the only 'zine that lifts and separates

Fall / Winter 1993
Volume I, No. 2
$2.00

Girls Just Wanna Have?
Stop Using Fun As A Weapon

When Cyndi Lauper came out with her song "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun," you could almost hear the sound of thousands of girl-palms slapping thousands of girl-foreheads, V-8 style, as we all realized: goddammit, that's right! We do just wanna have fun! Because, somehow, what she sang wasn't as obvious as it should have been. Girls weren't supposed to just wanna have fun. We were supposed to just wanna have kids and touchy-feely committed relationships. But there was Cyndi, singing it out to the people. And there we were, doing our new-wave bops on dance floors across the country, drunkenly singing it along with her, as though it was some kind of a battle-cry. We were gonna have fun like the boys did. We were gonna have one-night stands and hangovers and we were gonna laugh out loud like banshees and fuck the world if they didn't like it!

As girls we demanded our fun as an act of rebellion. Like today's riot grrrls, we had been raised on feminism and were not about to be limited by conservative notions of what was and what was not feminine. Punk rock idolized the tomboy and gave us the freedom to be loud and obnoxious hedonists, and thereby distinguish ourselves from the previous generation's wimpy female role-models, those hippie-chicks with their lank hair, middle parts, and simpy, Sissy Spacek-like facial expressions.

But that was the early eighties and at least we were girls then. Now we find ourselves singing along, not with Cyndi, but with Chrissie: "I'm not the girl I used to be I got a kid I'm thirty-three BAY-BEH!" As women, is it even acceptable for us to want to have fun?

Men don't need to ask themselves this question. They have always been expected and encouraged to have unending fun, because, as everyone knows, boys will be boys, even when they are men. But as women we are expected to undergo a kind of pleasure-ideectomy so that we may become the selfless keepers of compassion, moderation, serenity, and responsibility that is the definition of "womanhood." It's clear that fun seems to be what separates the girls from the women. Certainly Freud never considered that the answer to his question "What does woman want" was "FUN!"

Well, we had to fight for our right to party, and we aren't about to give it up easily just because we ain't girls no more. Trouble is, what's a thirty-year old gal supposed to do for fun? Can we still behave the way we did as girls, or is it just too embarrassing? Do we even still want to? Or are we genuinely no longer interested in this type of fun? And if we aren't, what is fun? Can being sober be fun? Can having that touchy-feely relationship be fun?

All we know is that women do just wanna have fun, even if it may be a little difficult for us to figure out what that means. Because for us, fun is an issue. So here it is: the fun issue.

enjoy!

your editors, the left one and the right one
Dear Busty Babes,

We here at Pawholes country central wish to let you know that your zine rocks our collective worlds.

Keren and I picked it up at See Hear a couple of weeks ago, and it just rules. I especially related to the blow job piece as well as everything about us extra cool aging scene veterans. Ain’t it the truth sistas! Finally a zine for the post-post-post-riot grizzly generation.

Thanks!
Deborah & Keren
Pittsburg, PA

Hey gals - just wanted to let you know that I get your zine in at my store (an underground/alternative comics/book store). I get lots of new shit in every Friday - so much that I never get to read much - I always have to skim everything. But as soon as I started reading BUST I couldn’t put the thing down - I finished it all in one sitting and let my order-putting-away wait. You gals did a really good job - I really like it. And this is coming from a guy who is 1) a CAD and 2) pretty much numb from the whole zine scene. So keep up the good work and keep using those computers.

Take care, Scott
P.S. I'm down here in bee-yoo-tee-ful Baltimore MD

Groovers
I picked up your fanzine 2 days ago and it’s been on my mind ever since. I found myself nodding my head a lot in public places while reading it and felt this uncontrollable urge to write to you. For I too am a struggling 30 something free lance music writer, living in NYC with a long list of yucky boyfriend stories to my credit as well as having the secret Sassy interest thing.

In short, I was thrilled by your ‘zine. Thanks for your groovy paper.
Barbara Kligman
NY, NY

Hiya-
I picked up yer zine and really, really enjoyed it.

As a zine follower for a couple of years now, and yes, a boy, I’m glad to see someone other than disenfranchised middle-class white boys (such as myself) doing cool work. Neat.

I don’t wanna gush, but let me just give y’all some solid praise and say I look forward to the next.

Jamie Barnett
NY, NY

dear bust
A very cool zine indeed! An e-mail pal of mine found it in his local comic shop in NYC and mailed BUST to me. My appreciation and compliments to you for your fine, honest, funny, angry and totally female zine! It came at the right time too - cause I was starting to get disheartened about finding cool stuff by gals, especially gals who know how to get into cyberspace. I use the WELL alot and there’s a women’s forum there and you wouldn’t believe how totally boring it is! They don’t know any of the bands I ever talk about, they have no sense of humor, it’s totally touchy-feely-sensitive Boomer-women-support-group-dysfunctional-relationships bleah kind of stuff. No fun at all! BUST is like that classic postcard “It’s really great to be a girl!” Fun? comics of course - thumbs up to Julie Doucet, Mary Fleener, Fiona Smythe, and the Twisted Sisters anthology. I’m leaving in a week and half for the Peace Corps but if I have enough time I may e-mail some stuff to ya’ll.

yours- Mary Taylor
San Francisco, CA

dear bust
The problem with women is: they don’t want what’s right in their faces. They want some hulk-like dude who they know is an asshole but they want to fuck them anyway. Why? Because that’s who their friends tell them to. And if they went out with some guy who “really” did like them, they wouldn’t dig him ‘cause he dug you and you can’t handle it.

Also women like to think that they know that type of guy.
“I know that type, he’s a dick.”

While this may be true in some instances it’s not in all. And when a woman disses some innocent guy ’cause “she knows the type” the guy thinks “fuck you ya bitch, who the fuck are you for you to say, you know my type. I happen to be a swell guy, just because I don’t measure up to what you and your friends say is this or that you got a lot nerve dissing someone you could fall in love with.”

-Dot Boy
NY, NY

dear bust,

Thanks for sending the inaugural BUST! I liked the zine a lot, if that’s ok for a guy to say.

In the first issue I especially like the like/hate lists, the critique of Lifetime Television, Scarlett Fever’s powerful R-E-S-P-E-C-T, and Celina Hex’s observation that “its clear that the lives we thought we’d have aren’t even a possibility anymore.” Ain’t it true for all of us.
Dear Bust Collective,
I just finished reading the July issue of your magazine. I enjoyed every article and art piece — particularly the cover. A great job everyone!

with love,
Patricia Barrera
Apple Valley, MN

Dear Bust
I don't know how I got a copy of Bust but it's excellent...this is the best I've seen in a while. Good writing, graphics, etc. Intelligent. Thanks!

—Suzanna
Cleveland Heights, OH

Dear Ladies,
Thank you for kicking off your Birkenstocks, letting down your armpit hair and taking time away from playing Mystery Date to bring us BUST. Really, you shouldn't have. Really.

It was refreshing to see what years of reading Seventeen, Sassy and Cosmo can do for a girl — make her bitter! But then again, who wouldn't be bitter if they were a thirty something single girl in the Big Apple. (I am, of course, assuming that you are all single, and I'll bet I'm right.) And, why, you probably obsess, are you still single? Because you're too busy hanging out in "cool cafes" watching "B&W movies" and "being mentally challenged by academia". Perhaps there's a gay man out there who might meet your requirements.

If men obsessed about the petty shit that women obsess about, the world would be even more fucked up than it already is. Girls, our advice to you is to relax and enjoy life a little. The first step is turning off the television and leaving the house.

Should you welcome a male vantage point for your slanted publication, we would welcome the opportunity to write an advice column in which we would be more than happy to provide insight into the male psyche and answer all your probing questions. Feel free to contact us.

Ever more,
Boys
SMEGMA — The Society of Men Engaged in Gregarious Masculine Activities
NYC

P.S. Girl — we sympathize with your blowjob dilemma, because as you might imagine, going down on you is no day at the beach. But to get a little you've got to give a little.

DON'T LET US SAG!
SUPPORT BUST

Help us take on those "women's magazines" as we address the controversial issues of:

FASHION AND BEAUTY

Send us your stories, essays, poems, art, or anything else you can stick in an envelope. If we accept your submission (and we probably will), we'll send you a free copy of the 'zine. Start writing now, because the deadline for submissions is JANUARY 1, 1994. PLUS: Draw some clothes for our BUST paper doll (see back cover) for our next issue's fashion-spread.

Return postage must accompany all submissions if they are to be returned. Any and all correspondence to this publication will be considered a submission for publication. To order additional copies of this issue send $2.00 (in cash) along with 2 29-cent stamps to the above address. BUST #1 (A Day in the Life) can be ordered by sending $1.00 and 2 stamps. You can e-mail us at BUST@AOL.com
The second I thought about it, it occurred to me that I have a pretty bratty attitude towards fun. I insist on having it now, even, perhaps, when it is not to be had, because fun exists entirely in the mind of the beholder. The idea of fun always used to conjure up times when I couldn't get it, and now I must. Because I can, I insist. Just try to stop me. Arrested adolescence strikes again.

Not Getting It

I was a fun-deprived teen—I think. At least I suspected at the time that a lot of people out there were having a lot more fun getting to do a lot of things I never got to do. Like make out, or go to concerts, or parties, or drive a cherry-red Camaro too fast down Rollercoaster Road in the middle of the night. (I only got to drive my parents' plastic, turd-brown Toyota really fast when I was home from college, and it somehow didn't seem like the same thing.) So I had a mild case of fun-envy, assuming that my fun (writing up in my room, drawing, staying up as late as possible to consume novels, old movies and economy-size ice cream) was not actual fun. Midsummer midnight bike rides were, and so was going up to the field to look at the stars, but I guess it only took on the aura of "fun" once I was sharing it with my new best friend, Lin, whereas all the things I loved to do before that only happened when I was totally alone. Does fun exist only outside oneself?

The things that were supposed to be fun never quite worked out as advertised, anyway. The one boy adventure I remember—driving around with Scott R. and a bottle of wine—was great until I realized he wanted to make out. (I brilliantly deduced this when his car rolled gently to a halt at a dead end. Oh.) Despite the fact that he was totally sexy and knew it (many other sensitive arty girls in school also had lethal crushes on him) it was getting what everyone else wanted and then not wanting what I got. Like opening the suave guy's door in Mystery Date, when I'd prefer the dark. Here was this bedroom blue-eyed, full-lipped, sultry saxplayer with his head in my lap — why wasn't I having a good time? There was something fake about the whole thing. Maybe he believed in his own mystique too much. Maybe he lost me when he said he was gonna be the next Charlie Parker. (Yeah, and I'm Vermeer.) Maybe life was much more complex and confusing than I'd ever guessed, even for those people who were getting what they wanted.

I bet if I found myself at a Blue Oyster Cult or Aerosmith show at the Spectrum I wouldn't have had such a good time either. I'm sure I'd have felt there was something weirdly incomplete about the experience, something inauthentic—I'm not a boy, nor a stoner, I don't have faded concert t-shirts to prove my pedigree as a devotee. I didn't know all the words. Elvis Costello's hyper-conscious sardonicism might have fit me better but he wasn't playing arenas yet. Going with Lin to see Joni Mitchell was worse than embarrassing, it was boring. If the Sex Pistols had been around I would have been terrified of all those sharp objects, safety pins, beer bottle shards, mohawk tips. (The one time I tried to go to the Spectrum, to see P-Funk, some kid ripped off our tickets at the door. We drove home in gloomy ignominy, a migraine eating Paula in the back seat. It just wasn't meant to be.)

Since I didn't even get what "do bongs" meant, going to one of the epic legendary parties—in-the-woods so desirable at the time would have been the ultimate in alienation, of course, but I wanted to go anyway just because no one would ever think to invite me. I did end up at a few because I was tagging along after my j.d. sister, but to my surprise it wasn’t really all that much fun, not exciting, just a bunch of people who already knew each other doing drugs. Was this having fun? Where's the frisson? Is this all there is to a party? I was just beginning to suspect that my suspicion that everybody else was having more fun than me was fiction. What's the deal?

Getting It

Now, as a professed adult, I refuse to feel deprived and I crave certain activities, i.e., going out to play, playing pinball in loud bars, cruising art in the galleries; seeing bands in dark, cramped venues; just being abroad late and free, running the streets. Or getting rides from my motorcycle-driving friends or getting coffee in the small hours in vinyl-padded booths, doing road trips; anything spur-of-the-moment that's fun just because you never thought of it before. Alone or with. Play here now.

I still love reading old novels and curling up to write in bed; eating ice cream; staying up as late as possible; and I'd still rather be supine in a field somewhere looking at the constellations than just about anywhere else I can think of, although that's harder to make happen when you live on the Lower East Side. (I can usually spot about 3 stars total between my studio and the subway, and on the way home from the subway, at Bowery & Houston, there's often a spectacular view of the moon, at which I have howled spontaneously once or twice.) But I digress. You learn to have your own real fun as soon as you realize you belong to a club of one, you are a one-woman party, the vessel for all of your own pleasure: that the space between your ears is the arena for your own private spectacle of flashing colored lights and loud hard music and speed and joy. You learn you're much more fun than fun is.

