

Eternal Sunshine #10

November 2007

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Quote Of The Month – “Sometimes I don't think people realize how lonely it is to be a kid.”
(Clementine in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to the special pre-wedding issue of Eternal Sunshine. Actually, the only thing special about it is I'm not going to write very much. Aside from this opening section, and this month's personal writing selection, all you're going to get are the games, letters, and movie reviews. So maybe you can consider this the Standard U.S. Government Issue: half the material at twice the price. But considering I don't charge for this rag, that last part shouldn't concern you all that much.

The big news regarding the wedding is poor Heather and her history of being not very graceful. That trend unfortunately continued, as about two weeks before the big day she fell down while hanging some Halloween decorations with her daughter, twisting her right ankle rather severely. After icing it down for an hour, she managed to driver herself home (usin the left foot for the gas and brake). Then the swelling and the pain really started in, full force. By the following morning it was clear she wouldn't be able to make it to work. Instead, Heather spent the day with her ankle elevated, while I bought some crutches and an ankle brace on the way home from work.

The injury itself was a bit odd. Heather was able to put some pressure on the foot, but suffered excruciating pain when trying to move her foot from side to side. Wiggling her toes was also painful, although over the course of the following two days that subsided a bit. She couldn't drive, but with me as taxi service Heather was able to make it through the next few days at work...although she did mention to me that she never realized just how far the bathroom was from her desk until she had to use crutches to get there!

That weekend I took Heather to my old doctor, where they examined her and took a few X-rays. There doesn't seem to be any break or fracture, although there could be a tiny chip somewhere. However, the severity of the sprain, and the ligament damage, means it will probably be three months before she can walk on the foot normally with zero pain. In the meantime we can expect slow but gradual improvement.

When she was first injured, while the wedding was never in jeopardy, the idea of a honeymoon where we'd planned to do a lot of walking around seemed out of the question. We actually considered cancelling the honeymoon completely, and rescheduling it for the spring. But after a week, while she is still in pain, I think we've decided there has been enough improvement to still go and enjoy ourselves. Even if we can't do everything we wanted to, we can always return for an anniversary and make up for the injury then.

The only real change in wedding plans is Heather's entrance. In the original wedding design, she was to walk down a long flight of stairs into the ceremony. Now, with her ankle the way it is, I think we will simply have her slowly walk in from the next room. When it comes time to take some extra photos, maybe we can fake a few on the staircase.

That's about it from me this month. If we have the photos back by next issue, I'll probably stick one or two in here. Have a spooky Halloween, and I'll see you in November!

The Knife

There are very few people who know many of the details of my relationship with my first wife Mara. Her own family remains, I believe, happily oblivious to the extent of Mara's health problems, both physical and mental. As for my family...for reasons that are not entirely obvious to me, I never chose to confide in them very deeply; or to anyone, for that matter. I felt it was something I had taken on as a personal burden, a responsibility which I alone was supposed to deal with. Besides, there wasn't much anybody could have done to help me, aside from offering moral support. Most of the things Mara and I went through we went through together, without outside interference (except for doctors and psychiatrists, when necessary). On those rare occasions when she attempted to derive some support from her own family, it inevitably resulted in her being disappointed at what they were willing to offer. And when I would reveal some details to my friends or family, I suspect they felt I was dramatizing the situation for humorous effect...or else they simply had to step away and pretend it wasn't happening, like when someone you know is dying of a terminal illness, and you stop calling rather than deal with it. Or, perhaps more accurately, when you try to convince yourself that shape crossing the road wasn't a flying saucer or a ghost or a fairy or a goblin.

I've told many of the more dramatic stories since then, and they seem easier to believe simply because when told one at a time, they can be dealt with on an individual basis. When you try to sit down and look at the collective summary, however, the situation begins to be harder to get your arms (or your brain) around. While I was in prison, I sent three or four chapters of what I called "The Mara Project" to Heather, where I attempted to tell the entire story from when we met to the bitter end. I probably finished close to a hundred handwritten pages - first in the form of a narrative stage play with myself telling the history complete with my personal commentary, and later simply as a written record of events. Yet when I got to that point and stopped, I hadn't even reached our actual wedding in the chronology of events. Maybe that's why I stopped there: because it was spiraling out of control. Or maybe I needed to focus on other things. Or maybe I just decided it wasn't very interesting; probably a combination of all three.

