

The Heuristic Squelch

UC Berkeley's only intentionally funny campus publication
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the legendary issue



the ^{neuristic} squelch

BUSY BEING CAMPUS LEGENDS SINCE 1991

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words from the top

Dear Reader

Maybe you were handed this magazine on Sproul by a kind and gentle Squelch writer, or maybe it was shoved in your face by one of our over-eager members who misled you about what's inside it, or maybe you picked it up at one of the various PMC magazine racks scattered around campus, or maybe you stumbled across it lying supine on a table or on the ground somewhere, discarded by a bored reader whose expectations far exceeded what we delivered and discarded it with a dismissive fling, or maybe it materialized in your lap as you were pooping—whatever be the reason, you are now in possession of the latest copy of the Heuristic Squelch. Relax. Concentrate. Make sure you have enough toilet paper for after you're done with your pooping. Tune out the world around you. Say to the people nearby, "it's the red button to take a video, grandma, now please don't disturb me—I'm reading." I don't think she heard you. Say it louder, "I'm reading the Heuristic Squelch, grandma, please shut your old mouth!" I don't think she heard you. You need to yell it now. Or maybe you don't want to say anything at all. Maybe you just want to read and that's alright. You're the boss.

Are you settled in now? Comfortable? Good. You're now going to dive into a magazine that would be best left undescribed. During your brief flick through this issue, you might find yourself shaking your head in amusement or jiggling your shoulders in a chuckle or silently exhaling in disappointment. This is your copy. You can do with it what you like. If you left your glasses at home and the text is all blurry, pull it closer. If you find yourself being pestered by an obnoxious fly, swat that little bastard straight to hell. Or sniff it, if you like. Go on and bend your head, raise the magazine to your nostrils and take a good, long whiff. Smells like paper, doesn't it? It doesn't have that sweet old page scent yet, but it will in a few decades. Maybe that's when you'll actually read it all the way through. Or maybe you never will. Whether or not you do, I hope that you enjoy doing (or not doing) it!



Siddharth

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Squirrel Mafia Strikes Again!

By Anonymous, scared and hungry hawk

When Louie DeNutsi woke on Saturday morning, he lifted his covers to find a grisly surprise. Next to him in bed was the severed head of his best friend, a hawk named Donny “Wings” McGee. Don DeNutsi, Godfather of the “Sather Bridge Boys”, believes this was retaliation carried out by a rival squirrel family, the infamouse squirrel mafia that controls the Free Speech Movement Cafe: “Capuccino Cartel”, led by Don “The Triple Shot” Capuccino.

Last week, the Sather Bridge Boys accosted a student, Vito Scoiattolo, who had this to say of his harrowing experience: “I was leaving the cafe

with my muffin and my decaf triple upside-down caramel macchiato with extra foam on the side, when two burly squirrels accosted me. One said ‘Ey, youz got’s to pay tribute to the Don.’ ‘The who?’ I asked. ‘Don DeNutsi,’ said the second. The first squirrel reached behind its ear and squeaked menacingly. I thought it was reaching for a gun and I didn’t want to take any chances, so I panicked, gave them my lemon meringue cupcake, and ran to the Tang Center for some world class counselling.”

UCPD officer and timorous head of the UC Squirrel Task Force, Giotto Corleone, said, while wiping cupcake

crumbs from his face, “I don’t know what incident you’re talking about. What mafia war? There hasn’t been a major incident since the nut raid at Dirks’ estate in ‘15.”

Studies show that 9 in 10 squirrels will be involved in a mafia family before they are ten months old, and 60% of these squirrels never make it past five years. A major challenge faced by legislators is the difficulty of incarcerating squirrels. Squirrels are notoriously difficult to imprison, as they usually just scamper through the prison bars. Swift action must be taken to curtail this bloody mafia violence.