Now I like to do practically anything, especially if I haven't tried it yet. Everything can be fun. That's the deal.
on a friday night
by Barbara Kligman

It was going to pour rain soon, but I decided to leave the house anyway. It was Friday night. And I had nothing to do.

I put on a non-descript outfit and went to see that art movie. Nothing like seeing some art, I thought. I saw a friend of a friend on the way to the movie. He was rushing home to his girlfriend, wine in hand, smile on face. I could have killed him.

We chatted and I made up an imaginary friend who was waiting for me. Gotta Go. See Ya Soon. Yeah, Let's Do That Real Soon.

When I got to the theater, it was early. I bought my ticket and the ticket girl smiled at me. I found it hard to physically smile back for some reason although I wasn't sad.

I entered the screening room. I was the only one there. I felt a little bit pathetic.

"So, we're the only chickens out tonight, huh?" A woman was talking to me. She was shaking out her umbrella. I looked at her as if I was glad she was there. Then I wasn't glad she was there. "My boyfriend and I will sit in the same row as you so you don't feel as if you are all alone, OK?" I guess she thought this would make me feel better.

"I'm an artist, that's why I'm seeing this film. Why are you seeing this film?" she said to me.

Should I tell her the truth and say "I'm seeing this film because my boyfriend broke up with me and I don't want to be home when the phone doesn't ring." or should I make up a lie?

"I'm reviewing it," I say.

"Excuse me," she says. Her boyfriend gets back and I see him staring at my profile. I yawn with my mouth open. Other people begin to arrive. Correction: other couples begin to arrive.

She gets back and offers me M&M's. No Thanks. It's Okay. Really. I'm Full.

A cute blond boy enters and sits about 10 rows in front of me. I feel a slight sense of relief as I see another single person there alone. On a Friday night. I sit back and close my eyes.

my eyes open the blond boy is tongue-kissing a girl. I am scared of seeing the M&M woman, so I shut my eyes again.

When I re-open my eyes the cinema is full of couples. Really romantic couples. Couples like in those commercials for places that have champagne glass bathtubs. I am beyond dying now.

The movie starts. It's a bad movie. There are a lot of long, staring shots. These give the couples plenty of time to smooch.

I must remember to sit down front next time.

When it's over, the M&M woman looks at me with her hands in the air. I give her the thumbs down. Not her, the movie. I run outside.

It's pouring cats and dogs. Haven't heard that expression in a long time, huh?

I am in the mood for hot chocolate. I make my way to the A&P. On my way there a young hooligan runs up to me and puts his head under my umbrella. I endanger my life by crossing the street on "red" just to get away from him. First thing I did right all evening.

The A&P is packed as I pick up the real imitation flavor of hot chocolate.

The man in front of me, or in back of me, or probably both of them actually, stink from alcohol. Only difference between the two is that the man in front of me has dreadlocks melded into the shape of a unicorn's horn. His basket has ice cream (strawberry) and jelly rolls in it. I don't notice what the guy in back of me is getting.

A dollar fifty-nine later I am out on the street, heading east.

When I get home I don't want hot chocolate at all. I want, uh, uh, I don't know what I want.

The phone rings. It's a friend of a friend, inviting me to a party for the next night. I am afraid that she can hear my TV going. I am watching a really embarrassing show. I think it's a beauty pageant.

I decide to make the hot chocolate after all. If mini-marshmallows can't cheer me up, nothing can.
Recently I read an article in Sassy about 3 girls who were geeks in their high school. It was really unexpectedly painful to read this article. These girls were really sad and it just brought all my high school pain screaming back. These girls were lucky to have one thing I didn't have in high school: a feeling of mystification about why they were picked on. I guess I identified with my abusers enough to be able to say, Of course it was me. I had gnarly curly hair and you all had straight parted in the middle 70s tresses; I had a weird name, when that just didn't fly; I was really REALLY smart in a school where that was way uncool; plus I was shy and depressive and couldn't talk. OF COURSE I WAS THE ONE! If I'd been one of them I'd have picked on me too. It was fucking excruciating.

Reading that article made me want to write to Sassy just to offer some hope from the other side of this experience. I'm 30 now and I now consider that part of my life very much behind me, but from 6th through 11th grade I was a calculator-carrying geek (BIG time). I wanted to tell those girls in the Sassy article, I made it through that. Not unscathed—it was an absolutely formative time in my life—but I am definitely not a geek anymore. I'm not (usually) afraid of my peers anymore in that way, and in a lot of ways I just rule. I wanted to tell those girls to hang on tight, it definitely gets better, so much better it's completely worth having gone through all that. Still, whenever I talk about events in my life that made me the way I am I always come back to those days that were just hell on earth.

The two hardest things about being a geek were feeling I had no protection against the horribleness in my social environment, and feeling unattractive and unloved. To overdistill the point, I had no power and no sex and no fun!

There was a turning point in I think 9th grade, when I finally had had enough and I set out to become popular. Really I set out to become an extrovert, but behind that was the hope that it would make me loved and give me friends and a boyfriend. I actually did this. I learned to talk. I learned to make people laugh. I learned how to drape my hair. I learned how to dress. This all worked, man! I fucking reinvented myself as an extroverted, fun girl. (My therapist is continually amazed by this story. It never occurred to me, until she pointed it out, how remarkable an action, how phenomenal an accomplishment, it was to reinvent myself.)

Well anyway, it worked to help in acquiring friends. I continued to be mystified by boys, though. (Naturally, I found out since then that everybody was, but I thought it was just me at the time.) Everyone around me had boyfriends, and I just couldn't figure out what it took to get one. But also, although I didn't realize it then, I was too much one of the guys. It was safer. I hung around with a bunch of slightly oddball football players who practically thought of me as a brother. I dressed in an androgynous way (before it was hip, and because I could hide). I listened to them about their girlfriends. I made them laugh. I desperately wanted them to be attracted to me as a girl, but it just wasn't happening. It made me lonely and I was always trying to figure out what they saw in other girls and didn't see in me.

Weirdly, at this same point in my life I also had this kind of a slutty period, when I worked in a grocery store as a checkout girl and fooled around with some of the guys that worked there. I remember in particular one guy named Hayden Hall (I always think of him when I walk by the NYU building on Washington Square with the same name) who was dangerous (he was arrested for weapons possession at like 16 and is probably in jail now somewhere) and as a consequence really sexy. One night Hayden Hall and I fooled around for a long time in front of some shitty TV movie, and we fell asleep and then woke up at like 3 am, and we did the whole trying-to-sneak-me-home-without-my-parents-finding-out thing. Unsuccessfully. And then Hayden Hall pretended not...
to know me at work the next day. Jeez. I also (on another occasion) gave a hand job to his half-brother, who worked in the grocery store too. These were experiences I used to figure out the mechanics of sex. But they weren’t fun. Definitely not! Because the guys didn’t respect me—I had no power except when the guy’s dick was in my hand.

I changed high schools again in my senior year and everything changed again. I wasn’t exactly a geek anymore—I was more of an eccentric. A little semantics helped a lot. I had a number of eccentric friends, and I still don’t know exactly how I managed it, but I also attracted this very strange guy who became my first boyfriend. (It turns out all my lovers have been really strange men, actually. Natch. I have this first guy to thank for that.) So then I found out what it was like to have sexual fun! In the context of a relationship where there was love and safety (especially compared to those weird shameful fumblings with Hayden Hall and his half-brother), sex stopped being about subjugation and objectification and started being FUN. This was still fumbling and generally done on the sly, but there was no shame associated with it! And it was great!

So now it’s 10 years later and, although I’ve been in and out of a couple more long relationships, frankly not a hell of a lot has changed. It still seems like the only emotionally safe sex is that had inside a relationship. And when my relationships have gone sour, in other words when the power balance changed or someone stopped having fun. The thing about being single is, it’s hard to feel equal with the people you’re flirting with. It’s really hard to know if they like you as much as you like them, it’s really hard to know if they just see you as a sex partner and nothing else, etc. That insecurity is part of what makes flirting fun, but those feelings of disempowerment flying around in my head ran all the fun of sex for me. I just end up feeling like someone (usually me) is getting treated like a sex toy.

Meanwhile, I’m single again. In the beginning of this year I broke up with the guy I had been with for 2-1/2 years (it took me a long time to get up the steel to do it, and a long time to get over it too). 9 months later, I’m wanting to view being single as a positive experience, and I don’t want to miss out on the opportunities associated with being single because I’m sitting around waiting to get back into a serious relationship again. But what that means is I’m comfortable having fun flirting, but not with having sex outside a relationship.

The thing is, I haven’t had sex in over a year. Some of it was unintentional because my boyfriend didn’t want to have sex. (Well, not with me anyway.) And then once I broke up with him I decided I wasn’t having sex on purpose and it was pretty easy to keep going with it. But now it’s gone on long enough! And although I don’t know if I’m ready to have another boyfriend, I know I’m tired of being celibate. Sex is fun. I love getting down & dirty as much as the next girl. When any (of the whole skanky lot) of my boyfriends and I were just getting going having sex in a big way we had a lot of fucking fun. I mean we were laughing and breathing heavy and losing sleep and we were into it.

And I miss sex! I may not be ready for another relationship, but I’m ready to sleep with someone. But I haven’t figured out how not to fall in love with the guy after we sleep together, so I have to wait until I find someone who won’t kick the shit out of me emotionally.

Recently I started having a flirtation with this guy I’ve known for a long time but never knew very intimately. Through a series of conversations we started talking about going on
A True Rock and Roll Story

by Hecuba

I lived the fantasy; I went on the road with a rock and roll band. Three bands actually. And I lived, barely. More precisely, I lived to tell the painful truth about it, which is that it isn't all that much fun.

I discovered two truths by which I plan to lead the rest of my rock-and-roll-loving life. Number one: never believe anything a rock musician tells you, at 3 a.m., from a pay phone at a roadside gas station. A statement like “I really miss you and I want you to come out and visit” is the lonely male at 3 o’clock in the morning talking—a male willing to say anything in order to hear a positive feminine coo at the other end of the line, to let him know that he’s a tiny bit human and ardently attractive—it is not a statement of fact.

Rule number two: Never believe anything a rock musician tells you when he is doing cocaine. For instance: “I really care about you, and if you ever need to talk to anyone, about anything, I hope you know that you can call me.” Don’t believe it, because it is inevitably followed up with “Um, could I have a wee bit more coke?

Of course, before I learned these incredibly easy rules to live by, I flew from New York to California to meet up with this wonderfully charming, and oh so deep singer/guitarist. Having called me every other day from the road. I thought hey, this is sincere, he really does want me to come out. I knew I was doomed when after I told him that I had bought the ticket, the phone calls stopped. And yet I went.

The first night was great. There’s something about a moving tour bus, climbing it’s bumpy way up the California coast, that acts as a powerful aphrodisiac. I thought we were okay. I was being the totally cool girl—not hanging on him, not waiting for him, not letting every female within a five mile radius know that this one is mine. No, I hung out with the other guys in the band while he was... somewhere else. I went swimming with the guys in the headlining band while he was... somewhere else. Never kissed him in public. Never reached for his hand. I swear officer. I was a perfect gentleman. And he just slipped away. First it was, “I saw the lights off so I slept on the bus—didn’t want to wake you.” Wake me? As if I’d be really pissed that the guy I had flown across the country to be with had disturbed my sleep. I caught on quickly. When he did share the bed, I didn’t try to remind him that, hey. I’m a girl, okay, one night I really lightly, really unthreateningly, really unsexually put my arm sort of across his chest. He allowed me to hold him in this way. I suddenly felt like a sexual predator.

I tried talking to him about it—he said nothing was wrong, he was very happy that I was there, and that he just wanted me to have the chance to hang out with whoever I wanted to hang out with. Stupidly I didn’t say that obviously I wanted to hang out with him. I just said, OK. Just checking.

I did get to see a lot of gigs. And a lot of load-ins, sound checks, and load-outs. Spent many mornings lurching around the moving bus in search of aspirin and water. Did a lot of drugs and flirted with anyone who would flirt back, which was anyone but him. Got to say “I’m with the band” maybe one-hundredth as many times as Pamela DesBarres. The irony of that phrase is that while everyone thought I was sleeping with this guy and thought whatever about me accordingly, I didn’t even get the pleasure of all the good fucks people thought I was enjoying.

I think the pressure of being in a band on the road does limit the capacity for real friendship. You have quick bursts of intensity with people who you may never see again. It’s hard for these guys to figure out who is going to be in their life for a while, and who is just going to be there for one night. That is actually something I’ve talked about with some of the guys. I thought the intensity of the experience would bond us all together, not just me and my erstwhile suitor, but me and everyone. That didn’t happen. I do keep in touch with a few people that I met on the road, even him. The ones who have really followed through consistently, however, are not band members, but bus drivers, tour managers, drum techs.