More than those reasons, I think I stopped because the entire relationship is the source of such deep guilt for me. I have been working on that, and making progress...I'm able to see that just because something ends in disaster and failure doesn't nullify the positive aspects. I'm also constantly reminded that I am who I am now because of those experiences I've been through, and while I choose to beat myself up for not turning the nightmare into a fairy tale, others are more likely to look at it and find things within the stories that point to a more redeeming picture of myself and my commitment to happiness. Put bluntly, by a few people, I'm told most of the problems in my later life, including my self-sabotage and eventual imprisonment, were attempts on my part to punish myself for perceived wrongdoings and failures. Or, in other words, if I couldn't save her, I don't deserve to be saved myself.

Fortunately, I no longer believe that. And divulging some of the details of the problems and the struggles and the surreal nightmares have helped me to slowly let go of portions of that guilt. Not to mention, time does have a slight healing quality to it...life keeps me too busy to constantly remind myself what a screw-up I am.

When I started the Residential Drug and Alcohol Program in prison, one of the things everyone had to do was step in front of the "community" (every inmate enrolled in the program at that time, around 150 men, plus five or six staff members) and make a commitment statement. In essence, you were supposed to get up and there say "I knew I needed help when..." following that with the moment you knew your life was out of control, or the moment you reached rock bottom. Not surprisingly, most inmates went up to the front of the group and bullshitted their way through. The most common statement was something like "I knew I needed help when I had to say goodbye to my children before I was sent to prison." Maybe for some it was the truth, but it was also a safe and inconspicuous way to get through the exercise without revealing anything truly personal.

As usual, I decided to be different, and I searched my mind for the lowest moment I could find. Not necessarily the one where I left lowest personally, but the one which to an outsider would illustrate the pathetic state of my life...the moment when the periods of happiness or peacefulness had been overwhelmed by the bad times.

What I came up with was a specific evening when Mara and I lived in Dallas. I believe this was early 1996; for some reason in my mind I always see this evening as when we lived in Rahway, New Jersey, but in truth I believe it was later, after we had moved to Texas. Mara's Crohn's disease was still a problem, although she had experienced short periods of improvement. Her mental state, meanwhile, had begun to fray considerably. When we'd moved to Dallas she had hoped a new group of doctors and psychiatrists would be able to get her problems under control, but as usual she'd expected too much and was very unhappy with the way things were going. She complained of missing her family in one moment, and the next hoping she would never speak to or see them again. And Mara's weight continued to be a major problem. When we went out of the house we had to bring her wheelchair, because between her back and her weight she could not comfortably walk more than ten feet on a

good day. In effect, she was tired of living, and tired of hoping for the relief that never came. Every step forward was somehow followed by two steps back. Aside from work, I spent every moment, waking or sleeping, by Mara's side. But nothing I did could ease her misery.

One of my brothers had owned a Bowie knife years earlier, and sometime when I was a teenager he had given it to me. I never had any use for it, but we kept it in a bedside drawer as a form of protection. We didn't have any guns; not even I was crazy enough to keep guns around Mara. There was no telling who she might use them on, including herself.

This particular evening we were lying in bed, watching television. As a general rule at this stage, I would fall asleep hours before Mara would. She'd stay up until 2am or later watching television, unable to sleep, and instead would sleep until 10am or later in the morning, waking up only for a moment beforehand to take the handful of pills I'd give her before leaving for work. I would call her when I got there, to let her know I'd arrived safely, as she liked me to do. Often she wouldn't remember me doing that, and an hour later would call in a panic wondering if I'd been killed in an accident.

Mara had been strangely quiet all evening, neither laughing at the TV nor complaining of any discomfort. I rolled over, gave her a kiss goodnight, and started to settle in. At that point, Mara reached back and opened her bedside drawer, pulling out the Bowie knife and showing it to me.

"Tonight, when you are sleeping," she said with a serious but dull tone, "I am going to stab you to death."

"Okay," I replied calmly. "And why would you want to do that? Did I do something wrong?"

