with numerous Trojan greats. In addition, I will appear at USC Collections, South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, Monday at noon.

Ladies and gentleman, I thank you for the honor of allowing me to address you today, and I leave you with these words: may God bless America, and may the Trojans continue to . . . Fight On!
STEVEN TRAVERS

SPEECH AT USC

Steven Travers graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in communications from the University of Southern California in 1983. He also studied in the School of Cinematic Arts and worked in Hollywood for six years, during which time he wrote the screenplay, The Lost Battalion. Steve is the author of The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty, which proposes that USC has replaced Notre Dame as the greatest college football tradition in history. Released in 2006, it made the National Book Network “top 100” seller list. His latest book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, tells the story of a 1970 football game in which the integrated Trojans traveled to Birmingham, beat the segregated Crimson Tide, and thus created such a stir that full integration came to all aspects of Southern life in succeeding years.

This book has been the subject of two documentaries by College Sports Television (a division of CBS); one on coach Paul “Bear” Bryant and the other titled Tackling Segregation, which aired in 2006. It has also been optioned by a major Hollywood producer, Kerry McCluggage (USC ’74) of Allumination/Craftsman Films. His producing partners on the film include legendary Trojan Anthony Davis.

Steve is the author of numerous other books published by Triumph, a division of Random House. His first book was the best selling Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman, nominated for a Casey Award for best baseball book of 2002. Next year he will publish Trojans Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be a Real Fan, as well as College Football’s All-Time Top 25 Traditions, which ranks the greatest collegiate programs in history, concluding that under Pete Carroll the Trojans have compiled the most impressive overall record in the game. His books are available at the USC Bookstore and he will be conducting a signing immediately after his speech.

In addition to his writing career, Steve is a guest speaker here at USC who has been featured in Professor Dan Durbin’s class on “Sports, Culture and Society” at the Annenberg School of Communications. He played professional baseball, coached at USC and in Europe, attended law school, and served in the Army.

Ladies and gentlemen, Steven Travers.
Thank you very much for inviting me to speak on this auspicious occasion. I am truly honored to address any group at my alma mater, whether it be parents, students, book signings, or classes. I must say that when I entered USC a quarter-century ago, if somebody had told me that my books would be prominently displayed in the student bookstore; that I would be a guest speaker at the Annenberg School of Communications; that I would sign books in the company of gridiron legends like Charles “Tree” Young at the Coliseum; and that I would be addressing incoming freshmen and their parents, well, I would have said, “I’ll take that.”

My talk today is about USC’s place in history, its role as a dynamic force in society, in Hollywood, and in the state of California. The subject is not merely its glorious football past; but its place in the pantheon of American social progress and how time after time this great institution has been on the right side of important events.

First, I would like to take care of a few announcements.

As mentioned, I will be signing copies of both *The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty* and *One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation*, immediately following this talk. Those books are available as mentioned here at the USC Bookstore as well as the USC Collections, South Coast Plaza in Orange County. I am the author of seven books, plus an eighth, a history of the Los Angeles Lakers, due in a few weeks. My books are available at Amazon.com and most bookstores.

I will be signing in front of the Coliseum peristyle entrance prior to the game tomorrow and at the USC Collections on Monday at 5 PM. In addition, I will making an address at the Los Alamitos Public Library on Sunday at three. On Monday morning at 10:30, I will be a guest in Professor Dan Durbin’s class on “Sports, Culture and Society” at the Annenberg School of Communications. The focus of the class is a retrospective of the 1972 national champion Trojans, considered to be the greatest college football team ever assembled. Other guest panelists will include Charles “Tree” Young, Anthony Davis, Dave Brown, J.K. McKay, Pat Haden, and Craig Fertig.

Lastly, I would like to invite you to attend the USC Weekender at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco on Friday, November 9, the day before the Trojans game at California. Our guest speaker will be the aforementioned Charles “Tree” Young, a member of the College Football Hall of Fame who starred for the 1981 world champion San Francisco 49ers and is today a respected Christian pastor in the Seattle area.

Now, students, parents, Trojans, lend me your ear and hear a tale; a tale of American excellence; a tale about an institution we all love called the University of Southern California. This tale starts a long time ago, before there was a University of Southern California.
In 1849, gold was discovered in this state. It was found not here in the Southland but in the foothills east of Sacramento. San Francisco became the hub of Pacific Coast commerce, trade and society.

Over the next 20 years, the trans-atlantic railroad connected the East Coast with the West Coast. In observing a map, it would seem logical that the railroad would have been built through Texas, connecting to Arizona, Nevada, through the Southern California desert connecting to San Diego and Los Angeles in the south, and by coastal route to San Francisco, Sacramento and points north. Instead, it was built over the rugged terrain of the Rocky and Sierra Mountain ranges, at much greater cost and hardship. Why?

Because Abraham Lincoln was the major political backer of the railroad, who in turn were his strongest political and financial supporters. Lincoln was determined that the railroad would not be built through the Confederate states, since it would have therefore been built by slaves, thus “exporting” slavery to the West.

Instead, slavery came to America to die. A thriving institution that survived Greek philosophy and even the European Christian Church could not survive the U.S. Constitution. Finally, a document, a country, a people so righteous that one of the world’s great evils is unable to overcome that righteousness. The greatest blight in this nation’s glorious history ended not because another empire came to our shores, defeated us in battle, and forced us at the point of a gun to be moral. No, within ourselves the “better angels of our nature.” After much angst, yes, but we found it using documents written by Americans, in America, which and came to life in America.

After the Civil War, the railroad was completed, its final destination being Sacramento, the state capital, and San Francisco, the home of the Barbary Coast. Indian Wars ensued and a population boom took over the Golden State. A political dynamic took shape. San Francisco became the preferred destination of the Union’s backers from New York, Boston and the North. Los Angeles became the preferred destination of displaced Confederates. Thus the term Southern California takes on a new meaning.

Northern California was more secular and less religious. An “anything goes” mentality permeated the Barbary Coast, spurred by the non-traditional nature of the “gold rush.” In the South, the population tended to be more conservative and Christian.

Colleges sprouted up to serve the growing populous. In Berkeley, a land-grant public institution: the University of California. Eight years later, in 1880, a private college built in a mustard field, in the finest residential neighborhood in the city, located a couple miles from Olvera Street, the traditional downtown center. Given the name University of Southern California, our school was founded by three men of diverse religious affiliation; one Jewish, one Catholic, one a Methodist. It originally featured Methodist religious instruction, its sports teams referred to as the Methodists. Over the years it becomes non-denominational but retained a sense of religious morality. In 1912, Los Angeles Times
sports editor Owen Bird covered a USC track meet, declaring that our men “fought like Trojans.” The nickname stuck.

In the 1880s, Stanford University is built. College football becomes a popular pastime. Through college football universities develop a public persona, prestige on the gridiron a direct reflection of the schools. California and Stanford develop a major rivalry, and over time national football reputations. USC has no such natural rival, and does not develop such a national reputation.

As gold is discovered in Alaska, the Pacific Northwest becomes a major hub of Westward expansion. Through this dynamic, Washington, Washington State and Oregon become the best college football teams during the period prior to and during World War I. The Pacific Coast Conference forms in 1915. The Rose Bowl, first played in 1902 but discontinued, is started again in 1916. Victories by Washington State and Oregon demonstrate to the nation that Western football is now superior to that played in the Ivy League. California’s “Wonder Teams” are the first great dynasty after World War I. Stanford hires Pop Warner and matches California as the “best of the West.” Only Notre Dame’s football reputation is comparable.

Meanwhile, USC is not on the “radar screen.” Los Angeles has one major disadvantage: it is a desert and there is not enough fresh water to maintain a large population. The Los Angeles “city fathers” observe the landscape, concluding that with the fabulous year-round weather, the wide-open spaces with fertile soil and exotic fauna, the endless strand of golden surf, Los Angeles is a veritable Shangri-La just waiting to become a great American city. All they lack is fresh water.

City engineer William Mulholland hatches a plan. An aqueduct is built, diverting fresh water from the Owens Valley in the eastern Sierras to burgeoning Los Angeles. Ladies and gentlemen, this aqueduct - completed around 1913 - has been criticized for various reasons. The truth it, it was one of the greatest engineering accomplishments in the history of Mankind, surpassed at that point only by the building of the trans-continental railroad. These accomplishments, in congruence with and followed by successful aviation flight, the building of Hoover Dam, the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority, a network of highways, the erection of such masterpieces as the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges; followed by the Manhattan Project, then landing men on the Moon; my friends I’m here to tell you that these were uniquely American accomplishments that, at the time, could not have occurred, if barely even conceived of, on other nations of this Earth!

Things happen here sooner and in more excellent manner than any nation. Events that took years, decades, centuries to occur in other countries have happened in relative “light speed” in America.

With the completion of the aqueduct, Los Angeles is allowed to grow. The San Fernando Valley is incorporated into the city. In the years prior to World War I, the University of Southern California grows with the region. USC provides educational opportunities for
the first generation of college-educated black Americans. A museum is currently being
built on campus and USC’s history project has done an excellent job logging the record
of its early black pioneers in medicine, the law and architecture. Out here in the West,
new attitudes take shape, attitudes that will shape this nation. Out if this emerges a
divergent black intellectual class, one led by W.E.B DuBois and favoring “elitist” class
leaders; the other a more cooperative vision embodied by Booker T. Washington.

America enters World War 1. Countless servicemen pass through Los Angeles on their
way to and from training centers that are built throughout the Southland. They fall in love
with this arid land. When the war ends with American victory in 1918, many enter the
University of Southern California. On Vermont Avenue, halfway between downtown and
Hollywood, the Southern branch of the University of California system opens for
business in 1919. A few years later, UCLA expands to Westwood. Critics skoff that
“nobody will go west of Western Avenue.” Santa Monica is a vacation spot for the
burgeoning Hollywood elite. Despite enough land to built a stadium worthy of one of
those Latin American soccer collosusus, UCLA chooses to play football at the Coliseum.
They must drive to our campus and walk past our shrines.

With the boys home from the war, America’s identity begins to change, to take shape. A
new class of literati known as the “Lost Generation” – Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott
Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Henry Miller – give international voice to this new America.
Under Republican leadership, the United States economy explodes as never before. They
called it the Roaring ‘20s. A leisure class emerges. What was available only to the
privileged elites of Greece and Rome are now available to the American masses. In
baseball, Babe Ruth thrills millions. The gladiators of the New Rome play football.
Universities build enormous arenas to house the spectacles on these green plains – “The
Swamp” in Florida, “The Big House” in Michigan, in Columbus “The Horseshoe.”
Football becomes a professional game. Heroes emerge. Charles Lindbergh crosses the
Atlantic. There is a sense of American exceptionalism. A source of pride in the U.S., it
becomes a source of concern in foreign capitals.

In Germany, the emerging political leader Adolf Hitler has made note of the fact that 19th
Century German immigration to the New World, combined with the loss of the “flower
of German manhood” in the Great War, has drained the Fatherland of vital manpower. To
his consternation, college football rosters are dotted with the German names of All-
American grid stars: Muller, Oosterbahn Schulz, Friedman. Hitler expresses great
concern that if ever he launches a worldwide effort at military domination, it will be these
very men, the “best Germans” who had enough entrepreneurial courage to make their
mark in America and are now second and third generation sports heroes. They will quell
his advance. He would have been wise to listen to the voice in the back of his mind. Led
by one of those German-Americans, Dwight Eisenhower, America emerged as the “thin
red line” separating the world from Hitler’s chaos, instead providing American freedoms.

In 1919, the University of Southern California observed the landscape of military victory,
of American success, and out of that the ultra-competitive new arena of college football.
A battle for domination begins to take shape in California, between the Golden Bears of Cal, the Stanford Indians, and the new kids on the block from USC.

The best football over the previous decade was played in the state of Washington. USC hires a high school coach from Seattle named Elmer “Gloomy Gus” Henderson; so named because it was always, “Aw, we can’t block,” or “Our offense will never stop ‘em.” Henderson is brought in based on the promise that those great high school players from Seattle will be ticketed not for Washington or Washington State, but will follow him in Moses fashion to the Promised Land of USC. They do. Our first football All-American, Brice Taylor, is among them. Taylor is living proof that a new era is upon us, that in California there is a progressive way of thinking. He is part black, part Cherokee Indian, and despite being born with only one hand, one of the best players in the land.

USC knows that college football is now big business. Their image, its prestige, is greatly affected by its football fortunes. Stanford University has a head start. It was Stanford that played in the first Rose Bowl in 1902, won the national championship of 1905, has established the biggest rivalry in the country, the Big Game with Cal, and now decides to go for the Big Kahuna in the form of the Rose Bowl.

Started in 1902, re-established in 1916, the Rose Bowl is played every New Year’s Day at Tournament Park, which is now the Cal Tech campus. Huge stadiums are being erected, and if the Rose Bowl hopes to be competitive, they will need to play in one of them. Stanford Stadium goes up in 1921 and they immediately bid to move the Rose Bowl to Palo Alto. The Tournament of Roses Committee and City of Pasadena react like Americans, rising to the challenge of building the greatest of all football stadiums in the Arroyo Seco in 1922.

Memorial Stadium is built in Berkeley. In 1923, the “House That Ruth Built,” Yankee Stadium, is erected in the Bronx. In that same year, the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum is built adjacent to the USC campus. After the hiring of Henderson, who is immediately successful, USC has decided to become a big time program. In 1922 they join the Pacific Coast Conference and play in the very first New Year’s Day Rose Bowl game, a 14-3 triumph over Penn State marked by a peculiar portent of the future: the Nittany Lions are late for the game because they were caught in traffic. The next year the Trojans move into the Coliseum, which with its Roman motifs symbolizes American superiority; the New Centurions of a modern age.

The building of the Rose Bowl and the Coliseum become the defining impetus of Trojan greatness and allow Los Angeles to emerge as the sports capital of the world. It is the Rose Bowl that becomes the grandest of all games, its imprimatur built on the backs of spectacular victories attained by the Men of Troy over all comers East and South. It is the Coliseum that attracts the 1932 Olympics, the true “coming out party” of this, the city of the future.
But true greatness came slowly at USC. “Gloomy Gus” Henderson could not beat California. Despite having won almost 90 percent of his games, he is fired after the 1924 season. On January 1, 1925, the “Four Horsemen of Notre Dame,” led by legendary coach Knute Rockne, ventured to the Rose Bowl where they defeated Ernie Nevers, coach Pop Warner, and the Stanford Indians. After the game, Rockne jokes to reporters, “Maybe I ought to take the USC job and show them how to beat Cal and Stanford.” USC administrators take him at his word and make an all-out effort to hire him. Rockne gives it serious consideration but Notre Dame holds his “feet to the fire.” Rockne recommends Howard Jones, winner of the national championship at Yale and a coach whose Iowa Hawkeyes beat the Irish in 1921.

Jones is hired and is immediately successful. He decides that an inter-sectional rivalry with Notre Dame is what will separate his program from Cal and Stanford. He sends student assistant Gwyn Wilson to Lincoln, Nebraska, where Notre Dame is playing the final game of the 1925 campaign. The temperature in Lincoln is about . . . one! Nebraska beats the Irish, who get on the Sunset Limited to train them out of ice cold Lincoln. On the train, Wilson pitches Rockne on playing at USC in 1926. Rockne informs Wilson that the administration is already giving him a hard time; that he travels too much and the players miss too much class time as is. Thanks, but no thanks. Wilson goes back to his car with his tail between his legs.

“What will I tell Coach Jones?” he ask himelf.

Enter Mrs. Marion Wilson and Mrs. Bonnie Rockne. On a train filled with football players, football coaches, football writers and football fans, they are the only two women; kindred spirits. Mrs. Wilson fills Mrs. Rockne’s head with glorious tales of the new Rodeo Drive shopping boutiques in Beverly Hills, where the newest fashions from Paris are being worn by Hollywood movie actresses. Having spent the weekend in ice cold Lincoln, Nebraska, Mrs. Rockne is immediately captivated, excuses herself, and goes to exclaim to her husband how pleased she is that Notre Dame will be traveling to Los Angeles in 1926. Knute tells her he had to decline the offer. Mrs. Rockne immediately informs him that he will indeed accept the offer. Thus is born the USC-Notre Dame rivalry. Capacity Coliseum crowds watch the Trojans capture its first national championship by virtue of a 27-14 win over Notre Dame in 1928. 120,000 see Notre Dame beat USC at Soldier Field in Chicago in 1928. 112,000 at the same location in 1929.

The Bonnie Rockne-Marion Wilson story is fun and certainly not false, but in truth Rockne probably would have begun the USC rivalry eventually. In the 1920s, a Christian revivalist movement swept America. It had the disturbing effect of manifesting into racial intolerance in the South, and anti-Catholic bigotry in the Midwest. Notre Dame’s players were exposed to very poor treatment on that road trip to Lincoln, Nebraska.

Rockne endeavored to take advantage of a growing Catholic fan base, known as the “subway alumni” in big cities. Thus followed epic battles with Army at the Polo Grounds
and Yankee Stadium in New York, with Penn State in Philadelphia, with Southern California in Los Angeles and Chicago. Notre Dame became “America’s Team” in the 1920s, and by virtue of being their greatest rival, USC was able to create separation from California and Stanford. This caused great angst at Cal and Stanford. Pop Warner, unable to beat USC, left Stanford. Jealous of Trojan gridiron glory, Cal and Stanford accused USC of academic impropriety, of professionalism. They began to change the lyrics of “Fight On!” to:

“Fight On! For old SC,
The fullback needs,
His salary.”