Drama Strikes At Smith Household

By Siddharth Bhogra, concerned neighbour

“I didn’t ask to be born” yelled Mike, the youngest, as he hurled a vase (or is it pronounced vase?) on the floor. He had just been informed by his mother, Sharen, that he needed to go to bed as he had school the next day, but he wanted to continue to watch TV. The real reason why Sharen told him to go to bed is that she and his dad, Bertie, were in the middle of one of their nightly fights. Bertie had returned from another “late night at the office” with a couple of his shirt buttons undone and his breath smelling of booze. Sharen suspected that he had been out again with that bitch, Denise from Accounting. Sharen was wrong. He had been out with Carla from Sales.

“I was really mad when he came home late again last night,” said Sharen to a Squelch reporter. “We had an incident a few years ago when I caught him cheating on me and it took years of therapy to get over.” “I know,” replied the Squelch reporter, “I was there.”

Sharen had spent the past few hours drinking wine and lying in wait for Bertie to come back home and show his lying, cheating face. She wondered why she stuck with him all these years. She reasoned that it was for Mikey’s sake, but deep down, she knew that was a lie. She got pregnant when she was young and she was afraid that she wouldn’t know what she would do on her own. So she always threatened to

leave but never did.

“Where were you?” she yelled at him when he got back. “I... I was at the office,” he replied. Sharen and Bertie argued for hours. Mike turned up the volume of the TV to tune them out but could still hear their muted shouts in the other room. “Why can’t we just be a normal family?” asked Mike of the Squelch reporter present, “Why must mummy and daddy always fight?” To which the Squelch reporter replied, “It’s because you all are severely mentally ill and you live in a fucked up world that doesn’t give two shits about you.”

More on this story as it develops.

IN OTHER NEWS:

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Werewolf more Of A Dog Person
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Comedy Found Dead; Jimmy Fallon, James Corden Called in For Questioning
Page C4

Lighthouse Actually Very Very Heavy
Page G2

Old Letter Reveals UC Berkeley's Original Nickname To Be "The Golden Beers"

By Joseph Cohn, Golden Age historian

Resurfaced letters suggest the university's famous nickname, 'Golden Bears', is the result of the misreading of a letter dating back to the time of its founding in 1868. The letter, penned by founder Henry Durant, reads "...and let us christen our university 'The Golden Beers', for nothing quite surpasses partaking in cracking open one with the fellers."

Although many are surprised, some say the university should have figured this out long ago. "California in the 1860s was still very much the Wild West. The area was filled with prospectors, and the only thing these men loved more than gold and stolen land was a pint of beer," says UC Berkeley history professor Jedediah Jefferson, "Golden Beers is a far more logical nickname than Golden Bears. No one has seen a golden bear around campus, let alone one they could crack open, but everyone has seen golden beers. Besides, what even is a golden bear? Is it a polar bear with a fake tan? A grizzly with a coat of honey? A pizzly? No one

knows."

Chancellor Christ seems to have embraced this discovery. She made a surprise appearance at a frat party last weekend and brought along a case of Bud Light. According to eye-witness reports, she performed a keg stand and shotgunned all the beer she brought along with her. Squelch reached out to Chancellor Christ to ask what changes to expect around campus, ranging from school spirit-wear to the mascot Oski. Below is an excerpt of her response:

"We are planning to change the school logo from the Golden Bear to a can of Natty Light, which we believe best reflects our school's values. We are also looking into installing beer taps around campus to provide students with an accessible and environmentally friendly way to celebrate school pride. As for Oski, we're getting rid of him. I'm not sure how we allowed Oski to happen in the first place. Go Beers!"

Sanders Announces Presidential Candidacy and Practices Necromancy

By Bellatrix Lenormal, normal person who is NOT a witch

Eager supporters gathered beneath the blood moon in a small town in Vermont for the announcement of Bernie Sanders' 2020 presidential election candidacy. Sanders unveiled his new slogan, "Get your cake outta the oven, because I just set the temperature to Bern".

The crowd fell silent as Sanders drank from a vial of black liquid and chanted, "WE ICHAI SEIZE VOH MEANS OHV PRODUCTION. WORKERS OHV VOH WORLD VO'ITE. IZH UCHA HOLLUM THOK MISKATH TOP 1%." His soul escaped from his body, travelled to Marx's grave, and attempted to enter Marx's corpse. Sanders' soul was rejected for not being a true leftist and returned to his own body.