Rule number three is slowly creeping up on me. Never meet anyone you’ve respected from afar. Keep them there, on stage, at a comfortable distance.
fun: reality vs. concept

by Scarlett Fever

For me. Right now. Today. The idea of fun has little or nothing to do with the reality of fun. I love the idea of roller coaster rides, especially the really old wooden ones, like the Cyclone at Coney Island. The reality is that when I ride the Cyclone, wind whipping through my hair, children’s happy screams in my ears, I am terrified. Terrified and sick to my stomach and I’m embarrassed that seven and eight year old children are having so much fun and all I am is full of regret the minute I reach the top of the first peak and see the parachute jump where other fun seekers died years ago. When I get off my neck hurts and my back hurts and my stomach hurts and I feel incredibly old. The fun and thrill of roller coasters for me is only in theory.

For me. Right now. Today. The idea of coloring my hair is fun. The reality is I make a big mess, it takes all night of sleeping with a muddy hennaed head wrapped in plastic crunching in my ears, I can neither answer the door because I look so silly, nor answer the telephone because the plastic cap makes too much noise for me to hear. My bathroom is a disaster after I wash the henna out of my hair. But it sounds like fun.

For me. Right now. Being tattooed is a lot of fun. I have many so it must be fun. Reality check: It hurts like hell. Am I a masochist that must endure pain to have fun? Each time I get tattooed I seem to pick an even more painful spot and each design gets bigger and bigger. It’s fun. I get to watch the design grow on my skin, the colors come to life in their permanent glory- a celebration of myself and my body and my femaleness- but the pain. How can this be fun if it hurts so much?

Webster defines fun as: 1) light hearted amusement and 2) a source of this. My thesaurus lists the following synonyms: play, relaxation, frolic, diversion, pleasure, romping, escapade, celebration, joy. Unhappiness, tedium and sorrow are the opposite.

For me. Today. Right now. What I find relaxing, amusing, pleasurable and joyful are afternoons with my friends over coffee (do I sound like a General Foods International Coffee commercial?), late evenings playing cards and giggling over nothing, and mornings with only my cats and my music. When I manage to get free time that coincides with the time my friends have I do frolic and gambol and romp through the city and taste everything the city offers me. My life is a celebration and it has been nothing if not an escapade so much so that at times I feel like Lucy Ricardo.

I am having fun ... it’s just that my definition of fun is still stuck in the days when I needed largeness. Things had to be big and loud and colorful and scary and risky to be fun. Today I have colored condoms, nights with friends, tattoos (even if they are painful). I have friends and lovers and lovers of friends. I have animals and children and family. If fun is light hearted amusement I have watching old movies late at night with good friends over the phone. I have phone sex and safe sex and self-sex. I have cool nights and sunny days. I have Oreo cookies and cold milk. I have Ben and Jerry’s Coconut Almond Fudge Ice Cream. I have pedicures and manicures and puppy dogs’ tails. I have decorating and redecorating. I have torturing the landlord of my rent-stabilized apartment. I have clean sheets and my loft bed. Every day I wake up and am still breathing is a good day. It may not be a great day but it’s going to be an adventure and that is fun.
I think I love you: my life on the road with David Cassidy

by Celina Hex

He was the first boy I was obsessed with. Absolutely. Completely obsessed with. I couldn't get enough of him: the tv show, the posters, the cards, the towels. One look at his picture on the screen and I would feel a rush of adrenaline that I experienced as a deep-down hungry desire in the pit of my stomach. It was a frustratingly unfulfillable desire. Sometimes I couldn't help myself but kiss the tv (but only if there was no one else in the room). I kissed the big poster of him over my bed before I went to sleep at night. He was my first. And you never forget your first.

I lived for the show and could hardly wait each week for Friday night at 8:30 when it came on. I defined myself by the show, I knew that I was cool for liking the Partridge Family better than the Brady Bunch. One day a girl at school told me my hair looked like Laurie Partridge's when I took it out from behind my ears and, for a minute or two, it would hang in ear-formed floops around my head. My hair didn't look like Laurie's at all. Of course, but I carefully took it out from behind my ears from them on whenever I wanted to impress someone. I think I might still do that.

But mostly I loved Keith. He had such beautiful, long hair. I have loved long-haired boys ever since. His hair was so much prettier than mine ever would be. He had beautiful eyes and soft eyelashes; his eyes always looked like they were smiling, and they always looked kind of sleepy, too. He wore his shirts tight against his small, narrow chest, which was small and narrow like mine. He always wore just a few buttons open at the top of his shirt which would arouse my just-starting-to-develop sexuality, as did those chokers, they really got me.

My best friend Rosaline was three years older than me and lived down the hall. Sometimes she would dress me up in her pre-teenage clothes: chokers, fringe vests, bell-bottoms. I'd look in the mirror at myself and feel as cool as a Partridge. Then I'd go home and my mom would yell at me to take it off. But it was too late—I'd already gotten to have a taste of the rebellious teenager I was to become (and feel like I still am).

So imagine my excitement when I found out that Nick at Nite, where I work, was gonna start showing the Partridge family and not only that, but word had it that David Cassidy was willing to do anything he could to help promote it. I was all over it like embroidery on a gauze shirt, asking my bosses to please, please be allowed to help out in any way I could.

And sure enough, one morning I came in to work, and up comes one of my bosses accompanied by a short guy and he says "Celina, this is David Cassidy. David, this is Celina" and
there's david cassidy standing right there holding his hand out to me. i stood there, moving my hands and mouth and even, i think, leaning quite casually on the wall of my cubicle space and just sort of calmly chatting with Him. we talked about the show, i told him i was so glad to meet him. i don't know what else we talked about, but as soon as he left i found myself shaking all over the place, while my office-mates stared at me and waited for me to faint. then i grabbed the 8 x 10 glossy picture of him i have hanging over my desk (a publicity pic from his partridge family days) and ran down the hall. he was talking to some of the other staff members. i waited patiently. then i meekly walked up to him. "david," i peeped, "can i please have your autograph on this picture?" "sure," he said, he signed it, and then he leaned over and gave me a surprise kiss on the cheek. i thanked him, turned on my heel, and as soon as i was out of sight i ran down the hall, i skipped, i flew. david cassidy kissed me!! wow!! my inner ten-year-old was freaking out.

that night i thought a lot about him. i thought about the nation of 10-year old girls in 1973, all of us believing in his mystic power and believing that we couldn't touch him in his glorious lifestyle of teenagers and dating and concerts and stands. i thought about how we all felt we could never even hope to touch his hair or the hem of his garment. and then it came to me: it was exactly this force, the pent-up and frustrated desires of thousands of little 10-year-old girls across the country which had totally brought this man to his knees! and so now here he was, at forty, still signing autographs, still being remembered as "keith partridge," still giving grown-up little girls surprise kisses on the cheek. it was me and thousands of other girls like me who had, in fact, managed to change the course of this man's entire life!

a week later the promotions department asked me if i wanted to travel on the partridge family bus (not the real one, but an incredible simulation) to washington d.c. with a video camera and film the bus on tour. david would be in washington, too, for a public appearance. "of course i would," i told them. as far as i was concerned, this was a dream come true.

so that's how it happened. a few days later i found myself on the partridge family bus, with a big old video camera in tow that i didn't even really know how to operate, traveling down the i95 on the way to d.c. the bus driver, wilson, a reuben kincaid-esque man, had been driving this bus around for weeks, promoting the show. he'd been to chicago and all sorts of other places and told me, sadly, how the cardboard cut-out of laurie had been stolen out of the window in nyc by some guy who jumped up, grabbed it, and ran off yelling vulgarities. i looked around. sure enough, the bus had cut-out heads of all the other partridges, but no laurie.

we arrived in d.c. that night and i still wasn't even sure if i was gonna get to spend any time with him. but the next morning i went down to the lobby of the hotel to meet the other people from nick. "c'mon, go get the camera," they said, "we have a tv show this morning." i ran up and got it, and when i came back down david was waiting in the lobby, too. we piled into the limo (the limo!!??) and there i was, 7:30 in the morning, holding a camera in david cassidy's face as he sat across from me in the back seat of a limo.

david spent some time looking over his itinerary and then he turned to me and, checking out my 70's style grammy-gown, asked, "is that really you or is that just you dressed for the partridge family tour?" a colleague answered for me, "that's really her!" "i feel like i've been waiting my whole life to wear these clothes," i said, recalling my rosalindays. "yeah," he said, "i remember those dresses. in fact, i remember falling in love with a girl in a dress like that." i blushed. "actually, remember taking a dress like that off a girl," he added, impishly, with i "those-were-the-days" look on his face, and knowing that this would pull on my fan-heartstrings. "my inner ten-year-old was screaming. omigod omigod omigod celina i don't care what you think, everything you've done with you tif up until now has been worth it, every second, because now we get to do this!!"

in the afternoon david made an appearance at the d.c. hard rock cafe having lunch with women who looked like they were from the midwest: even though they were from d.c., and who had won partridge family trivia contests on their local radio stations. i didn't get anywhere near him. some girl was there with a whole pile of cassidy stuff she had laid out on a nearby table, including the issue of rolling stone on which i appears nude (well, you only see him from the hips up.) it's an amazing cover on which looks so slinky and sexy and pale like a child, and his eyes look definitely stoned. it was taken right at the peak of his heyday. this fan-girl also had lunch boxes, cards, teen and tiger be magazines, everything david. i didn't have anything like that except for one card a friend had given me that had a picture of david and the words "popular teenager" below it. i felt very unworthy of that experience i was getting to have. i felt bad for this girl.

differently that night we all went out to dinner. i didn't know where to sit, since was really just a tag-along on this tour, so i sat at the end of the table and pretending that david and i were having dinner alone together. i talk to him about some partridge family episodes that i particularly like and was genuinely impressed at how willing he was to talk about it. in fact, during the entire trip it was moving to me how kind he was, even though i was just a twirpy little fan.

still, it was hard to remember that it had been twenty years since crush on him, not that i had a crush on his forty-year old self, his was shorter, and his hair was, after all, david cassidy—not keith partridge he was a funny, pleasant and attractive man, but he wasn't a teen any more, but earlier that day, at the hard rock, there had been a partridge family episode playing on the monitors. i was watching it our scene where keith is singing, and i realized that my adult self had a crush on the teenage keith, with his hair falling so coily in face as he sang, his eyes half-closed, and his lips forming the shape of an "o" when he sang the word "you." i got that tingly little feeling in the pit of my stomach that feels like hunger and
desire and a even felt a little twinge of wanting to run up and kiss the tv screen. maybe it was just more exciting to me when he was on the other side of reality—on the pretend, larger-than-life side.

I remembered how much pleasure I experienced as a child in that extreme feeling of desire toward an unreachable object, and how I can still, today, get that feeling watching certain videos on mtv. I wondered about how much this was still a part of my adult feelings about men and my relationships, and I realized that I usually only feel in love when I can look at a lover and get that same tingly "keith" feeling; how much my "being in love" feels like that extreme and unfulfillable desire. the guy has to stay on the other side of the tv screen for me to feel it, though. once he's on my level, in real-life, it goes away. I started to worry that my feelings about boys hadn't really matured that much since my original crush on keith.

the next day David and I took a train together back to New York. he told me how difficult it had been for him during the height of his career as a teen idol and especially how difficult it had been immediately afterward. seems he had to surround himself with people who totally didn't care about who he was—mostly alcoholics and drug addicts. "but," he told me, proudly, "I'm glad I never let any of my fans down—I'm glad I didn't publicly self-destruct." I was glad he cared about us fans, but I started to feel bad for him. poor beautiful, angelic, David. he was the spark that ignited so many young hearts, but he was just a boy, how could he have been expected to bear the pressure of all that desire? "people always wanted something from me," he confessed, "so when I got involved with women, it was usually with women who were very giving, who wanted to give something to me." "I'm sorry," I thought, quietly. "I guess I'm just another one of those women who wanted something from you."

when we arrived in New York, we said good-bye. "It was nice meeting you, I really had fun," he said. "thanks," I answered. "I really enjoyed it." "you know the hotel I'm staying in," David called, as he got into a taxi. "come by if you want me to autograph anything else for you."

I never went to his hotel, though. I'd already gotten so much from David Cassidy, and I felt it was time for me to give something back to him—like a break from being an idol. after all, I reasoned, isn't that what mature love is all about?
MARY HART SUCKS

by Jane Hanauer

Sorry. Don’t mean to get down on Mary Hart. I know she’s dined on shit aplenty for a lot of things: her vacuous gaze, false laugh, that story about the woman who couldn’t hear the sound of her voice without getting physically ill; the list grows.

I would have loved to see her in her apartment the night that story broke. Nice to think of her smoking a j with some friends and saying, “who the fuck is this bitch?” Maybe I should go kill her.” One of her friends replies, “calm down, Hart. Inhale. We’ll think of something.”

If only.

And yet, forget it. It’s hard to think of Mary Hart receiving any bit of news with anything less than a smile, the one exception being a sincerely asked, “what’s that on your back?” Frankly, it’s unsettling.

Why does Mary Hart get so much shit? All she does is co-anchor “Entertainment Tonight”, a show that, in some markets, seems to be on three times a day, like “MASH.” The trouble is, and don’t you know it, that she’s one of a handful of women who’s on television all the time and she seems — damn it! — like the most plastic, pulsating airhead in the world. It’s depressing.

