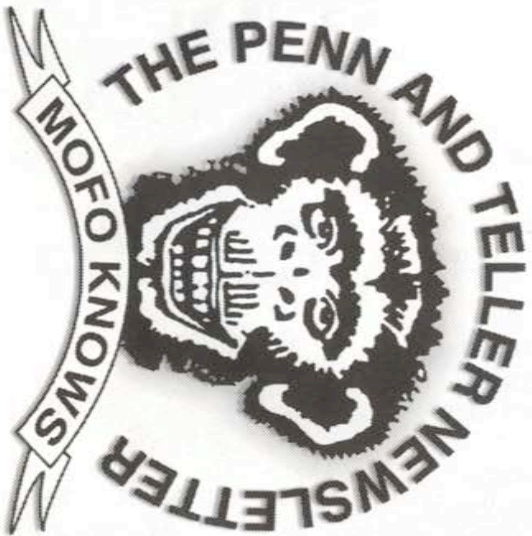


MOFO GOES HOME



"This one here's for Penn & Teller!"
—David Allen Coe
(long-haired-redneck-magician-biker-
Take-This-Job-And-Shove-it-country-singer)

MofO Knows
4132 S. Rainbow Blvd., Suite 377
Las Vegas, NV 89103
Change Of Address Requested



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MOFO KNOWS

May 15, 1995

Issue 16



P&T FAQ

From the Internet newsgroup alt.fan.penn-n-teller comes these Penn & Teller Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What happened to Penn's column in PC Computing magazine?
2. Was Penn fired from PC Computing?
3. Does anybody in this group know that Penn has a really great column in PC Computing magazine? But I can't find it there any more.
4. Is THIS your card?
5. Doesn't Penn write PC Computing magazine?
6. I heard that Penn quit working for PC Computing magazine because he got hired by Pepsi to make soap ads in Canada. Does anybody in Canada use soap?
7. What page is Penn's column in PC Computing?
8. I heard that Teller is writing a column in PC Computing magazine under the pen name "John C. Dvorak." But when I read the column, it wasn't funny at all. What gives?
9. Does anyone have an e-mail address for PC Computing magazine? I want to cancel my subscription.
10. What happened to Penn's column in PC Computing magazine?

Most Penn & Teller fans are well aware that The Bad Boys of Magic are no strangers to the internet. But not everyone knows there is actually a newsgroup and a Web page devoted exclusively to our dynamic duo.

Tom Phoenix (rootbeer@teleport.com) recently sent MofO Knows this list of Penn & Teller Frequently Asked Questions and, as you can see, the Three of Clubs just barely managed to sneak its way into the otherwise myopic list of topics. Be sure to catch the related story inside, and look for the web and newsgroup addresses.

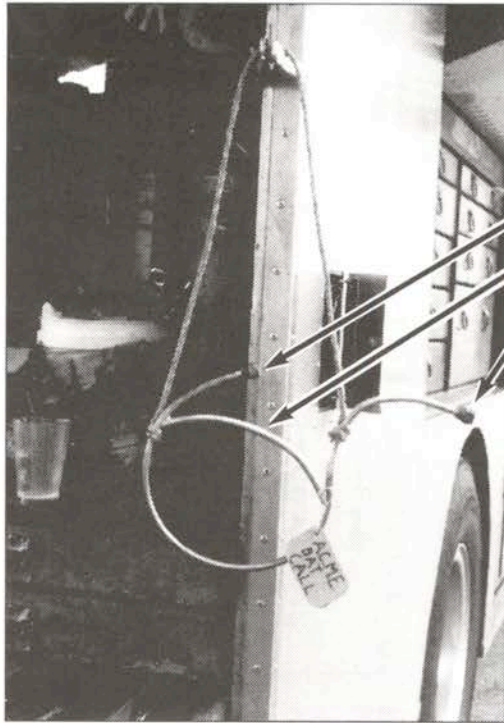
Don't forget, even though MofO knows all, we, his minions, do not. So send in your cards and letters today!





Fantastick Bat Call

Eric was saying, "See those air conditioning vents up there?"



Even in the middle of the day, I think it's pretty certain you'll get at least a few bats out of those."

- A** Acme Bat Call Diagram
- B**
- C** (pat. pending)

The extra looked skeptical, but picked up the bat call. He blew into it. A huge puff of talcum powder came out of end 'A', carefully aimed so as to cover the blower with white. The background kid

I play the role of Mortimer, the death-scene expert, in the new movie of THE FANTASTICKS. I got bruised on every portion of my anatomy, got an eye infection, carried a screaming woman up a hill eight times, learned to fall flat on my back, talked in Cockney dialect, got to be pals with Joel Grey, and beat up an ex-New-Kid-On-The-Block. You'll see. It'll be out in November.