Reactions were expectably polarized. Despite the failure of Sanders' necromancy, many Republicans argue it is illegal to use dark magic as aid during presidential elections. However, a lack of constitutional precedent means it could

take a lengthy battle in the Supreme Court before anyone knows if necromancy violates the rules of office.

Within the Democratic Party, many have embraced Sanders' new approach. One congresswoman said, "At first I was unsure about supporting a quasi-immortal necromancer for president. But the more I thought about it, I became sure that Bernie is still the most morally upright candidate, despite his use of dark magic."

Although Bernie's actions are a surprise to all, it should be noted that he is not the first political figure to pursue immortality through the dark arts. Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, famously died ingesting cyanide in an attempt to extend his life. Due to the stigma surrounding necromancy, history has suppressed. However, it is widely speculated that Susan B. Anthony lives on as Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Man Annoyed By BART Delay

By David Larson, newly unlicensed therapist

Thursday 4:30 pm, Downtown Berkeley BART station—Bill Suttree lies across the rails waiting for the train. "I mean come on, it's like every time. Trains are always getting delayed for some bullshit reason," said Suttree. He voiced his criticism of the BART about twenty minutes after climbing down onto the tracks. "Where is the damn four-twenty train?" asked the bewildered man, "Some of us have places to go." A helpful and polite BART employee on the scene informed Bill that the southbound train was stuck in El Cerrito because of a "medical emergency on the tracks."

Bill grumbled about the failure of public transportation and fell silent for several minutes. He sat upright and bemoaned, "These rails are really hurting my back. I have a back condition and this long wait is not doing it any good." The police officers on the scene sympathized with his plight and offered him a memory foam cushion. Bill thanked the officers, who went on to pacify the other commuters' fears that Bill's situation would cause further delays. Readers will be pleased to know that by press time, the train pulled into the station and took Bill to his intended destination.

THE LEGEND OF THE BEAR AND THE PINE TREE

Once upon a time, there was a bear who was King of the forest. The forest was full of big pine trees and little pine trees, and the bear ruled over them all. This special bear was named Osikakanu, which in the forest language meant “bear that is full of poo”. Because he was a mighty bear and because he was full of poo, Osikakanu pooped all the time. After he took a poo, he always cleaned his butt by rubbing it on a nearby tree.

The trees did not like Osikakanu, but they were scared of him. One day, after Osikakanu finished his hourly poo, he looked around and spotted the perfect tree to rub his butt on. But this was not just any ordinary tree. It was the oldest pine tree in the forest and it was very mean and very grouchy. As Osikakanu wiped himself against the tree, the tree reached down with a long, needly branch and stuck it up Osikakanu’s butt.

“Ow! What the FUCK!” cried Osikakanu. “What was that for?!”

“Scoundrel!” boomed the tree. “For villain thou art, and villainy hast thou wrought upon my brethren in these ancient woods. In piercing your poophole, my kindred and I are avenged a hundredfold for thy crimes! Thy poophole hath defiled many a tree, foolish bear, and thy poophole must pay.”

“That’s messed up, man,” replied the bear, “I’m bleeding and it really hurts.”

“Leave this forest,” said the tree. “And never return!”

And so, Osikakanu, once mighty king of the forest, limped away into the northeast, far away from any tree that would try to attack him and started his own kingdom. Osikakanu became a hero to his people,

who loved him so much they called him “Oski” and would often cry out “Go Bears!” in his honor (though years later they came to realize that Osikakanu had wanted them to yell “Go Beers!” and not “Go Bears!” as he was a big fan of the ol’ brewskis). Oski taught his people to despise the pine trees of the south.

The tree, too, paid a price for its actions. Poop covered the tree’s trunk, and Osikakanu’s blood stained the pine needles a deep, cardinal red, and thenceforth, the tree came to be known as Satanturden, which in the forest language meant “poop-and-blood-stained pine tree”. Like Oski, Satanturden taught his people to loathe their ancient enemy.

To this day, the bears of the northeast and the pine trees of the southwest fucking hate each other. Now, of course, this is simply an old aunt’s tale, passed down through generations and none of it might not be true. But I ask of you, O Reader, what cause have I, a humble writer, to spew bearshit?



