

MOFO GOES HOME



Dear Penn & Teller,

The performance in St. Petersburg was a rude awakening. I did not realize your atheistic views were so prominent in your performance. Acknowledging the Lord, our Savior, in vain, is shocking coming from one who has no belief in Him. Why do you use His name at all, when you do not believe in Him?

Dear Audience Member,

Thanks for your polite note. Sorry if you found our irreverence distasteful, but I understand exactly how you feel. I have heard musicians, actors, and Presidents touting their theistic views from the stage, and it makes my blood boil, too.

Our intention in the intermittent “blasphemous” parts of the show is to hold religion—which we believe to be a destructive force that erodes personal responsibility, impedes science, divides mankind, and justifies all manner of meddling and butchery—up to mockery.

We did not seriously expect deities to appear in response to our imprecations, and, as you observed, they didn't.

Cordially,

TELLER



Two men: Penn, Teller. They write. One man: T. Gene Hatcher. He edits. He assembles. One man: Krasher. He scrutinizes. One man: Dan Maizer. His team: alphagraphics. Their job: Printing. One man: Glenn Alai. He labels. He mails. Your job: read on. Read on!

Mofo Knows

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Change of Address Requested

Yes, I can start my hot tub
from my car. —Penn.



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THE VOICE OF A DOG



They're doing this live action version of the comic strip, *Dilbert*. So, they go to all the work to make a dog puppet. And they're taking cartoon characters and having actors play them, so they need a kinda realistic talking dog. So, it looks pretty much like a real dog, but it's on its hind legs and it wears glasses and it talks.

My Comedy Central recording was very close to my first *Dilbert* rehearsal, so even with my barking dogs, I walked. If you want to really experience a lack of respect, try walking to a studio lot. They don't even want to talk to you. I stood by the guard, smiling and waving and the guy wouldn't even look at me. When I told him my name and the stage number, he looked at me like I was nuts. It was very funny.

So, I'm on the set and they're rehearsing and they all seem very happy that I'm doing this gig. I have my script and I'm reading it over and I go over to see the puppet people, who are really nice and working all the time, like the Muppet people.

It's time to do my scene and there's a big elevated stage so the puppeteer can be underneath and they put me in an easy chair with the script in my lap and we rehearse the scene. Now, memorization doesn't bother me

that much, BUT, I also don't have to learn ANY blocking. I mean there are 4 guys that do all my cues and blocking. They run the puppet and I sit in a chair and read lines. A guy stares at my mouth and makes the dog talk like me. Wow. I just sit and read and I get laughs. No makeup, no standing up, no worrying about flubbing lines—just great. Who cares if it goes long? I don't have to look at the other actors, they don't look at me. No one touches me or moves me around. I don't have to stand up for a long time. I can't make a mistake with anything. I can't forget lines and I can't forget blocking. I'm just reading, but I don't even have to put headphones on. It's great. And it's an elaborate scene with Dogbert turning from one side to the other and doing takes and lifting his ears and all this other stuff and—it's all coming off my voice—and they're making notes and rehearsing and all I have to do is read!

There's a puppeteer under the thing and then 2 other people running several model airplane wireless controls each. My "mouth guy" is the best in the business. He does mouths. He did *Harry and the Hendersons*. He did *Alien 4*. He did *Child's Play*. He can really move a mouth. He mouths all the lines

along with me, and listens to me breathe, stares at my mouth and I have to tap him on the shoulder right before I start every sentence. Man, he's good. There he sits, I read the script, he has it memorized and he sits with his little airplane controller. Oh, I almost forgot, he's the mouth of the Cryptkeeper. And that's a great mouth on a puppet. Hey, if you ever need someone to move a mouth for you—this is the guy. He does lips and everything.

And it's amazing. I mean, it's amazing that the puppet is so animated, everything moves. And I'm just reading away, and they're all staring at me and they're making the dog's head and mouth move like mine and I'm getting laughs and I'm reading.

Oh, I also "do a voice." That is to say, I keep my voice up high so I sound more like a dog. But, I sound a lot more like me.

Number of times that ANYONE, producer, director, associate producer, a. d.—ANYONE—has given me any comments whatsoever on my performance as Dogbert: 0. I'm telling you—it's a dream gig.

Man, oh man, do I love being the voice of a dog. I LOVE it! It is the greatest gig I've ever had outside of P&T. —Penn.



KIDS



I'd be very grateful if restaurants would offer a special section for adults-only, so that those of us who don't care for the dinner company of tykes would not have it imposed on us, and those who like kids around when they dine could delight in one another's squealing offspring. It's the same principle as smoking and non-smoking sections. Let everybody be happy.—*Teller.*

Things like noise, smoke, and other irritants like that hardly ever bother me. I don't mind screaming kids and I don't even really mind cigars very much. When I see kids walking around a restaurant, the only reaction I have is to hear my mother's

voice in my head being very upset about it. But, it doesn't bother me. I think smoking distracts a lot less, but I don't mind either at all.

What I think is really interesting about the "adults section" of a restaurant is I bet they would find a way to make it illegal. The pig power structure is very happy banning kids from casinos and bars, but I think if you tried to say, "We're going to advertise that this section doesn't welcome kids," politicians would have a field day legislating about it. I wouldn't be surprised if high chairs and other "child friendly" restaurant options were made mandatory fairly soon. Too few people see it as merely limiting the contract options among adults. "It takes a village"—

we're supposed to see society as raising kids. It's the V-Chip, it's running around restaurants, it's Children's Hour, it's Family Hour, it's banning smoking and liquor ads, it's those stupid "childproof" lighters. If most people want to have kids around there are going to be laws that say everyone better get used to acting as though kids are always around.