"No, but I'm tired of living. And if I kill you, I won't have a reason to live anymore. So then I will be free to kill myself. So that's what I am going to do. I'm sorry, but I just can't take it anymore."

I could actually see the warped logic of what she was telling me. But I didn't know what to do, or what to say. Life had been dragging us both down, and for a long time I'd had no hope of things getting any better. At any rate, I was tired too, both literally and figuratively. And I felt completely helpless in my life.

I didn't turn around. I didn't want to look at her. I just put my head down on the pillow, said "I love you," and closed my eyes. In less than ten minutes I was asleep.

The next morning my alarm went off around 5am, as usual. Mara was still awake, sitting up, holding the knife. Her eyes were bloodshot and red, and I could see she had been crying on and off.

"I couldn't do it," she said quietly. "You looked so peaceful and innocent, I couldn't kill you." I gathered her morning pills, which she swallowed with some water before rolling on her side to pet one of the cats and put on her CPAP mask, which she had to wear when sleeping to treat her sleep apnea. As I walked to the bathroom to take a shower and get ready for work, she looked up at me.

"I hate you, you bastard. Why can't you just let me die?"

And she put her mask on, turned on the machine, and went to sleep.

Years later, when I stood in front of those 150 inmates, I knew perfectly well what I needed to say. To the confused glances of the room full of faces, I walked to the microphone and announced: "I knew I needed help when my wife told me she was going to stab me to death in my sleep, but I had grown to miserable and tired of living that instead of doing anything about it, I just rolled over and closed my eyes."

I don't think anybody understood what the hell I was talking about, but if nothing else, it got a reaction.

The Dining Dead -

The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

Across the Universe – Heather has been wanting to see Across the Universe since we first saw the trailer over two months ago. From that, it appeared the film was a semi-psychedelic love story, set to a backdrop of Beatles music. I have been a lifelong Beatles fan, going back to my earliest childhood memories, and as a rule I have nothing against musicals or love stories. (Those of you who have seen my 100 Movie list may remember Moulin Rouge is included there, as are Yellow Submarine, Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang). So at first I was intrigued by the possibilities this movie possessed.

Then I started reading some of the reviews. Even six weeks before the film debut, Julie Taymor's movie was receiving troubling notices within Hollywood circles. Too expensive, too long, no story, no cohesion...a spectacular failure. Those opinions were not universal, but they appeared to be the consensus. Still, Heather wanted to see it, and I was willing to give it a chance. We didn't make it there last weekend, but finally tonight we sat down behind an idiot who wouldn't turn his cell phone off and got ready to experience what could be a wonderful film.

It wasn't. Across the Universe is a terrible movie. Avoid it at all costs. We couldn't even stay for the whole thing. 90 minutes, in we gathered our belongings and left. We had to give up before we started to bleed internally.

I'm not going to waste too much time describing the story. Jude (Jim Sturgess) travels from Liverpool to the U.S. to find his father, who he has never met. While there, he meets Max, and through him he finds Lucy, Max's sister...as well as a multitude of other characters, including Sadie, Jo-Jo, Prudence (who climbs in through a bathroom window), Dr. Robert, Mr. Kite...you get the idea.

At every possible moment Beatles songs (courtesy of the publishing rights currently owned by Sony, by way of Michael Jackson) are inserted into the story. Usually they are forced, such as when friends sing "Dear Prudence" to coax her out of a closet...or "All My Loving" when Jude says goodbye to his girlfriend in Liverpool. The only time the music isn't a distraction is when it isn't shoved down your throat: a rendition of "Why Don't We Do It In the Road" is enjoyable, as is a few seconds of "Come Together" by Joe Cocker as both a homeless nut and a pimp - but even that grows tiresome quickly.

If you've ever seen the nightmarishly-bad film Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, starring Peter Frampton and the Bee Gees, you have something to compare this movie to. Every Beatles reference imaginable is included, with no rhyme or reason. After 90 minutes I cared absolutely nothing about a single character in the movie, and if they had all been suddenly killed by - I don't, know, let's say The Terminator - I would have been applauding the entire time. Good riddance to bad rubbish.

Julie Taymor's attempts at psychedelic experiences are awful and hackneyed. Her banal method of reducing the 60's to stereotypes smacks of a 1970's B-movie written over a weekend. Every song is taken at its most literal meaning, instead of the multiple layers the Beatles used within their later lyrics.