One day the special effects guys on The Fantasticks, Eric and Cliff, were not very busy and were killing time by tinkering. Each time I went past their truck, I noticed Eric working with a piece of copper tubing, shaping it, filing little holes in it. So I asked him what it was.

"It's a bat call. Puts out a really high squeal that bats respond to. The high eaves of the studio are full of bats. I'll show you later."

As I passed later in the day, I saw Eric shaping the tube into a sort of twisty French-horn shape (pictured).

He was putting a mouthpiece on the end labeled 'C', and had a whole series of holes along the bottom at 'B'.

By late afternoon, there was hanging from the trailer, the completed instrument, with a little tag on it, A.C.M.E. BAT CALL. When I came up, a background actor was looking it over.

was in makeup and wearing glasses, which made it especially satisfying.

There's lots of waiting on the set, but sometimes it's very worthwhile. You can bet there will be a bat call soon at the Buggs & Rudy offices, to make it more exciting when stars drop by.

—Teller

SIT, LIBERTY!

I was on the plane with a Secret Service man directly behind me and Gerald Ford sitting next to him. I was trying to listen in on the conversation and these were my favorite things that I actually heard an Ex-President say in person:

"Would you like bacon bits or fresh cracked pepper, Mr. President?"

"Just bacon bits, please."

"Sourdough or multi-grain?"

"Could I see the basket please?"

I assume the basket was handed over in front of him, there was a pause while he thought and then, "Multigrain."

"Would you like wine with your salad?"

"No thank you."

Later in the flight...

"Sundae, sir?"

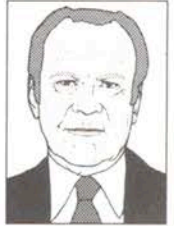
"Do you have butter-scotch?"

"Yes, sir."

"No nuts or whipped cream."

I heard it.

—Penn



"Just bacon bits, please."

ANALIDS OF MY DREAMS

This week will go down in the history books as one of the first times analids got some serious respect. Not only did the nice people at

Letterman provide a limousine for their trip from the Queens Bait and Tackle Shop,

they gave the worms their own dressing room (actually Bob Costas used it afterwards).

The worms ranked a limo and all I got was a town car to pick me up from the airport. The Letterman people liked the worms so much, they asked

me for the can so they could keep the worms on standby in case the comic flopped.

I'd like to tell you all that the worms are now living happily in Central Park - But I don't have a clue. The last I saw of them, one of Biff's helpers was walking through the stage door with worms in tow. Adios my little muchachos.

—Andrew



MOFO SEES

May 25 - June 7
Bally's Casino—Las Vegas, NV

July 12
Wolf Trap Farm Park—Vienna, VA

July 13
Fraze Pavilion—Kettering, OH

July 15
Will Rogers Auditorium
Fort Worth, TX

July 17
An Evening with The Boston Pops
(On your local PBS station. Check local listings for details.)



ARNO'S ORANGE HAND

Teller and I were attending TED6 [the sixth annual meeting about Technology Entertainment and Design]. During the lunch break I went for lunch with Bran Ferrin and his coworker and we were joined by Arno Penzias, who happened to wander

into the restaurant with a woman. I was pretty surprised by how happy Arno was to see me. He came over and was all over me and we were laughing and having a great time. We were really getting along well. It was great.

He was talking about his talk and I said he should open with the "Orange Hand" joke. I told the joke and everyone laughed and Arno said, "I can't tell jokes, I can say funny things, if they're spontaneous, but I can't tell jokes."

I said, "Sure you can, you're a smart guy, you can learn." I talked him through the "Orange Hand" joke in a very analytical way, very analytical, explaining to him where the beats were and especially how to do the timing on the ending. I did the ending a few times for him because the timing is a little counter-intuitive. We laughed about him opening with it.

There was no chance he was going to, we were just fooling around with the idea of it.

We came back after lunch and Arno joked to a few people that he was going to open with a joke from Penn. There seemed no chance he really would. We got in the auditorium and he was introduced, of course, as a Nobel guy. He went on stage and said a few words and then said, as a throw away, that I had tried to teach him a joke that he could open with. He talked, in the abstract about what I tried to tell him about timing and the beats. The audience started yelling, "Tell it! Tell it!"