John Davidson has that problem. Seems like an airhead. People make fun of him. But, as a male, he’s one of hundreds of television’s talking heads. Guys can alleviate embarrassment caused by Davidson by quickly changing the channel and pointing to almost anyone else. “My God! Just look at that Ted Koppel!” they can say to the womenfolk. In the world of male hosts, Davidson is an aberration. Mary Hart, on the other hand, is one of the chosen few. A woman in a position of anchorwoman-esque authority who’s on television a lot. She’s a role model. She’s a symbol.

She’s America. She’s...Aaaaiiiiiieeee!

And so, she gets a lot of flack.

Meanwhile, the person who really deserves flack, the one who hired her, the person who looked at her audition tape and said “hey, this is exactly what America needs!” is off somewhere quietly sipping lemonade. And perhaps even at this moment is deciding that Turkel on “Family Matters” should pull his pants up even higher next season. “Higher pants, bigger ratings. Capice?”

This person should be killed.

Or, perhaps not. Nonetheless, it would be nice to see more women hired as talking heads who actually seemed like people you might want to listen to in real life. You know, heads with brains and personalities, the whole 3-D real world package?

It’s been done before. Take Linda Ellerbee. Or Oprah Winfrey for that matter. If one of them were half of a 6:00 newsteam, you can be darn sure that neither would respond to a treacly news story with a knee jerk chuckle and a suddenly serious “Thanks, Bob.”

Yessir, and as for Mary Hart, given the opportunity, we all know she’d laugh loud and long after a story about swimwear for baby seals. Maybe she was once hit in the head.
Donna
by Sugar O’Shea

Donna had a blow-dry haircut, a wing job, cherry lip-glossed lips and camel-toe jeans. I had the same haircut I’d had at St. Margaret’s, chap stick and corduroys. Donna and I were bad. I was bad but Donna was worse. In the morning, after home room, we’d skip study hall and smoke a joint from her power hitter. After that there was nothing left to do but shoplift or hang out at the Owl Diner, smoke cigarettes and drink coffee. I never would shoplift: it was too scary. I used to watch, though, not watch Donna, but watch if the store manager was looking. Donna would take shirts. She never got caught. Sometimes she’d take jackets. The Owl was a trailer diner. It smelled like grease and there were old men in there with nothing else to do. Donna and I would play the table juke box. songs like “Patches” and “Watching Scotty Grow.” At the other place we’d play Frampton. It was a pizza place. We’d order pizza, onion rings, and fries. It was called Ricky’s Pizza or something.

I never met Donna’s mom. She was always sleeping off her night shift at the Foxtail Lounge. I knew there’d been lots of arguments over unemptied ashtrays and pilfered booze. So after dinner Donna and I would meet out in the back of the Courier Citizen building. The land back there was undeveloped: power lines and freight tracks cutting through tall weeds. Beyond that was the Connector, a mile of skid-marked tar that ran from downtown to the Interstate, where we would drag race. Me and Roy in my mom’s Skylark against Mark and Donna in Mark’s matte black Camaro. The Camaro almost always won. It’s really hard to beat a Camaro in a Skylark.

After the race we’d go to Mark’s house. He had a scary dad but he also had his own room in the attic. Tolkien books, Floyd and Sabbath albums, a Moonchild black-light poster, black-light bulb and pot. About an hour later we’d call it a night. Mark would crash. Roy would either borrow the Camaro or walk. Donna and I would leave in the Skylark. With Donna it was just doing stuff, not really talking a lot of the time. I’d drive, Donna would complain about her mom. I’d say good-bye then she’d say good-bye.

Eventually I figured out that you could take the Connector to the Interstate and then keep going. But I do go back from time to time. The last time I went back, I was standing in line at the Cumberland Farms reading my horoscope, waiting for my turn at the checkout. The guy in front of me was piling Ring Dings, Macaroni ’n Cheese, Downy, and frozen meat patties on the conveyor. It was Mark. I said hi. He said hi. He told me he owned his own Karioke equipment and made the rounds of local bars. He said I should stop by the Bridge Tavern on Friday night, that Roy and Patti would be there. For a moment I considered it. Yes, I said. That would be fun.
Some edicts that dictate my life: embrace life, be curious, have fun. Today I will broach the last one.

I'm 29; I like to live in a certain way. I define my parameters, my interpretations of fun; you know, its the circumstance of society that dictates what fun should be. To have fun now the way I did when I was 19 would be considered randomly pathetic and/or desperate.

I like to stretch, and fall back asleep over and over again, dilly-dallying in that ephemeral space between reality and dreams, feeling my dogs stretched alongside me, their fuzzy warm bodies glued to my skin, gingerly rolling over and accidentally crushing them with my breasts, which jiggle jello-like each time I exhale.

I like to release myself for moments on end, sort of giving myself a vacation from the conundrum of my thoughts. Usually this falls under the guise of dancing, which I do well and unhibitedly, a vertical undulating vulture, moving to and fro convulsively and sensually.

I like to wear my knee high red wellies, my yellow slicker, and jump up and down in deep puddles, splashing all who come near me. To that end, I like to pretend I am Gene Kelly, kick my head back and do my rendition of "Singing in the Rain."

Nothing beats a good guffaw session....

I remember cool airy black patches of night, spots in my eyes, high, stroking my friend's glimmering gold hair, listening intently to the sounds of people's hazy voices, feeling like my heart would burst with joy, for I was in the bosom of a fun evening.

I especially have fun when I have a crush on someone. Yes, I still have crushes—I succumb to them wholeheartedly, allowing them to dictate actions, rituals and rationale.

For instance, my crush on the video store boy.

I discovered this incredible video store in my neighborhood. I was challenged by the new-found fact that I was not a true film aficionado. Oh sure I'd seen every French film ever made pre-nouvelle wave, but I knew so little about so much else, and so began my determined effort to see classics like "Cool Hand Luke" and "Let's Make Love."

But soon, my mission turned into another event. I was happily unemployed (ah freelance life) and thus, I went to the videostore everyday, obsessively, with my timid puppy. The people behind the counter took an immediate liking to my puppy, cooing over her, feeding her biscuits. There was a cast of characters I was becoming acquainted with: the blonde guy with the frizzy long hair was rather shy; the assistant manager with her pure porcelain skin and straight ebony shiny hair was more wif-like than even the top gamine models; the security guard always wore ripped muscle tees, intimidating my puppy with his deep booming voice. They knew my name, my account number; I didn't have to present any ID to get a video. I began to feel like a regular much like on Cheers. Everybody knew my name, and my puppy's name.

And then came the turning point: my puppy was stolen, and I was heartbroken.

It was then that I noticed the videostore boy...

I walked in one day, sans the dog. He asked where she was and after I told him she was gone, he replied, without skipping a beat, "So you gonna rent The Shaggy D.A.?"

Oh the videostore boy...

Why hadn't I noticed him before? I wondered? I thought about the last few months. When I first discovered the video store, I had a boyfriend, and the videostore boy was clean-shaven. When I began flying solo, he had grown a beard (do you like it better with or without the beard he had asked the day before he shaved it off...My reply was very Zen: whatever). At the point of my epiphany, he was fresh scrubbed again, looking like a pony-tailed Ken doll.

All my friends know about the video store boy. They know about every incident that occurs between the two of us. They know about the little things, like the way he runs his hand through his bourbon colored hair when he sees me, the color of his skiffs and the way he calls me "Miss B."

One friend likes to point out when he is checking me out. She'll lean over and whisper in my ear about how he just glanced at me, and convincingly remind me that he couldn't be gay, no way no how, not with the way he just glanced at me.

Another friend is convinced he digs me. She says he never handles her tapes the way he handles mine.

Personally, I like my crush on him. Its motivating. My crush inspires me to be attentive to details: his work hours, his tone of voice (he's rather moody; sometimes lasciviously bitchy, other times precisely self-deprecating), my outfits (lately I've been looking, well, good.)

My crush keeps my powers...
continued from page 19

of manipulation sharp and clear. I like to walk straight back to the obscure section, pretending not to notice anyone, especially him, and then saunter up to the counter, casually, with a lot of ennui, feigning that he is the person to service me. Naturally I always know exactly what I want to rent before I walk in there, and I usually have a bastion of witty anecdotes to relay.

I like to think that he is waiting for me to walk in, at any given moment...

Ah my crush. I can't even guess his age. Its not like I want more either...I just like this quiet fun obsession of mine. I don't want to cross over to the other side of the counter; I don't want it to be anything more than what it is: my motivation to go to the video store.

I used to go to the video store to rent movies; now I go to see the video-store boy.

My perception of fun is internal and applicable to me, and only to me. It colors my pleasures, my life. It keeps the woman in me smiling and the girl in me frolicking without inhibition.

My sense of fun allows me to be me.

Hot Dogs Can Be Fun by Jane Stick

In search of thrills a couple of years ago I worked three times as a go-go dancer. The first time was a drag but makes a great story, the second time was quite thoroughly depressing, and the third time was genuinely fun. First time: After my shift, 3:30 a.m., no sleep the night before, in a Long Island motel room with a harmless enough guy for about four hours during which—struggling to stay awake after refusing his offers of coke—I earned over 900 bucks doing a strip tease to generic pop radio, spinning off outrageous fantasies, and writhing around on the bed beside but not touching him, simulating excitement. "Did you come?" he panted, leaping off the bed; "you looked like you were about to..." "That's how I'm supposed to look," I told him (breaking the rules.) He had an eggplant-colored cock which he tugged at for 3 1/2 hours. Flecks of cocaine poked out of his nostrils. At the third gig I had exchanges like this with an attractive bus mechanic who was getting married the next day. (He:) "I want to make love to you. Standing up." (Me:) "On a bus!"

Lately I've been fantasizing in vivid detail about fucking a flirtatious guy from work who I've been flirting with. Flirting with no-strings sex in mind, whether or not as a serious possibility, is fun. Fantasizing about a "relationship" on the other hand, is about as far from fun as you can get. I've become almost as adept as a man at working a scalpel to distinguish lust from love. (And love I try never to admit to myself: what better alibi against rejection?) A man will get angry if his come-on fails: "Cock teasing bitch!" Me, I'll blame myself for being an oversexed grotesque. Yet, I had great fun two summers ago playing the office slut and fucking both guys from the art department. I enjoy the alternative to helplessly awaiting the phone, awaiting approval, waiting for him to set the standards and limits of my sexual expression. I enjoy being the one who says, while riding in the elevator, "Let's have an affair." One time while I was at the Lebanese art director's apartment (105 degrees, no air conditioner, no fan), stoned and ecstatically earning my certificate for Blowjob of Excellence, the always cheerful Frugal Gourmet was in the background kneading bratwurst. That was fun.
being behind the wheel of a car, just rambling around, seeing the world, smelling the country, smelling...smelling...the soft silky hair on the neck...of your boyfriend's neck...sneezing all night long...cats (not the domestic kind)...crying all night long...crying. This is the world of the young. Eeek! I can't...
My aunt bought me two dream books for Christmas. One was entitled “Lucid Dreaming.” The book attempts to show me how I can be consciously aware of my dreams while I am having them. And once that occurs, “I can control my dreams and dramatically change the quality of my waking life.” Imagine that! And to think of all the money I wasted on my shrink! The other book offers “10,000 Dreams Interpreted” and was written in the first decade of the twentieth century (which turns out to be a problem, as you will see).

I admit, in a poignant New Age moment, I skimmed through both books. And lately I have been remembering my dreams when I wake up. The problem lies in that my dreams are so fucking bizarre, no interpretation book can fully explain them. Now, lie down, relax, close your eyes and count sheep (silently!) and I will share some of my stranger dreams with you.

**Dream No. 1**

I have a new pet. A cat I had forgotten I had until I heard feeble meows coming from a corner of my living room. Walking over to the corner, I saw a cage. I bent down, peered in and saw that my cat had become the size of, and looked like, a salamander.

The head of my cat looked normal, just smaller—a salamander-sized head. However, instead of seeing a small, fuzzy body with a furry tail, I saw a sleek, gray body with no fur. The cat’s body was shaped like a salamander—no arms, no legs and no tail.

Filled with sheer panic, my mind told me that if I fed the cat, “it would grow.” Feed it and it will grow and be normal again. I ran to the kitchen. I opened up the cabinet for a bowl. I no longer had dishes. Only thousands of soda bottle caps lined up in neat rows. I filled one of the caps with tap water. Food. Where is the cat food? Opening the refrigerator, I quickly grabbed some American cheese slices. I placed the bottle cap in the cage, and tore up the processed cheese into tiny, bite-sized pieces. Happy and convinced I had saved my salamander-cat from starvation, I woke up.

What in the hell did that mean? According to 10,000 Dreams Interpreted, here’s what I figured out.

**Reptile**: to handle a reptile without harm to myself foretells that I will be oppressed by the ill humor and bitterness of friends, but I will succeed in restoring pleasant relations.