Editor-in-chief

The Heuristic Fucking Squelch

Sup bro,

I'll get right to it: cut this shit out. You and your fucking pathetic excuse for a newspaper have been shit talking Greek culture for decades, and I'm pissed. Not that anyone's been reading. Frats are more than just partying and drinking: they're a brotherhood. I'm closer to my frat brothers than you will ever be to another human. Like I'd honestly go gay for some of them if I wasn't such an alpha. And you, bro? You run a fucking "comedy" paper that's been losing readers for years. As if you had any in the first place. Dude my dad's like golf buddy writes for the Wall Street Journal, so I know how newspapers are supposed to work. Do us all a favor and like shut the fuck up. It's time to close up shop bro. Or better yet, hand it over to me. I'm fucking pre-Hass bro. They teach you how to do this shit in UGBA 10. If you keep this bitch-ass shit up, you'll be talking to my dad's lawyers. What you're doing is slander. That's illegal, bro. You could be arrested. I bet you're just jealous. Bro, I can bench press your entire body weight. I'm the campus legend. Everyone is always like you're a legend bro, right after I do something legendary, like the time I bungee jumped off the Campanile while shotgunning a sixpack. Total legend, bro. I get with a different chick every night. You probably get a hard-on every time you make eye contact with a girl. And dude, have you even tried rushing? Don't, you'd be the guy who'd fuck the pig. I'd honestly feel really bad for the pig in that situation. Anyway, I've wasted enough of my life talking to you. Don't bother writing back; based off everything your paper puts out, it would be shit.

Chad

Do you have what it takes to be America's next Top Chef? Or Canada's next Top Nice Person? Or Berkeley's next Top Hippie? Or a river's next Top Dam? Or a yoghurt's next Top Topping? If your answer to any of those was yes or no, The Heuristic Squelch is the place for you! We're a magazine that writes funny stuff and even though we don't always succeed, we have a of of fun doing it! We're looking for:

WRITERS

ILLUSTRATORS

DESIGNERS

BUSINESS
MANAGERS

LOOKS

MUSCLE

BRAINS

WILDCARDS

ROBIN
WILLIAMS

WEEKLY CLUB MEETINGS

MLK 177 on Thursdays at 8pm

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TT Things To Do When You Quit Your Job

10. Hand in your resignation
9. Return all the office supplies
8. Say goodbye to everyone but Todd
7. Turn in your company ID
6. Remove the dead trout from the vent above Todd's desk
5. Clean up your desk
4. Put Todd's stapler in jello
3. Leave the building without assistance
2. Accidentally back into Todd's minivan
1. Break up Todd's marriage

Top Five Signs You've Hit Rock Bottom

5. Your family buys you self-help books
4. Whiskey for dinner
3. Whiskey for lunch
2. Whiskey for breakfast
1. You buy yourself self-help books

Top Tens

Top Seven Places to Surprise a Deer

7. In the middle of a road
6. In the woods
5. In your house
4. In your bathroom while you're pooping
3. In the secret lair behind your bookcase
2. In The Room of Requirement
1. During any moment in Bambi

TT Things To Never Forget

10. Your social security number
9. To breathe
8. That essay that was due yesterday
7. New Year's Eve 1994
6. NOT New Year's Day 1995
5. That thing
4. Core childhood trauma
3. Whatsisface
2. Wassername
1. That other thing

Top Five Pick Up Lines For Singles Over 75

5. Help, I've fallen and I can get it up
4. You must be a short walk because you took my breath away
3. Are you a pacemaker because you get my heart going
2. Unlike your daughter, I'll come more than twice a year
1. Wanna go out on a carbon date?

**DO YOU EVER FEEL THAT YOUR HIPSTER FRIENDS ARE OUT-HIPSTERING
SHOW EM WHO'S THE REAL NEANDERTHAL WITH OUR LINE OF STONE TOOLS:**



Your friends will eat their beanies in envy as you cut into your vintage artisan salami with your new stone knife. They will stop brewing their own beer in even more envy as you use your stone straw to slurp your boutique artisan kombucha. They will smash their mason jars in despair when they see you use your neolithic hand ax to chop 100% organic artisan free-range wood. Buy these carefully manufactured tools and become the hipsterest hipster of them all!