They said that USC football players were academic laggards. When those very players went on to sterling non-football careers in the law, in Hollywood, when All-American lineman Aaron Rosenberg became a leading Hollywood producer, others noted poets, architects, actors, and various other success stories, it was of no good value to Cal or Stanford. They were left to wallow in their perfidies and got used to it.

In 1931, USC traveled to South Bend to play for the first time at the new Notre Dame Stadium. On the way there, the train stopped in Tucson, Arizona. Kicker Johnny Baker performed below Coach Jones’s expectations and almost quit the team then and there. In California, my father, Donald E. Travers, was just a boy. He loved football and heard that the “Catholic family” who lived in an apartment below his had a radio. The game was broadcast nationally with the legendary Graham McNamee doing play-by-play. It was billed as one of the biggest sporting events ever held.

USC trailed the heavily-favored Irish 14-0 in the fourth quarter. My father listened in silence while the Catholic family made varied references to God’s favoritism of the Irish over the Trojans, amid various put-downs of USC. Then USC rallied. Trailing 14-13 late in the game, they lined up on fourth down within sights of the Irish goal line. Jones decided to try a play instead of kicking a field goal, since Baker had performed poorly in practice and missed a crucial extra-point attempt earlier. In a play reminiscent of USC’s winning touchdown against Notre Dame in 2005, the Trojans approached the line in normal formation, but at the last second switched to a field goal. Baker was straight and true. The 16-14 Trojan victory gave them the national championship. The train ride from South Bend to Chicago to Los Angeles took several days and resembled one of Harry Truman’s “whistle stop” Presidential tours. Between 300,000 and half a million Los Angelenos met USC when they arrived at Union Station. Speeches were made, a Mayoral procession held with a Manhattan-style confetti parade through the financial district all the way to campus.

USC won the 1931 and 1932 national championships. They beat Notre Dame in 1938 and 1939, when they captured the national title again. The Trojans were the “Team of the Decade” in the 1930s, firmly established as Notre Dame’s equal. When World War II began, Howard Jones and USC had four national championships to Notre Dame’s three.
While the rivalry had helped increase Trojan prestige, it had also done the same thing for the Irish.

UCLA built their sports tradition on integration of great black athletes. In the 1930s, the great Jackie Robinson starred for the Bruins. As a social statement, it cannot be overemphasized, the importance of integrated Trojan-Bruin games, played before capacity crowds at the Coliseum, covered by a large metropolitan press and national media.

USC has consistently been on the right side of history. In 1956, at a time when segregated Southern teams refused to travel north or west to play integrated schools, USC made the perilous trip to Austin, Texas with a black running back named C.R. Roberts. Despite a tremendous amount of turmoil, before and after the game, Roberts rushed for 251 yards in the first half to spur a stunning 44-20 USC triumph that induced the Longhorn players to shake Roberts’s hand afterwards in displays of good sportsmanship. An indication that the time for true integration had not yet come to the South is indicative of fan reaction to Roberts, who was catcalled to the end.

Notre Dame established itself as a dominant power in the 1940s, but by 1962, coach John McKay turned things around for Southern California. The ‘62 Trojans shut out Notre Dame, 25-0 en route to an unbeaten season, a wild 42-37 win over Wisconsin in the Rose Bowl, and the national championship.

In 1964, new Irish coach Ara Parsheghian brought unbeaten, number one-ranked Notre Dame to the Coliseum, needing one last win for the national crown. Trailing 17-0 at the half, USC quarterback Craig Fertig engineered a comeback capped by a fourth down curl-in, known as “84-Z Delay,” to receiver Rod Sherman, giving Troy a 20-17 win.

UCLA football coach Red Sanders said, “The USC-UCLA game is not a matter of life or death. It’s more important than that.” In 1967, USC beat UCLA, 21-20 to capture the national championship. Up until that time, the 1967 UCLA game was considered by many to be the greatest college football game ever played.

In the 1960s and 1970s, USC played a series of rivalry games that elevated themselves to the top of the pantheon, symbolizing a golden age of college football. Aside from the 1967 USC-UCLA game, the battles between cross-town rivals were titanic struggles, often with national championship implications in 1965, 1968, 1969, 1972, 1973, 1978, 1988 and beyond. As color television became the vogue, images of the green Coliseum plains under blue Southern California skies, fans dressed in beach attire frolicking in 80 degree temperatures, All-Americans dueling it out in front of “gold standard” cheerleaders and tanned, Beautiful People crowds, tantalized a nation.

line was called “The Wild Bunch,” based on Sam Peckinpah’s Western of that same year. Under John McKay and John Robinson, Troy won five national championships. Trojan greatness was forged against the very toughest competition America had to offer. Between 1967 and 1982, the best Notre Dame teams coached by Ara Parsheghian and Dan Devine beat USC just twice in 16 seasons.

Year after year, legendary coaches Bo Schembechler of Michigan and Woody Hayes of Ohio State brought unbeaten teams to the Rose Bowl. Each time there national title hopes were rebuffed by Trojan juggernauts. USC traveled far and wide to take on all comers.

In the mid-1960s, John McKay met Alabama coach Paul “Bear” Bryant at a California coaching clinic run by Redwood High School coach Bob Troppmann. One night, Bryant and McKay were enjoying a late-night cocktail or seven when Bryant suggested that if McKay were to bring an integrated Trojan team to Legion Field, demonstrating that white and black players could be classy, disciplined and play great, it might have the effect of “opening eyes” in the South; enough to allow Bryant to overcome the politics of Governor George Wallace, thus integrating Alabama football at last. According to legend, Troppmann observed this exchange while a hundred yards or so away, sleeping in bunk was his star player, one of the campers. That player’s name was Pete Carroll.

In 1970, USC went to Birmingham, Alabama. Another black Trojan running back, Sam “Bam” Cunningham, played the game of his life to spark a resounding 42-21 USC triumph. This time, unlike the C.R. Roberts game at Texas in 1956, the time was right. As the story goes, Bryant invited Cunningham into the ‘Bama dressing room, propped him up on a stool before a sea of white faces, and announced, “This here’s what a football player looks like.”

The story has been repeated as Holy Grail within Trojan circles for 35 years; by John McKay, Marv Goux, and by legendary USC announcer Tom Kelly on a 1988 video documentary of USC football history called Trojan Video Gold. There is only one problem: it apparently never happened.

Whether it happened that way or not is immaterial. Cunningham, his teammates and their coaches – white and black – demonstrated that men of different races can work together. It was a telling visual statement resonating with the fans observing it at Legion Field in 1970. To say that 72,000 Alabamians had what the Bible describes as a “road to Damascus” moment then and there would be to exaggerate, but the fact is it helped Bryant smoothly ease a black recruit named Wilbur Jackson into his program. Bryant is properly credited with making integration successful at ‘Bama, and when it succeeded there, it succeeded in the rest of the country.

This is the story I tell in my book One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation. As I conclude, it was a moment in which liberalism and conservatism met at the 50-yard line – perhaps for the last time, it sometimes seems – and the winner was America.
The 1970-71 Trojans have been viewed as an integrated team that went to Alabama, teaching the people down there a lesson. Like all things, the truth is more complicated. The fact is, the Trojans of that era were split by racial divisions, riven by the desire by some to see black quarterback Jimmy Jones stay on the job; by others to replace him with white hotshot Mike Rae. In 1971, USC was 2-4, teetering on the brink of collapse. Notre Dame was 6-0, gliding toward the national championship. The week the Trojans were traveling to South Bend, a little-known offensive lineman named Dave Brown approached John McKay, told him he was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and would McKay allow a “demonstration” after practice? The Catholic McKay probably figured that at 2-4 it couldn’t hurt.

This was not a time of religious revival in America. In 1966, *Time* magazine announced on its cover, “God is dead.” It was the age of peace protests, the Vietnam War, the “sexual revolution,” with movies such as *Rosemary’s Baby* and *The Exorcist* lending credence to the notion that evil was more powerful than righteousness. Athletes in particular were viewed as “weak” and unaggressive if they accepted Christ, who according to John Lennon was less popular than The Beatles.

Nevertheless, according to Brown a “lot of guys accepted Christ that day.” Thus armed, the Trojans traveled to South Bend and, under the watchful eye of Touchdown Jesus, dismantled Notre Dame, 28-14. That group of players never lost again. Not that season, not in 1972.

In 1972, tailback/kick returner Anthony Davis had what this historian believes to be the finest single game any college football player has ever had, scoring six touchdowns in a 45-23 rout of Notre Dame. The Trojans went on to annihilate Woody Hayes and Ohio State in the Rose Bowl, 42-17 to cap an unbeaten, national championship campaign. To this day, a consensus of college football pundits consider the 1972 Trojans to be the greatest team ever assembled.

In 1974, A.D. was a senior. He was just as explosive, earning the moniker “Notre Dame killer” when he engineered Troy’s comeback from 24-0 down in the first half. USC scored 55 points in 17 minutes in what may be, at least from USC’s point of view, the greatest game they ever played. Allow me to quote from my book *The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty*, with homage to the great L.A. Times sports columnist Jim Murray:

“It was not a sporting event, it was a Roman orgy. USC was not a football team, they were Patton’s Army marching through the Low Countries, Grant taking Richmond, the Wehrmacht during the Blitzkrieg.

“For Trojans fans, it was not a game, it was a sighting. It was Fatima, Lourdes, and the Burning Bush combined.
“For Notre Dame coach Ara Parseghian, it was the Seventh Circle of Hell, The Twilight Zone, ‘Chef’s head’ in Apocalypse Now.

“For the Irish, it was their worst disaster since the potato famine.

“It was a 17-minute Southern California earthquake, epicentered at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on a fall Saturday in 1974. It was felt as far away as South Bend, Indiana, and the aftershocks reverberate to this day.

“Up in the broadcast booth, Ohio State coach Woody Hayes must have felt like a Prussian military commander with a binocular-view of Napoleon’s Italian Campaign, knowing he would have to face them in the Rose Bowl a month later. The USC rooting section started chanting, ‘Woody, you’re next.’

“. . . the Trojans had conquered Ireland, but before they could ‘roll over Austria, Poland, and Denmark,’ as Sports Illustrated stated it, McKay pulled his starters . . .

“‘I have no idea what happened,’ said McKay. ‘But I guarantee I was there. And I clapped.’

“Parsheghian never coached after that season. Rumors have it that he sees a therapist to combat visions of a white horse constantly running around a field.”

When Troy beat Ohio State in a come-from-behind 18-17 Rose Bowl victory, McKay had his fourth national title.

The 1976 world champion Oakland Raiders had seven Trojans on their roster. Their opponents in the 1977 Super Bowl were the Minnesota Vikings, the game played ironically on USC’s “stomping grounds,” the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. The Vikings had two USC players on their roster.

Under coach John Robinson, USC defeated Joe Montana and the Fighting Irish, 27-25, when a history major from Riordan High School in San Francisco named Frank Jordan kicked a 37-yard field with two seconds left in 1978. After defeating Michigan in the Rose Bowl, USC captured another national championship. They followed that up with an unbeaten 1979 season, beating Ohio State in the Rose Bowl, and by 1980 had extended their unbeaten streak to 28 games.

25 years passed without a national championship, but coach Pete Carroll turned things around. I am proud to say that I attended the same suburban California high school as Pete Carroll. Some day, hopefully, I plan to write his autobiography. Many coaches are mercenaries. Pete is not. He may not have gone to USC, but he was born to coach here.

In 1969, Pete was in the stands rooting for the Trojans when Sam Dickerson caught a last-minute pass in the corner of the end zone to give USC’s “Cardiac Kids” a 14-12 win
over UCLA. In the 1980s, when he was an NFL assistant coach, the newspaper in his hometown conducted an interview with him. He was asked who he rooted for as a kid.

“I always rooted for John McKay and USC,” he replied. “I had SC pennants in my room. I became a Trojan fan when Sam ‘Bam’ Cunningham beat Alabama and de-segregated the South.” This was some 15 years before he became the head coach at USC.

After being fired by the New England Patriots after the 1999 season, Carroll and his family moved to Los Angeles. Why? For one, his daughter was playing volleyball for the Women of Troy. His wife, Glena, came from a Trojan family, her father having graduated from USC. She grew up in the South Bay area and they moved to Palos Verdes Estates. After years of being a “vagabond” coaches wife, she was now home. When people speculate that Carroll may leave for the NFL, I say that the single biggest reason he will not is this. He and his wife are at home and have no reason not to stay.

How great has Pete Carroll been in the 2000s? Let me count the ways. Here are the raw statistics:

Two consecutive national championships between 2003 and 2004.


The number one pick of the 2003 NFL Draft was Carson Palmer; numerous other Trojans have been selected in the first round.

A 34-game winning streak between 2003 and 2006.

33 consecutive weeks named ranked number one in the nation between 2003 and 2006.

Entering the 2007 season, a 65-12 record between 2001 and 2006, which includes a 4-1 record in BCS bowl games, three Rose Bowl appearances, and five straight Top Five finishes.

At one point between 2002 and 2006, USC was 51-2, the best record over a 53-game stretch in college football history. They have been, at varying points, 55-3 and 56-4 over 60 games between 2002 and 2006. They have not lost a home game since 2001, have beaten Notre Dame five straight times and beat UCLA seven consecutive times. However, this does not tell the whole story.

In 2001, USC lost 27-16 at South Bend. It was not merely the last time the Trojans lost to the Irish. It was the last time USC lost by more than a touchdown. Just think about this for a second. USC is 65-12, but 11 of those losses have been by a touchdown or less, most by the barest of margins.
In 2001 for instance, had USC won five of the six games they lost by less than seven points, they likely would have been chosen to play in the BCS championship game. Recall that Nebraska was picked over Oregon despite getting blown out by Colorado. In 2002, had there been a play-off, USC was the best team at season’s end and would have been the national champion. In 2005, the margin of defeat against Vince Young and Texas was as razor thin as can be conceived in a game historians believe to be the greatest ever played. Prior to the BCS, in that year the Trojans would have beaten a Big 10 team in the Rose Bowl and won the national title via the polls, no matter how loudly Texas screamed. In 2006 the difference between victory and defeat was tiny.

In other words, with a few lucky breaks here and there, Pete Carroll could be 76-1 with six straight national championships entering the 2007 season! In the history of college football, his first six years have been as extraordinary as any coach ever, and this includes the likes of Knute Rockne, Howard Jones, Frank Leahy, Bud Wilkinson, Bear Bryant, John McKay, Joe Paterno and Bobby Bowden. This is rare air indeed.

It is my considered opinion that under Coach Carroll, the University of Southern California has overtaken Notre Dame as the greatest of all collegiate football traditions. I do not say this lightly and come to argument my premise with a solid foundation of facts. Let us first acknowledge that accomplishments in the modern era are greater than those of the leather helmet or “rugby” eras. Since 1960, college football has modernized. We now see face masks, real equipment, better training and diet, national schedules and travel, major color television, big money, the BCS, high-stakes recruiting, and true integration not just of black athletes, but Latinos, Pacific-Islanders, and others. It is in this era that USC dominates.

USC has won 11 national championships, the most of any program, tied with Notre Dame. (As an aside, USC’s track team has 26 NCAA championships, its baseball team 12, and UCLA’s basketball team 11). Prior to World War II, USC, Alabama and California had won four national championships. Minnesota had five, Notre Dame three. When John McKay arrived in 1960, Notre Dame had seven national championships to our four. They also had five Heisman Trophy winners to our zero. Now, the modern era is upon us: face masks, black players, new standards. Since 1962, USC has won seven national titles to Notre Dame’s four. Since 1965, USC has won seven Heisman Trophies to Notre Dame’s one.

Furthermore, each USC national championship is legitimate: won via victory against a national powerhouse, often Michigan under Bo Schembechler or Ohio State under Woody Hayes, in the greatest of all New Year’s Day games, the Rose Bowl. USC does not “back in” with a bowl losses or non-appearances. On the other hand, seven of Notre Dame’s eleven national titles have come in years in which they did not play a bowl game. Surely in one or two of those years the Irish would have lost a bowl game had they played in it.
USC has also had more years in which it might be said they should have been national champions but lost a skewered vote. Notre Dame has none of those. The “Catholic vote” has always benefited them.

Alabama would like to believe they have the greatest tradition, but two of their so-called “national championships” came in years in which they lost bowl games. Photos of a hangdog Joe Namath leaving the Orange Bowl field after losing to Texas on January 1, 1965 are not depictions of a national champion. Neither are photos of the dejected Crimson Tide leaving the Sugar Bowl on New Year’s Eve, 1973 after Notre Dame’s Bob Thomas kicked a game-winning field goal to beat the “UPI national champions,” 24-23.

Furthermore, no Alabama player has ever won the Heisman Trophy while seven Trojans have. Oklahoma likes to beat its chest, but I also noticed in their media guide that in years when they won the Associated Press and United Press International national championships, they like to count that as two titles. Michigan trots out their all-time record for most victories and winning percentage. Many of those came during the Grover Cleveland and Teddy Roosevelt Administrations. They have only one national championship since 1948 and an 18-20 record in bowl games, including 2-6 against Southern California. There really are not any other contenders.

USC has by far the best bowl record of any team in the nation, and the best Rose Bowl record by an equally wide margin. Notre Dame, on the other hand, is 13-15 in bowl games and holds the current, on-going record for most consecutive bowl defeats. Alabama lost seven straight bowl games between the 1967 and 1973 seasons.