**Cheese**: to dream of eating cheese denotes great disappointment and sorrow. No good of any nature can be hoped for. Cheese is generally a bad dream.

**Cage**: to see wild animals caged (OK, this is stretching it), denotes that I will triumph over my enemies and misfortunes.

**Cat**: to hear the screams or mewing of a cat, some false friend is using all the words and work at his command to do me harm.

**Water**: I will joyfully realize prosperity and pleasure.

**Top**: (as in bottle cap) I will be involved in frivolous difficulties.

Which means, some false friend I have is trying to screw me over. Although I will be extremely upset and mourn, in the end I will succeed in restoring the relationship, as well as derive some type of prosperity from the entire ordeal. Right.

**Dream No. 2**: I just started my period for the first time—at the age of 27. My Grandma called me, claiming that she was worried because I was home alone. When I told her what had happened, she insisted that I come over to her house immediately.

Once at Grandma’s, she explained that she had called the doctor. His instructions: to insert two tampons, lie...
down on the couch and listen to the Smiths CD. Lying on the couch, friends began stopping by my Grandma's to visit me. I remember the song “Girlfriend in a Coma” drifting in the background as everyone expressed their concern for me.

The phone rang and Grandma answered it. The Doctor had changed his mind. He now wanted to see me in person. Immediately, I was "beamed", a la Star Trek to the Doctor's office. A nurse stepped into the waiting room and handed me a large, plastic bag. "Go to the restroom and give me a urine sample," she demanded.

I entered the bathroom, passing stall after stall after stall. I finally came to one I liked (?!), and went in to do my business. Opening the plastic bag, I discovered a silk container filled with a chalky liquid. "Oh my God!" I cried, "I'm not here to get an examination for my period — I'm here for an upper GI and a complete physical!"

The nurse banged on my stall door. "Hurry up honey, the Doctor doesn't have all day. Are you done yet?"

Still searching through the plastic bag, I found some Ben-Gay. Angrily, I opened up the door and shouted, "No! I do not have a urine sample for you yet! And unless you let me put this Ben-Gay on, I can't give you a urine sample!"

At that point, I applied the Ben-Gay. Reentering the stall, I peed in the cup and proceeded to pack everything back into the plastic bag. When I walked out of the stall, I discovered that all the other stalls in the bathroom had been transformed into (occupied) beauty salon stations. Quickly walking out, I couldn't help but notice one of the "clients" — a young girl dressed in ripped blue jeans and a grungy flannel shirt. On her head was an old green Army helmet, and in a very elaborate process, the beautician was gluing green grapes to the side of it. With no explanation, I awoke.

Blood (they didn't use words like menstruation or period in the early Twentieth Century): enemies will seek to tear down a successful career that is opening up before me.

Grandparents: I will meet with difficulties that will be hard to surmount, but if I follow their good advice, I will overcome the barriers.

Couch: false hopes will be entertained. Be alert.

Doctor: disagreeable differences with family members.

Urine: an omen of bad luck.

Bathrooms: I lean too much towards light pleasures.

Chalk: (stretching it, I know) disappointment is foretold.

Ben-Gay ointment (using salve as the reference): I will prosper under adverse circumstances and convert enemies into friends.

Hairdressers: a family disturbance.

Helmet: threatened misery and loss will be avoided by wise action.

Grapes: this is a dream of bright promise and happiness.

Well, nice to know that that dream ended on a positive note! A little more complex than Dream No. 1, my final interpretation told me some false friend I have is trying to screw me over. Although I will be extremely upset and mourn, in the end I will succeed in restoring the relationship, as well as derive some type of prosperity from the entire ordeal.
by Mary Gorson

I spent most of my adolescence terrorized by my not-role-model-mother and intimidated by my suburban princess “friends,” never dating any boy in my high school. By the time I escaped Long Island for college, the prospect of being thought of as a “babe” was truly enticing.

Here comes the downside. The little punk babe (am I dating myself or what?) was renowned as party girl extraordinaire. Boys paid lots of attention to me. I would giggle and kiss ’em once or twice, that’s it. And then I would be introduced to people who would reply, “oh, so you’re Mary, I heard about you” and I am still not sure what they meant. I was such a babe that three months after arriving on campus I declared myself socially off-limits—no dating, no parties, only visits to bars with close friends. Anytime this self-imposed exile cracked, it was like Liza Minelli on her latest comeback tour. I mean, who doesn’t like people paying attention to you? But who likes being the floor show for someone else’s pleasure?

Years later, the swings from party animal to monastic hermit aren’t quite as extreme. Figuring out how to have “fun” with people outside of that select group of girlfriends who have their periods on the same days is an interesting challenge that I think I can take on, finally, being over the age of thirty, a relatively responsible adult. At last, to be free of the mother-induced guilt about short skirts and weird haircuts and the resultant drug-induced club-slumming period and the temper tantrums…and I can just like the way I am, with or without lipstick, and I can go out and be as groovy, or as not groovy, as my sleeping patterns and checkbook will allow. This is the best part about having been a fucked-up kid: I got it all over with at an early age.

Here’s my dilemma though: maybe people I know weren’t so fucked-up when they were younger, they had relatively good childhoods and adolescences and early adult hoods and then. Saturn-return time hits (around 29) and boom! They all start thinking about how fucked-up it was that they were enjoying themselves when they were younger, and maybe they aren’t supposed to have quite as much raucous fun as they used to, because they’re supposed to be responsible adults. Oh, it’s kind of late; no, really, I’m so tired; oh I have so much stuff to do, my apartment is a wreck, maybe next week; I have always wanted to go there, can we get a group to go the week after next; I may have a date; oh it’s tomorrow, well I’m not sure I have been working so hard, let’s get together, though, next weekend, maybe see a movie, or go meet some boys, etc.

GODDAMMIT!!! Haven’t we earned the right to not have to bend under the weight of our own lives? I am not old, and neither are you, and I’ll be damned if I’m going to sit home, preserving my youthful appearance for Prince Charming by skipping a school night out to have some fun (barring gratuitously unsafe sex and drugs). Fun is my mandate, my prerogative, my mission; no one else is going to do it for me. We are all going to be older, next year, in ten years, in twenty years—do we want to remember our thirties as the time of our lives when we go to bed early? I hope not.
You Just Don't Understand—Cause You're Too Dumb!

by Hecuba

"I was reading GQ the other day, Bill, and there was this great article...I really felt like the author was talking to me! It was all about relationships—you know, like how to tell if a girl really likes you, or if she's just leading you on; how to tell if she'll call you; that sort of stuff."

"Really? You know, Greg, I could really use an article like that to help me figure out what the deal is with Cathy—I just can't figure out what she's thinking and I'm trying to interpret all her signals and I just can't get a grasp on it. Do you think I'm projecting my feelings?"

Yeah right. When was the last time you picked up a men's magazine like GQ or Esquire and saw an article about men's questions in relationships? Oh, maybe...never? Why is it that in every women's magazine there's a myriad of articles on relationships with men—how to meet a man, how to get his attention, how to hold his attention, how to tell if he likes you, etc., and there are no complimentary ones in the men's mags? Are women in dire need of all this advice? Or do men just not give a shit?

Well, okay, that's a trick question. Obviously men do give a shit, but in a lesser, sort of non-analytical, way. They're quite happy, meandering along in a relationship, not asking "those" questions, not pondering every shade of meaning in a glance or a phrase. Women, on the other hand, enjoy the nuances of male/female interactions. I don't think the articles multiply out of women's inability to handle relationships; they exist, rather, for two reasons: to show women that they are not the only ones out there feeling insecure in their current quandary, and basically, because women enjoy that sort of thing. It's not a real relationship if everything is smooth sailing and clearly interpretable. We thrive on the analysis, as if it will somehow deepen the relationship if there are ever-present nagging questions about it.

It's just our nature. We're smarter, we think more, we want to know more, we expect more from our relationships, not just with our boyfriends or lovers, but with out friends as well.

Girl-friends are different from boyfriends. Girls talk; they mull, commiserate and prod, question and interpret. Boys, well, boys just talk, I guess. And it's a slightly foreign language, for sure—they do the guy bonding thing of sports, music, girls and sex. Not that girls don't cover those subjects as well, it's just that we use different language to discuss them. We want to know more of the "why" and boys just want to know the "what."

Now we can choose to look at this quest for meaning as a need, or as a gift. Smart money on gift, I say. If the downside is a little more inner turmoil, a few more sleepless nights, and a constant questioning eyebrow, these negatives are outweighed by the positives—a deeper girl friendship thing and a better understanding of what makes us all tick.
My Rude Friend invited me to a party last week. I wasn’t doing anything so I thought Okay, I’ll Go.

I prepared for the evening carefully. I put my hair up. Then I selected an outfit that both looked good and felt comfortable. As I was getting ready, My Rude Friend called me on the phone. She said Come On Over Whenever You Want.

Ah, the fun we would have tonight!

I took the subway to her expensive apartment house and was greeted by her doorman when I arrived. We’ve Been Expecting You, he said, as he ushered me into the elevator to the 77th floor. It was a fancy kind of building even if it was boring-looking. It reminded me of the apartment building in “The Jeffersons.” I thought about this, as I started singing “We’re Moving O n Up.” The Jeffersons’ theme song. When I arrived at the apartment door, My Rude Friend’s roommate, the Austere One, opened up the door.

God You Look Skinny, she said. An odd greeting, but I entered cheerily. I saw that the Austere One had her friend, Annoying Boy over. The last time we all went out, Annoying Boy kept us all informed of things that we already knew. He did this repeatedly all through the night. That is, until I cut the evening short and went home to sleep instead.

When I walked in the door this time, he immediately reminded me of all the fun I had missed that night. I still think I had more fun sleeping, though.

While My Rude Friend was getting ready, the Austere One went into her bedroom. She looked like she was going to pass out. She re-entered the room laughing, saying something about this is what she gets for working in a liquor store. What a thrilling lifestyle, I thought.

In the meantime, Annoying Boy started asking me questions like: Are You Writing A Lot? and If You Want To Interview Rock Stars, Why Don’t You Hang Out With Them? I found this all quite irritating and politely excused myself away from him before I got a chafing rash from his itchy comments.

I went into My Rude Friend’s room and we watched videos on her giant screen TV. My Rude Friend started telling me about the party we were going to that night. It seemed that she liked a boy that was going to be there, the Boy From New Jersey. It was his brother’s birthday and that was why a party was being thrown. The only thing that troubled me was that this scenario was taking place on the Upper East Side. It was however, funnily enough, the Jeffersons home turf. I still thought it was a humdrum place to be though. I started singing the Jeffersons song again.

When it was time to go, we took a taxi to the Upper East Side. The cabbie was Lebanese so I started trying out my new Arabic vocabulary words on him. I called him “sweetheart” (habibi) and asked him for a banana (mawzi). It was very funny and we were all laughing. Actually, My Rude Friend wasn’t laughing that much. She might have even seemed a little peeved. Hmm.

We got to our destination. It was far away from my house. It looked boring and stupid. I loathed it. We rang the buzzer for the first floor apartment. It sounded very quiet, not at all like a party was in progress. Oh no! I hoped we weren’t at the wrong place!

All of a sudden, a male with a scraggly ponytail and a large cystic growth on his face answered the door. He seemed very happy to see two girls in cute outfits on his doorstep. Come Right O n In, he said. I’m Also From New Jersey.

We were led through an earthy colored apartment. It smelled like boys’ things — tube socks and beer. I don’t remember seeing any chairs and there was no music or food treats. Jeepers. This sure didn’t feel like much of a party to me.

We walked to the back of the apartment, which was the kitchen. There must have been about 80 beers in there — Coors and Budweiser. In cans. There were some boys in sneakers drinking it. The window was open and if you went through it, you could enter the outside patio. We decided to do just that.

When we stepped out we saw there were more boys and even more beers. I saw two girls too. They were also drinking beer. In cans. It was then that I saw something gross. It was a boy wearing a t-shirt. And the t-shirt said PUT YOUR
MOUTH ON ME. I turned to the beer guzzling girl next to me and said I Can’t Believe He’s Wearing A T-Shirt That Says PUT YOUR MOUTH ON ME. She burped. That’s The Boy From New Jersey.

Yikes! A scandal!

It was then that the Rude Friend went up to the Boy From New Jersey and started talking to him. I looked at him with the expression of Hey Over Here. But he didn’t look at me. My Rude Friend was sticking her chest out when she was speaking to him. To combat My Rude Friend’s forgetfulness that I was standing right next to her. I tried to become interested in my surroundings. I watched the Boy From New Jersey and his friends get wasted. I began to feel cold and wished I could be anywhere else.

We continued to stand outside in the dark and damp night with boys drinking beer in cans. Coors. The Boy From New Jersey went into the apartment. A girl then came up to us and started talking in a really loud and raspy voice. She was wearing dirty white bicycle shorts with a men’s dinner jacket. She was telling us that she really felt she had “made it” because she was finally living on this sidestreet. She seemed nice but her voice was rather scratchy and scorched-sounding. Anyway, she saw someone that she wanted to talk to more than us. When she walked away, it got very quiet.

