

# SATYR

DECEMBER 1963

THIRTY-FIVE CENTS





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## THE YOUNG INTREPID

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an **ASUCLA** publication

Dear Mr. Postmaster: Gee, but it's been a long time since we've had a chance just to sort of sit down and have a friendly little chat with you. We could say that the reason we haven't come out with an issue till now is that the copy for our October issue was waylaid by a notorious band of motorscooter hijackers, who smuggled the material into a clandestine office in Washington where it appeared last month as a confidential report on the Vietnamese crisis. We could say that. And we will.

Anyway, Mr. Postmaster, first things first. Satyr is an official publication of the Associated Students of the University of California, a swell group of kids, who live at 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles 24. This means that every Wednesday we get to wear our official ASUCLA uniforms. Lawton really likes that, because it gives him a reason for starching his underwear. Being an official ASUCLA publication also means that, while opinions expressed herein are not necessarily official ASUCLA opinions, you still sue them. Another interesting fact is that any similarity between the characters or semicharacters in Satyr fiction or semifiction and real people (whoever they are) without satiric purpose is purely coincidental. All that really means is that you sue ASUCLA.

Now, Mr. Postmaster, you're probably saying, "What about the magazine?" What about it, indeed! Since we're near the new year, and since Janus, the god for whom a couple of very religious parents named January, had faces turned both to the past and to the future, this is our "Something Old, Something New" issue. One thing that's new is the Jean Shepherd interview, first in a series of interviews with prominent satirists (satirists who get paid). Shepherd does a show on radio each night; for those of you who pick up New York stations on your bridgework, he's on WOR at 11:15, their time (which, of course, is wrong). Also new is the foldout technique in "The Game of UCLA." Actually, it's not really new, because Steve White, the game's author, folds the same way.

Among the old are Hank Hinton, whose "Frat Man" artwork was copied from an old Norman Rockwell scrapbook; Harry Shearer, whose "For Rent: Campus" is the product of an old habit—wallowing in bitterness (he keeps a vat of it handy in the office); Brian Robbins, who's an old hand at drawing hands at sides; and Joel Siegel, who's a dirty old man.

Finally, Mr. P., in case the guys at the sorting bin were wondering, Satyr is represented for National Advertising by College Magazines, Inc., a swell group of magazines who live at 11 West 42nd St., New York 36, New York. Our local ads are sold, between lawsuits, at the Westwood Plaza address. Well, Mr. Postman, it's been fun, as always. See you soon. Meanwhile, as they say, "We'll be suing you!" Get it? Heh, heh, heh.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S DEATH CAME AS WE WERE GOING TO PRESS. THEREFORE, SOME REFERENCES TO THE LATE PRESIDENT COULD NOT BE OMITTED.

SATYR



# I, LIBERTINE

SATYR meets  
Jean Shepherd

Edited by Harry Shearer

**S** EVEN OR EIGHT years ago, I could satirize anything that was around, regardless of the Republicans or Democrats or anything, and people would laugh. Today, there are large areas where, when I satirize them—which I do all the time—the switchboard lights up. And it's the very people that were anti-McCarthy that are calling up. What's happening is that there are more and more satirists shouting at Them—the other guys.

This is the first time in the history of our country that the President's confidantes have been actors, and nobody seems to think that there's anything wrong with it. Because they know, themselves, that if they were big enough they would hang around with Sinatra.

If you see the papers of the 1880s and 1890s there is page after page of advertising. People lived by the Sears Roebuck catalogue. A guy would sit in a little town in Indiana and dream of owning this fantastic truss, or of owning these dentures that would give him a sincere smile that he read about in a Chicago paper.

In a small, dingy radio studio in New York City, an Indiana-born Master of Psychology sits for 45 minutes each late weeknight, broadcasting his opinions about satire, advertising, politics and most everything else into the East Coast air. He is Jean Shepherd. What he does, or is, is hard to define—not just because few people in Los Angeles have ever heard him, but because few people outside New York have ever heard anything remotely like him. In a country where mildly funny superficial routines are acclaimed as piercing satire, Shepherd is a unique phenomenon: A social critic on a mass medium.

I guess I primarily want to amuse people. The word amusement sounds very light, but there are different kinds of amusement. There are people who get their amusement by watching other guys hit each other with pies. My idea of amusement is presenting the paradoxes by which they live and die. Some people have called me a satirist, others have called me a humorist, but that's again a hard thing to say.