Overall, the movie has zero to offer - not a single redeeming factor. Aside from rolling our eyes, or cringing (even at the terrible choreography), Heather spend the movie quietly saying "I'm sorry...I'm so sorry."

Fortunately, being such a failure, the images in the film are not creative or meaningful enough to ruin the Beatles for the poor viewers. On the way home, Heather and I popped in a Beatles CD and sang along, doing what we could do erase Across the Universe from our memories. If you simply skip this movie altogether, you won't have to do the same.

Elizabeth: The Golden Age - After recently watching Elizabeth on DVD, we have been anticipating the release of the sequel since we saw the trailer months ago.

Reprising their roles, Cate Blanchett stars as Elizabeth I, with Geoffrey Rush playing her trusted adviser Sir Francis Walsingham. Building off of the theme near the end of the first film, in many ways the political intrigues and impending war with Spain - culminating with the defeat of the Spanish Armada - are simply a backdrop for the main thrust of the film: Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen," and how as Queen she has given up any ability to be a normal woman, or to be treated as one.

Walter Raleigh (Clive Owen) is her male counterpart in this film. He is adventurous, outspoken, and brave, but also honest and chivalrous (he is introduced putting a coat over a puddle for the Queen). Clearly he reminds the lonely Queen of Lord Robert (or at least his good points), the man whom she loved and was betrayed by in the first film.

Instead, Raleigh becomes involved with one of the Queen's Ladies-in-Waiting (Abbie Cornish as Bess). And

meanwhile the imprisoned Mary Queen of Scots plots with King Phillip II of Spain to wage Holy War against the "bastard pretender". The intrigues seem less interesting this time around, and Walsingham isn't given as much screen time in his role as the master of deceit, spies, and dirty tricks as he was in the first film. Perhaps that was by design, as he is aging rapidly and referred to numerous times as an "old man."

It's difficult to build much suspense about the arrival of the Spanish Armada, since any schoolchild knows it was the greatest defeat in Spanish naval history. But the battle with Spain is really added scenery. Blanchett gives another stirring performance as a woman unlike any other, but who is denied those things a normal woman is permitted: love, happiness, and as Raleigh tells her, being liked for who you are instead of what you can do for someone. It is a thorny crown Elizabeth wears, and her pride can be hurt when Bess is able to aspire to dreams Elizabeth has been forced to give up in her duty as Queen.

Overall, I preferred the first film, but that doesn't mean this one isn't worth seeing. I still give it a B+ and suggest you skip the typical hype-of-the-week and instead learn more about one of the most admirable women in history.

Seen on DVD – **INLAND Empire** (Incomplete, I just couldn't concentrate enough on the movie to enjoy it, so I returned it to Netflix. I intend to put it in our list to watch again at a later date); **Halloween** (C+, this was the original John Carpenter film which we rented for nostalgic sake. It was cornier than I remembered, and didn't hold quite the fright I hoped); **My First Mister** (B, quirky and sweet – Albert Brooks reminds me as a cross between his typical character and my father); **Looking For Comedy in the Muslim World** (B+, typical Albert Brooks, very funny, some true laugh-out-loud moments).

Meet Me In Montauk

The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

Tom Swider: Just perusing some back issues of ES and saw your movie list. I forgot you were quite a movie buff. Something I miss about Philadelphia is the easy access to art house films. It's been a pretty dry year as far as I'm concerned. Last movie I saw was "King of Kong" ... it was enjoyable even though I normally don't go for documentaries.

We considered going to see that in late September, but it was showing at two very distant theatres so we skipped it after all.

Harrisburg just sucks on the whole. I like my job and it beats being unemployed, but there's not too much culture here. We've got Midtown Cinema, which is more of a viewing room than a movie theatre. Got to see Cronenberg's "A History of Violence" last summer. Did you see his new film yet (Eastern Promises)? From what I've read about it, I think I'd be disappointed and would compare it less favorable to "A History of Violence."

Haven't seen Eastern Promises. Almost did, but Heather seemed a little less than interested.