The Fable of the Student Who Went to Berkeley

There once was a bright-eyed, young student who was rejected from Stanford and chose to go to the number one two public university in the world. The Student wasn't particularly daft but wasn't too smart either, so Berkeley was the obvious choice. The Student walked through campus and looked up in awe and admiration at the overly phallic clocktower that was definitely taller than the one at Stanford.

The Student promptly stepped on the seal and so the Student's fate was sealed (hehehe). The Student started the semester with optimism, went to 8 AMs, slept before midnight and said no to drugs. The Student met dormmates and classmates and was amazed by how funny and cool they were. The Student smiled and was happy.

"Oh, how merry I am!" exclaimed the Student.

Soon came week three and the Student fell into depression. The Student read Camus and wore black clothes, said yes to drugs, and switched from Chemical Engineering to Art History. The Student realized that the dormmates were all losers. The Student freshman fifteened, and then freshmen fiftied. The Student was run over by an EECS dude on a boosted board and was taken to the ER at the Tang Center.

The Doctor diagnosed the Student with ADHD and Broken Leg Syndrome and wrote a prescription for anti-depressants and Adderall. The Student spent dead week weeping in Dwinelle. Thus ended the first semester.

Choose your own moral and mail it in to win an exciting prize!

❑ The best fuck you'll have at Berkeley is by the university itself. Berkeley, it would seem, is where dreams get fucked.

❑ Beware of EECS dudes on boosted boards.

❑ Berkeley is the angry jackhammer to the asphalt of the soul's happiness.

❑ Berkeley will fuck you and leave you the bill.

❑ Our tower is longer.

The Fable of Mouse & Man

There once was a Mouse named George that was best friends with a Man named Lenny. Lenny could not find a job because he was a recent graduate of UC Merced and George could not find a job because he was a mouse. So they both went on a trip to a weed farm (upstate). Along the way, George told Lenny tales of what their life would be like at the farm. Lenny's favorite was the one in which they spotted a white rabbit with a pocket watch and followed it down a rabbit hole, where they had tea with a bunch of playing cards or something and the Humbert Humbert of mathematicians.

At the weed farm, they met a former nationally ranked junior tennis player and linguistic prodigy, Hal, and his partner, Pemulis, who wasn't as good of a tennis player but was pretty fun to be around and quite decent at math. They had started the farm after Hal dropped out of the University of Arizona his first year there and Pemulis had recovered from injuries he suffered in an attack by wheelchair assassins.

Lenny got along really well with Pemulis, but in an ill-fated accident involving a doctor, a deerstalker and five orange pips, Lenny accidentally pushed Pemulis off of a cliff by the Reichenbach Falls. George saw what had happened in absolute horror and knew that if Hal found out it was Lenny, he would furiously lob Lenny over the waterfall while yelling definitions of complex words at him, which would totally confuse Lenny. So George shot him in the back, like a dick.

Don't ever be friends with people named 'George'

The Fable of the Goat & the Curly Fry

There once was a Goat who had a broken horn and excellent dining etiquette. The Goat was walking past a fancy restaurant and, upon peeping through the window, saw a plate with a single curly fry.

"Gasp!" gasped the Goat, "I would be the talk of the Goat town if I came back with a beautiful golden horn like that."

The Goat walked into the restaurant and towards the table with the Curly Fry. And a poof! and a paff! and lo, the Host of the restaurant appeared out of nowhere. "Table for one?" asked the Host.

The Goat panicked and said, "Umm... uh... I was just uh... yes, please."

The Host led the Goat to a table away from the one with the Curly Fry. The Goat sat down and ordered a glass of grass juice, a plate of grass salad, and a cup of grass mousse. The Goat ate its food with immense dignity and grace. After finishing, the Goat looked up at the table with the Curly Fry, only to find that the Curly Fry had vanished! Was this some sort of magician's trickery? A hallucination? Had the Curly Fry been an apparition? No. What it was, was that a passing Lemur had picked it up and eaten it.