Despite the fact that USC’s football program got a late start and was not a major sport until after World War I, Southern California ranks among the all-time leaders in historical victories. USC is also in the elite class of college teams with an overall .700 winning percentage in all games played since 1888.

USC enters the 2007 season having been ranked number one the second most times of any college team. If they continue to be ranked number one throughout the season they will pass Notre Dame’s all-time record of 89. USC holds the record for most consecutive weeks ranked number one, 33 between 2003 and 2006. Miami is second with 20 between 2001 and 2002. USC was also ranked number one 17 straight weeks between 1972 and 1973.

USC’s 34-game winning streak between 2003 and 2006 is the second-longest in modern college football history, behind only Oklahoma’s 47-game streak between 1953 and 1957. Among the longest winning and unbeaten streaks in history, they have several of them, including streaks ranging from 23 to 34 at various times between 1931 and 1933; 1971 to 1973; 1978 to 1980; and 2003 to 2006. Had USC beaten Texas in the 2006 Rose Bowl, they would have entered the next campaign one unbeaten regular season away from tying the record with a chance to break it at the BCS championship game. USC would have become the first team in history to win three straight AP national
championships. Seniors last year would have been shooting for four national titles in as many years, but consider this.

When USC lost to Vince Young and Texas, they did not have the services of Lofa Tatupu, who left early and at the very time was in the process of helping the Seattle Seahawks, coached by ex-USC quarterback Mike Holmgren, get to the the Super Bowl against a Steeler team led by former Trojan All-American Troy Polamalu. The Steelers got there on the strength of defeating rival Cincinnati, led by All-Pro ex-Trojan quarterback Carson Palmer.

Furthermore, in that Texas Rose Bowl game, USC did not have Erick Wright, who had been dropped for disciplinary reasons. He transferred to UNLV, was a star, and last spring was a second round draft choice. Could Tatupu or Wright have made the difference between victory and defeat against Young’s Longhorns?

In addition, had All-American wide receiver Mike Williams stayed in school, he would have been a senior in 2005. Had Reggie Bush and LenDale White come back for their senior years in 2006, all bets are off. Bush might have become the second player in history to win two Heisman Trophies. White may well have won the school’s eighth Heisman. USC might have earned its 12th national championship in 2005, pushing it past the 11-all tie with Notre Dame. With Bush or White returning in 2006 they may well have run the winning streak to the all-time record 48 entering the 2007 season ranked number one. The record 33 straight weeks ranked number one may have been extended to 46 entering 2007 still number one. Notre Dame’s record 89 weeks ranked first would have been eclipsed by USC reaching 94.

Let us examine a few other areas of criteria. In 1968, USC set the record for most first round draft picks in a single draft with five. They have had two of three most drafted classes in history, in 1953 and 1975. They are tied with Notre Dame for most players chosen number one overall with five. USC holds a slim edge over Ohio State for most players drafted in the first round, 67 through the 2007 draft. Records are sketchy, but USC and and Notre Dame are roughly tied for most players drafted, and most players in pro football. USC has had two pro football MVPs (O.J. Simpson and Marcus Allen), two Super Bowl MVPs (Lynn Swann and Marcus Allen), the most players in the Super Bowl, the most players on winning Super Bowls teams, and an increasing lead over Notre Dame for most players in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Notre Dame has the most All-Americans with USC close behind; nobody else is really close. Notre Dame and USC have the most players in the College Football Hall of Fame, with a wide separation over the next programs.

It could certainly be regarded with validity that the best game ever played was the 2006 USC-Texas Rose Bowl; that the best single-game individual performance ever was Anthony Davis vs. Notre Dame in 1972; the best single-game team performance was USC’s 55-19 annihilation of Oklahoma in the 2005 BCS Orange Bowl. No less an
authority than Lee Corso feels that way. The 1972 Trojans are generally considered the
greatest single-season team ever. The 1979 and 2005 Trojans are very likely the best
teams not to win national titles. If one examines his record closely, it becomes apparent
that Matt Leinart may have had the best season in history in 2004, and the best career
ever between 2001 and 2005. His competition includes O.J. Simpson in 1968, and despite
only playing two years O.J. is considered by many to be the best college player ever.

The facts stack up this way in USC’s favor any way you cut it. Despite all of Notre
Dame’s hype, or the passion for other storied traditions in Tuscaloosa, Ann Arbor and
Norman, USC is college football’s all-time greatest dynasty.

In 1999, Rod Dedeaux of USC was voted “College Baseball Coach of the Century.”
USC’s 12 College World Series titles tower above second-best Texas with five. USC has
by far the most baseball players drafted, drafted in the first round, in the big leagues, in
the All-Star Game, in the World Series, Rookies of the Year, and winners of the Cy
Young Award, with nine spread between Tom Seaver, Randy Johnson and Barry Zito.
Fred Lynn won the 1975 American League Rookie of the Year and MVP awards.

USC and UCLA are roughly tied for the most Olympians, medal winners and gold
medallists. Had either school been a country at the 1976 Montreal Games, they would
have placed among the medal leaders.

USC has won the most men’s national championships in all sports. In 1999, USC was
voted the “College Athletic Program of the Century.”

In 2005, USC beat Notre Dame, 34-31 at South Bend. I again quote from The USC
Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty:

“Outlined against a blue, gray October sky the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic
lore they are known as famine, pestilence, destruction and death. These are only aliases.
Once named Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden, the gladiators of the New
Millennium are men of youth, color and American diversity. Their real names are:
Leinart, Bush, Jarrett and White. These new Four Horsemen of Southern California came
to the land of destiny riding their famed white steed Traveler, that dreaded Coliseum
sight of Irish past. They relegated the old Notre Dame ghosts to their place and time, a
time when the only color was white, myths were protected, lies told as Truths. They
formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another Fighting Irish team was
swpt over the precipice at Notre Dame Stadium on the afternoon of Saturday, October
15, 2005. 80,795 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon
the green plain below.”

Has a greater, more exciting football game ever been played? Has an atmosphere ever
been fraught with greater passion, tension and drama? In this game we have the essential
heart of the USC-Notre Dame rivalry, the greatest rivalry in all of college football, one of
the best in all of sports. The relationship between USC and Notre Dame is unique not just
because it features the two all-time heavyweights of the college football world, but because unlike most rivalries, it is fought with the greatest mutual respect. Much of this is based on factors that manifest themselves away from the field of play.

It features two of the finest academic institutions in the nation. Yes, USC is a “jock school” no longer. Incoming freshmen routinely enter this institution with 4.0 grade point averages. In the 1990s, it was considered an article of faith that USC’s rise in academics could not thrive in coordination with football dominance, but Pete Carroll has reduced that theory to a mere synapse in the air.

On the surface, the school’s appear different. Notre Dame represents Christian piety and Midwestern toughness. USC is “Hollywood’s school,” representing golden beaches, bikini-clad maidens and big city nightlife. But USC was founded as a religious institution and offered Methodist instruction until World War I. It has always been a conservative college in which people are not made fun of if they believe in God or root for America. Both Notre Dame and USC are patriotic institutions that have produced many war heroes, and offer a political environment that is quite rare outside of the South.

USC’s tradition as “Hollywood’s school” marks its roots with a tall, ruggedly handsome pulling guard from Glendale High School named Marion Morrison. Morrison was set to be a starter on the line for Howard Jones. In the summer before training camp started, Morrison and a teammate went to Newport Beach, where they were trying to impress a bevy of beach beauties. Morrison went bodysurfing. He chose a notorious stretch of breakwater known today as “The Wedge.” It’s notorious because ex-surfers in wheelchairs can be found on the Newport Pier wearing T-shirts stating, “Victim of ‘The Wedge.”

Morrison separated his shoulder, and when football practice started he couldn’t block. He lost his starting job and with it his scholarship. Not a product of wealth, he began to accumulate debts from his fraternity brothers, who reluctantly told him he had to move out unless he could carry his weight. Morrison left school and went to Fox Studios, where he found work as an actor under the stage name John “Duke” Wayne.

Early in his career, Wayne was approached by the legendary director John Ford, who was making a film about the football team at the Naval Academy called Salute. He wanted to use USC football players in the movie and tasked Wayne with organizing the endeavor, which included sending many players back to Annapolis, Maryland by train. Wayne dealt with coach Howard Jones and the school administration, overcoming “red tape” and making the film a success. Ford was impressed and cast Duke in his first major role, Stagecoach.

The film Salute was done using players from USC and Loyola. Despite being the national champion, USC had all they could handle playing Loyola a few months later. The Loyola team had learned all their plays and lost fear of the Trojans practicing and filming with them.
Jones had recruiting advantages in Hollywood not available to him at Iowa. “It girl” silent film actress Clara Bow threw wild parties at her Hollywood Hills mansion. Trojan football players found themselves invited through the Wayne connection. In observing epics of the silent film era, Biblical flocks and Napoleon’s Grand Armee more often than not consisted of USC football players.

One of Wayne’s acting sidekicks was Ward Bond, also a Trojan football player. Bond often played a friendly priest or drinking partner, the kind of guy who would get in “knock down, drag out” fisticuffs with the Duke, then afterward share a shot of whiskey with him.

In 1966, USC traveled to Austin for the season opener against Texas. Wayne was filming War Wagon in Texas at the time. Events of that wild weekend are so crazy a book or movie could easily be formulated to tell the tall tales.

The night before the game, Duke held court in the hotel bar, dressed exquisitely in a black three-piece suit, white 10-gallon cowboy hat, and snakeskin cowboy boots . . . with spurs. A Los Angeles sportswriter was at the bar, getting drunker and drunker. He was known to be quite liberal in his political views. Duke was an unabashed conservative Republican giving colorful descriptions in 1966 of what the American military was going to do with the Communists in Vietnam. Finally the old scribe had enough.

He walked up to Duke and his now-silent entourage, watching him ruefully.

“They tell me that they call you . . . The Duke!” said the writer.

“Waal, what of it?” replied Wayne.

“Waal! Duke . . . . you ain’ . . . .” I’ll delete the word he used which starts with an “s” and ends with a “t.”

Wayne took a swing at the drunk writer and a full brawl was avoided only when his people pulled him away.

Wayne drank whiskey all night and well into the morning. He ended up in the room of Nick Pappas, a fraternity brother of his and head of USC alumni groups. Around six A.M., Wayne told Pappas he wanted to address the team in the dressing room, and could he arrange it?

Pappas stuck his foot in his mouth and said, “Sure, Duke, whatever you want, I can fix it with McKay.”

Now Pappas was on the spot if he could not deliver. Figuring McKay was up early getting prepared for the game, Pappas called him in his room and told him he had a
dilemma. McKay was a huge Wayne fan who said his favorite relaxation was a bowl of ice cream and a John Wayne movie, and sure, The Duke was welcome in the dressing room.

Wayne apparently never slept or stopped drinking. He had a make-up man responsible for getting him ready, but the guy never showed up. It turned out later that the make-up had been mixing drinks trying to keep up with The Duke the night before. The stress was too much for the guy and he died. Wayne started calling all around trying to get the guy, and word got to McKay that Duke needed assistance, so he assigned assistant coach Craig Fertig the task.

Wayne did not know what to wear. Fertig told him he was known as a cowboy so why not don that look, so he dressed him in the suit-10-gallon-cowboy-hat-boots-with-spurs ensemble.

“I had him lookin’ good,” Fertig told me when I interviewed him about it.

In the dressing room, Duke gave the Trojans an incendiary speech filled with graphic descriptions of bloodshed and war imagery. According to legend, it was the model for George C. Scott’s opening monologue in *Patton* four years later.

The team was so fired up they charged out of the dressing room with all the passion of any Knute Rockne squad, and beat Texas in a defensive struggle, 10-6.

Before the game, Wayne drove around Memorial Stadium in a golf cart driven by Fertig’s father, Henry “Chief” Fertig, at that time chief of the Monterrey Park, California Police Department. The whole time, Duke had a plastic cup that Chief kept refilling with a surreptitious bottle of whiskey. The Texas fans gave Duke a rousing ovation. Most did not know he was a former USC football player. Duke gave ‘em the “hook ‘em, horns” sign, the whole time muttering to Chief Fertig what they could do with their “horns.” He used a word that starts with an “f” and ends with a “k,” which was what he told Chief the Longhorns could do to themselves.

In many ways, 1966 was a golden year at USC. It was the middle of an era in which USC’s sports teams and in particular its football program was the dominant power of the decade. A baseball player from Fresno named Tom Seaver roomed with a baseball-football player from Roosevelt High in L.A. named Mike Garrett. Another baseball and volleyball player was a tall kid from Van Nuys named Tom Selleck.

It was also when the famed School of Cinema and Television, now known as the School of Cinematic Arts, became a world class institution. Out of that class emerged two promising filmmakers, George Lucas and John Milius.

Lucas and Milius became friends with a film student at UCLA named Francis Ford Coppola, who took classes with Doors’ singer Jim Morrison and keyboardist Ray
Manzarek. Another creative genius in that group was a kid from Arizona named Steven Spielberg.

All of these disparate characters got together and decided they wanted to make a movie about Vietnam, only it was not to be simply about Vietnam, it was to be in Vietnam. The idea was that they would take a film crew and loose script over to The ‘Nam, film war scenes using a handful of actors and military personnel playing themselves. It was to be the ultimate cinema verite.

For some odd reason the Department of Defense turned it down, but a decade later it became Apocalypse Now. Lucas’s career is well known, but Milius’s less so. Milius was considered the most talented of the group, but he was a hardcore political conservative, which is verboten in Hollywood.

Turned down more often than not because of his politics, which were heavily anti-Communist and pro-NRA, Milius did write the screenplay Dirty Harry, considered one of the most reactionary right-wing law ‘n’ order films of all time starring Clint Eastwood. Milius also directed Red Dawn with Patrick Swayze and Charlie Sheen in 1984. The premise of that film was that country boys raised knowing how to use guns could survive as freedom fighters in the Colorado mountains after the Soviet Union invades America.

Robert Zemeckis went to the USC film school. He directed Forrest Gump, a novel written by Alabama graduate Winston Groom. Groom wrote the foreword of my current book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation. Other leading Trojans in Hollywood include director Ron Howard, actor Henry Winkler and The OC creator Josh Schwarz. In the mid-1990s, USC did a very smart thing when they added a producer’s division to the film curriculum. This had the twin effect of teaching real world skills to producers on how to actual finance and make films, not merely conceptualize them, as well as pitting future producers, directors and writers with each other.

UCLA did a similar thing by mixing the drama program with the film school, thus creating partnerships between aspiring actors and filmmakers. For many years, the four major film schools in America were Columbia and NYU in New York; USC and UCLA in Los Angeles. USC has over the past decade forged ahead of the competition. Today, Hollywood is literally dominated by USC graduates working at the talent agencies, the production companies, the studio offices and lots, and in the screenwriting salons. I recently took a meeting at the William Morris Agency in Beverly Hills. There were eight people in the room; every one of them a USC graduate.

USC is a unique college. Despite its Hollywood pedigree and Left Coast location, it remains a conservative, patriotic institution where old-fashioned values are given the freedom to be expressed. Outside of the South, and especially in “blue state” California, this is fairly rare. For those of you who read Tom Wolfe’s 2004 novel I Am Charlotte Simmons, the notion of sending your precious children into such a maelstrom of
overheated passions is daunting. I cannot assure you that USC is immune to such behavior, but can tell you that there is an independent streak at this university separating it from other institutions of higher learning.

The rivalry with California and Stanford began to take on political overtones in the 1960s. It had started when USC dominated those schools in football, and they accused us of academic cheating. After World War II, Cal-Berkeley adopted a Leftist mindset based on the influence of a leading professor, Robert Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer was in charge of the Manhattan Project, but after the war he freely gave the Soviets Atomic secrets. After a recruiting “payola” scandal rocked the Pacific Coast Conference in the 1950s, California began to de-emphasize sports. USC simply dominated them more than ever. Cal’s response was to sue USC over an alleged late hit in a 1959 game, but the case was thrown out. In the 20th Century, 100 million human beings were murdered by international Communism. That did not stop Cal from allowing its campus to be the de facto staging grounds of American Communism, providing “aid and comfort” to the North Vietnamese.

Stanford, unable to beat USC, accused the Trojans of taking football too seriously. Furthermore, USC gave more and greater opportunity to black players than any school in the nation. Stanford, while not segregated, was relatively slow in this regard. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, USC’s teams traveled to Stanford with many black players. As the team was forced to walk through a gauntlet of Stanford hecklers between the dressing room and the stadium, John McKay told me in 2000 that he heard, and I quote, “The most vile, disgusting racial epithets I’ve ever heard in 40 years of coaching; all of this coming from the supposedly enlightened Stanford student body.”

McKay told the press after that he wanted to beat Stanford by “2,000 points.” In 1972, a Stanford student newspaper column claimed USC’s players were academic rejects lacking in morals or proper civilian conduct. That group of “rejects” and “criminals” produced four Christian pastors, a school teacher, two network sportscasters, two corporate attorneys, entrepreneurs, coaches and the 2006 Republican gubernatorial candidate of Pennsylvania, Lynn Swann. The writer of that column is probably with the New York Times today, still telling the yokels how to live!

It was also around this time that the Stanford band did an infamous “tribute to Chairman Mao.” At the time that they were honoring Mao, the Chinese dictator was in the middle of the Cultural Revolution, a decade-long reign of terror historians believe resulted in between 35 and 55 million human beings murdered by Red China. When our band took the field, Stanford gave them the Nazi salute.