So on some weekends I may venture to Baltimore to see movies at The Charles or back to Philly. I made the trek to The Charles to see Lynch's INLAND EMPIRE, and was thoroughly confused. It seemed like it had a lot in common with Mulholland Drive (a movie I can watch every month), but went much further in distorting reality, acting, fantasy, and dream. Also related to MD playing at The Charles was "Persona", part of a month long Ingmar Bergman festival.

By coincidence, our DVD copy of INLAND Empire arrived in the mail an hour before I got your letter. But I couldn't take the time to watch it properly, so I returned it to Netflix and put it at the bottom of our queue. I'm looking forward to it...although I'm not expecting to understand it!

Hope you enjoy going through the Twin Peaks DVDs with Heather. It goes without saying that I'm a semi-fan, though I try to maintain a low profile about it (Brad and Jack will get on my case). I did get to Twin Peaks Fest X, and was amazed at how much fan support there is for the series. If you come across them, you might look into getting copies of the fanzine "Wrapped In Plastic." There was a lot of good writing from a literary perspective. For example, one compared "Lost Highway" with Shakespeare's "Othello." Another took a constructive look at

"Mulholland Drive", examining HOW things happened instead of what things were supposed to mean, and the narrative forms it took at various points in the film and why those decisions were made.

I seem to recall Heather telling me that she went to one of the Twin Peaks Fests years ago, and was amazed at how many people attended and how devoted they were. We're actually watching it on VHS, because Heather already owns the set (although now I see you can buy both seasons on DVD too). Just want to finish Season 2 of The X-Files first.

Back on your list: 12 Monkeys - Lots of good things about it. Warped timeline. Filmed in Philadelphia. Terry Gilliam style of wit. Brad Pitt's butt.

Obviously a show like Dr. Who has covered the idea of time travel in more detail, and with more regard for the paradoxes involved, but I will always love the flashback scenes of the airport. I also will never forget how when Mara and I went to see this in the theatre, about fifteen minutes in she leaned over and whispered "Okay, you can tell me what the hell is going on now."

Clockwork Orange - Decent, but I'd give Kubrik's nod to "Eyes Wide Shut".

Maybe it is a combination of my fascination with behavioral studies at the time when I first saw it, plus the soundtrack. And of course Malcolm McDowell is wonderful.

Chinatown and Maltese Falcon - Agreed. Very good film noir. Learned during a trip to LA that the real water baron was William Mulholland (of the real Mulholland Drive). You might also like Polanski's "Repulsion."

I still can't believe I am getting married to the great niece of Hal and Martha Wallis...

Dune - Gotta love "Dippity Dune Dog" (the dog Patrick Stewart holds onto while charging into battle....)

I would have liked to see whatever Lynch's true vision for this film would have been. But that will never happen. I understand Dune was the film which made him decide he would rather make no more movies than make one where he had to sacrifice control.

Glengarry Glen Ross - Diplomacy players will like this one, as you get steak knives for coming in second place.

Put the coffee down! Coffee is for closers.

Trainspotting - Great story and soundtrack!!

For me, I still enjoy Shallow Grave slightly more, but only because it is so quiet at moments (and because it doesn't remind me of my prior drug use).

I've found your writing about your prison experiences to be interesting, and I hope you continue sharing. Writing is supposed to be good therapy. I go in cycles in trying to maintain a diary as a way of obtaining insight through the writing process or in later review, but something in life always presents an interruption to that habit. These days, I just try to enjoy myself in my present situation and temper my plans to what I think I can realistically do.

I really want to get more writing done regarding my childhood and my first marriage. The simple piece The Knife in this issue is an attempt at what I mean, but sometimes the scars invoked (and the abundance of material, ironically) stalls me out.

Good to see Andy York's still kicking around. I met him once while I was working in San Antonio. Made my way up to Austin a few times, once to play Viceroy's at Dragon's Lair. If you can't find a con, DL has some fairly regular gaming. I also think that BoardgameGeek has their con in Dallas.

Andy is a good egg. He is also one of the only two hobby members to ever have met the elusive Mara in the flesh...and one of only four people on the planet that had the pleasure of my late cat Whisper to jump in their lap and purr (besides Mara and myself)...Whisper hated (or feared, more accurately) almost everybody, but she had no problems with Andy whatsoever.