I don't just talk on the air. I perform. I take different parts and characters. It's like a little one-act play, or a monologue.

I rarely talk about The Establish-

ment, or Them—the great Them—which is usually the role of the satirist. Them—which means everyone but me and the very intelligent people that listen to me. You see, the people who listen to Lenny Bruce, the people, up to a certain extent, that dig Jules Feiffer, they're convinced that everything these guys say is totally truthful. They are incapable of telling the same lies that you and I might be capable of, little lies for yourself. They are totally truthful. Well, be careful of the truthmonger. He's dangerous.



A truthmonger Shepherd is not. Though he has a strong conception of the world and where it's going—to be revealed momentarily—he also has a way of stopping the listener (and himself) short, looking at what he's been saying, and musing, "We may be the biggest fools of all, right?" This approach, this habit of saying to his listener in a sardonic tone, "You think you've got it all figured out, haven't you, Charile?" is another way Shepherd distinguishes himself from the Lenny Bruce method.

Bruce would never stand in front of his audience and say, "You've really got it figured out, haven't you?" because he would assume that, because they're there and he is there, they have got it figured out. That's a big difference.

In short, when you turn your work back and say, "Look, I am not the one to follow," then people will shy away because they're looking for a dictator, a fuhrer, a father. Although in this country, because we all hate father, it's going to be a big brother,

or a good buddy. Holden Caulfield grown up.

His work in a Hammond, Indiana, steel mill, his three years in the Army radar corps, his childhood experiences in Hammond and Chicago—all are grist for Shepherd's satirical mill. He has devoted whole shows to readings of "Archie and Mehitabel," a collection of humorous writings by Don Marquis, and to haiku poetry. On another night, over a background of Gregorian chant, he has expounded on the pantheon of the American religion

of advertising—a religion whose commandments include "eat peanut butter, guard against bad breath, and buy storm windows;" a religion which, as all religions, postulates "an evil, lurking, sinister force, constantly trying to undermine all devoted followers—Brand X, in sinister disguises luring you to an eternal damnation of vaguely yellow teeth and vaguely unpleasant breath." He has developed judgments on American society's view of nature from watching a Yankee baseball telecast during which broadcaster Phil Rizzuto was scared by lightning, and he has described how he learned some of the facts of life when, as a 14-year-old radio hobbyist, he placed microphones in the shrubbery of five neighbors' homes.

Just as unique as Shepherd is his audience. A man who has garnered a reputation as a hipster (he won *Metronome's* 1955 Jazz Artist of the Year Award—"his instruments are his words"), he has become one of the main speakers for—and to—New York's Greenwich Village. His audi-



ence, as far as can be determined, is made up substantially of the far-out, politically and artistically. But he's also talking to some of the city's less bohemian writers—journalists, admen, publishers. Yet what he says is the message of neither the far-out nor the far-in.

There's a new kind of anti-intellectualism, and it's masquerading as intellectualism. You see, I believe there really are the two ways of living; on the one hand you have people who literally do apply to the world situation or their life some kind of logic or intellect. There are the other people who only feel. Well, that used to be the slob; he was the guy that would break a window and get in a fistfight or drink beer and fall on his face. He didn't intellectualize; he just had a fight, that's all. "What are ya lookin' at, Mack?" and belt him. Today, what's so intriguing is that we're taking the same attitude of the slob, but nobody today ever wants to admit he's a slob. There's no such thing as an untalented child. Every Reader's Digest issue has "For Your Talented Child, a New Kind of School."

This is a new thing in our country. When a guy dug something that was literally slob fodder a few years ago, he didn't deny it. He was sitting watching the stag films. He didn't pretend he was watching art. Down in the Village now, there's a showing of stag films. Only serious art students are being invited. It reminds me of the old ads, you know, "fifty poses, art students only."