UCLA has resisted the kind of radicalism of California and Stanford, although they did hire a Communist agitator named Angela Davis. Davis smuggled a gun to a criminal named George Jackson, who used it to murder Judge Harold Haley at the Marin County Civic Center in 1970. Davis never apologized nor paid for her crimes.
In 1969, researchers at USC began work on a new form of communications. It was called the Internet.

USC’s Republican credentials have not always paved a smooth road. Numerous members of the Richard Nixon Administration were USC graduates, including First Lady Patricia Nixon, appointments secretary Dwight Chapin, Watergate figure Donald Segretti, and chief of staff H.R. Haldeman (although he transferred to and graduated from UCLA).

In the 1976 film *All the President’s Men*, the actor playing Segretti tells Dustin Hoffman, playing Carl Bernstein, about the “USC mafia” that dominated GOP politics on campus in his day.

In 1983, when I was student, I sat in a sold-out Bovard Auditorium and listened to one of the most fascinating, charismatic speeches I have ever heard. The speaker was Watergate “plumber” G. Gordon Liddy, and he was welcomed enthusiastically here during his book tour for his autobiography, *Will*.

In 1984, when I walked through graduation ceremonies, the commencement speaker was supposed to be President Ronald Reagan, an enormously popular figure on campus. Unfortunately, The Gipper had just come back from China and had to bow out due to exhaustion.

That fall, Democrat Presidential candidate Walter Mondale spoke at USC, but chants of “Reagan country” irritated him.

“You should be ashamed of yourselves,” he told the crowd. “This is the school that produced Donald Segretti.”

“Reagan country!”

In 2004, controversial filmmaker Michael Moore screened *Fahrenheit 9/11* at USC. I was not there but I have been told by student eyewitnesses that he was booed off stage, yelling at the USC crowd as he left, and thereafter took to wearing a UCLA cap.

I realize there are those in this audience who do not vote Republican, do not support the war in Iraq, and probably consider conservatism to be an archaic ideology. My point in discussing these political facts about the University of Southern California is not to tout it as a mouthpiece for the Grand Old Party. Rather, it is to point out the independence of USC. Here, the tides of easy sentiment are often bucked, trends that course unabated through other universities are not so easily allowed to go forth unquestioned. A student is free to get an education here that is not marked by the kind of radical indoctrination of so many other campuses, and after all, is a good thing!

This is the greatest country God has ever graced Mankind with. Perhaps John Wayne was jingoist. Perhaps my speech contained some bias, but in the end I can say from
experience that I love this school. It made me into a man and taught me critical thinking, which is the key to persuasive discourse no matter what one’s leaning may be.

USC has existed as a friendly neighbor in a community that on the surface looks much different from itself, yet through two riots the campus was never touched. Football crowds are a demographic of white, black and Latino fans any politician would die for. Despite its wealth and affluence, USC remains the “people’s school” to a fan base of millions in L.A.

USC has gentrified the neighborhood, provided outreach, created scholarships for deserving students in nearby high schools, and made day care centers for local working mothers. The creation of the Staples Center and the Galen Center has revitalized the downtown corridor. The school has built professor’s housing on-campus. Because of its Pacific Rim location, USC attracts an enormous student population from the Orient, Africa, the Middle East, and other locales. It has the largest non-white student population in the nation. Thousands of government leaders in foreign countries learned to love America and California while going to school here.

I cannot urge students enough: reach out to these foreign students. Befriend them, and learn about their cultures. You have a unique opportunity to educate yourselves in ways that extend far beyond the excellent classroom experiences you will have. Question professors, engage your intellect. Live the “life of the mind.”

I did that. I learned as much outside the classroom as I did inside it. I made lasting friendship with incredible people. My roommate at USC, Terry Marks, is now the president of Coca-Cola International.

Finally, I leave you with this message: faith, hope and love are the most powerful tools you will ever have at your disposal. Many of you will join fraternities. Much partying and experience awaits you, and I say this to the parents as much as the kids: somehow you will survive, just as I did. Enjoy yourselves, have fun. You will never have a better four years than the four that await you.

But always remember who you are. I am a Christian. It is the rock of my life. As you deal with the perils of youth, peer pressure, and acculturation, find your rock. Cling to it. Know that there is something greater than you, something that connects us all. When things get confusing, when your mind is not right, when you begin to question long held beliefs, find that rock and cling to it.

Before I let you go, I would like to invite you to stay afterwards for a signing of my new book, One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation, along with The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty. I will also be signing at the peristyle end of the Coliseum tomorrow for three hours prior to the Arizona game. I will be accompanied by the legendary Tom Kelly along with numerous
Trojan greats. In addition, I will appear at USC Collections, South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, Monday at noon.

Ladies and gentleman, I thank you for the honor of allowing me to address you today, and I leave you with these words: may God bless America, and may the Trojans continue to . . . Fight On!

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH’S SPEECH

ON THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF OF HIS ADMINISTRATION

My fellow Americans, I speak to you today in a way I have never spoken to you before. You have heard my views from the perspective of a President’s son; the owner of the Texas Rangers; the Governor of Texas; a Presidential candidate; and the standard-bearer of the Republican Party. Always, my words have carried with them a certain caution, based upon political considerations: a debate, re-election, mid-term campaigns. But now I am free, free as I have never been before, to do what what one of my predecessors, President Harry Truman, so famously did. He called it “plain speaking.”

There is a little more than one and a half years left in my Administration. The 2006 Congressional elections were the last in which I would have to deal with the consequences. Vice-President Dick Cheney is not running for President. My legacy will not be the defining issue of the 2008 campaign. My shadow will not be cast large over the vote. No, my friends, I will be judged not by this election, but rather by history; and it is history that I wish to speak to you about today. My greatest failing has been the inability to describe the pressing issues of the day against the “landscape of history,” or “sweep of history,” as President Ronald Reagan so eloquently put it.

My speeches have always been about the “here and now,” trying to impress the voters, the punditry, the media and the world community to see it my way when it came to an upcoming vote, whether it be an American election, a Congressional resolution, a U.N. mandate, the policy decisions of my fellow world leaders, or the “good graces” of opinion-makers, whoever they may be.

No more. I am now free to speak and to act plainly, my actions and motives not left to be deciphered by the spinmasters. What you see is what you get. My detractors have criticized me, my family, my education, and my military service. Specious arguments centered on the fact that my U.S. Air Force Guard unit was never called to serve in Vietnam. I have avoided speaking about this issue, but choose today to point out some facts about my military career.

I could never hope to live up to the exploits of my father, President George H.W. Bush, but I tried anyway. My father was the youngest World War II fighter pilot in the Navy. He was twice shot down by Japanese Zeroes in the skies above the South Pacific. I chose to become a fighter pilot, too.
There is no “affirmative action” program for pilots. The military cannot afford to give wings to an unqualified man for political purposes, or to fill some kind of quota or favor. I set upon a course in which I was headed for rejection at each turn. The first was to become accepted into flight school. As they say, “many are called, few are chosen.” I was rigorously tested in math, science, engineering, aptitude and physical requirements. Approximately 10 percent of all people who apply are accepted. I was one of those accepted.

Next came flight school and flight test. To succeed, one is again tested to the very limits in a rigorous course of academics, physical ability, and flying skills. Out of each 100 people accepted, about 90 percent “wash out.” I was again one of the 10 percent who made the cut. I earned my wings and became a fighter pilot in the United States Air Force, assigned to the Texas Air Guard. This was in 1968-69.

My critics have assailed my intelligence and courage. I freely admit I never lived up to the standards set by my father, but the raw facts nevertheless are these: I succeeded at something in which about 20 of all 1,000 who try actually succeed at. The unimpressives have called the Texas Air Guard a “champagne unit,” derisively stating that all we did was “protect Texas from Oklahoma.”

In the period between 1968 and 1970, when I applied for, joined, trained and became qualified to fly jets, the U.S. was heavily involved in the Vietnam War. A fellow pilot and scion of a prominent family, my good friend John McCain, was a prisoner of war. I had no assurance, and there was no guarantee, that my unit would not be called on for combat missions in Vietnam. The Cold War was raging at that time, with major confrontations with Communism potentially brewing in such hot spots as Cuba, Czechoslovakia, and North Korea. The possibility of being called to duty in any of these or other parts of the world was very real.

There have been several Hollywood films depicting the “fighter pilot experience.” Two of my favorites, Top Gun and An Officer and a Gentleman, glorified on screen the very thing we accomplished in real life. Those who criticized me – and many came from the same Hollywood film industry that produced these fine movies - were incapable of doing that with which I did; physically, morally or courageously. Instead of recognizing this fact, thanking me for my service, they like the rest of the “protest generation” chose to put forth the lie that what my fellow combat-trained fighter pilots and I did was as unimpressive as they were.

This is not true. They knew it not to be true. They said it anyway. I shall refrain from further commentary on these people other than to say there is a word in the dictionary that describes them.

My intellect has been besmirched in regards to my academic record at Yale and Harvard. I will admit that I not been a “legacy” of the Bush clan, ticketed for “skull and
bones,” I would not have been admitted to Yale. I did have the grades for the University of Michigan, USC, the University of Texas and Penn State University, just to name a few prominent institutions. Had I matriculated and graduated from one of these colleges, would this have automatically made me “ineligible” for the White House by virtue of academic record? I need not answer that question; it is self-evident.

I certainly enjoyed my time at Yale. I was in a fraternity and I partied, but I made solid grades and graduated in four years. My record was good enough to be accepted first to flight school, and then to the Harvard MBA program. There is no “legacy” tradition in the Harvard Business School; maybe the undergraduates can slip in on “name recognition,” but not the MBA candidates. I was accepted, and graduated, purely on merit.

I submit that if one were to offer the qualifications of a fictional political candidate, and when asked to provide academic record, this candidate could demonstrate that he was a graduate of Yale, a fighter pilot, and the recipient of a Harvard MBA, it would universally be acknowledged that the candidate was more than qualified in this regard. Somehow, I am the only human being on planet Earth to actually possess these qualifications in real life, yet have this record called into question. Because I am generally above such things, I always resisted commentary on these criticisms, but for the record, the fact my critics were wrong was always known by me!

Soon, the Presidential candidates will begin to dominate the news of the 2008 Primaries and then the general election. Their policies will be what you decide upon. You and they will determine what America’s role in the world is. My policies, my decisions, have a finite quality to them.

Obviously, any President makes decisions with the hope that they will have a lasting impact, and that impact will be profound. History will judge whether I accomplish this task. But the policies of my Presidency, while debated, will represent events between now and January 2009, a relatively short period of time. Sooner rather than later, the proposals of the candidates and the decisions of my successor will carry greater weight in the day-to-day body politic than mine.

The defining measurement of my Presidency is the War on Terror, and by extension Iraq. There is no hiding from this reality; indeed, I embrace it. But before I get into the “nuts and bolts” of this big issue, I want to touch on some other things that I feel are important. The purpose of this speech is not to speak of or propose specific policies or legislation. Rather, I speak today of philosophy, of ideas that are the core values I live my life by, and therefore use as guiding principles that cannot be separated from my Presidency.

After my re-election in 2004, I told the media that I had “political capitol and was willing to spend it.” I had been elected with more cumulative votes than any President in this nation’s history. The largest turnout ever decided in favor of me, and Republican coattails were long. The GOP dominated at every level of American government: the U.S. Senate,
the House of Representatives, the White House, the Supreme Court, governorships and state legislatures.

Not since 1964 had any single party held so much power, and it was indeed power that we had at our disposal. With power came opportunity, but history tells us that too often opportunity becomes hubris. We live in an age of democracy, but previous world power has been felt to come from other sources; from the gods; or the single God that united church and state in Europe for more than a thousand years; or from elite classes.

Roman Emperors more often than not thought of themselves as gods, but human frailty interfered too often to sustain this fantasy. In order to remind themselves that no matter how powerful or bathed in glory they were, a slave would trail Caesar issuing a whispered warning in his ear: “All glory is fleeting.”

In January of 2005, opportunity was mine; the opportunity to turn the George W. Bush Presidency into one of the greatest in history. The issue that I placed front and center before a Republican Congress was social security. For years, economists have been warning that when the Baby Boomer generation retires, social security will run out. Depending upon the state of the economy at the time, it could threaten to bankrupt this nation.

I am an optimist. I did not believe then nor believe now that social security will bankrupt America. The kinds of devastating blows that bankrupt other countries are not enough to overcome the strength of the United States. But there will come a day when the bill will come due. Our current economy could withstand it, but there is no guarantee that a “perfect storm” of negative economic factors could not result in future disaster.

Critics said my reasoning in trying to reform social security was philosophical in nature; a refutation of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal of the 1930s, and Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society of the 1960s. They are partly correct but not entirely. The New Deal had merits for its time. Union protections, reform of the banking and securities industries; these were necessities of that era. But it created Big Government and big budgets. Out of this mindset came the concept of “base-line budgeting.”

The formulaic behind base-line budgeting is the idea that a governmental agency will increase its budget by automatic yearly increments. In other words, if a department has a budget of $3 million in 2007, it will automatically increase its budget to $3.1 million in 2008. Therefore, if in 2008 they spend $3.09 million, the budgeteers can boast that they saved $10,000 when in fact they spent $90,000 more than the previous year. This goes on in perpetuity regardless of the specific need of the department in question over time. Republicans have tried to reverse this trend. Democrats have fought tooth and nail to preserve it. Because of the corrupting nature of Washington, Republican have too often sided with Democrats in “wink wink” manner. Republicans are human and just as likely to be seduced by power, which in Washington comes from the purse.
The Great Society was more political with devastating consequences. It was aimed at a wide variety of ills in the United States, and to declare it a blanket failure would be inaccurate. But there was a racial animus to the Great Society, picked up from New Deal themes that had been cast aside by Dwight Eisenhower’s administration. They were revived to this country’s detriment.

Despite our social mistakes, black Americans were making steady progress until the mid-1960s. They had overcome and were overcoming prejudice. Families were generally together in a nuclear unit of father, mother and children. Church attendance was high, employment rising, incomes improving.

The Great Society created a culture of dependence in which a large swath of black citizens came to rely on Democrat Party prescriptions in order to survive, but not to thrive. The corrosive nature of this dynamic would not have had a major effect upon them, however, had it not occurred at the same time as the cultural movements of the 1960s.

Instead of working hard and achieving the American Dream, too many black citizens of this great nation were forced into a form of *de facto* slavery by the Democrats. They called it “affirmative action” and “welfare.” The result was black unemployment and the break-up of the African-American family. Upwards of 75 percent of black children were born to married couples in the 1950s. Today, that figure is a shocking, disturbing 35 percent.

Just as corrosive was the drug culture. Hollywood and conspiracy theorists have attempted to divert blame, stating that blacks were disproportionately targeted by the Mafia, or that inner city drug addiction was a CIA plot. Those who state this know it is not true, yet they say it anyway. Again, there is a word in the dictionary defining such a thing.

Drug use among blacks and minorities became an epidemic when it spread to them during the “Summer of Love” that marked the anti-war movement, the free speech movement, the civil rights movement, the gay liberation movement, and the sexual liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Many middle class white youths, after experimenting with drugs, “tuning in and dropping out” in San Francisco or Greenwich Village, found themselves effectively homeless. Dirty, addicted and penniless, they had a “fall back position.” Most returned to their suburban roots. With the care and nurturing of loving families they were able to recover and become decent members of society again.

Many black Americans were less fortunate. They often did not have the “support system” of the middle class. Due to Great Society prescriptions, their family units were dissolved. Devastated by the drugs they were seduced into addiction to by their “hippy brothers,” a
terrible proportion of black America fell into the hopeless life of the streets. This legacy lives on today.

Street crime and drugs can be fought by the police, but the root causes within the black and minority communities must be addressed by black leaders. Many Christian pastors have devoted their lives to this cause. The “dominant media culture” chooses to downgrade Christianity, so these leaders are not given the “bully pulpit.” Instead, frauds and race-baiters like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton spew forth untruths. Until the “voice of black America” is viewed by honest, courageous, moral leaders instead of the Jacksons and Sharptons, the problems of black America will not be solved.

Criticism of black leadership is considered too touchy a subject for white Republican political figures. With the freedom that comes from not facing re-election, I am able to choose, instead of safe moderation the opportunity to disseminate the truth, which I thus proudly do. The fact of the matter is, I love my country. Because I do, I want all Americans to succeed. Black success is central to the success of this nation.

In 1968, Republican Presidential candidate Richard Nixon employed a “Southern strategy” to win the White House. Democrats have love advocated that this was a cynical ploy used to disfranchise black votes and create GOP hegemony in the region. In 2005, even Republican leaders “apologized” for this tactic. The truth has somehow not become common mainstream knowledge.

The truth is that slavery was ended in this nation by a Republican President, Abraham Lincoln. For 100 years, the dominant political party of the old Confederacy were the Democrats. It was under lock-solid Democrat leadership that “Jim Crow” laws were enacted and enforced. Corruption thrived under the Democrats for well over a century.

Huey and Earl Long, the face of Louisiana political corruption? All Democrats. Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett, who attempted to block the entrance of the first African-American student, James Meredith, into Ole Miss in 1962, was a Democrat. George Wallace, who announced a policy of “segregation now, segregation forever,” was a Democrat. The Pendergast machine in Kansas City that gave rise to Harry Truman in Kansas City? Democrats. The Republican filmmaker and patriot, Frank Capra, used the Pendergast criminal enterprise as the model for crass public immorality in Mr. Smith Goes to Washington. Democrat corruption was not limited to the South or border states. Tammany Hall in New York City is the ultimate symbol of the Democrats’ “culture of corruption.”