Andy York: Enjoyed the story in the latest ES about your experiences "in the northeast". It certainly is a different culture and environment than what most of us are used to. I look forward to the next installment.

I enjoy writing them...but I don't suggest anybody try living them! At least I wasn't in a maximum security facility where bodily harm from other inmates was a constant danger. Meanwhile, I'm beginning to write more about Mara and our marriage, but that seems to have a lingering depressant effect after each installment.

Nope, the Mensa Diplomacy SIG closed somewhere around 2000, as I recall. The last Mensan who actively GM'd folded his zine and no one else stepped up to run games.

Does Mensa still have a newsletter or magazine?

Movie-wise in the past month, definitely see "In the Shadow of the Moon" - excellent documentary with the astronauts providing the commentary. There is no filter, no independent commentary, just their words and deeds. They also addressed the tragedy of Apollo 1 in a fitting manner.

"3:10 to Yuma" is another must see. I didn't care too much for "Death at a Funeral", though it had some good bits. "white light/black rain" was sobering, with an interesting contrast between the personal response by the survivors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. "Wildfire" (IMAX) can easily be skipped.

So few movies seem to really grab me lately. I used to love the big-budget films twenty years ago, the Lethal Weapon goofy movies and the original Die Hard, things like that. But now they all leave me bored.

Dane Maslen: I too have a 'complete' Twin Peaks set. Alas it's merely a complete set of the series and does not include the pilot (i.e. the initial extra-long episode). I once tried ordering the pilot through a local shop, but they failed to obtain it.

Watch eBay, you can get tons of Twin Peaks merchandise there.

I tend to like farces. Many years ago I saw Michael Frayn's "Noises Off" which, even nearly 30 years on, is still the funniest play I have ever seen (and I've subsequently seen it twice more at the theatre and at least twice on TV in its film version - not as funny, but still fairly good). Last weekend I went to see another Michael Frayn play, "Donkey's Years". I thought I might be somewhat disappointed as my expectations were very high based on "Noises Off". Inevitably "Donkey's Years" turned out to be not as funny as "Noises Off"...but it was probably still the second funniest play I have ever seen. There were a couple of minutes in the second half when I could hear none of the dialogue (the audience were laughing too much) and could only vaguely see what was going on on stage (my eyes were streaming with tears of laughter).

When a farce works, and you laugh like that, it is one of the most rewarding and purely enjoyable experiences you can ever have. When it doesn't work: fingernails on a chalkboard, my friend. Ouch.

Game Openings

Diplomacy (Black Press): Graham Wilson, Brad Wilson, Chris Babcock, Melinda Holley, Alexander Levinson, needs just two more. Getting close, who wants to join in the fun?

Balkan Wars VI (Black Press): Signed up: Jack McHugh, Graham Wilson, Brad Wilson, Brendan Whyte, needs three more. Rules and map on request, or you can find them online within Paul Bolduc's **Boris the Spider** site at: <http://members.aol.com/prbolduc/boris/hrules/BW6.html>

Eternal Sunshine Game Section

By Popular Demand

Credit goes to Ryk Downes, I believe, for inventing this game (although his original version had the GM supply the starting letter as well). The goal is to pick something that fits the category and will be the "most popular" answer. You score points based on the number of entries that match yours. For example, if the category is "Cats" and the responses were 7 for Persian, 3 for Calico and 1 for Siamese, everyone who said Persian would get 7 points, Calico 3 and the lone Siamese would score 1 point. The cumulative total over 10 rounds will determine the overall winner. Anyone may enter at any point, starting with an equivalent point total of the lowest cumulative score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the minimum score from the round added to their cumulative total. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to. The game will consist of 10 rounds. A prize will be awarded to the winner.

Round 7 Categories

1. A brand name of bottled water.
2. A Rolling Stones song.
3. A branch of science.
4. A carbonated beverage (brand name).
5. A professional basketball team.