He was backed into a corner. With a big smile, he took off. It was amazing to watch. I could see him remembering the way I moved and my choice of words but also giving it his own touches. People who watched me watching Arno said that I was mouthing his words, moving my hands and leaning forward in my chair. I couldn't believe it.

In some ways, it was one of the proudest moments of my life. He made a couple of awful mistakes, he telegraphed the punchline by skipping over the part right before and his timing was a little off, but, it played. He got the laugh. A Nobel Laureate opened his speech with a joke that I told him! I had tears in my eyes.

He *ran* into the audience and grabbed me and shook my

PENN AND EDWARD TELLER

"Our next guests are a pair of magicians, world renown for their wacky and bizarre sense of humor. They are currently performing at the Apollo. Ladies and gentleman, Penn and Teller!"

The audience claps. Penn and Edward Teller walk out onto the stage. Dave looks a little confused, but shakes their hands. They sit. Penn folds his hands and looks smug. "Hi, Dave!"

"Hi. What's wrong with Teller?"

"Nothing's wrong with Teller. This is my partner, Edward Teller, who besides doing magic, also happens to be a famous physicist. He was at Los Alamos, developed the H-bomb, supported SDI, you know, that kind of thing." Teller smiles weakly and waves.

"And he still doesn't talk?"

"What is this, Conan O'Brien's show? We've been here before, Dave, you know the routine. I talk, Teller doesn't."

Dave replies in his best hick voice: "Gol-ly, I never rekindled being a host would be so darn complicated." Audience laughs. Dave smiles, having regained control. "So kids, what do you have for us tonight?"

"Well, Dave, our new book, 'How To Play With Thernonuclear Devices, just came out, so we thought we would perform a trick from that.' Teller holds up and points to a copy of the book. "Our book, of

audience catches the reference to Bill Murray's appearance, and laughs.

"Now, that wouldn't be much of a trick, now would it? There's nothing to worry about, all I need you to do right now is remove any valuables from the desk, any pencils or personal belongings that you don't want turned into uranium."

Dave grabs his mug and a stack of note cards. "Hey, this is just like when I left NBC!" The audience laughs. Dave walks far away from the desk, to the other side of Penn & Teller.

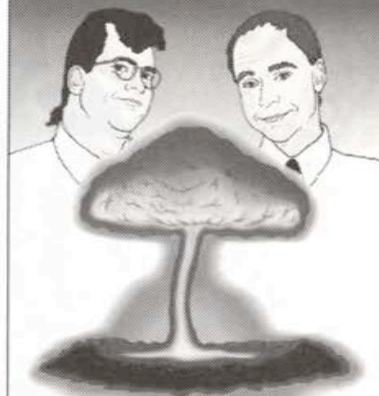
"Good. Now to protect us from the radiation, we've brought along this glass shielding which has been specially made with excess lead to prevent us all from having children with extra heads." Two stagehands roll out the glass shielding. "But before we begin, I would like to pass out these radiation badges as a safety precaution."

Penn attaches a radiation badge to himself, while Teller attaches one to Letterman. Teller then goes over to Paul Schaffer, and gives him one, and then gives one to all of the cameramen.

"Remember, kids, if you're going to play around with radiation, be sure to wear your badges."

"Right. I'm also going to put one here on the desk, so we can measure the strength of the uranium. The badges are green right now, but will turn orange, then red as you are

PENN & TELLER



HOW TO PLAY WITH THERMONUCLEAR DEVICES

Penn & Teller's How To Play With Thernonuclear Devices

Dave's desk will be worth 118 billion dollars."

Dave smiles at the camera. "And NBC didn't think I was worth a lousy 14 million." The audience laughs. "So I think we are ready to begin. Teller, if you could drape the desk, please." Teller takes out a picnic blanket and drapes it over the glass shielding. "Now Dave, I need you to concentrate. I want you to imagine your precious desk turning into enriched uranium."

Dave puts his hands up to his forehead and pretends to concentrate.

"Why do I feel like I'm on the Psychic Friends Network?"

"Dave, I need you to concentrate. Concentrate. Think of uranium. Enriched uranium. Think of your desk turning into uranium!"

With that, Teller pulls off the blanket over the desk, which has turned to a dim florescent yellow. The radiation badge has turned black. The audience is fascinated and stares at the desk for a few moments before

hands and hugged me. It was so great. I can't tell you how great it was. I think Arno and I have really bonded.