The truth is that Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and the GOP “husbanded the South” back into the Union. In so doing, not only did they free millions of Southern blacks, but they put end to the “under the table” politics that dominated the Democrat South for a century. Conservatism and Christianity – the winning ideology of 2,000 years of history worked hand in hand to change “hearts and minds” in Dixie. This, not street protests or
public assistance, made it possible for the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “dream” to come true.

I submit to you that the American South made more positive change in a shorter period of time than any geographic region in world history. When defeated in the Civil War and forced by the Federal government to become “moral,” they resisted. Given the opportunity to do the right thing by new, hopeful Republican leadership, they did just that by leaps and bounds. The lessons of the Bible were allowed to come to fruition in Dixie. God smiled on His people. The South rose again, becoming an economic and political juggernaut. Major professional sports franchises came to all the major cities of the South. The Olympics were successfully held in Atlanta. Liberal detractors derided the South as “hillbillies” and “banjo pickers” as depicted by such Hollywood fare as Easy Rider and Deliverance. They knew that these depictions were not true, but they said it anyway.

I would be willing to say that today, in 2007, white Southerners and black Southerners have in more in common, speak the “same language,” and have a more honest understanding of each other — their shared similarities as well as their acknowledged differences — than white or black Americans anywhere else. Under Democrats, Birmingham, Selma and Montgomery were inflamed, sometimes even in flames. The South changed under peaceful Republican leadership.

Under the Democrats, Detroit, Newark and Chicago burned. Boston, supposedly the most liberal city in America, is considered to be the most racist. This is not a coincidence. The great irony is that the civil rights movement was always thought to be the province of liberalism and, by proxy, the Democrat party. Lyndon Johnson’s Civil Rights Act gave imprimatur to it. It is with a certain amount of chagrin and confusion that the advocates of leftist ideology observe that the main benefactors of the civil rights movement were Republicans.

This is because the civil rights movement became the event which allowed conservatism to moderate itself. Liberalism is the basis of Western Civilization which had advanced Greek democracy, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the Reformation. Conservatism took the lessons of history, combined them with religious conviction and respect for tradition, then emerged victorious.

The left observed our victory cynically, attempting to say that the truths placed before them were something else. They said the “Southern strategy” was nothing more than crass political theatre, veiled racism designed to give the GOP power while holding blacks down. If in fact the Republican strategies of the 1960s and 1970s were designed to hurt Southern blacks, they failed miserably. Instead, blacks integrated sports teams, schools, colleges, government offices, the halls of academe, big business and all corners of social culture. Within a few years of being denied the vote by Democrats, under Republicans blacks not only had the vote, they had the votes; that is, they began to get elected themselves to all levels of the state, local and Federal government.
The Greek philosopher Plato is considered to be the father of “political science.” Plato believed that through education, a form of “right conduct” could be taught, that “perfectible humanity” would emerge to produce proper governmental power, beyond corruption, for the benefit of all people, and above all capable of avoiding war. While Plato’s dream may not be possible, nevertheless using his theory that good politics can be produced by using almost mathematical constructs, I offer as proof of conservatisms’ superiority the American South by demonstrating the following model:

- For decades, the South was backward, much of lit lacking electricity, indoor plumbing, and modern amenities. People were often ignorant. In the years in which they were ignorant, two dynamic marked their identity. They were racist and voted Democrat.

Over time, as the Tennessee valley Authority was built, air conditioning came into existence, and modern amenities such as cable TV, the Internet and education became the hallmark of the populace, two things changed. They were no longer racist, and they now voted Republican.

Take the contrast between the Mississippi and Alabama Gulf coasts and the city of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans is a city run by Democrats, still corroded by the influence of Earl and Huey Long. Its corrupt black leadership has been hi-jacked by the same “victim mentality” that propels the panderings of Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. As a result, they reacted incompetently to Katrina; before, during and after the hurricane.

Along the coast, where the Republicans get the vote, white and black American citizens worked together to re-build in a model of efficiency. My administration made mistakes and deserves a share of the blame for the Katrina disaster. My critics have placed all the blame on me. They are wrong to do so, knew it, but said it anyway.

In the 1960s and early 1970s this nation saw the rise of a “protest generation.” To explain how this came about is to attack a complex problem, and I herein will attempt to explain this phenomenon in simple terms. Young people in the 1960s were the children of our “Greatest Generation,” those who first survived the Great Depression in the 1930s; defeated Hitler’s Germany and Tojo’s Japan in World War II; and had stood up to international Communism in the 1950s.

Psychology explains much of man’s actions. When a man realizes that he is not as great as his father, he can deal with this reality in one of two ways. He can admit it, endeavoring to try and live up to his father’s ideals in the hopes that some day he shall attain such greatness. His alternative would be to downgrade his father’s achievements; to say that instead of virtue his father was greedy, immoral, racist, a warmonger. Thus was the choice made by the “protest generation.”

Not all who came of age in the 1960s were protesters. Many hoped to emulate the greatness of their fathers. These were the young men who joined the military when America called for them, but the unimpressives who instead took to the streets in the
1960s are today the liberal elites who dominate our media, the teaching profession, and the tenured ivory tower cult of university academics. This generation must be given some credit where it is due. The civil rights movement as their great accomplishment, but as I mentioned this succeeded only because the Christian hearts of white conservatives were changed.

Beyond that, the ‘60s generation has hurt America badly. They gave us the drug culture, which produced millions of cocaine and heroin addicts, ruining lives and families. They gave us affirmative action, which has set black Americans back for decades. They gave us the sexual revolution, which gave us an epidemic of sexual diseases. They gave us the gay rights movement, which was the impetus for the AIDS epidemic. They rejected God, thus breaking up families, pushing the divorce rate to over 50 percent, and replacing morality with immorality. They gave us the anti-war movement, which has created an entire generation of doves who do not recognize the lessons of history, mainly that appeasement leads to disaster.

Above all their numerous sins, their most egregious was the inability and unwillingness to confront Communism. So pervasive have the left been in degrading our national goals in Vietnam that today it is considered an article of faith that we were wrong to be in Southeast Asia. Did we make mistakes in Vietnam? Yes. If we could have done it over again, would we have done it differently? Yes. Did we learn from history? Yes.

But let me simply place before you one statistic, and ask that you give consideration to the meaning of this statistic: 100 million!

100 million human beings were murdered by Communism between 1917 and 1989. Some have disputed this figure. Would it really matter if the figure were inflated a bit, and instead of having murdered 100 million human beings, Communists only murdered, say, 50 million people? 20 million? 12 million? 12 million people died in the Nazi Holocaust between 1933 and 1945, 6 million of whom were Jews.

Today, historical liars do not want you to know this. Isamo-Fascists go to great lengths to hide these facts, officially teaching lies to their children. General Dwight Eisenhower had the foresight to see that some day Holocaust deniers would try to divert attention from the truth. He ordered camera crews in to the concentration camps, officially had historians document all of it. But when the United States won the Cold War during the Presidency of George H.W. Bush between 1989 and 1991, there were no American troops sent in to occupy the gulags. Soviet concentration camps, which operated for decades longer than Nazi camps and accounted for millions more dead, have been paved over. Visitors to Russia today see shopping malls and parking lots instead of monuments to the dead.

The fact is that some 35 million people died under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin. Two periods account for the majority of the killing. In the 1930s, approximately 20 million died in purges, political assassinations and famines. Russian farmers were forced to collectivize their farms. It was the opposite of free market capitalism.

In the 1950s, perhaps sensing the political power of sympathy ion the wake of the Holocaust and the rise of national Israel, Stalin engaged in a second Holocaust against Russian Jews that was more deadly even than Adolf Hitler’s “Final Solution.”
Between 1966 and 1976, Chairman Mao Tse-Tung instituted the “Cultural Revolution” in Red China. The result was approximately 55 million human beings murdered by Communism.

In addition to the U.S.S.R. and red China, some 1 million people have been murdered by Fidel Castro in Cuba. Millions of others were murdered under Communist rule in Latin America, Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe. It was precisely because the crimes of Communism were becoming exposed that America became the “thin red line” between imprisonment and freedom, standing up to the Communists in Southeast Asia. Critics have called our involvement immoral and wrong-headed. While mistakes were made, strategies were ill-conceived, and on occasion we engaged in acts of immorality, the fact that we – for the most part alone – stood up to a political ideology responsible for the murder of 100 million human beings, was precisely the right thing to do.

In 1972-73, President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger orchestrated a peace settlement in Vietnam, modeled on the dividing line at Korea’s 38th Parallel. It was a masterstroke, which pitted China and the Soviets against each other, all favoring America’s foreign policy interests. It preserved the freedoms of our South Vietnamese allies.

Between 1973 and 1974, Watergate dominated the American political conversation. The Democrat party, seeking mid-term victories in 1974 and a return to the White House in 1976, saw only crass opportunism. Above all practical American interests, they placed the personal destruction of President Nixon. They were willing to sacrifice the good of America and the lives of millions for cheap votes and easy political gain.

Why? To understand this one must address post-World War II history and the psychology of guilt. Nixon represented above all others an adversary who had exposed the Democrats and the left for what they were. This was embodied by the Alger Hiss-Whittaker Chambers affair. In my view, we can trace our differences to this event. Sides were taken. The Democrats were so thoroughly discredited that they were given two stark choices:

1. Admit their mistakes, and essentially become Americans. Most did.
2. Desperately place forth a series of lies in the hopes that to do so would shield them from the truth.

The facts are these: in the 1920s, Whittaker Chambers joined the American Communist party. He edited the Daily Worker, the official organ of the Communists. He was approached by Soviet agents and told that he was to become a spy, and would be working with a series of espionage agents within the Franklin Roosevelt administration. One of these was Alger Hiss.

Hiss was a popular, polished Harvard-educated attorney and major architect of FDR’s New Deal. Chambers was enthralled by him; devoted to this dedicated servant of Soviet Communism, which in Chamber’s mind was the highest of all human callings.
Then, in the late 1930s, the fact that Stalin murdered some 20 million people became known. Then the Soviets signed the Molotov-Von Ribbentrop pact, sealing alliance with Nazi Germany. Then, the Holy Spirit came to save Whittaker Chambers with the Truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is the manifest savior of all mankind, not Communism.

It became apparent that Communism was the enemy of Christianity. Armed with Truth, Chambers approached the FBI and told them of Hiss’s espionage. An investigation revealed numerous high-ranking traitors and spies in the Roosevelt administration. FDR was presented with the facts, he chose to ignore them.

The U.S. Navy knew that America could not afford to ignore Soviet espionage, even if the Democrat President Roosevelt chose to. They began to intercept Soviet communications via a World War II program called the Venona Project. Through the Venona Project, the guilt of Hiss and other top Democrats was proved incontrovertibly. The cases were presented to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover was involved in a series of complicated, very delicate investigations and surveillances. He determined that to go forth against Hiss with what they knew would damage national security; ostensibly by letting the Soviets know what we knew when instead we needed the Russians to keep hanging themselves under a blanket of false security.

When World War II ended, the Soviets quickly became our enemies. Republican Richard Nixon was elected to Congress. He began to investigate the Hiss case. Hoover told Nixon that he could not provide him the intelligence he needed to verify Chambers’s claims, but that he was indeed correct; Hiss was a paid Soviet agent.

Nixon, a leader member of the House Un-American Activities Committee, began hearings and investigations into Hiss, using Chambers as his star witness. The Democrat party establishment hauled out all the biggest guns of the American left in an out effort to destroy Nixon, Chambers and the Republican party. A trial was held, and Chambers was proved correct. Hiss was convicted.

What happened in the wake of this explains much of our political divide. Millions of Democrats, men and women of honesty and good conscience, accepted the truth. In so doing, many became Republicans.

A hardcore group of leftists, embodied by the liberal wing of the Democrat party, by Washington elites, by an increasingly anti-American media led by CBS, the Washington Post and the New York Times, knew that Hiss was guilty and their party rife with Communist espionage. Instead of acknowledging it, they chose to lie; about Hiss, about Chambers, about Senator Joseph McCarthy, about conservatism, and about America. They set the wheels in motion for decades of division in this great nation.

Why? Because their power was derived from these lives. To admit the truth was, in their minds, political suicide. Their power and imprimatur would be destroyed if they were to
admit that the likes of Nixon, the frumpy Chambers, the jingoists of conservatism, had been right all along.

Their lies were uttered with just enough force to tarnish the Nixon-Chambers allegations, at least within their own delusional fan base. Then, after the Soviet Union dissolved on Christmas Day, 1991 with America’s victory in the Cold War, Soviet archives were opened. The Venona Project, kept in the dark for decades, was revealed. All of Nixon’s and Chambers’s allegations, as well as many made by the right, including Joe McCarthy, were proved to be completely accurate.

Democrats say Kissinger had tim line befo4re ancrhy

They are Democrats, must justoify their actions. Communism now takes on other forms of anti-Ameriocanism
   Allenda, Chile
   Cold War not won without Vioetnam
   Ismal was on side of Hitler

   Truth – not worried about changing minds, only stating truth

   Civil; rights – Democrats Jim Crow
   Line item veto

Taxes - “Death tax”
Economy
Rich get richer one makes 50, then 100, other makes 300,000, then 2 million
   Father – victim of own success
Abortion
Health care
Immigration
Global; warming - cooling
Jefferson, Berger, firing of judges
Clinton in 1990s – failure against terror
Greeks
Christianity – “Last Days”
Darfur/Africa
Palestine – Jews 1918-35
Iraq – War on Terror
Haliburton – work dy else did
Peopl sat 1 million dead; truth is about 40,000
   True God walked amongst them
Pyrric victory
Mind of enemy
Patton – “no bastard . . .”
Learn about enemy
What they don’t have – nukes, chemicals, et al
Hearts and minds
Guantanamo
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Treachery acts of our people
Will be won when Democrats inherit it, may require a nuclear act
Communism – 1960s, drug culture 100 million dead
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Self evieent truths; not worried about persuading, worried about truth
The South – racial isues
Americann Empire

"THE BETTER ANGELS OF OUR NATURE"
HISTORY, RACE AND TRUTH

SPEECH FOR JOHN MCCAIN
Written by STEVEN TRAVERS

In 2000 I ran for the Presidency on the strength of what we called the "Straight Talk Express." In my two decades plus in Congress, and in my military career, I have been known for just that: straight talk and honesty. Today, I want to address these and other themes. America is talking about race and history. Unfortunately, truth is too often a casualty.

I have been called a "Maverick." I am a conservative Republican, but many members of my own party have criticized me for reaching across the aisle in order to forge coalitions with Democrats. To that I say the great state of Arizona sends me to Washington every six years not to toe a partisan line, but to get things done. I offer that America will in November send me to the White House as President not of the Republican Party or the conservative movement, but of the American people. One of my heroes, General and later President Dwight D. Eisenhower, did just that. It is his example I hope to follow. I believe those of good conscience in all parties would agree this is a worthy course.

America is a divided nation. My biggest goal is to bridge that divide. As you know, I spent time as a prisoner of war. It was a trying time, but through faith in God I came to understand eternal Truths. Today I wish to offer some truth. I am not afraid to speak honestly with America, even if it comes with occasional political cost. My experience in
the "Hanoi Hilton" taught me that whether I am elected to the Presidency or not, I must hold true to my principles and that an honest approach to our problems is in the long run far more advantageous.

Race is the topic today. Many white people are afraid to talk about race. Many people of color find it all they want to talk about. It is the "elephant in the room," often either the unspoken or the overriding issue that still divides America the beautiful. Race is no longer simply just about whites and blacks. We are a multi-cultural nation, strong because of that; a nation of bi-racials, of diverse religions, of Latinos and Orientals; of refugees from former Communist countries, from nations run by despots and totalitarians; the great destination for those seeking opportunity and liberty.

American history and race are inter-twined with each other, and I am stunned to see how little real history people actually know. In the modern world of sound bites, the Internet, the blogosphere, of fierce partisanship on both sides, in which one-upping each other seems to be the overriding goal, I offer that today you pull up a chair and hear a tale.

The winners, it has been said, write history. In the past 2,000 years, the "winner," for lack of a better term, has been Western Civilization; namely European empires and the Christian Church. In reaction to that, many people of African ancestry, or Arab ethnicity, or Oriental persuasions, sometimes feeling left out, have sought to tell their stories, too. In so doing, we have seen a "war of words," of ideologies framed by far too many falsehoods on all sides.

The past 140 years has seen the rise of the United States in what has come to be known as the "American Century." In the age of Hollywood, radio, newspapers, the Internet; mass communications and the art form of public relations, the mythic American story, of cowboys 'n' Indians, of victory of good over evil embodied by our enemies, whether they be Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan or Godless Communism; the story has been told from our point of view and not without a touch of jingoism.

There has been a reaction to that, and it has often been a false narrative. For too long now, we have seen this false narrative repeated until they are accepted as truths. We have seen it in public schools, in partisan political circles, and now even in churches. We must take a deep breath and try and understand each other instead of pointing fingers.

Slavery, it has been said, is America's "original sin." Yes, it is. There exists in this world good and evil. Evil slithers and slides about, often by forcing good men to compromise and do evil things. I have seen this up close as an Annapolis man and fighter pilot. I was taught honor and morality, but was forced to live with the great conundrum that my job was to release weapons of death not only on legitimate enemies and military targets, but possibly also innocent people, who we called "collateral damage."