Playboy, now, is frantically trying to rationalize everything that everybody has secretly wanted to do—like sleep with twelve-year-old kids. They want to make that into a positive philosophy. This is what happened, by the way, in Germany in the early 1920s. The same know-nothingism masqueraded as intellectualism. The Dadaist movement in Germany was the same thing. Pop art—it's all over. And believe me, within a year, all you will have to do is clip out an ad from the Saturday Evening Post—doesn't matter, any magazine—you clip out a General Tire ad, take a red crayon, and you write on it, "A-Bomb" and you're an artist. Seriously. And people will cheer you. You'll get very serious reviews in The New York Times. And that's the danger, you see, when the official people begin to accept anti-intellectualism on an intellectual basis.

I have always felt that civilization is a very thin veneer at best. And the minute that you find things to destroy it, people will go for it like a small-mouth bass hitting a plug. I mean, the minute you tell a guy,

"Look, man, it's ok now to go to stag films," forget it. They're going to be down there by the billions. And this is just what Hitler did. Because underneath us all the killer is very close to the surface. The minute that the government says it's ok to kill now, forget it.

Now it may seem trivial to people. And they'll say that's happened before in history. That's right; exactly right. Look what happened afterwards. I'm not concerned with the damn stag films, I'm concerned with what the attitude of the anti-intellectual intellectual eventually leads to.

*The world Shepherd is satirizing—or, more accurately, the scope of that world—is quite different from the subjects of most popular satirists. For example, despite a buildup as an "in" or sophisticated entertainer, Mort Sahl satirizes the broadest kinds of material—the President, headline events, and the like. Shepherd is dealing with the mores of American society, and with the people who—for better or worse—help set them: The writers and artists, at various levels, of New York. Seeing American popular society from the producing end, so to speak, rather than from the consuming end, gives Shepherd some unique perspectives, and gives his satire and social comment an entirely different edge—a double edge.*

Berman and Sahl don't laugh at the country. They laugh at the other side. Sahl was beloved by the Democrats because he was laughing at these other guys—he wasn't laughing at Stevenson. When you're laughing at the other side, you're not laughing at the country. And it's even more so today. An example: If I do a funny bit on the air that, say, satirizes James Baldwin, forget it. I don't know if you have ever seen James Baldwin on television—he's easy to satirize, for obvious reasons. We look upon satire as a one-way tool today, even more so in this country.

We use the two words satire and caricature today intermixed. They are very different. As a matter of fact, I have never known a popular satirist. I have known immensely popular caricaturists. For instance, Voltaire was a satirist. He left France 25 times with the police five minutes behind him. I have yet to find anybody who wants to chase Feiffer out of the country.

If I became a right-wing satirist I would be beloved by the right wing, and that would be enough to keep me in business. If I am a left-wing satirist, I would be beloved by that group. But if you satirize both, who the hell is going to dig you? Because people do believe completely in one or the other side. The other night I did a satire

on Norman Mailer. Norman Mailer writes this big thing about peace and five minutes later he's stabbing his wife—for peace, you know. For peace he's going to show her how much he loves her, "Take this, baby, between the ribs." And she gets up on the stand and testifies that that did show her how much he loved her. I thought that was the ultimate piece of Orwellian business. Well, immediately I've lost all the Feiffer-Mailer-Baldwin crew right there. And the other crew, the right-wingers, doesn't know what the hell I'm talking about. They're so unused to hearing the other side of the world satirized that they think I'm subversive, too.

You see, satire has become a set art form like the Western. You get up and you do the bit about integration. You do the bit about the ride in the bus. Of course, you have to do the usual satire about the Village hippies—that has to be done. And you have to do the satire of the Madison Avenue man—he's a stock figure like Uncle Tom. It's done in every satirical revue now.

I'm saying here in a subtle or complicated or bad way that satire often is a "bit." It doesn't have anything to do with reality. You know you can satirize CORE, you can satirize King, but you just try satirizing Negroes, that's what I'm trying to tell you. But it's very easy to satirize Southern white people. In fact, you're applauded for it. Now, don't for a minute think I'm pro-Southern white people. But there are several areas now that are even untouchable because they have been invested with Right and Beauty and Truth by definition. By definition there's no arguing that if a colored guy gets up and says something, we know he's right. That's the end of it. This is very dangerous. Because I have to put disclaimers here and say that I am not anti-Negro, and this shows you what we're up against.