My Rude Friend and I sat on the dirty picnic bench for awhile. There were a lot of splintery things on it. Our knees were getting cold because we were wearing stylish, but holey, jeans. Just then a boy she used to work with came over to My Rude Friend. She told me that his name was The Lord but she didn’t introduce me. She started talking to him about work. I sat there trying to get into the conversation, but I might as well have been the Invisible Girl. The Lord walked away to get more beer, but not before telling us why he was wearing a giant hat. It seems that a boy from his work bit him on the forehead. I exclaimed Oh My as he looked at me with bitter disdain.

Frankly, it plain old threw me for a loop.

Now, I was getting really cold. I turned to My Rude Friend and said Let’s Go Inside. She said Okay. As we walked up the steps, she started to talk to another boy who said to her I Know You. She said Ooooh, batted her eyelashes and started a conversation. I stood in the background without an introduction. What to do.

I said to My Rude Friend, Let’s Go Inside. I went in first and stepped on the makeshift stool waiting for our feet in the warm kitchen. But my foot slipped and before I knew it I was scraping my back against the wall while simultaneously trying not to fall face down on the dirty linoleum flooring. I managed not to fall too badly, but still got a large scrape on my back. Throbbing with pain. I managed to spur Shucks, Am I Embarrassed, while the beer drinkers all laughed at me. My Rude Friend laughed too and then tried to get me to sip some brew with her. No
Thanks, I Don’t Want It. Really. I’m Fine.

My Rude Friend started to talk to The Lord again, who was now showing off his human teeth bitten forehead. He was getting drunker and drunker and My Rude Friend was getting closer and closer to him. They were talking about stuff I didn’t know about. They were talking about stuff I’d never know about. My Rude Friend’s back was facing me.

As I silently wished I could be Samantha from “Bewitched,” a Big Boy came up to me. He was wearing an orange shirt with a Nehru collar and a big, floppy hat. He was tipsy from all the Bud and Coors, I thought. The Big Boy said to me Are Ya Drinkin’? I said No. He said Why? I said I Don’t Feel Like It. Then he hung around waiting for me to get interested in him. I looked everywhere but at his face to let him know that that would never happen in a million trillion years But it would seem that getting the hint was going to be a major jobbie for this Big Boy.

The Big Boy continued staring at me. I was just standing around again. My Rude Friend was praying that The Lord would come back to her for more chatting and such. Just as The Lord bypassed me to see the Rude Friend, the orange shirted Nehru-collared Big Boy finally walked away.

Ten more minutes passed with me fake admiring the yellow kitchen paneling. I couldn’t tell what time it was because the clock on the oven was stuck at 1:30. I knew it would be 1:30 at some point, but I didn’t want to be here to actually see it happen.

I tapped My Rude Friend on the shoulder and said I Am Going Home Now. She said Really. I said Yeah. Uh Huh. She said Bye and quickly turned around to The Lord, who was staring straight at her chest without blinking. I ran out of the kitchen, through many beer cans, very fast.

When I reached the pavement, I was very happy. I breathed the cold air very deeply. As I walked the long blocks to a main road, I passed a lot of bums. They said things to me like, I Like Your Pants, Where Are You Going and Hey Hot Thing.

The main avenue looked like a traffic swamp land. I saw a bus stop and decided to wait there. It was 12:45 a.m. There were many Chinese people waiting in line for the bus as well. I got in line beside them and hummed to myself.

I rode home on the bus. 73 blocks. And when the bus left me off in front of the Kentucky Fried Chicken, I was happy as a bunny. I ran home and hurriedly pushed the keys into my door. The door to my apartment, my haven.

Sanctity!

I ran the bath and got my things ready. Bath oil. Bubble things. Rubber duck. I stayed in the tub until all my fingers and all my toes were wrinkly. Then I sleepily tumbled into bed for a restful night of sweet dreams. But just as I was dropping off to slumber, I heard what sounded to be the ringing of my telephone.

Who could be calling me at 1:30 a.m., I wondered? I let my answering machine pick it up, as I was snuggled too tightly in my warm little bed. In the back of my mind, I heard what sounded to be My Rude Friend’s voice. She mentioned something to the effect about tripping on beer cans, becoming an atheist and losing housekeys.

Since it didn’t sound like anything important, I stayed tucked cozily into bed and quietly drifted off to sleep.
7 Reasons to Smoke

by andie

Cigarettes

Sitting here, glaring at the dark, I light another cigarette.
Somewhere across the room another ember brightens and fades,
letting me know you are still breathing, existing; still there.
I wonder if you are ashing on the floor.

I feel you glowering, searching for words, looking for excuses,
trying to remember what you said when you left some other girl,
or what she said while leaving you.
I hope your cigarette will burn your fingers.

You begin to talk, about your talents, troubles, truths,
something about how well you were doing before I came along.
I am suddenly desperate, disgusted, swallowed by the thickening air.

I have heard all these words before, same sentences even.
Romantic, you are about to call me. I prefer the ‘addicted’.
“I am not a sentimental woman,” I will say,
hot rings of dreams hanging overhead.

I can not believe in the kind of love you worship.
I have already felt crying-drinking-hate.
No satisfaction in that.
I crush my cigarette into an overcrowded ashtray and smile.

I wonder if you know I’m staring,
if that flip of your cigarette to the trash was for my benefit.
I linger on the irony of seeing you clearest in obscurity.
Obscurity suits you.

Yes, I must somehow enjoy loneliness. No, I don’t like to fight.
I can listen to you and light cigarettes at the same time.
Strange how in silence the air can be so dead and cold.
(But I need only the warmth of smoke between my lips.)
BUST PRESENTS:

FUN from A- DD!
ADRENALINE It's good, believe me... it gives power, it reveals your nature, it gives you a lovely natural flush; it takes you to the realm of uncontrollable, supernatural powers... It's what makes superheroes go go go. (BETTY)

BATHS Fun because they are totally for you. Put lavender oil and fresh rose petals in the water. Bring in candles, burn incense, play your favorite music and feel like a queen and don't bother to clean the tub at least until the next day. (SCARLETT)

BATHS The ultimate sanctuary. Candles, smells, and oils enhance the ritual. The only place where nobody will bug me. Where some of my greatest revelations have occurred. Therapy that money can't buy. (LUCKY)

BOOKSTORES Bookstores excite me with all of the things I could be informed about while mocking me with the fact that I never will. I love to judge books by their covers, get drunk handling and leafing through books while I daydream imagine submerging myself back into academia and coffee shops and dark library rooms with even darker yellow-y lighting. To be honest, I have to admit that I like the inspiration my library rooms sometimes more than I like the activity of sitting down and actually reading a book. But no matter, some day I'll plod my way through all of the books I've bought while high on the smell of printing ink, and I'll still feel exactly as small and exhausted and euphoric when I'm standing in the bookstore again, surrounded by all of the words and pages and thoughts committed to paper that I can only ever hope to breathe in, and never hope to know. (CELINA)

CAMEO APPEARANCE Isn't it just so much fun to wait for the special guest star cameo appearance on your favorite TV show like Baretta and Police Woman? (BETTY)

CBGB Smells bad, looks bad, is tiny, gross, filthy, corroded, and sort of pathetic, but god I love it—it's not the history, the faded glory, the familiar, the moth-eaten antiglamor, the pseudo-omnious matte black luxe interior. I love it because it's a loud cozy unprepossessing ugly dive and it always was and it always will be. Besides, I love it because everyone else hates it and I always go there. Besides, they do have good bands there. (GIRL)

CLOSE-OUT STORES Even if you think you don't need to buy anything, walk into any close-out store and realize that you do. After all, don't you really need to have a red back pack in the shape of a fire truck which at $4.95 is such a bargain who could resist it? Then again, a fluorescent green ice-cream scoop for $2.95 would really brighten up those ice-cream parties you like to throw (or will once you own this object) and also an inflatable neck pillow for the tub is something you maybe never thought of going out of your way to get but since it's right there and so cheap, why not? And while orange may not be your very first choice as a color for candles, at 5 for $1.00, you know you'll adjust. Close-out stores always let you leave with a bag full of goodies you never even knew you wanted, and give you the thrill of going on a shopping spree without any of the mess. (CELINA)

BED We all spend a great deal of time there. It's especially fun with nice sheets, a big comforter, lots of pillows, a pile of books, and no alarm clock. A boy would be nice, but not essential. (MARY)

BEEF JERKY My forbidden pleasure. Too embarrassed to buy it in shops where people might know me. I travel to bordering neighborhoods and bring it home in a brown paper bag like pornography. A comfort food from childhood. Tough and bland, like my mother's cooking. Imagine it's what the Ingalls ate. I always wanted to be an Ingall. (LUCKY)

BOOKSTORE On my feverishly anticipated day off taking a shower makes me think of getting up to go to work and how much I hate it and how many dirty dishes are in my sink. Fuck it, I deserve a reward. I rush out of the house, no breakfast, because I forgot to buy something again. As I go up the over-bright staircase to the bookstore I decide in advance to limit myself to three books. I open the inner door and sigh deeply. The smell surrounds me, intimate and familiar and exciting. It's the smell of paper and ink and glue and maybe even tiny book bugs and I love it. This smell is as much a part of my bookstore pleasure as finding a new book by a favorite author and I'm always seduced into staying way past my three book limit. (OLIVIA)

BURNING I'm a total pyro and I've been one all my life. To see flame leap and flicker and consume that which it desires turns my insides molten and releases a drug in my head; a delicious smile creeps across my face and I am mesmerized. One match at a time is a small thrill but I can't stop. It usually leads to lighting the entire book and holding it near my eyes as fire threatens to blossom out of control and burn me in its orange-gold light. Candles are good, fireplaces better, giant bonfires best. Since I don't dig the destruction of property or the endangerment of others & can't really revel in housefires or even ecologically correct forest fires (flash on Bambi & Thumper) the absolute fucking greatest pyro dream would be to stand on the edge of an active volcano. Could there be anything more beautiful than lava? (GIRL)

BROOKLYN BRIDGE The Brooklyn Bridge is one of my favorite "things." But it's not so much a thing to me as it's kind of a marvelous mood structure that I'm drawn to. I like the fact that you can walk over it. I can ride my bike over it and it makes me very happy. I also ride to the little park under it (on the Brooklyn side) and hang out there and read or clear my head and marvel at the structure and try to figure out how they built it anyway? It bugs me out to think about it, because people DIED when they did it. Just so I could drive home from Soul Kitchen on a Monday night, peppin' at the Watchtower clock/thermometer and know I'm checkin' in at 3:37 am and it's 67 degrees. I love that fuckin' bridge. Oh yeah—I got my first moving violation making an illegal turn onto it. Happy and proud! (SUGARTIT)

CEREAL Sitting down to a huge bowl of sugar cereal in front of the tube at two in the morning. (MEDUSA)

CEREAL Sitting down to a huge bowl of sugar cereal in front of the tube at two in the morning. (MEDUSA)

CHANGING YOUR HAIRSTYLE Sounds simple, and it is. Go from bang to babe with the flick of a few bucks. Sure it's all in your mind, but that's where it counts, yes? (JANE)
Worlds opened up to me and I can't help it, I can't help it, I can't help it. (CELINA)

The best part of dancing is doing it as fast as you can, and getting that feeling in your chest like it's going to cave in that I used to get from smoking. (Maybe I'm just really out of shape. I like dancing at a party, even if it's hellishly hot in the middle of the summer, because it satisfies a showoff streak in me and I can fantasize that everybody's watching me. (I never look around to check—that would ruin the fantasy.) I love dancing alone in my apartment, because I can do extremely goofy interpretive moves and there's nobody there to laugh. (TABITHA)

Dancing I LOVE TO DANCE! It's the only kind of exercise besides sex that I really like. I turn on the Chili Peppers or Sly and the Family Stone and shake it (well, shake them), sometimes in the morning before I've even had my first cappuccino of the day. The best part of dancing is doing it as fast as you can, and getting that feeling in your chest like it's going to cave in that I used to get from smoking. (Maybe I'm just really out of shape. I like dancing at a party, even if it's hellishly hot in the middle of the summer, because it satisfies a showoff streak in me and I can fantasize that everybody's watching me. (I never look around to check—that would ruin the fantasy.) I love dancing alone in my apartment, because I can do extremely goofy interpretive moves and there's nobody there to laugh. (TABITHA)

Dancing around your room in your underwear
If you have poor vision, this fun is enhanced by removing your glasses or contacts, and dancing with the blurred vision that makes you look like the gorgeous blur you truly are. The only precaution necessary is to make sure the door is locked. Otherwise, turn it up, take your time, and blogue till your grin is a beaming half moon. (HECUBA)

Darts Oh there's nothing like watching that sleek silver steel tip puncture the picture of your ex friend... (BETTY)

Danger Most things I find really fun involve submitting myself to danger. I was thinking, "anything to do with water" (drowning), "anything to do with heights" (falling) "anything to do with speed" (crashing) and of course, pace the Scaracrow, a lighted match. Fun! Life-or-death! Possible Death! Certain Death! Being at the edge of a very high cliff or tall building gives me the greatest spasm in my groin, as though my eros-thanatos g-spot is screaming at me to get my center of gravity the FUCK away from there while simultaneously shooting endorphin LSD into my brain. I want to skydive so bad. I want to ride the biggest rollercoaster of them all 100 times in a row. I want to surf off the Angel Falls. My therapist once said I was counterphobic. (GIRL)

Driving a sports car Preferably while the Supremes are blasting out of the speakers. It's a wonderful thing. You shift from 1st to 2nd.