Our Founding Fathers were among the greatest men in the history of the world, yet in forging the Constitution they compromised and allowed slavery to exist. People of all
colors are correct when they say what they should have done was to abolish slavery once and for all, but this issue is not, and pardon the pun, "black or white." Slavery was considered an economic institution that had thrived as legitimate trade between nations for thousands of years. Competing nations and empires, seeing the future in the New World, brought it to the shores of colonial America. The English, the Spanish, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the French brought it here. The United States inherited it. The Northern states rejected it, but the Southern states found it economically indispensable.

In 1787, the Founders, many of whom were Southern slaveowners, derived a plan to abolish it. They determined that in 1808, importation of slaves would end. The theory was that over time the existing slaves would grow old and pass away, and with it slavery. The Southern states therefore would have several decades in order to ease their economies away from slave labor. It was an imperfect plan and not one that history judges a noble one, but it was not the story of evil white men who eagerly oppressed their fellow man despite what their Bibles told them was right.

One of the great templates of the black story is that families were routinely broken up by slavery, but while partly true, this is not entirely so. In fact, many slave families were kept together; men and women allowed to marry, to start families, their children Christianized into a faith that offered them their only glimpse of hope in an otherwise hopeless world. Healthy children were born and raised into healthy adulthood, which might sound hopeful except for the unfortunate result being that they were also born into slavery, which instead of dying out continued to be the driving force of the Southern economy.

In 1839, slaves found themselves on American soil when the Spanish ship *Amistad* was shipwrecked en route to Spanish-held Cuba. A trial was held, the result being that they were declared free and returned to their African homeland. This result of this trial was a product of the American Constitution. They were returned despite vigorous lobbying on behalf of the Spanish crown to return their so-called "property," but the U.S. turned down this request from an ally.

In the years following, a national argument ensued. A little-known Illinois politician named Abraham Lincoln rose to the Presidency on the basis of his opposition to slavery. This movement was the driving force behind a new political party called the Republicans, named after a book, *The Republic*, which had been written by a world famous Greek philosopher named Plato. But the devil, as I say, slithers and slides in and out of even our most noble concepts. Plato's Greece, the home of Democracy and our most wonderful early visions of man's yearning for freedom, thought slavery to be a "natural state."

But Abe Lincoln felt that our founding documents had made evolutionary, as well as revolutionary strides beyond Platonic Greece, and that mid-19th Century America was the time, the place, the very idea if you will, for abolition to occur. We all know what happened next: some called it the War of Northern Aggression. Others, the War Between the States. Most now refer to it as the Civil War. It has been argued that slavery was not
the central premise of the war, at least not in the beginning. Instead, code words like "states' rights" were bandied about; hoary phraseology by educated Southerners attempting to justify a dying way of life.

Regardless of economic or other social factors, the war was fought because of slavery. In the beginning, even Lincoln stated that the Union was either to be all-slave or abolished completely, but that "united we stand, divided we fail." White Northerners fought for the Union. Many were drafted. Many were Irish immigrants, "recruited," so to speak, fresh off the boat. It would be disingenuous to state that millions of whites freely signed up in order to put their lives on the line in order to benefit blacks, but in reality many did sign up and did in fact pay the ultimate price on behalf of the slaves. There are those who say that reparations are owed modern African-Americans over slavery, but if one were to carry this concept out to fruition, the descendants of dead Union soldiers could argue the same thing.

The Union did prevail after a horrible, bloody, divisive struggle. In 1863, President Lincoln declared the Emancipation Proclamation, thus "freeing," at least in early theory, the slaves. Now this is an important area of study and well worth considering, especially by black Americans who find so much to fault with America. As I stated, slavery existed for thousands of years. Black slaves held in bondage by white slaveowners were a small percentage of the historical slave population. The Roman Empire enslaved all their conquered territories through Asia Minor and beyond. The Egyptians enslaved Jews. People of all races and ethnicity's were both slave and slaveholder. Many races, including Africans, had sold their brethren into slavery for profit. None were without sin.

Slavery had come to America, but four score and seven years after this nation was forged, kicking and screaming against the British Empire, slavery ended as a viable trade between nations. There is still white slavery, forced prostitution, Christians enslaved in Africa, child exploitation . . . but the kind of legitimate slave economy allowed to thrive between countries was no more. What ended it? No conquering army or empire entered America, defeated us in battle, and then forced us by the barrel of a gun to abolish slavery. Americans, using laws written by Americans in America ended it. We took on the issue head on and did what was right. When we did it, slavery was suddenly a forbidden worldwide practice. America, quite simply, is where slavery came to die.

Lincoln was assassinated. Had he lived, perhaps America would have healed. He did not, and America did not. Reconstruction occurred between 1865 and 1877. It failed. A Republican Administration oversaw its failure, and it was not our finest hour. Black people were sentenced to another century of de facto slavery. Southerners have been blamed and vilified, but too often their story, the suffering they experienced in the war and in its humiliating aftermath, has not been properly addressed. History and human nature are not comic book characterizations of all good vs. all evil. People are neither one nor the other. Since the time of Cain and Abel, we have struggled mightily to walk a righteous path while tempted by every form of human failing; prejudice, ignorance,
revenge, violence. Even in the Jim Crow South, humanity could not be divided between all-suffering saintly blacks vs. a 100 percent population of Simon Legree whites.

Even in the Old South, a sense of white charity had once existed, inspired by Christian teachings, but now practices such as white wives of slaveholders ministering to the spiritual and medical needs of black slaves ended. Acts of post-war violence against white women gave rise to the Ku Klux Klan, and quickly this wicked organization went beyond its original intent of protection, using politics and misguided religious concepts to justify itself. It was a sordid American tale indeed.

White America came around to doing business as usual with each other. A status quo was established. A tacit "understanding" was reached. Blacks were left out. Over and over they were given the shaft; brutalized, mistreated, forgotten. This was not merely Jim Crow's sin. This sickness spread throughout America, from sea to shining sea. The promise of America, which inculcated the great immigrant movement of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, embodied by Ellis Island and the teeming cities filled with Irish, German, Swedish, Italian, Jewish and Oriental peoples arriving in the Promised Land; all of this was a cruel hoax to black America.

All immigrants were mistreated. The Chinese built the railroads that connected New York to California, creating a continental nation, yet were cheated of their land and the fruits of their labor. The Irish were told they "need not apply." Italians were characterized as Mafiosi. Jews were not allowed to pursue their dreams. But they kept coming because, despite hardship, goodness vastly outweighed evil on these shores. Slowly, these groups assimilated.

Blacks, the single ethnicity that had not come here of their own free will, looked on in despair while all these newcomers took their slice of the American Dream. Within the black community, competing ideologies were formed in order to deal with this reality. A spirit of rugged, frontier individualism infused the black self-improvement movement from 1900 until the 1930s. There is great irony in this, in that it was America's pioneers, those who forged the Westward expansion, who formed the greatest example for black self-reliance. Schools of thought were represented. W.E.B. DuBois believed in an elitist philosophy of black separatism. Booker T. Washington recognized that within white America were people of good conscience and that cooperation with those elements offered the best hope.

For 100 years after the Civil War, America found itself engaged in a struggle for world domination; a struggle that indeed pitted the cosmic forces of good vs. evil against each other. It was the industrial age. The battle was both ideological but technical in nature. It was ideological in that a revolutionary philosophy took over in Europe. The central tenet of this new ideology was that Mankind would sacrifice freedom for security. Thus did Hitler and Stalin and Mao rise, replacing God as modern deities to be worshipped by the masses, all of whom were considered expendable before the yawning needs of the nation-state.
Opposed to this, above all other nations, empires, powers and armies, stood America. It was in America that man had found freedom, and with it realization that each individual has a divine purpose under God. The Hitler's, the Tojo's and the Stalin's were convinced that this made us soft, unwilling to sacrifice; that our freedoms also made us little kings coveting our little homesteads, but unwilling to expend energies on behalf of anybody else. It was the single greatest miscalculation in the annals of human history, yet this great narrative, this great victory, cannot be re-told without the ultimate realization that so many black Americans justly feel left out of it. Our greatest source of pride is one they were not allowed to truly share in, and it is out of this frustration that many blacks feel the need to alter the story. Thus we are told by many on the Left, or by those who have some political or racial axe to grind, that America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki not to save the lives of 1 million Japanese and Americans who would have died in the planned invasion of Tokyo, but because we hated people of color. This is a lie, but it is repeated not just at political rallies but in churches and even in schools. This must stop!

Hand in hand with the ideological struggles that came to be known as World Wars I and II; the Cold War; and now the War on Terror, a different struggle ensued. It was a competition emanating from the Industrial Revolution that marked transition from the 19th to the 20th Centuries. As we view the rise of German nationalism, we see that it was through industry that they felt their victory could be secured. The battle would be fought also over natural resources; coal, oil, iron ore, and the vast territories needed to secure an endless appetite for it. Bigger and better ships; automobiles, aeroplanes, technological achievements; whoever dominated these engines of both military might and commerce would rule the world. It appeared that Germany would win this global struggle for supremacy. What they lacked in natural resources they made up for in their will to conquer others in order to attain it. At the same time, America shrank into isolationism, our self-confidence shaken by the Great Depression.

Despite this, when the time finally came to stand up and be counted, it was America that countered the German/Axis military-industrial machine. In successfully so doing this leaves the thoughtful man or women to ponder the role of God. Here were a handful of agrarian colonies, separated by an ocean from the salons of political influence, lacking a major army; an after-thought, almost, yet within 150 years we found ourselves suddenly to be the greatest, most powerful empire in the history of the world. The term empire is one that politicians such as myself are loath to use, but indeed, as a straight talker, I must admit this is what we became and remain today. It started with the Grand Alliance in which Winston Churchill agreed that America was the natural inheritor of the British Empire, yet we were and are a reluctant empire. An empire not of colonies, not a conquering force, but an empire of ideas and liberation. An empire of coalitions, of trading partners and friends who do business with us not out of fear or coercion, but because it is mutually beneficial to the whole world.
Still, as America captured the great battle for industrial and technological might, African-Americans found it increasingly difficult to share in our victories. In the immediate wake of triumph over the vicious hatred and racial slanders of Adolph Hitler, black America struggled to understand why a country so noble, so willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, so brave and righteous, could not see fit to open its loving arms to them. They gathered in their churches, asked this over and over, and with God as their witness vowed, "We shall overcome."

The Civil Rights Movement followed, and out of this important lessons. Black sports heroes Jesse Owens, Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson were just that: heroes that Americans of all colors could admire. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. understood this country as well as any man, black or white. He understood that we were at heart a loving nation, a nation of believers. He infused his speeches with religious phraseology, stating that he "had been to the mountain top," that he "saw the Promised Land," and that "mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

Dr. King surrounded himself with as many white followers as black, and made full use of a phrase called Satyagraha, which had been the philosophy of his hero, Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. King patterned non-violent resistance after Gandhi. Satyagraha meant, in effect, to put bad behavior against one group against that group. That is, when the British treated the Indians poorly, Gandhi wanted them to know that they were treating themselves poorly; that crimes against some men are crimes against their own souls. If the offending party has a good heart, as Gandhi knew the British did and as Dr. King knew America did, then this technique would work. It did.

It is also very important to understand that while the civil rights struggle was difficult, there did exist in this great nation enough sympathy, empathy and good conscience for it to succeed. It is important to realize that in a Democracy like America, a struggle like this could only succeed if a majority believed in the cause, and that the majority was then and still are white people. There were indeed and still are huge numbers of good white folks with love in their hearts. There is no all good, no all bad. In America, and thank God for it, the good vastly out-numbers the bad.

In studying the success of the Civil Rights Movement against long odds, consider that there are no stories of Jews overcoming Hitler; political prisoners rising out of the Soviet gulags; or Chinese dissidents who got the best of Chairman Mao. The elements of fairness, equality, kindness, love and Democracy that make America a shining city on a hill did not exist in those Godless despotisms. I was imprisoned in one of them and can speak from personal experience. Only because America opposed the Communists and forced their hand through aggression in Vietnam was I, along with my fellow POWs, allowed to return to this land that I love.

In America, men like Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey and University of Alabama football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant did exist. It was men and women like these who courageously stood for change and are rightfully considered heroes because of
it. But the devil is always afoot, and he was in the 1960s when John and Robert Kennedy, and Dr. King, were assassinated. America was never innocent, but the "age of innocence" was now over. The Christian influence within the civil rights struggle was replaced by black militancy, embodied by the Black Panthers. Malcolm X, a thoughtful man of intelligence and courage, had chosen to join forces with Dr. King, but he was assassinated by elements within his own Muslim faith, which became highjacked by angry men like Louis Farrakhan.

The 1960s gave birth to a new mindset, which was an offspring of Communism. In the U.S.S.R. and Red China, so-called "liberal" elements such as homosexuality, feminism and racial equality had no place within the totalitarianism of Josef Stalin or Mao Tse-Tung, but within international Communist circles, these precepts were seen as ways to weaken their greatest enemy, the United States.

Legitimate demands for better treatment of women, of gays, of minorities, were hijacked by elements of Communism. In Fidel Castro's Cuba, his undesirables were sent to Florida during the 1980 Mariel boatlift. The American Civil Liberties Union became infiltrated, and un-American grievances replaced traditional, legitimate causes. The ACLU has engaged in much good work, but much bad work, as well. They were the leading opponents of McCarthyism, which at the time appeared to be an overbearing intrusion into our civil rights.

Nobody would argue that Senator Joseph McCarthy was entirely correct. He was not. Dwight Eisenhower and George C. Marshall certainly opposed him. But the Venona Project, revealed after the Soviet archives were opened following the fall of the U.S.S.R., did reveal an enemy within: many Communist spies and "fellow travelers" within the highest levels of the Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman Administrations. McCarthy was paranoid, but he had some cause to be.

ACLU activities have included subversive animosity towards law enforcement and in so doing championing of the release of actual criminals. It has promoted the increasingly wide-held notion that most blacks are unfairly imprisoned, as if because some innocent African-Americans were lynched in Alabama in the 1930s, modern day "Bloods" and "Crips" are equally blameless. It has included a steady effort at undermining child molestation laws in favor of those who believe that few barriers should exist to prevent physical sex between men and young children, boys or girls. It has included an effort at bringing down long-held institutions like the Catholic Church, using the self-guilt of the sinful in a sinful world, in an effort to show moral relativism of crimes and indecencies. It has included an effort at destroying the Boy Scouts and promoting atheism. This, my friends, is how Satan operates and it is imperative that men and women - of whom I include myself - open their eyes and see that with which is placed before our countenance. There is a passivity, a blindness in our culture, in which these blatant sins are somehow swept under rugs, but not on my watch.
These were the aims of Communism, but with the help of a loving God and a President named Ronald Reagan, we defeated it. However, evil exists and never goes away. I saw it in the "Hanoi Hilton." It is a beast called the Inquisition, slavery, racism, totalitarianism, Nazism, Communism, terrorism, and a host of other isms. It simply takes other forms. When Communism as a major military threat was destroyed, an entire power structure, a psychology that rebels against God, that hates righteousness, that despises things that are holy or wholesome . . . and therefore hated and continues to hate such concepts as "American as apple pie," continues to live on.

As described, this post-Communist ideology lives on in the protest movement; in such organizations as the North American Man-Boy Love Association; in the legal and lobbying organizations that promote these nefarious concepts. We have seen it in the liberation theology that hi-jacked the Catholic Church in Latin America, promoting hatred towards America, freedom and capitalism as the "new god"; its weapons their shield, replacing the Holy Bible.

This ideology manifested itself in organizations like the Symbionese Liberation Army and the Weather Underground, which completely rejected the supposed pacifism associated with the Left, replacing it with violence. It is an ideology embodied by a former university professor who called the World Trade Center victims of 9/11 "little Eichmanns," simply because they engaged in acts of commerce which provide needed goods and services to average people like you throughout the world.

But what is most disturbing, my friends, is that this ideology has found a place in black America. There will always be unimpresseds promoting lies about America, about righteousness, but within black churches exists some of America's best and brightest. If we allow the traditional values of black Christianity to reject America in favor of falsehoods, we not only do a disservice to our country, but also sentence another generation of African-Americans to a new form of slavery. We have ignored this too long, but now is the time for all of us to confront a 21st Century reality. It has been festering below the surface for years, decades even. Evidence of it has filtered into our consciousness, but we have denied it, excused it, and even promoted it.

Good people, it is 2008, and by the time I take my oath of office it will be 2009. White America, indeed all of white civilization, from Europe to Australia; to former colonies in Africa and in Asia; have long-ago engaged in self-analysis that has at times been more like self-flagellation. As a Christian, as an American who wants only the very best for all of my fellow citizens because we must remain united, I urge my black brethren to take this unique opportunity in history to look within. I urge thee, with all the respect at my disposal, to examine yourselves, your communities, your schools, your children, your churches. I urge this not as an accusation, but because history has taught us that we must take responsibility for ourselves, individually. We cannot rely on government panaceas to see us through. We must lift ourselves up.
I cannot say that the New Deal was an abject failure. I cannot stand here and call the Great Society a total loss. Like so much we experience, like people, like life itself, there was good and there was bad in these policies, but like so much of government, too much of a good thing always becomes too much, period. I submit, my friends, that the frontier spirit that infused post-Reconstruction black America, in spite of the hardships, in spite of the inequalities imposed upon black people by white America - thus making this entrepreneurial spirit an act of necessity - despite all of that, it is this spirit that my good friend, former Congressman Jack Kemp, has tried so hard to revitalize through inner city "empowerment zones." It is this spirit that I call on black America, indeed all of America, to return to.