"Aw, shucks," shucksed the Goat, "It seems like I shan't be getting a horn after all." As the Goat got up to leave, the Host galloped over and said, "O, Goat! You ate your food with such excellent dining etiquette, the likes of which we have never seen here, and for that, we would like to offer you anything your heart desires, on the house."

The Goat was delighted and immediately ordered a plate of Curly Fry, to go, please. Thus, the Goat found its shiny new golden horn and soon became the talk of the Goat town.

If a goat can have proper dining etiquette then why can't you, Thomas?! Why must you always eat like a slob and embarrass me at restaurants?

The Fable of the Sloth Who Wanted to be a Writer

There once was a Sloth who fancied itself a writer. It went around to have a look at all the fancy schools where Sloths could learn to be fancy writers. It decided to go to the fanciest school of them all. That school was not UC Berkeley.

At the school, the Sloth met an orphaned Tortoise. The Tortoise had gotten through life by committing petty crimes like stealing from

misers and cheapskates. The Tortoise told the Sloth that it had once stolen a fiery Ferrari but then crashed it into a helicopter to stop it from flying away. The helicopter had been the getaway vehicle of a Platypus with one eye.



The Platypus lost its other eyes in a skiing accident in the Eastern Himalayas when they fell out of its pocket, where it had kept them for safekeeping. The Platypus had stolen a trophy from the Tortoise that the Tortoise's great great great grandparent had won in a race against a Hare and was going to sell it on the Mediterranean black market to the great great great grandchild of a Hare that had lost a race against a Tortoise.

The Tortoise had successfully managed to stop the Platypus from flying away in the helicopter but lost an eye ~and~ an eyebrow in the accident. The Tortoise and the Platypus rose from the rubble of the crash and, as the dust cleared, they looked at each other through their respective good eye. They looked at the destruction of the crash and into the eye of the other and then they both began laughing.

The Platypus and the Tortoise laughed and laughed and laughed until they were both crying through the one and only eye they could still cry from. They hugged each other

and became best friends from that day on. The Tortoise told all of this to the Sloth and the Sloth listened in wonder and with warmth in its heart to this wonderful and heartwarming story.

"Is this really true?" said the Sloth.
"Of course it is." said the Tortoise.
"Really?" said the Sloth.
"Yes." said the Tortoise.

The Sloth wrote a book about the Tortoise and the Platypus. The book won the Pulitzer Prize for journalism. Years later, when the Sloth won yet another prize for this book, the Tortoise confessed to it that the story was, in fact, a lie.

"I know." said the Sloth.
"Really?" said the Tortoise.
"Yes." said the Sloth.
"Why did you write the book then?" said the Tortoise.
"Felt like it." said the Sloth.

Writers, it would seem, are liars.

The Fable Written by a Sloth

Hi.....
.....I.....
am.....
.a.....Sloth.

This.....fable.....
was.....writ.....
.....ten.....
.....by.....
.....me.

Sloths love ellipses.

The Fable of the Computer Scientist Who Wrote the Recursive Fable

There was once a computer scientist who wrote The Fable of the Computer Scientist Who Wrote the Recursive Fable.

THE MAIN STACKS MINOTAUR



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BUBLI, THE GODDESS OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION

I don't know what to do, doctor. I still can't seem to control my anger. The littlest things make me furious and I end up taking it out on the humans. To be fair, I am the Goddess of Death and Destruction—that's what I'm supposed to do. Though I wish it wasn't. I wish I was the God of Inner Peace and Harmony, or the God of Sweets and Sugary Treats, or Lollygagery and Tomfoolery. Last week Dhaniya, the Goddess of Workplace Civility and Human Resources, called me into her chambers and told me that I needed to stop spreading famine every time I couldn't finish my sudoku. And then she gave me an official warning, so I got really angry.

Did you count down from 10 like we practiced?