The other night I satirized a whole group of people who were parading up and down in front of the Atomic Energy Commission here in town on the eve of Hiroshima. And all their quotes were in the paper; they were all well-meaning people, I'm sure. But not one of them even mentioned Pearl Harbor. It was as if these nice little Kabuki dancers were over there tending their fishing nets and we, being the rotten bastardly country we are, went over and blew them up, and it's going to be our eternal shame forever. You remember the song, "Remember Pearl Harbor"? Boy, that's a funny one. If I played "Remember Pearl Harbor" people would think that's a funny bit. Because the last thing people want to remember is that the Japa-



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nese did something like this. And I did that on the air and you should have seen the fantastic mail.

*Not taking one side or the other, especially not taking the side of the liberal environment in which he lives and works and with which most people identify him, has exposed Shepherd to some fantastic mail, indeed. The mail reveals something that many liberals assume doesn't exist—that the "hip" are just as prejudiced as the "unhip."*

One of the worst things that I think is coming into our world today is a new kind of McCarthyism, and it is this, that if you ever stand up against any of this stuff you are automatically put down by most of the critics as being obviously unhip. If you ever say, "I don't like Lenny Bruce," that means either you're unhip or you're pro-bomb. You can say, "Well, I don't think Bruce is particularly good, I think he's very dishonest in a lot of the work he does," they say "No, because his ideals are great." Well, I'm afraid Hitler's ideals were great; he was for Germany, to get everyone in Germany working. It was the by-products, like all those ashes and smoke and stuff on the way.

I think that in a few years there is going to be a new kind of bloodletting: it's going to be the hip versus the antihip, the unhip being anyone who disagrees. Period. Not anyone who is for war or for the bomb, but just merely disagrees.

There has been developing in this country over maybe the past 25 years a growing misunderstanding of, and hence a disbelief in and distrust of, democracy itself. We don't like "politicians." We are looking for a savior. Not Eisenhower. Because Eisenhower was like an interim. Most people voted for Eisenhower almost by default; they were voting against the Democrats. But the growing disbelief or the "cynicism" in every politician, any politician, no matter who he is, is very interesting. This is exactly what happened in Hitler's Germany. He came up out of the beer hall; that didn't seem official to anybody. And as long as he was standing in a beer hall talking, that seemed like a guy who was merely telling the truth and had no ax to grind.

I believe that the guy that is going to come up in our society is not going to come up out of any of the political parties. It's going to be somebody in the next seven or eight years that's going to come out of the coffee shops. And this guy is going to come out and be the absolute bearer of Truth. It's going to be the truth party. And they're going to use such fantastic generalities: Love, Understanding, Truth

—all these things, of course, they assume they know what that means. Nobody else does. But they know. They'll show the world what truth means. By God, they'll show it to them if they have to use the flame throwers. They'll show them beauty.

*If Shepherd prides himself on not being a truthmonger, he at one time also prided himself on being a hoax-monger. The hoax, of course, has long been a sure way to garner attention for an air personality, but Shepherd's hoax, like most everything he does, had a message. He began, several years ago, to discuss a new book which had just come out, entitled I, Libertine. The author, Frederick Ewing, was as fictitious as the book and as the spicy stuff supposedly located between I, Libertine's covers.*

*As Shepherd continued to give the book frequent casual mentions on the air, inquiries about it began to flood in, eventually from 26 states and several foreign countries. In reply, Shepherd would tell people to ask their local book dealer for a copy. The idea behind the whole scheme was to frustrate bookstore clerks, who, Shepherd felt, frustrated book buyers seeking a volume not on the best-seller lists by maintaining that such books didn't exist. Presumably, a horde of Shepherd fans mobbed bookstores asking for a book that really didn't exist. The hoax backfired, though; demand for I, Libertine was eventually so great that Shepherd and science-fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon ended up writing a real, genuine book by that name. Bookstore clerks were by this time prepared, and I, Libertine, for one reason or another, sold 300,000 copies.*

*Two of the themes that thread their way consistently through Shepherd's shows are America's show-business syndrome and a growing ambiguity about the roles of the sexes. Each Friday last summer, Shepherd had a character from a Fire Island homosexual colony, Chuckie, on his show to talk about "exciting" developments along this line: Department store ads advising women to "this year, be one of the boys," cigarette ads proclaiming that one brand "separates the men from the boys but not from the girls."*

This ambiguity is true of any totally mechanized society where the role of the male as provider and as protector against the elements is practically nonexistent. I think that this comes with the welfare state, and it also comes with mechanization, automation, 20th century life.