In so doing, my brethren, I am asking that you allow the truth to set you free. History is a large, unwieldy thing. It can be an open sore, but it can also be liberating, empowering. This country I love has been lied about. I have heard these lies coming from men and women of authority. Sadly, without refutation, I have seen them believed. No more. No, ladies and gentlemen, no more. No more slanders and lies about this land I love.

It is time for black and white Americans, indeed the entire world, to confront our history. No, we are not a John Wayne cowboy movie. That image swung too far to the Right, but today the Left, Hollywood and much of the international body politic has adopted a "blame America first" mindset that is not merely disagreeable, it is a pack of lies. For black Americans, I urge you to be thankful for what you have, and not resentful of what you do not possess. I cannot make life fair and would be crazy to suggest otherwise. I admit people who look like me treated you badly, but I also know that people who look like me loved and helped you. I also recognize that among you all is not angelic.

Consider that while your ancestors were shackled and brought here by force, had they not many of you would not be here, and if you were not here you may well be living in a poor, disease-ridden, corrupt African country; if your ancestors had survived the ensuing centuries. Consider that there are no successful black-run countries, and in saying this I offer not condemnation of your race, but a request for soul-searching that may yield the answers for a successful future, here and in Africa.

I urge the United Nations, Hollywood, the public schools, the academic community, black America; I urge all of you: come home, my friends. We have been apart too long. Teach the truth. Tell the truth. Our faults are well known. We put them in the storefront window for all to examine. In the information age we live in, our secrets are quickly made open sores, to be exploited by all political rivals. The CIA, decisions that led to wars, many with bad results, many made in secret, are now well known, picked over in endless detail by the punditry, which so often offers complaint without solution. I offer no legislation, no Supreme Court rulings, no sweeping Fairness Doctrines. Rather, I offer my voice, a bully pulpit as Teddy Roosevelt called it, and a request for healing through a fair, truthful examination of our history, of ourselves.
What I do offer, however, is that schools and colleges adopt a new curriculum. I call it a Truth Agenda. Tell the children they live in a wondrous, prosperous land. Stop bad-mouthing it. Replace cynicism with patriotism. It is a real thing, an uplifting emotion, and it is worthy. It is not jingoistic and it is not false. For black Americans, I urge you to read great books by world famous authors, time-tested by decades, centuries of historical analysis. I urge you to read about our military victories, our incredible accomplishments in the world of business. I urge you to absorb the entire culture, and I urge you to attend churches with people of color other than yourselves. Do not self-segregate. Dr. King fought that battle and we won it. Do not regress. Reach out. White people love your spirituals, your gospel music, and they want to love you. You can find room for your own stories, your African culture, your ethnic studies, for black authors. It is all legitimate, but do not limit yourselves. You can be African without being Afro-centric. Expand. Grow. There is room for all of us.

We are currently engaged in a struggle in Iraq, and my request for openness and truth is part and parcel of that struggle. We entered the war in 2003, and one of the main reasons given for invasion was the well-worn issue of weapons of mass destruction. Mistakes were made, calculations were wrong. Naked political accusations of my predecessor have branded him, and since I supported him, myself, as liars.

My friends, I am not a liar and neither is President Bush. We are men, and not infallible. Good people, there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Saddam Hussein used them against the Kurds in 1988. They were used in the war with Iran in the 1980s. He tried to use them against America in 1991 but we defeated him before he unleashed them. President Clinton knew he had them and spoke in detail about Iraqi WMD, specifically in a 1998 speech. When we invaded, we found WMD.

We did not, however, find as much or as lethal a cache of it as we said we would. Why? For one, we believe Saddam may have hidden much of it; in the desert, in the Euphrates River; maybe in Syria. But we also know now that Saddam wanted us to believe he possessed a stockpile. He wanted to be perceived as an Arab tiger, a new Saladdin standing up to the West. He deceived us, but in an ironic twist ended up biting off more than he could chew. I assure you, Iran understands that lesson, too.

The CIA made mistakes. The Bush Administration miscalculated. As a ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, with top-level sources in the intelligence community, and now as a Presidential candidate with access to regular, classified briefings, I too made mistakes, but I also know we did not lie about WMD.

Many have stated that entering Iraq was a mistake. I have resisted this notion. I was a supporter of the war and have not found that to constantly change my position, as so many do while adjusting to shifting political winds, is neither helpful nor good campaign strategy. But I am willing to ask, If I knew then what I know now, would I have supported the war?
No war plan survives the first battle. My hero Dwight Eisenhower might have been fired for the mistakes of the Market Garden fiasco of September 1944 had the current political-media complex existed then. No leader can be judged strictly by 20/20 hindsight. What were the circumstances at the exact moment of decision; not a day, a year, five years later?

The U.S. does not engage in torture. My political opponents know we do not. They say it anyway. I have known torture. Waterboarding is not torture. I do not endorse it as a regular policy. It should be rarely used, but it has succeeded in the past and has legitimate uses. But more importantly, I cannot for the life of me understand why, in a world in which people want to cut our throats; in a world in which 3,000 Americans can be killed in the World Trade Center; for political purposes will invest all their emotional and legal energies into sympathizing with our mortal enemies.

Was the Iraq War a mistake? Let me say that had I realized it would divide us politically and culturally, as it has, I might have gone another way. I say might. In the end, I probably would have given the go-ahead, for several reasons. First, while I am a Christian, I am not a Quaker. I am not a pacifist. Many have asked, "What would Jesus do?" I am not entirely sure that Jesus would not have allowed us to be slaughtered like lambs, turning the other cheek because "those who live by the sword die by the sword," and Heavenly paradise awaits us regardless of victory or defeat in battle. That said, I am not Jesus, which is precisely the point. I am just a man, and I must do the best I can. I am not running for the office of God, only for President.

Let me further use the example of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi advocated peaceful non-resistance, but please understand that this only works if your opponents are moral. The British Empire was moral. Martin Luther King Jr. also knew that America was moral. Saddam Hussein, Adolph Hitler: these were not moral men. They could not be dealt with the way Gandhi dealt with the English, or the way Dr. King dealt with the Christian South! Sometimes force is all they understand.

Terrorists only understand force. Now, this alone does not justify our invasion of Iraq. Critics have stated we went to war:

- As punishment of Saddam for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait
- For "finishing the job" we did not complete in 1991
- For his trying to assassinate former President George H.W. Bush
- Because he harbored terrorist training centers.
- Because he was in contact with Osama Bin Laden
- Because he had WMDs
- Because he was trying to foment an Islamic backlash against the West
- Because of our oil interests in the Middle East
- Because of global economic interests
- Because Arab partners like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, concerned at the instability he caused, supported the war
- Because despite public outcries, many of our European partners secretly wanted us to invade
- Because Democracy is the only real answer to hatred and hopelessness among disaffected Arab youth
- Because Iran needed to be counter-balanced
- Because it could lead to Israeli-Palestinian peace accords
- Because 9/11 change everything and gave us the political will to do what many wanted but did not have the support to do in the Clinton years
- And because of all the above-related, true factors, each of which added up to Iraq being the right war in the right place at the right time.

Many have said we needed and still need to articulate our reasons for going in. There were many, all good. They all added up. I admit now, I thought we would go in and do exactly as we did, which was to annihilate Saddam's Republican Guard and accomplish the mission, as President Bush proudly stated aboard the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln, a mere two months after we started it. I thought we would win one of the most brilliantly conceived military strikes, which we all called "shock 'n' awe," exactly the way we did do it. I also thought we would establish a Democracy, be loved in the Middle East, pay for it with Iraqi oil, establish a strong partnership, follow that up with Palestinian independence, bring the boys home, have a ticker-tape parade down Fifth Avenue in New York as we did after the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and call General Tommy Franks our greatest military hero since Ike. That said, I knew that securing peace and security would not be as easy as defeating the Iraqi Army.

Did I subscribe to hubris? Was I wrong? Like many things, I was partly right, and partly wrong. While I am willing to entertain the question that it was a mistake, I also know two things. One, it is not helpful since it is a done deal and must be dealt with as is. Two, despite all the miscalculations, the cost in men and treasure, our Middle East efforts are now and will continue to pay off. In the end, we will achieve our goals and the world will be better off for it. President Bush will be judged by history as Harry Truman was in his
then-unpopular handling of the Korean War, another adventure rife with errors and miscalculations.

So my friends, I have no stock in Halliburton; my father was not the target of assassination by Saddam Hussein; and my reasons for supporting the war were based on an honest assessment of what I thought we needed to do in order to protect this nation I so dearly love. I disagreed with former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. I helped convince the President to remove him in order that a plan I supported - "the surge" - be allowed to succeed as indeed it has. But Secretary Rumsfeld once said "there are known knowns and there are known unknowns." I only knew what I knew in 2002 and 2003. I could not know then what I know in 2008. In 2009 I will not know what I will know in 2010. But my reasoning was pure. There was no hidden agenda.

What have we accomplished? We removed Saddam and his sons. We removed the Taliban. We drew jihadists from all over the Middle East into two already-bad places and, at a time and place of our choosing, killed many of them. We have studied them, learned from them, detained and questioned them, and set them on the defensive. We freed the Kurdish north and started nascent Democracy.

Still, for partisan political purposes, in order to discredit or embarrass George W. Bush and the Republican Party, many insist that we torture, that Guantanamo detainees are mistreated and are innocent. Ladies and gentlemen, the only difference between many of these terrorists and Heinrich Himmler, Adolph Eichmann, Lavrenti Beria; is that they lack the ability to carry out the crimes those monsters did carry out. The single entity preventing them from attaining their cruel goals is the United States of America.

Are we safer? The record is all I have to go on, and the record says we have not been attacked. While I happily credit President Bush for his vigilance, I also offer this: Osama Bin Laden thought George Bush was the same as Bill Clinton. He felt the response to 9/11 would be Clintonesque. Bin Laden mis-judged the difference between Republicans and Democrats. He got the opposite of what he wanted. Are terrorists waiting for another Clinton, a Democrat, to ascend to the White House so that their next attack will be defended in the manner of that party? I cannot say, but as voters, it is worth thinking about.

In closing, let me just say that I have worked with people who disagree with me, and I am running for President of the Republican Party, and not for the role of Keeper of the Reagan Revolution. I loved Ronald Reagan, but I must be my own man, and I am running for President of all of America; not just "red states" or "battleground states." I plan to run and to win in every state in this great nation. I have offer common ground with everybody.

My supporters included conservative talk radio. They are passionate and talk tough. They use partisan language. I do not talk that way and do not plan to, but I cannot stop people who believe in me from trying to help, just as my opponent will not be able to control all
of his or her supporters. I ask for a fair, hard, respectful campaign. I ask for truth. Just as I ask people to pursue the truth about our history, about America, pursue the truth about me. Disagree with me if you must. Argue vehemently. Display passion, but do not impugn me with lies and falsehoods.

I am a dedicated public servant who has stood above those things and deserves better. I expect that there will unfairness, some pretty foul. I have seen worse, but like Gandhi imploring the British, like Dr. King insisting white Southerners were his brothers, I ask that you find your better selves.

I believe in the generosity of the human spirit. To quote the great Abraham Lincoln, I ask that America come together. I ask that all us - you, me, everybody - find, as Lincoln called them, the "better angels of our nature."

Thank you.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

RESUME, BIOGRAPHY, PRAISE FOR STEVEN TRAVERS

STEVEN TRAVERS
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (1994-2008)

SPORTS COLUMNIST - San Francisco Examiner, San Francisco, Calif.
SPORTS COLUMNIST - StreetZebra Magazine, Marina Del Rey, Calif.
SCREENWRITER, FREELANCE WRITER AND PUBLISHED AUTHOR.

EDUCATION: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles, Calif., Bachelor of Arts degree - Communication Arts & Sciences (attended USC School of Cinema-Television). HOLLYWOOD FILM INSTITUTE, Los Angeles, Calif., Certificate of Completion. UCLA WRITERS’ PROGRAM, Los Angeles, Calif. WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW, Fullerton, Calif.


SCREENWRITING AWARDS: ONCE HE WAS AN ANGEL, Quantum Leap, Calabasas, California (optioned by group that included Frank Capra Jr., son of the famed director); BANDIT, America’s Best, Orlando, Florida; ROCK ‘N’ ROLL HEAVEN, Writers Network Screenplay & Fiction Competition, Beverly Hills, California.


INTERNET: Steven Travers' Journal.

LEGAL/SPORTS AGENT: San Francisco Sports Management, Inc.

MILITARY: United States Army Reserves.

ATHLETICS: Professional baseball player, St. Louis Cardinals, Oakland Athletics; Coach, USC, Cal-Berkeley; Manager, Berlin Sluggers, Berlin, Germany.

POLITICS: Campaign manager, California Congressional election; political consultant, speechwriter.

VOLUNTEERING/ORGANIZATIONS: Marin Literacy Program; USC Alumni Club; NorCal Trojan Club; Hollywood Congress of Republicans; Christ Lutheran Church.

ACADEME: Guest speaker, University of Southern California Annenberg School of Communications.

ABOUT STEVEN TRAVERS
Steven Travers has always been entrepreneurial.

“I was turned down by my high school newspaper because they didn’t allow freshmen,” says the sixth-generation Californian, “so I started my own!”

Aside from journalism, Travers was a star pitcher, playing three years of varsity baseball for the same suburban California high school that USC football coach Pete Carroll graduated from years earlier. Travers helped lead his team to the mythical national championship of high school baseball, according to polls conducted by *Collegiate Baseball* magazine and the Easton Bat Company.

Travers attended college on a baseball scholarship, where he was an all-conference pitcher, and played collegiate summer ball in Colorado, Nevada and Canada. The 6-6, 225-pound Travers played professionally for the St. Louis Cardinals' organization, where he was a teammate of Danny Cox. Travers once struck out 1989 National League Most Valuable Player Kevin Mitchell three times in one game (he K’d 14 that night). In the Oakland Athletics’ system, he played alongside Jose Canseco.

“Punching out K-Mitchell was great,” he recalls, “but the highlight of my career may have been when I was with the A’s against the Giants in a Major League exhibition game at Phoenix Municipal Stadium. I struck out the side and went nine-up, nine-down in three innings. Bill King and Lon Simmons announced it on the radio.”

Steve later coached at USC, Cal-Berkeley and was recruited to manage a team in Berlin, Germany.

After pro baseball, Travers returned to college. He studied in the University of Southern California School of Cinema-Television, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications. At USC, he was a classmate of Mark McGwire and Randy Johnson. After graduation, he traveled extensively to New York City, Washington, D.C. and to Europe: London and Paris.

“I almost went to work for Dean Witter in the World Trade Center,” he recalled. “After 9/11 I really started to think about ‘what might have been.’ ”

Travers also went to Western State University College of Law, the Hollywood Film Institute, and was part of the UCLA Writers' Program.

He served in the U.S. Army during the Persian Gulf War, and was a political consultant, speechwriter and campaign manager for a California Congressional candidate. Travers was also a sports agent, co-founding San Francisco Sports Management, Inc. The agency represented Pittsburgh Pirate outfielder Al Martin. Another client, ex-Angels' playboy pitcher Bo Belinsky, was at that time being approached by Hollywood producers about a movie depicting his tempestuous life. Travers wrote the screenplay.
That script, *Once He Was An Angel*, was a quarterfinalist in the Quantum Leap screenwriting contest before getting optioned by a Hollywood producing group that included Frank Capra Jr. and Frank Capra III (son and grandson of the famed *It's A Wonderful Life* director). Thus began Travers' embarkation into a full-time professional writing career in 1994.

“I’ve punched a lot of tickets,” Travers says of his background, “and I bring real-world experience to my writing.”

A veteran of Hollywood, Steve has written 15 screenplays, teleplays and stageplays. His credits include *The Lost Battalion* (the true story of a World War I unit during the Argonne Offensive, the subject of a film starring Rick Schroder), *Wicked* and *Baja California*. His additional writing awards are for *Bandit*, an America’s Best quarterfinalist, and *Rock 'n' Roll Heaven*, a Writers Network Screenplay & Fiction quarterfinalist. He appeared in the film *The Californians*, starring Noah Wylie and Illeana Douglas.

Travers worked closely with legendary Hollywood producer Edgar Scherick, the original producer of *The Lost Battalion*. Scherick started ABC’s *Baseball Game of the Week* and *Monday Night Football* with Roone Arledge.

Travers also wrote for the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Los Angeles Daily News*, and was a sports stringer on San Diego’s XTRA 690 AM radio station. Steve has freelanced for magazines, newspapers and web sites. He produced Steven Travers’ Journal on the Internet. Eventually, Travers became the number one columnist at StreetZebra, an L.A. sports magazine where he covered the USC beat and wrote a monthly "Distant Replay" of great events in the Southland's rich sports history.

“I have encyclopedic knowledge of history,” Steve says. “I am truly versatile as a writer, able to use my knowledge of the past to understand the present. I have also survived as a freelancer; written extensively for the Internet and the so-called New Media; and have up-close knowledge of the ‘dot-bomb’ era that was the 1990s.”