I did and it worked. But then Bhujiya, the God of Poetry and Prophecies, asked me if I needed an ark because, quote, "I Noah guy." And then he cackled so loudly at his own joke that he probably caused an earthquake in Indonesia. What's worse is that he didn't even come up with it himself! He stole it from A Thousand and One Jokes to Tell Your Immortal Friends.

Ahh, so you dislike the treachery, the deceit... the lies. Do you think that this, perhaps, has something to do with your parents and all the things they concealed from you as a child? You know... your mother lying about her daily glug-glug-glug, your father lying about his addiction to wiping out entire races of civilization and both of them lying to you about how the world was created.

Please, for the love of me, don't bring up my parents.

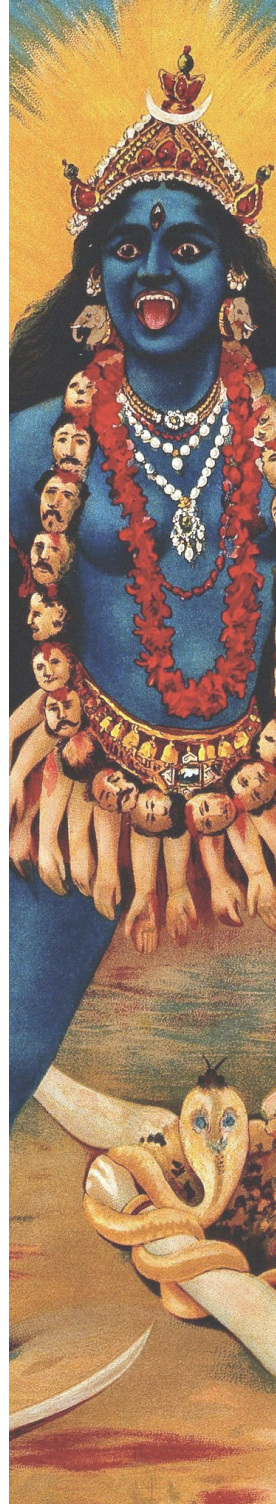
Well, perhaps we should talk about alternative stress-relief strategies instead. Given that you have five arms, maybe you could perpetually hold a stress ball in one of your five hands. You could squeeze it any time you feel yourself getting angry and wishing desolation on all of mankind. I think I have one lying around here somewhere. It's one of those little yellow ones with the smiley face and the words "Have a nice day!" written on it. You know the one?

Yes, but I don't think I can perpetually hold a stress ball, doctor. All my five hands have objects of symbol to empower those who worship me. My first has a candle to represent eternal light and all the wax in the world. The second has a sword, a symbol of valiance and the immortality of the hilt industry. The third has a copy of the Vedas to hurl at the head of those who claim to have attained enlightenment by reading it. The fourth—

I think I get the point.

Well, what am I to do, doctor? How can I go on living with this fiery temper? I can't bear to make any more living creatures suffer. They all deserve to live out their precious lives in full, happy and without pain. How might I rid myself of my ailment, doctor? Oh, mighty healer of the mind, I beg you, cure me! Cure me!

And I shall, o mighty goddess, I shall. I have the answer you're looking for, the solution to all your problems, but I'm afraid that it will have to wait until next week as we're out of time for today. What a pity! We were nearly there. But in the meantime, stay strong and here's a prescription for anti-depressants and Adderall.



THE PECULIAR LEGEND OF THE SPENDTHRIFT ROBBER

During my travels, the most peculiar tale I ever heard was from the cantankerous old drunk at a local watering hole in a village in North Facria.

"Ay laddy," he said, gently cupping my elbow with one hand and pinching my nose with the other, "let me tell you the tale of the bumbling fart who tried to break a millennia-old curse." He took a sip from my pint of sake, used my shirtsleeve to wipe off his liquid mustache and continued, "back in the olden days of yoresterday, there was a horrid scum of a man who went around doing crimes. He would rob and rob and rob and just when you would think, no siree, he couldn't possibly rob anymore... he wouldn't. He was very predictable that way. This feller, he came from a long line of robbers. His father had been a robber before him and his grandfather before his father and on and on it went, all the way back to the first ever crook: the first person ever to spot a coin on the ground and furtively look around to check if anyone was watching before slyly pocketing it—what a ferken bersterd!"