The fear of the female runs through almost all male literature, as well as a desire to get back at her by somehow obliterating her as a threat. You can see it in Playboy, where the

woman is never talked about as a person; it's always somebody you go to bed with and that's it. And the poor little guys, you know, who read it, only get this in Playboy. They read it and all the while they know damn well that right outside the door is a chick who isn't about to date them. They are not the dynamic sex-potent machine that they are when they pick up the Herb Gold article or the Shel Silverstein piece. When you read Playboy and these magazines it's like a lot of little boys whistling in the dark, pretending that it ain't what it seems to be, that I really am Rock Hudson, I really am. If you look underneath this rough little clerk exterior, there lies the heart of King Kong.

I think the problem with the sexes today is that it's quite obvious that there isn't very much use for men in a society where jobs are interchangeable, where children are practically superfluous in most hip marriages or city marriages now—a kid spends his entire summer at camp, his entire winter at boarding school—the kid is just something they had one summer and that they visit a couple of times for Christmas. So there isn't even a role as a parent for the father much any longer.

The mother, however, does have a definite role, and that is the role of the female in society. Let's face it, almost all literature, almost all of our movies, almost all of our plays, Playboy magazine—you can go up and down—is the worship of the female. Being a female is a great thing in our society, contrary to what the old attitude was: A hundred years ago, in the days when there was a fight for survival, being a female was a definite disadvantage. It's interesting—do you know that, for example, you can see it in the theater. The number of female stars outnumber the male stars 25-1. In a minute I can name Gerry Page, Kim Stanley, Shelly Winters, Ethel Merman, Mary Martin—all top-flight stars. Name one man on Broadway who comes up to any one of them. Well, they're the new goddesses; they're the new heroes. So as an end result, many men—because of fear that they will never make it with a goddess, that they're unworthy—find themselves walking up and down Greenwich Avenue with a bunch of the boys.

I don't think that there's a growth of true homosexuality in this country. I say that there's a growth of neuterism—both men and women, by the way. You'll find that many goddesses have rejected men because after all why should a goddess mess around with these nothings? This is not an

*(Continued on Page 30)*



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increase in lesbianism, but an increase in love of self. And so you will find large numbers of them here in New York on both sides of this fence. Great numbers of neuters who really have no interest in the other sex except as a concept. That was predicted, you know, by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*—a growth of the neuter in society.

And you'll find in this neuter group sex substitutes are a very big thing now. LSD-25. I think a sex substitute is a hangup on the theater. People who go to the theater every night are substituting other people's seductions for their own. You'll find a tremendous hangup on literature. And it's interesting that most of the drugs that people are taking are depressants of real passions. It's an illusion the drug creates. To have a hallucination of sex is more important—or is certainly easier to get—for a guy who can't make the real thing.

Among the women a sex substitute can very well be a job. Not among the men. A woman can literally be married to a job; she loves that water cooler. That's why women always make in a totalitarian society the most robot people. Woman is a true robot. Hitler found this out. Hitler opened

the doors and immediately the most dedicated Nazis were women. You'll find girls up at the Time-Life Building who love their job. There are girls right here at the station who come in here at eight o'clock in the morning and the damn office doesn't open until nine. Some of them work till ten or eleven o'clock just to be here. Now you would say, "Here's a woman that's really interested in her work." Well, you find out she does lousy work. Being here and being one of the boys—that's what she's really in love with. If you can be a boy without the concomitant responsibilities you have really got it made.

*References to show business have darted throughout Shepherd's speech so far, and it reflects his second primary theme—the American "hangup" on show biz. For people in New York, the theater is not only a sex substitute—it's a life substitute. In less "cultural" areas of the country, the movies and television take over this role.*

So some guy's working down here at the Equitable Life Insurance Building all day long. He's on the 38th floor, and 8,000 desks, all comptometer machines, and IBM machines and NCR machines, and he's a number on a fantastic roll of numbers on tape—he doesn't even have a card any more. And he leaves the place and there's 50 million cars, and he's a little tiny guy on that Scarsdale local, and he gets out there and there's millions of houses the same, and he grabs his wife, and they run out—by the way, she looks like all the other wives, and she's kind of fat, you know, and she's got a station wagon, and the Little League is going. It's just the way life really is, you see. He runs like hell. They get into the city, they grab two drinks, and they grab a hamburger or something, and they rush over to the Morosco Theater to see how it really is, with Rip Torn and Gerry Page. That's life. And for two and a half hours there are people up there who are really passionate. Rip Torn fights, and Gerry Page cries, and they talk about things like truth and beauty and love and ugliness, and they hack away at each other for two and a half hours, and his eyes are glowing and the chick is weeping.