In 2001, Travers was hired as the lead sports columnist for the *San Francisco Examiner*. While writing for the *Examiner*, Travers was an eyewitness to Barry Bonds' historic 73-home run season of 2001. He got Bonds to agree to authorize the writing of his autobiography, but a business deal with the publishers was not worked out. Eventually, by 2002 Travers wrote the Best Seller *Barry Bonds: Baseball's Superman* from Sports Publishing L.L.C. ([www.sportspublishingllc.com](http://www.sportspublishingllc.com)). Actor Charlie Sheen wrote the foreword. It has gone through multiple re-prints, is now in paperback, and was nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of the Year. A sequel, covering Bonds' alleged steroid use, additional MVP awards, and chase of Hank Aaron's career home run record, is in the works.
In 2004, Travers wrote a proposal for the book that eventually became *Game of Shadows* by Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams, who landed the deal he did not.

An avid reader, Travers poured through books, at least one a month; classics, biographies, history, sports, novels, philosophy. He was also a Christian, but had never read *The Holy Bible*.

"Sometime around March or April of 2004, I decided to read *The Bible,*" he says. "Two pages a day. I started out with the New Testament. After a while I began to read out loud, which made a difference. Then the Old Testament. It took a little less than a year to read the entire book. As soon as I read it through, I started again. Two pages per day, out loud. At this point I have read it twice through. I am beginning to understand it. I am not an expert on it, but the Holy Spirit has come to me and inspires me each day that I read God’s Word. I will read that book until the day I die, God willing and I am able, until some day I will have read it so many times I will be an expert. . . ."

In 2006, Taylor Trade, a division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (www.RLPGTrade.com), published his book *The USC Trojans: College Football's All-Time Greatest Dynasty,* which argues that the University of Southern California has replaced Notre Dame as collegiate football's greatest tradition. USC legend Charles "Tree" Young graciously wrote the foreword, and the book ascended to Amazon.com “top seller” and National Book Network “top 100 seller” status.

Taylor Trade released *One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed A Nation* in 2007 (foreword by *Forrest Gump* author Winston Groom). This is the true story of how the 1970 USC-Alabama football game ushered in desegregation of the American South. A film is in development. USC graduate Kerry McCluggage, a top Hollywood producer (Allumination/Craftsman Films); former president of Universal and Paramount TV divisions; founder of UPN; with credits that include *Star Trek, Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Miami Vice,* has optioned it with plans for a major theatrical release. The co-producer is Barry Kemp (*Coach, Patch Adams, Catch Me If You Can*). Jeff Nathanson (*Catch Me If You Can, Indiana Jones* sequel) may write the screenplay.

Travers is a member of a “producer team” that includes Trojan football legend Anthony Davis and USC graduate Jim Starr. The deal was masterfully put together by Lloyd Robinson (USC ’64) of Suite A Management in Beverly Hills; Steve’s former literary agent, Craig Wiley; and Rowman & Littlefield president Rick Rinehart. Davis is on board to promote the project along with other former Trojans. When the film is released, Travers, Davis and Starr will be executive producers.

Tom Seaver's Teams, His Town, His Times, An Illustrated History of Trojan Athletics (foreword by Coca-Cola/North America President Terry Marks).


Triumph/Random House plans to publish in 2008: Trojans Essential (foreword by legendary USC coach John Robinson), The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly San Francisco 49ers (foreword by 49er Hall of Famer Bob St. Clair) and The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly Oakland Raiders (foreword by radio personality Bruce Macgowan).

Steve is the author of three unpublished books. God's Country is a three-volume conservative, Christian worldview of how history formed the U.S. Empire and America's manifest destiny for the 21st Century. He also authored a novel, Angry White Male, and a compilation of his work over the years, The Writer’s Life.

In 2007, Peter Miller of PMA Literary and Film Management, Inc. in New York City (www.pmalitfilm.com) took over as Travers's agent/manager. At this time, they are contemplating an authorized autobiography of former New York Mets’ superstar Tom Seaver and a study of the modern nature of American politics and media manipulation, using the Whittaker Chambers case of the 1940s as its “Genesis.”

The telegenic Travers has made numerous appearances on television and radio, being interviewed for the books, articles and screenplays he has written over the years. His national appearances have included "The Jim Rome Show", CNN, ESPN, and the Armed Forces Radio Network. He has appeared on TV and radio stations in major markets such as New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

In September 2005, Steve was interviewed on College Sports Television (www.cstv.com), a division of CBS, as part of a program devoted to the 35th anniversary of the 1970 USC-Alabama game. In February 2006, CSTV featured Travers prominently in their documentary Tackling Segregation, which aired throughout Black History Month. His work was also the subject of a 2005 CSTV documentary on Alabama football coach Paul “Bear” Bryant.

In 2006, Travers was a guest speaker, leading a panel of distinguished former USC football players and coaches, for Professor Dan Durbin’s popular class “Sports, Culture & Society” at the University of Southern California Annenberg School of Communications. The subject was the 1970 USC-Alabama game, with Steve’s book a focal point. Out of this have come discussions with USC regarding Steve’s possible
hiring as an adjunct professor. Travers made numerous other speaking and book-signing appearances through USC, which included appearances at the USC Bookstore, the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, and the USC Collections at the South Coast Plaza Shopping Center in Orange County.

In 2007, he addressed the USC East Bay Trojan Club in Walnut Creek, California; the incoming freshmen and parents during Parent’s Weekend at USC; the USC Orange County Trojan Club; as well as more signings at the USC Bookstore and USC Collections; and an address of the Hollywood Congress of Republicans; and the annual banquet of the GMAC Bowl in Mobile, Alabama. Professor Durbin invited him back for a retrospective of the 1972 USC national champion football team at Annenberg School of Communications.

Steve is the scion of a distinguished California family. The Traverses came to colonial America, fought in the Revolutionary War, and settled into New York and Massachusetts. They founded the Travers Stakes horse race. One ancestor, a Captain Edgerly of the Union Army, was reputed to be President Abraham Lincoln’s “personal spy” during the Civil War. Steve’s side of the family came West during the time of the 1849 Gold Rush. His grandfather, Charles S. Travers, covered the 1906 Great Earthquake as a journalist, started a silent film magazine in Hollywood, and was President of the San Francisco Press Club. Steve’s great-uncle, Reginald Travers, was a noted Shakespearean actor. His father, Donald Travers, is a retired attorney and track coach who served as a Naval officer during World War II. His mother, Inge Travers, is a renowned artist. Steve’s brother, Donald Travers II, is a former Naval officer. Daughter Elizabeth Travers is a college student. Inside Berkeley’s Memorial Stadium is the Colonel Charles Travers Big Game Room (named after Steve’s late uncle, who served during World War II) to accommodate press conferences, and (named after Steve’s late aunt) is the Louise Travers Memorial Club Room. Colonel Travers also founded a wing of the university’s political science department, dedicated to fair and balanced analysis of public affairs. Members of the Travers family have served in the military during the Revolution, the Civil War, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War.

His web page is: [http://hometown.aol.com/uscsteve1/myhomepage/index.html](http://hometown.aol.com/uscsteve1/myhomepage/index.html). His books and further information be found at [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) or via Google.com.

Steve is a board member of the USC NorCal Trojan Club, the Hollywood Congress of Republicans, and worships at Christ Lutheran Church. Steve also tutors foreign students trying to learn English, as well as jail inmates, through the Marin Literacy Program.

"I always wanted to give of my time," he explained, "but was too selfish to really do it. I found excuses. If at the beginning of 2006, if you had told me how busy I would be, I never would have signed up, but I did. I was assigned to a Korean divinity student named Kyung-Taek Hong. We became friends and shared Christian fellowship despite the language barrier. Almost as soon as I started tutoring Kyung, incredible good fortune began to reign down on me. Book deals, the movie deal, speaking engagements, ‘top
seller’ sales, maybe a professorship at USC. As busy as I was writing, I met him every Wednesday for an hour and a half at the library. I consider him my ‘angel.’

“As Jim Hill always says as his signature signoff on of his sports show, ‘Keep the faith.’ ”

HIGHLIGHTS OF STEVEN TRAVERS’ CAREER

- Author of One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed A Nation (www.RLPGTrade.com), 2007; the true story of how the 1970 USC-Alabama football game ushered in the desegregation of the American South.
- One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed A Nation has been optioned by “A list” Hollywood producers Kerry McCluggage (Allumination/Craftsman Films) and Barry Kemp, who plan a major movie release. Travers is part of a “producer team” that includes Trojan football legend Anthony Davis, USC graduate Jim Starr, and Beverly Hills talent agent Lloyd Robinson. Jeff Nathanson (Catch Me If You Can, Indiana Jones sequel) may write the screenplay.
- Travers appeared on College Sports TV (a division of CBS) as part of their documentary about ex-Alabama football coach Bear Bryant, and later on Tackling Segregation.
- Author of The USC Trojans: College Football’s All-Time Greatest Dynasty (www.RLPGTrade.com), 2006; argues that the University of Southern California has replaced Notre Dame as the greatest of all gridiron traditions. This book made Amazon.com “top seller” and the National Book Network’s “top 100 seller” lists.
- Author of A’s Essential: Everything You Need to Know to Be A Real Fan!, Dodgers Essential; Angels Essential; Diamondbacks Essential; The Good, the Bad & the Ugly Los Angeles Lakers; all in 2007 from Triumph Books (www.triumphbooks.com), a division of Random House.
- Author of The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly Oakland Raiders; The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly San Francisco 49ers; and Trojans Essential; all in 2008 from Triumph Books/Random House.
- Author of College Football’s All-Time Top 25 Traditions, 2008 from Taylor Trade/Rowman & Littlefield.
- Author of the Best Seller Barry Bonds: Baseball’s Superman (www.sportspublishingllc.com) currently in multiple re-print, now in paperback, and nominated for a Casey Award for Best Baseball Book of 2002.
- Represented by literary manager Peter Miller (www.pmalitfilm.com).
- Web page: http://hometown.aol.com/uscsteve1/myhomepage/index.html
• Author of *Angry White Male*, a novel.
• Author of *The Writer’s Life*, a compilation of his work over the years.
• Author of *God’s Country: A Three Volume Conservative, Christian Worldview of How History Formed the United States Empire and America's Manifest Destiny For the 21st Century*.
• Future projects: Tom Seaver’s authorized autobiography; Whittaker Chambers and his political legacy; *An Illustrated History of Trojan Athletics*.
• Lead sports columnist for the *San Francisco Examiner*.
• Lead columnist for *StreetZebra*, a leading Los Angeles sports magazine.
• Sportswriter for the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Los Angeles Daily News*.
• Sports stringer on XTRA 690 AM radio.
• Freelance writer for magazines and web sites; produced Steven Travers' *Journal on the Internet*.
• Regularly interviewed on local and national media.
• Public speaker and guest lecturer addressing USC alumni clubs, book signings, library organizations, boosters, political organizations, Republican gatherings and college classes.
• Author of 15 screenplays, teleplays and stageplays, half of which have been optioned, sold, or written for hire, and several of which have won awards; plus treatments and songs.
• Credits include *The Lost Battalion*, *Wicked* and *Baja California*.
• Appeared in the film *The Californians*, starring Noah Wylie and Illeana Douglas.
• Exceptional knowledge of all facets of the entertainment industry - creative, legal and business. Experience dealing with and interviewing celebrities in film, sports and business; reputation for discretion and maintaining “off the record” confidence of story subjects.
• Communications degree from the University of Southern California; attended USC School of Cinema-Television, UCLA Writers’ Program, and graduated from the Hollywood Film Institute.
• Entrepreneurial self-starter who created his own sports newspaper while in high school; member of national champion high school baseball team.
• Earned an athletic scholarship, and was all-conference pitcher in college.
• Ex-professional baseball player for the Cardinals and A’s.
• Learned leadership skills while serving in the United States Army during the Persian Gulf War.
• Learned more leadership, and management skills, coaching at USC, the University of California, and managing a baseball team in Europe.
• Traveled throughout all of the United States, Canada, and Europe.
• Attended law school, and worked in a law firm during this time.
• Worked as a student intern in the USC Sports Information office, and as a production assistant for ABC Sports while in college.
• Campaign manager for a California Congressional campaign; political consultant and speechwriter; public relations and advertising experience.
• Comes from a journalistic family; grandfather started a silent film magazine in Hollywood during the Roaring ‘20s; worked on scary kids’ stories with his daughter.
• Volunteers with Marin Literacy Program.
• Board of Directors, USC NorCal Trojan Club.
• Worships at Christ Lutheran Church.
• Guest speaker, Professor Dan Durbin’s class on “Sports, Culture & Society,” USC Annenberg School of Communications.
• In discussion with USC Annenberg School of Communications for adjunct professorship.

PRAISE FOR STEVEN TRAVERS

Steve Travers is the next great USC historian, in the tradition of Jim Murray, John Hall, and Mal Florence! . . . the Trojan Family needs your work. Fight On!
—USC Head Football Coach Pete Carroll

. . . Steve Travers tells us all about the exciting and remarkable football . . . . that not only changed the way the game is played; it . . . changed the world.
—Winston Groom, author of Forrest Gump

Steve Travers combines wit, humor, social pathos and historical knowledge with the kind of sports expertise that only an ex-jock is privy to; it is reminiscent of the work of Jim Bouton, Pat Jordan and Dan Jenkins, combined with Jim Murray’ turn of phrase, Hunter Thompson’s hard-scrabble Truths, and David Halberstam’s unique take on our nation’s place in history. His writing is great storytelling, and the result is pure genius every time.
—Westwood One radio personality Mike McDowd

Steve Travers is a great writer, an educated athlete who knows how to get inside the player’s heads, and when that happens, greatness occurs. He’s gonna be a superstar.
—Dave Burgin/Ex-editor, San Francisco Examiner

Steve Travers is a phenomenal writer, an artist who labors over every word to get it just right, and he has an encyclopedic knowledge of sports and history.
—StreetZebra magazine

Steve Travers is a Renaissance man.
—Jim Rome Show

He is very qualified to continue to write books such as this one. Good job.
—Marty Lurie/"Right Off the Bat" Oakland A’s Pregame Host

Steve’s a literate ex-athlete, an ex-Trojan, and a veteran of Hollywood, too.
You’ve done some good writin’, dude.
—KFOG Radio, San Francisco

[Travers is] one of the great sportswriters on the current American scene.
—Joe Shea/Radio Talk Host and Editor

Travers appears to have the right credentials for the task.
—USA Today Baseball Weekly
A very interesting read which is not your average . . . book . . . Steve has achieved his *bona fides* when it comes to having the credentials to write a book like this.
—Geoff Metcalfe/KSFO Radio, San Francisco

This is a fascinating book written by a man who knows his subject matter inside and out.
—Irv Kaze/KRLA Radio, Los Angeles

Travers . . . established himself as a writer of many dimensions . . . a natural.
—John Jackson/Ross Valley Reporter

Steve Travers is a true USC historian and a loyal Trojan!
—Former USC football player John Papadakis

Pete Carroll calls you "the next great USC historian," high praise indeed.
- Rob Fukuzaki/ABC7, Los Angeles

You’re a great writer and I always enjoy your musings, particularly on SC football – huge fan!
- Oakland A’s general manager Billy Beane

Steven Travers is one of the most accomplished sports sports journalists in our nation today and *One Night, Two Teams* is his defining work to this point.
- Strandbooks.com

Travers, a USC grad, portrays the game and USC’s victory as a tipping point in the integration of college football and the South, a triumph for the forces of equality . . . his larger view of the game hits home in most respects, and he provides a compelling account- drawing from dozens of interviews with participants, coaches, drawing from dozens of others - of a clash between two schools with decidedly different approaches to the composition of their football rosters . . . Ain all, an intriguing premise and a well-told story.
- Wes Lukowsky, Booklist

The book is not just about sports but how sports and that September 1970 game in particular relate to the intertwining of sports, race, politics, history, religion and philosophy.
- Harold Abend, *In Scope*
One Night . . . is a tour de force.
- Marin I.J.

Travers combines wit, humor and historical knowledge in his writings.
- University of Southern California

Wow what a great job!!!! . . . I love the book . . . It's one of those you look forward to reading at special times . . . I can't say enough!
- Lonnie White, Los Angeles Times

This is a book about American society. It sheds incredible light on little-known events that every American must know to understand this country . . . In 20 years, people will say of this book what they said about Roger Kahn's The Boys of Summer.
- Fred Wallin, Business Talk radio

Steve is the USC historian whose meticulous attention to detail is a revelation. He is the best chronicler of USC ever.
- Chuck Hayes, CRN “Sports Corner”

This is fabulous, just a terrific look at our history. Travers is one of the best writers around.
- Rod Brooks, “Fitz & Brooks Show,” KNBR/San Francisco

You have created a work of art here, an absolutely great book. We love your work.
- Bob Fitzgerald, “Fitz & Brooks Show,” KNBR/San Francisco

When it comes to sports history, this is the man right here.
- Gary Radnich, KRON/San Francisco

Steve combines . . . social and historical knowledge in his writing.

- University of Southern California
Author Steven Travers discusses his new book . . .

- Orange County Register

. . . Join Steve Travers . . . at the Autograph Stage . . .
ESPN Radio

. . . Steve Travers, author of One Night, Two Teams: Alabama vs. USC and the Game That Changed a Nation . . .

- Los Angeles Daily News

Steve Travers, a sports historian . . .

- Los Alamitos News-Enterprise

Here this dynamic speaker tell how this famous game changed history.

- Friends of the Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Library

This is a fabulous book.
  - Michaela Pereira/KTLA 5, Los Angeles

Travers presents this particular game in 1970 as a metaphor for the profound changes in social history during the emancipation of the South.

- Publishers Weekly

. . . Explored in rich, painstaking detail by Steve Travers.

- Jeff Prugh, L.A. Times beat writer who covered the 1970 USC-Alabama game