"I've got this burnin'..." 2nd to 3rd.
"Churnin'..." 3rd to 4th.
"Yearnin'..." to 5th. "Feelin' inside me (ooooh)..." Make others on the highway think they saw something. "Jesus, was that Janet Reno rounding that curve at 120 m.p.h.?" "Don't be crazy." (JANE)

Dresses I wouldn't touch these in high school or in college but in graduate school I got a great collection of thrift-store dresses and I have never turned back. Wear a truly femmy dress like you had in elementary school, long or short, and then a big, heavy pair of not-to-be-fucked with boots. Then go ahead and prance right into that morning meeting with the VP. Your dress will say it once and say it loud: I'm a girl and I'm proud! (CELENA)

Dogs Other people's or your own. They love you with no hidden agenda and know the real meaning of play time. (Scarlett)

Coffee I am a coffee overachiever. Ever since I gave up drinking over three years ago, I have funneled all of my addictive, self-destructive and dependent tendencies straight into the percolator. When I want to live life on the edge, I drink coffee at night, I mean even right before I go to bed. I drink coffee when I get depressed. I drink coffee before I go out at night and get irate when the party I go to does not have coffee. I will never, ever drink decaf, and I disgustedly behold friends that do drink lite beer and wine coolers and I drink my special blend of half french roast, half hazelnut "ground for a drip" (like me?) I have never drunk decaf, and the disgust I now bestow on those who do.

Coffee has all the ancient mystique of dark red wine as well as the sheer street-smarts of a can of Bud, but it has no alcohol, and so I'll continue to indulge myself, happily acknowledging that I am completely and utterly powerless over it, and just as happily not giving a shit. (CELENA)

Dancing I LOVE TO DANCE! It's the only kind of exercise besides sex that I really like. I turn on the Chili Peppers or Sly and the Family Stone and shake it (well, shake them), sometimes in the morning before I've even had my first cappuccino of the day. The best part of dancing is doing it as fast as you can, and getting that feeling in your chest like it's going to cave in that I used to get from smoking. (Maybe I'm just really out of shape. I like dancing at a party, even if it's hellishly hot in the middle of the summer, because it satisfies a showoff streak in me and I can fantasize that everybody's watching me. (I never look around to check—that would ruin the fantasy.) I love dancing alone in my apartment, because I can do extremely goofy interpretive moves and there's nobody there to laugh. (TABITHA)

Darts Oh there's nothing like watching that sleek silver steel tip puncture the picture of your ex friend... (BETTY)

Danger Most things I find really fun involve submitting myself to danger. I was thinking, "anything to do with water" (drowning), "anything to do with heights" (falling) "anything to do with speed" (crashing) and of course, pace the Scaracrow, a lighted match. Fun! Life-or-death! Possible Death! Certain Death! Being at the edge of a very high cliff or tall building gives me the greatest spasm in my groin, as though my eros-thanatos g-spot is screaming at me to get my center of gravity the FUCK away from there while simultaneously shooting endorphin LSD into my brain. I want to skydive so bad. I want to ride the biggest rollercoaster of them all 100 times in a row. I want to surf off the Angel Falls. My therapist once said I was counterphobic. (GIRL)

Driving a sports car Preferably while the Supremes are blasting out of the speakers. It's a wonderful thing. You shift from 1st to 2nd.

"I've got this burnin'..." 2nd to 3rd.
"Churnin'..." 3rd to 4th.
"Yearnin'..." to 5th. "Feelin' inside me (ooooh)..." Make others on the highway think they saw something. "Jesus, was that Janet Reno rounding that curve at 120 m.p.h.?" "Don't be crazy." (JANE)

Dresses I wouldn't touch these in high school or in college but in graduate school I got a great collection of thrift-store dresses and I have never turned back. Wear a truly femmy dress like you had in elementary school, long or short, and then a big, heavy pair of not-to-be-fucked with boots. Then go ahead and prance right into that morning meeting with the VP. Your dress will say it once and say it loud: I'm a girl and I'm proud! (CELENA)

Dogs Other people's or your own. They love you with no hidden agenda and know the real meaning of play time. (Scarlett)

Dancing I LOVE TO DANCE! It's the only kind of exercise besides sex that I really like. I turn on the Chili Peppers or Sly and the Family Stone and shake it (well, shake them), sometimes in the morning before I've even had my first cappuccino of the day. The best part of dancing is doing it as fast as you can, and getting that feeling in your chest like it's going to cave in that I used to get from smoking. (Maybe I'm just really out of shape. I like dancing at a party, even if it's hellishly hot in the middle of the summer, because it satisfies a showoff streak in me and I can fantasize that everybody's watching me. (I never look around to check—that would ruin the fantasy.) I love dancing alone in my apartment, because I can do extremely goofy interpretive moves and there's nobody there to laugh. (TABITHA)

Darts Oh there's nothing like watching that sleek silver steel tip puncture the picture of your ex friend... (BETTY)

Danger Most things I find really fun involve submitting myself to danger. I was thinking, "anything to do with water" (drowning), "anything to do with heights" (falling) "anything to do with speed" (crashing) and of course, pace the Scaracrow, a lighted match. Fun! Life-or-death! Possible Death! Certain Death! Being at the edge of a very high cliff or tall building gives me the greatest spasm in my groin, as though my eros-thanatos g-spot is screaming at me to get my center of gravity the FUCK away from there while simultaneously shooting endorphin LSD into my brain. I want to skydive so bad. I want to ride the biggest rollercoaster of them all 100 times in a row. I want to surf off the Angel Falls. My therapist once said I was counterphobic. (GIRL)

Driving a sports car Preferably while the Supremes are blasting out of the speakers. It's a wonderful thing. You shift from 1st to 2nd.

"I've got this burnin'..." 2nd to 3rd.
"Churnin'..." 3rd to 4th.
"Yearnin'..." to 5th. "Feelin' inside me (ooooh)..." Make others on the highway think they saw something. "Jesus, was that Janet Reno rounding that curve at 120 m.p.h.?" "Don't be crazy." (JANE)

Dresses I wouldn't touch these in high school or in college but in graduate school I got a great collection of thrift-store dresses and I have never turned back. Wear a truly femmy dress like you had in elementary school, long or short, and then a big, heavy pair of not-to-be-fucked with boots. Then go ahead and prance right into that morning meeting with the VP. Your dress will say it once and say it loud: I'm a girl and I'm proud! (CELENA)

Dogs Other people's or your own. They love you with no hidden agenda and know the real meaning of play time. (Scarlett)
Heaven Covers I've slept naked since high school and
your spinal cord just to catch a
pretending to scratch the back of
times, but I love how typography gives so much
possibility over to your left while
and lean as inconspicuously as
have to really crank the ear set
when it's a challenge, when you
EAR DROPPING Especially fun
lotsa designers. I wish I could stop obsessing
to wherever it is, and most people don't even
it unless its wrong. I like to photograph it, but
actual signs, or pieces of type, like in the
tiramisu at Rafael la. Thai food and pasta. (L. C.)
on Thompson Street, crostini sandwiches and
almond crunch), Japanese food, especially Omen
EATING Haagen Dazs ice cream bars (coffee
almond crunch), Japanese food, especially Omen
on Thompson Street, crostini sandwiches and
tiramisu at Rafaella. Thai food and pasta. (L.C.)

Hall Wardrobes Wearing my leather jacket and cowboy boots for the
first time of the season. I always wait until the air is cool and crisp. I
finally feel myself after a long summer of stupid sun dresses and ugly
T-shirts. (MEDUSA)

Gray Markets Like Odd
Job Trading, etc. Stores
that carry everything, mostly
crap you don't need but
you can get so much for so little. (SUGARTTY)

Flirting With cute
boys! Especially
when they're secure
enough to take a little
dig now and then. (TARITHA)

Holidays Holidays are fun especial-
ly if it's a really fun one like the
ones where you get nifty gifts, or
you get to dress up like the queen
you ought to be treated like. (BETTY)

Hotel/Motel Rooms Okay, so, this is the kind of fun you only get to have as a grown-up, but I feel like a total kid every
time. I'm getting to sleep over, somewhere away from home! It's so exciting! I like motel rooms a lot but my day-job also

GIVING IN Giving in to that
more expensive bottle of
wine, the last hour of danc-
ing, the extra hour of
sleep. Giving in to someone
else and admitting you
were wrong. Giving in to
yourself and realizing it's
not all your fault. (MECUBA)

Heaven Covers I've slept naked since high school and
it's irrational but I can't sleep without covering my
ass and crotch and usually my breasts. Summer is a
nightmare of heat, insomnia, sweat-smelling sheets,
and sleeping by myself on the other side of the bed.
Every year it finally gets really cold one night in
September before they turn the heat on. I climb into
my long-neglected closet and pause to smell my old
friend, M.C., then pull down Grandma's dusty quilt
and that ugly wool blanket that I stole from an old
boyfriend. I pile them onto my bed in a frenzy of cold
feet and hard nipples and jump in, knowing that soon
I'll be warm and well-covered in case of fire(men) or
long-lived mosquitoes and probably fall asleep in five
minutes. (OLIVIA)

Fun From a To Dd
INCENSE They sell it in the coolest places: import shops, Indian groceries, Chinatown, witch stores, places with beaded curtains, essential oils, carved wood, esoterica, erotica, arcana. First the way it looks, the exoticism of the wrappings: eastern imagery, Mandarin and Sanskrit script on foreign red & gold papers, ancient supernatural symbols; the infinite variety of strange shapes, colors, textures, types; some for ornate brass burners, some to insert into any nearby crevice, some requiring a charcoal disc, some packaged with its own little safe hole to plug in; chunks of resin, punks, wads, cones, filaments, sticks; mostly the smells, the smoke spiralling, the instant mood-altering mind-enhancing scent pervading the room. Incense satisfies the sensualist, ascetic, aesthetic, rebel, traveler, goddess, the mystic and the pyromaniac in me all at once; it is a puja I took to immediately; it always uplifts me and brings me to the Nepali temple in my mind. (GIRL)

IRISH ACCENTS Quite fun in a lilting kind of way. (BETTY)

JELLO Food you don’t have to chew, is easy to make and you can play with. Just like with M&M’s, the red flavors are the best. (SCARLETT)

JUST SAYING NO Especially when they want it and you don’t. (BETTY)

KISSING Oh man especially if it means getting kissed down there. (BETTY)

KISSING Overlooked, under-appreciated, misunderstood; at times, better than the harder stuff to which it leads. (MARY)

LARGE SIZE CLOTHING You feel cool, it’s kind of airy, and people always think you’ve just lost six thousand pounds. (BETTY)

LAUGHING Pure fun. In fact, I’m pretty sure that laughing and fun are the same thing. But I can be sitting around in a cafe or riding on a train or walking down the block or whatever, it doesn’t matter much: if I’m with friends, and if we’re laughing (especially about stupid stuff) then it’s fun. I can be in the situation and I actually think, I’m having fun here, this is really fun, I’m enjoying myself and I love these people. (TABITHA)

LAWYERING IN THE GRASS Not, need I say, after being hit by a car, but rather laying in the grass on a sunny day alone or with a friend snoring, talking, or whatever. If alone, stick to the first two. (JANE)

LIPSTICK The darker and more medieval the better. Without it, I’m just a face. With it, I’m a painting. Always in matte, glossy’s for kids. It’s that finishing touch God meant to give me. (LUCKY)

MAIL ORDERS It’s such fun to look at pictures of objects you’d like to own, things you’d love to wear, things you’d like to make, perfect men you’d like to have. (SUGAR TIT)

MATH PROBLEMS AND CHEMISTRY EQUATIONS It’s a geek thing—you wouldn’t understand. (TABITHA)

MARTINI’S Only on occasion, and never more than two, made with Absolut and many olives, to be drunk only in the best of spirits with the best of company. Good manicure recommended purely for vanity’s sake but certainly not necessary. (MARY)

NEW SHOES Stylin’ new shoes (or boots!) are easily a favorite cuz hips got nothin’ to do with it. CD’s and books fall into this category, too. (SUGAR TIT)

MOTORCYCLES I love motorcycles. I remember clearly when I was eleven and my neighbor’s son gave me a ride on his Honda. I love the trappings: boots, leather, gloves, sunglasses, helmets. I love watching the little kids in the back seat watching us avidly as we pull along side to pass on the highway. I love gripping his waist or resting my hands on his thighs with casual intimacy. Sometimes I swear I’m gonna get my own (smaller) bike, and I envy those women who do, but I also admit to loving the utter lack of responsibility of sitting on the back and the thrill of placing my safety completely and literally in his hands. I love the wind in my face and the roar of the engine and yes, that vibration. (OLIVIA)

MOVIES Sitting in the dark with a box of popcorn and a box of Raisinet’s. (L.C.)