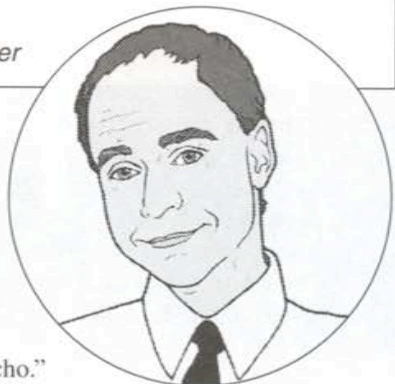
Man, I can't tell you what a great moment it was.

—Penn

The Arno joke moment was breathtaking. Penn was wearing a brilliant pink shirt and as Arno was talking, you could see Penn was *living* it with him. By the end, Penn matched his shirt and was glowing like neon. It was a great moment.

A great, great moment.

—Teller



Formula Movies, Movie Formulas

If you watch "Diabolique" right after the original "Cape Fear" you feel a lot like you've just seen "Psycho." Not quite, but 'American and menacing' plus 'sexy, picturesque and twisty' are really pointing the way.

—Teller

course, contains many other great tricks, like how to break into NORAD's computers to play chess, how to make your own radio controlled fake Geiger counter, and how to ride a nuclear warhead just like they did in *Dr. Strangelove*, which we won't be able to do tonight. But first, Dave, have you ever handled enriched uranium before?"

"Urr, no." Dave is remembering the time Penn & Teller dumped thousands of cockroaches on his desk, and is visibly worried.

"That's a good thing, Dave, because it's dangerous stuff. You won't find David Copperfield or any of those other wimp magicians playing with it. But tonight, we are going to turn your entire desk into enriched uranium."

"Uh, couldn't you just spray paint my name on it?" The

exposed to dangerous levels of radiation. If the badge ever turns black, you're crispy. Now, if Teller could come over here for a second and help me with the shielding, we will be ready to begin." The glass shielding is very thick, at least half a foot, and Penn and Teller lift it with considerable effort and lower it over the desk. Although he glass is heavily tinted with grey, the desk is still visible beneath it.

"Great. Now I would like to point out, that while many magicians have performed tricks which appear to be physically impossible, I believe this is the first magic trick which is financially impossible. Uranium costs 2.6 million dollars per gram [*], Dave's desk weighs about a hundred pounds, there are 454 grams in a pound, so when we are done with it,

remembering to applaud.

"Ladies and Gentleman, Penn and Edward Teller! After this commercial, we'll be back with musical guest R.E.M.!"

—Thomas C

** Actually, this is the cost of californium. It's hard to determine the true market price of pure uranium, as no one ever buys more than a few grams. As my friend Sheung says, "One problem is the stuff is highly toxic; inhaling a few milligrams of the dust is indisputably fatal. This means you have to pay the UPS guy extra, too... [But] why bother worrying about its cost? Charge it on your Discover card and take advantage of the up to 1% rebate." And yeah, I know that a pound of the stuff is critical mass, ok? Don't bug me.*

**Surfin' The Net? Be sure to check out the newsgroup
Alt.Fan.Penn-N-Teller. The address on the WorldWideWeb is,
HTTP://AI.EECS.UMICH.EDU/PEOPLE/NIELSON/PENN-N-TELLER.HTML**

NO UMA VIRUS



PCC's back-page has a "joke" about Windows95 being held up because of a virus called "Uma" started by Penn Jillette. I'm getting mail asking me why I would have anything to do with a virus. Can you believe it?

I wrote them mail and told them to get off my case but if you hear this rumor, please explain that it's someone else's stupid joke to try to act like I'm still part of the magazine.

—Penn

READING SOUNDTRACKS

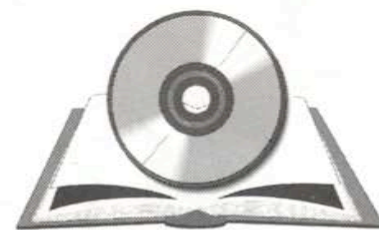
When I'm reading a book, I always have a few lines of a tune in my head that makes me crazy. While reading "Moby Dick" I kept obsessing on "The last I heard of Ahab, he was stuck on some whale—who was married to the deputy sheriff of the jail" by Dylan over and over and over.

During "The Scarlet Letter" it was "She wore blue velvet"

(because I would start out with "Scarlet Ribbons" but I don't really know that so it would change to "Blue Velvet."

During Rudy Rucker's "Mind Tools" it was "Keep a playing those mind games — together," by John Lennon.

Now I'm reading "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and I've got "Moon River" — man, have I got "Moon River" —



it's all that's in my head over and over and over and over again. And it really wasn't until about 10 years ago that I realized that was about Huck Finn.

—Penn