The old drunk took a long, dramatic pause, casually looked around at all the awed faces gazing at him and belched. I don't know if it was the intensity of the sound or the foulness of the odor of his belch, but every person in that watering hole wept. The mice that had poked their heads out of their little holes to listen to this most peculiar tale squealed in agony and were sent scampering back in. The old drunk stroked my knuckles, ate a slice of my burger and continued, "So this feller, right, was the most

skilled of all robbers, but he was mighty afraid of the popo. He was like Robin Hood [Editor's Note: Holy nutcracker! He was called Robin because he was robbing! I genuinely just got that now] if Robin Hood kept everything he stole for himself and was mighty afraid of the fuzz. So afraid was he of the ol' coppers cuffin' him that he went out of his way to live like a pauper to throw off any suspicion. He wore rags, lived on the streets, paid someone to give him syphilis, drank like an alcoholic whale until his liver did fail and brushed his teeth only once a day. But all the while he kept robbin' [like robbing and Robin. It's a callback to my revelation from before] and his wealth grew till he was rich enough to buy the tropic of cancer—which is the only thing he ever bought."

The old man walked over to the mouse holes, placed a wheel of swiss cheese on the ground and yelled, "The amusement park is now open!" The mice zoomed out of their holes and through the holes in the cheese. The old man walked back over to me and sat on my shoulders.

"He buried all of his wealth under the Federal Reserve—he figured it'd be the last place they'd look. But while they were constructing an extension to the bank, the workers found all the money. They reasoned that it must have dissolved into the ground from above the vaults above, so they put it all back in the vaults. And so the robber lost all of his wealth. He was left an old fool with syphilis and a drinking problem, who went around telling people his tale because, although he could handle

being a pauper, he couldn't bear being forgotten. And that is how the story goes."

"And was that old man in the story you?" I asked him.

"Don't be daft, young blud." he said, "I made all of that up."

"But they what was the point of all the peculiarity?" I asked him. "If that wasn't true and you just wanted to entertain all of us here at this very real watering hole, why did you construct such an absurd narrative that was hard to follow and that didn't have any proper jokes? Why go through all this trouble to end up more confused than we began with and not the slightest bit entertained?"

"Well," he said, "I'm not here to make sense, are we? We get paralyzed by logic and rationality and sometimes it takes a zany flamboyant hedgehog to come swimming in and bark away the paralysis. At times, I admit, my stories might get too fragmented, the characters too unusual and the situations too bizarre, to the point that they might end up disorienting audiences. But that is not my intention—all I wish to do is to celebrate the jagged and the unconventional. I want to leave my audience thinking what nonsense is this lunatic spewing?"

There was dead silence in the watering hole. The mice had stopped eating the cheese and everyone was looking at us. I was gazing into the old drunk's eyes and he was gazing back into mine. And then we played Twister all night—right hand on red, left on blue.

VAPES ARE OLD NEWS, KIDDOS.
SMOKE THE NEWEST, COOLEST SHIZ ON THE BLOCK:

Cigarettes



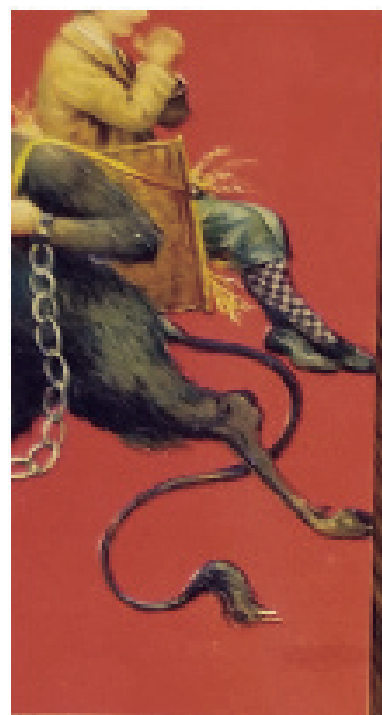
REAL FIRE
REAL SMOKE
REAL TOBACCO
REAL COOL
REAL CANCER

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Grues vom
Krampus.