And they leave, and they take their parking ticket, and they go down, and get in their Chevy—number 4 million in an assembly line of 7 million—and they ride out, and they're sitting there still thinking about how life is back there in the Morosco. And all the time the chick's sitting next to him he doesn't see her and she doesn't see him.

It's like the people of the Dark Ages. Life was so hard that they had to find



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a fantasy, so they built fantastic Gothic cathedrals; they built a gigantic fantasy, and it gave their life—which was a life of the bubonic plague and terrible hardship—it gave their life an illusion of fantastic grandeur. We have just begun to see how fantastic show business is now in our world. Everybody wants to be an actor. You go to the colleges, everybody wants to be a playwright. It means that everybody wants to live in a make-believe world. Now, you can masquerade it as art, but it still is a make-believe world. Stanley Kowalsky and Hamlet are not real men, they're make-believe guys. We want to get away from our life so much that we begin to worship people that have done it. This is why Lawrence Olivier today is on a par with, say, Nehru, and you probably don't know whether he has an intelligent thought, ever. But we somehow believe that he is Henry V.

This is why you'll find guys coming

to Frank Sinatra and asking about integration. What the hell does he know? They would never go to a sociologist and ask him. I get this with my own show. People think I live real life. Whatever the hell they think they're living, it's just this thing that swooped down on them.

Have you noticed, right today, that Kennedy's closest friends are show biz people? What would have happened if it had been reported that Lincoln was hanging around with a bunch of jugglers and tap dancers? And, as a matter of fact, many people think, "Isn't Kennedy lucky, he can meet Liz Taylor?"

I look for the days when the people who will be nominated will be performers. That's why I say that the guy who's going to come out of the coffee shops is going to be a performer. He's not going to be the guy who has ideas; he's going to be the guy who can move you. Hitler was a hell of a performer.

I'm really surprised that in New York we haven't started it already, producing sunsets, big mood music being played when there's a storm. Can't you just see on a real hot day they get this slow sensual music out of a Tennessee Williams second act playing behind. You know, it's ten o'clock at night, and you're lying in your pad and the mood music is playing and you're suddenly Stanley Kowalsky, you've got your bottle of Budweiser, and the big producers Up There are producing the whole scene. Then it doesn't quite work out, so the next day you go down to the programming therapy department where they program your dialogue. "You know, the trouble with you is you're just not playing with enough pizzazz. You've got to learn how to throw that beer bottle out on the street. Swear, man, don't just mutter."

I believe we are witnessing the first generation that has been totally brought up in an atmosphere where a book is unnecessary, where day and night a child can sit and watch guys living out a life before them on a screen. Sure, there were movies before, but this was like a once-a-month thing for people. When a kid thought in terms of being an artist in the 1880s and '90s, he thought of one thing that was important in his family life: A book. You write a book. Today they think in terms of writing a TV play. Right over here at Yale there are hundreds of young kids who are in the playwriting courses. You wouldn't find five kids learning to write a novel or even interested in it. Everybody writes one-act plays now, because this is their literacy.

Well, a play is really the opposite of literacy. The one thing that bothers me about drama is that in so many ways it can be the hokiest of all forms of literature, in the sense that a trivial idea, like "we should live each other," masquerades as a great thought. Whereas if you tried to get away with that in a novel, that would be Saturday Evening Post tripe. So many little things like war is bad, or people should really understand each other, people shouldn't be rotten to each other—that's the message for tonight. But I see the day when the world will be total theater. Even funeral parlors now are show biz—piped-in music. I imagine a lot of people imagining Heaven as that gigantic theater in the sky, where the stars are all in person, like going into the Catskills. Can't you just see the final religious statement—Jerry Lewis digs Heaven. Of course, there will always be a couple of soreheads: Lenny Bruce says, "Hell is even better than you thought."

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