I've been disturbed by an adult a time or two on an airplane, but, man, kids seem to drive others really crazy. I was told by Whatshername that I couldn't put my seat back because she had kids. What is her name, the woman that people always think I would find sexy, but I don't? —*Penn.*



July 17-23
Bally's Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV

July 28-August 6
Bally's Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV

September 8
Demolition Derby
Franklin County Fair
Greenfield, MA

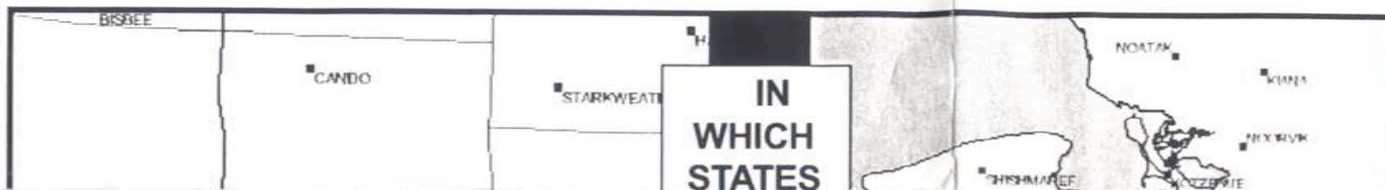
September 25
Lancaster Performing Arts
Center
Lancaster, CA

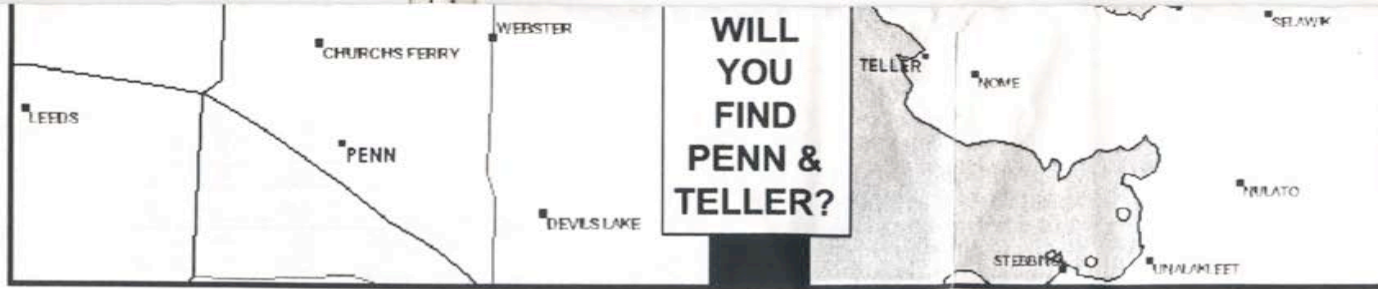
September 26-27
Cerritos Center
Cerritos, CA

September 28
Fox Theater
Stockton, CA

September 30
Flint Center
Cupertino, CA

Schedule subject to change.





Penn & Teller :
<http://www.sincity.com>

Penn:
<http://www.excite.com>

The Man Who Can't Be Hung



Howard Bone, the Man Who Can't Be Hung, died April 26, 1997.

A week after his death, I received a letter he wrote to me six days before his death. He details the ceremony of the previous evening in which he formally retired his black belt at Itto Ryu Jitsu, hugging the woman there who was his friend, and crying. Then he bequeaths to me some of his poems, and the copyright to his little martial arts treatise, "A Rainbow at Midnight." He had already bequeathed his autobiography "To Dance on Stage" to me nearly a year ago, but I failed to find him a publisher.

Nearly all his letters end with some quote from the sideshow, or some imaginary walk down the midway. And, as he exits the scene, this is the way he does it:

"And now, folks, the next act is on stage over to your left. Please step over there. Move down in close to the stage—it will give our pickpockets a chance to practice. That's all they will ever get here—practice. Regards to you, your folks, Penn, your staff. Down the road. Grassy lots. Break a leg. Take care of yourself. Your friend, your fan, HOWARD."

Howard really raged against the dying of the light. He did it with his typewriter, spending the last several years firing me almost daily letters.

Every one was some sort of farewell tour, some sort of poetic reminiscence, some exclamation of anger and betrayal, some dreadful pun.

I wish I had been able to sell his autobiography for him, but I think I did provide him, more than almost anybody else, with a sense of accomplishment in his life, and I definitely gave him his moment in the sun (my *Atlantic Monthly* article).

You have to pay a lot of attention and act fast or the people you intend to do good for will disappear.

Down the road, Howard. Grassy lots! Have a red one! —Teller.

My wife and I took my parents to see Doc Severinsen at the Schubert Theater in New Haven. The lobby of the Schubert has a big photo of Penn & Teller, along with a sign announcing their appearance for Dec. 28-31.

During the intermission, I approached an usher, and asked him if the sign referred to an upcoming performance, or if Penn & Teller had appeared there last December. "Oh no, they were here already," he said, smiling. "They did the New Year's Eve show—a sell out. You shoulda been here. It was something to see."

It was a great testimonial. And then, after the show, I was in the gift shop. Someone asked the gift shop attendant if "Doc" would be coming out to sign autographs. "I doubt it," she said, matter-of-factly. "Penn & Teller—the magicians—were the ONLY ones who ever did that." —Gary Brown.