MUSIC Really loud or really quiet. Girl singers with a point of view. Voices that are emotional, that sob and break. Music that makes you want to fuck or dance. (L.C.)

LOLLIPOPS Oh lollipop, buttercup, how I love them, especially if they have special surprises in the middle of them. (BETTY)
Pain You may think that this is the opposite of fun, but what else could explain our unstoppable addiction to all things painful? Who amongst us has not given in to the temptation to call an ex-boyfriend just to hear his voice on the answering machine (and then cry for a while after hanging up the phone)? And why do we try to find out every last detail about our ex-boyfriend's current girlfriends, making sure to torture ourselves with those same details (she has brown hair? See—I always knew he was checking out brunettes when he was with me! Oh, of course she's a photographer, and I bet she's really successful and happy too, right?) Don't we, when we're kind of sad but not quite as sad as we think we should be, search through our record collections and choose to play exactly that song which we know will pull gushing tears and heart-wrenching sobs from our very souls (Lemme see—oh, here's my old Cat Stevens record. I always did like "Cat's in the Cradle"). Pain is satisfying and self-indulgent and fulfilling. It's responsibility that's the opposite of fun. ( Celina)

Queue What's up with this word? It is a barrel of laughs when you go to the motor vehicle department and ask the information lady which queue is the appropriate queue for probational hearings and watch her blank expression droopy dog face go even blanker as she blinks and wonders what the fuck is a queue should I say something or not quite as sad as we think we should be, search through our record collections and choose to play exactly that song which we know will pull gushing tears and heart-wrenching sobs from our very souls (Lemme see—oh, here's my old Cat Stevens record. I always did like "Cat's in the Cradle"). Pain is satisfying and self-indulgent and fulfilling. It's responsibility that's the opposite of fun. ( Celina)

Real human I read a lot of books and I watch a lot of movies and when I really like an author or an actor I read or watch practically everything by or about them. When I think I detect a gift for seeing and portraying the human condition with compassion and truth I pay minute attention to any interviews, stealing your best boyfriend? The fantasy of scheming and concocting and executing the perfect revenge is half the fun... actually living it out is just 1000% fun. ( Betty)

Revenge Ever gotten revenge successfully? or thought about how you'd love to humiliate Ms. X for being such a bitch and make her pay for something she did to you? ( BETTY)

Oreo cookies With cold milk. (Scarlett)

Over Sleeping Waking up in a panic and realizing it's the weekend. Rolling over and sleeping until I naturally wake up. ( Medusa)

Pedicures Not the most attractive sight, sitting with your toes upright, with bright white toenails glaring against the blood red nail polish the pedicurist has chosen against your wishes, but oh boy doesn't the cotton feel all sugary and cushiony between your toes. Now you can truly feel like a duck, Miss Web Toes... (Betty)

Picking Scabs Hurts so good. Shedding skin, the proof of renewal, the red badge of courage, the future scar. It's satisfying to dig into one's own flesh a little, to try to get below the surface, to peel back the frail edge that covers us all. It hurts to be alive. They always say 'don't pick' but I always do. ( Girl)

Polaroid cameras Take silly pictures of yourself and your buddies and look at them right away. No fuss, no muss. (Scarlett)

Playing Pool It's that mastery thing. (Tabitha)

Reading Perfect isolation. Jayne Anne Phillips (Black Tickets), Dorothy Allison ( Bastard Out of Carolina), Mona Simpson (Anywhere But Here), Doris Lessing ( The Fifth Child), Nadine Gordimer (Something Out There), Graham Greene ( The End of the Affair), Toni Morrison, Raymond Carver, Tillie Olsen, Mary Gaitskill, Paul Bowles. (L.C.)
Fun from A to Dd

Roller coasters Some of my friends don't believe they're safe (and maybe they're not). But I figure if the one I get on isn't safe it's too late to worry about it and I might as well assume I'm going to get off it at the end in one healthy piece. It's one of the rare times in my life when I'm really able to be in the moment! The wilder and more stomach flopping, the better. The other ride that is fun is that Alice in Wonderland teacup ride (the Tilt-A-Whirl), where you just have the laughs squeezed out of you by the G-force from being swung around. It is so fucking fun, I ride it at every Feast of San Genaro. (Tabitha)

Riding a Galloping Horse and Skiing Each is scary and hard to do, but then when you start getting the hang of it the mystery is really exhilarating. For a while, I also thought getting a ride on a motorcycle was fun but now I'm thinking it's a little boring. For one thing, you're just a passenger: maybe if I got my own bike I'd have more fun. It's really fun when you go fast—same principle as skiing, the fear and the thrill—but I can pass on driving through city traffic. To me, it's just a skin-ny cab. (Tabitha)

Rock and Roll Boys Okay so I'm a sucker for a boy with a guitar, especially if said boy has long hair and is standing on a stage, playing his axe like I just know he would play me if I could get near enough, with his hair falling down in his face like it would if he were above me, entrancing and sweaty and physical and slinky and angelic and magical and beautiful and stirring my every desire and wish and dream and leaving me hungry for more. 'Nuff said. (Celia)

Shoes The shopping for and buying of them is the fun part. Extra fun points if you find a shoe store where they actually bring the shoes to you and help you put them on. Extra points if you find them on sale. No points for wearing them except the two or three that should be thrown out they're so broken in! (Scarlett)

Scars Imperfections are beautiful, the twist of nature gone awry, pleasing asymmetry; proof of pain, the memory of wounds survived. I know I totally romanticize scars but I just can't help it! After them, they turn me on. What happened, how did you break yourself, what have you endured? History of experience written on the body map, signs of the permeability and vulnerability of the flesh. Even acne scars can be sexy, especially on people who seem like they've been through their own personal hell. The body expresses the soul's hurts. The fact that it has healed itself over is the most beautiful of all, and the scars remember. (Tabitha)

Sleep Every other thing on this list does not believe they're safe (and maybe they're not). But I figure if the one I get on isn't safe it's too late to worry about it and I might as well assume I'm going to get off it at the end in one healthy piece. It's one of the rare times in my life when I'm really able to be in the moment! The wilder and more stomach flopping, the better. The other ride that is fun is that Alice in Wonderland teacup ride (the Tilt-A-Whirl), where you just have the laughs squeezed out of you by the G-force from being swung around. It is so fucking fun, I ride it at every Feast of San Genaro. (Tabitha)

Singing I have a pretty good voice. I like to imitate sounds and voices, and it's very satisfying to get it right. Yesterday I sang along with Kate Bush and Janis Joplin and Joan Baez and Edith Piaf. They're pretty disparate and I do pretty well at all of them. I quit smoking almost a year ago and my voice is recovering nicely by now, so it's starting to get fun again to sing since I can control the sounds that come out of me again. I lay on my bed and crooned for a couple of hours and at times I was so tickled at how much enjoyment I was getting out of it that I just laughed out loud. I was all by myself and laughing at the joy I felt. Top that. (Tabitha)

Shopping When you have money: Barney's. Most of the time: thrift-store finds, anything black, white shirts, stuff at Urban Outfitters, old stuff at the flea-market at 26th and Sixth Avenue on Sundays. CDs at Kim's Underground and Rebel Rebel. (L.J.

Smokey We all know it's bad for you, but if you're going to smoke do it with flourish, panache and style. Rolling your own is passe but those small little hand-rolled cigars taste good and look incredibly cool. Added bonus: you don't inhale cigar smoke so you're only risking tongue and cheek cancer but not throat and lung!! (Scarlett)

Staten Island Ferry The most ecstatic 50-cent ride in NYC. Anticipation as the crowd gathers before the green door, the great god-dam melting pot from banjy-boys to turbaned Sikhs, big-hair girls to white-dread bike messengers, Korean tourists, Hasids, and me. The doors part and through we pour, down the gangplank, down the ship's stairs to the bottom level, where I wait for the big engines to rev up, and then the enormous vortex of churning green boils up behind us and we pull away, scraping the wooden pylons with shrieking and the whiff of friction burns. The hairs rise on my arms as the boat picks up speed, rounding away from the Battery, heading past Liberty, where I always hear fragments of what's-his-name's poem racing through my memory... give me your tired, your poor... the wretched refuse of your teeming shore... I lift my lamp beside the golden door... I stand at the very edge of the deck, in the center, with swinging chain between me and the eternally on-rushing water. Behind us the skyline of little Manhattan draws away, far off beside us there are huge tankers at anchor from distant harbors, Japan, Sweden, Brazil, off to the south the magnificent Verrazzano Narrows Bridge glitters green lights, and onward we rush. I get lost in the flow of the frightening dark water, transported somewhere into those great deep recesses of my mind. I never care if we get there, there is no destination, the only thing is the journey. (Girl)


**STUDIO** It's late, really late, timeless, I'm tired but exhilarated, the tape in the boom box is my favorite favorite favorite right this second, I'm singing along at the top of my lungs but I can hardly hear myself, lost in the music as I pour liquid, viscous glorious gorgeous mucoid goo onto a surface of many colors and there is a chemical reaction making me shiver with almost sexual pleasure as the honey slides and undulates to the music, ribbon arabesques sinking into themselves, like a mantra ringing over and over again and I'm at the farthest reach of the universe alone in my studio madly in love with painting, and the tiny distant people riding the train over the Manhattan Bridge and the tiny distant lights across the river. (GIRL)

**SUPERMARKETS** The ultimate shopping experience, to spend at least an hour a week suspending my consumer disbelief, rendered happily catatonic by the plethora of goofy things to eat. I always buy more than I need, which is okay, because even fun groceries aren't going to bust my budget. It's the joy of shopping and the pleasure of anticipated noshing at the same time (similar to video store vertigo, but much more fun.) (MARY)

**TEA** Warm, milky, and comforting. Like breast milk. The kindest thing someone could offer you. While there is tea, there is hope. (LUCKY)

**TOILETS** Ah, to spend some time every day in enforced isolation with a new copy of Sassy or a pile of Hate comic books. Plus the sense of relief and accomplishment when finished. It sounds weird, but I like going to the bathroom. (MARY)

**UMBRELLAS** Especially if it's raining and I'm wearing a long raincoat, standing on an empty soaked street... I just can't help but do my best Gene-Kelly—Singing-In-The-Rain dance, just kicking back, arms flailing, water dripping deliciously in my mouth, face upturned welcoming the rain, letting it all out... oh boy I'm feeling exhilarated and light-hearted just thinking about it... (BETTY)

**TV** My best friend, my pal, my cool blue lit companion on those sweet sweaty summer evenings when I'm lying naked in my bed, my breasts doing their Jello dance everytime I inhale, and wondering what life would be like without my two best pals, my left limber hand and my favorite channels. (BETTY)

**UNCONDITIONAL LOVE** Coming home to my loving puppy whose little tail wags for at least ten minutes when I walk through the door. (MEDUSA)

**WALKING** Instead of driving, cabbing or subway-ing You are in control of getting to your destination and can stop at will - look at the YAMS Fun-o-rama... orange and mushy and oblong... the mind boggles. (BETTY)

**WATER** Showers, long soaks in the bath, getting caught in the rain. Feeling the rush of water around you in a pool, listening to the swirl of the waves as you move through it. Knowing that you are responsible for your propulsion forward and getting stronger for it. (HECUBA)

**WORD GAMES** I like crossword puzzles, but only if I can do them pretty quickly. If not, I get frustrated. I don't like them on Saturdays. (And man I fucking HATE Scrabble, I just have to say it.) (TABITHA)

**XEROXING** Xeroxing is fun especially if it's your naked butt that you can plaster on your worst enemy's car window so that she can throw up all her food all over the front seat and completely soil her brand new jade-color suit. (BETTY)

**WANDERING** Without a mission To actually have a day to wander without a mission is so rare that it sometimes takes me a few hours to realize that it's in effect. It's like the day is half gone, and I start to get the shakes. Then I roam wildly, sometimes takes me a few hours to realize that it's in effect. It's like the day is half gone, and I start to get the shakes. Then I roam wildly, and usually wind up with New Shoes (see item above). (SUGAR TIT)

**WINE** It's a cool fun word, ain't it? Just saying it is fun. (BETTY)

**WORK** The kind that makes you want to wake up. Soul-work that involves your mind and heart, defines your purpose, is challenging and satisfying. (L.C.)

**WOWERYSM** Oh yes be ashamed and be proud... I do it, and I know you've done it too: especially on summer nights, when people just can't be bothered to wear clothes. I just plop down in a chair, with my bare feet languishing in a bucket of cool water, dressed in loose cool black, wearing black leather gloves, in the dark with my eyes glued to the binoculars I bought when I was an avid Mets fan, watching that sexy neighbor pick his nose. (BETTY)

**XEROPRINT** It's a cool fun word, ain't it? Just saying it is fun. (BETTY)

**YAMS** Fun-o-rama... orange and mushy and oblong... the mind boggles. (BETTY)

**ZEPHYR** It's a cool fun word, ain't it? Just saying it is fun. (BETTY)