<u>Player</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Stones</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>Beverage</u>	<u>Basketball</u>	<u>Turn Score</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cal White	Perrier	Satisfaction	Geography	Coke	Lakers	35	231
David Burgess	Poland Spring	Satisfaction	Biology	Coke	Lakers	34	216
Jamie McQuinn	Evian	Satisfaction	Chemistry	Coke	Lakers	34	213
Dane Maslen	Perrier	Satisfaction	Physics	Coke	Spurs	34	213
Chris Babcock	Perrier	Satisfaction	Chemistry	Coke	Bulls	33	206
W. Andrew York	Evian	Satisfaction	Physics	Coke	Knicks	33	197
Allison Kent	Aquafina	Start Me Up	Biology	Coke	Knicks	22	193
David Partridge	Perrier	Satisfaction	Physics	Coke	Celtics	35	190
Brad Martin	Perrier	Brown Sugar	Biology	Coke	Bulls	26	173
Brad Wilson	Perrier	Satisfaction	Biology	Coke	Lakers	*39*	167
Melinda Holley	Aquafina	Jumping Jack Flash	Astronomy	Diet Coke	Celtics	7	163
Martin Burgdorf	Vittel	Satisfaction	Biology	Coke	Lakers	34	160
Joakim Spangberg	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	7	147
Brendan Whyte	Evian	Satisfaction	Physics	Coke	Globetrotters	33	145
Kevin Wilson	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	7	142
Jeremie Lefrancois	Evian	Satisfaction	Computer Sci	Perrier	Globetrotters	19	130

Selected Comments By Category: **Bottled Water** - Cal White "It was either Perrier or Evian, and I'm not sure how big that is in the States. Half of this game is guessing how you folks south of the border will think." **Rolling Stones** - Cal White "I considered Start Me Up because of the Windows 95 commercials.". **Science** – Cal White "This was tough. I thought of a lot of things from Medicine to Anthropology to Computer Science, but went with geography because it was the first thing that popped into my head when I read the question."; Brendan Whyte "Physics (from the Klingons "on the starboard bow" spoof song of the late 80s), a favorite line we use to quote just before science class "it's worse than that, it's physics Jim!" The irony being none of us had any friends called Jim. But we were studying physics, so none of us really had any friends at all...just pocket protectors we'd talk to for company. You think that's weird, I knew a kid who talked to his lunchbox!". **Basketball Team** – Brendan Whyte "I really have no idea... but I remember these cartoon [characters] with afroes (afros? afrae? afrii? afropodi?) from the 1970s... sort of "Bill Cosby and the Cosby Kids" but with a basketball instead of Fat Albert."

Round 8 Categories – Deadline is November 28th, 2007

1. A nation which no longer exists.
2. A style of music.
3. A tool.
4. A type of snake.
5. A soccer team.

By Popular Opinion

In this By Popular Demand variant invented by Allan Stagg, the questions are subjective, e.g. "Who is or was the best rock guitarist of all time?" The goal is to pick something that fits the category and will be the "most popular" answer. You score points based on the number of entries that match yours. For example, if the category is "What breed of cats are the friendliest?" and the responses were 7 for Persian, 3 for Calico and 1 for Siamese, everyone who said Persian would get 7 points, Calico 3 and the lone Siamese would score 1 point. The cumulative total over 10 rounds will determine the overall winner. Anyone may enter at any point, starting with an equivalent point total of the lowest cumulative score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the minimum score from the round added to their cumulative total. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to; players are encouraged to submit press justifying their choices. The game will consist of 10 rounds. A prize will be awarded to the winner.

Round 1 Categories

1. Who is the best female actor in movies today?
2. What is the ugliest automobile model in history?
3. Who is the funniest stand-up comedian ever?
4. What is the best-smelling perfume?
5. What is your favorite current television show?

<u>Player</u>	<u>Actress</u>	<u>Auto</u>	<u>Comedian</u>	<u>Perfume</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Turn Score</u>	<u>Total</u>
W. Andrew York	Julia Roberts	Edsel	Robin Williams	Chanel #5	Heroes	18	18
Jamie McQuinn	Renee Zellweger	Edsel	Bill Cosby	Chanel #5	Battlestar Galactica	14	14
David Burgess	Julia Roberts	Aztek	Robin Williams	Chanel #5	Grey's Anatomy	13	13
Chris Babcock	Hillary Swank	Edsel	Robin Williams	Obsession	House	12	12
Melinda Holley	Angelina Jolie	Edsel	George Carlin	Ciara	Law and Order: C.I.	10	10
Martin Burgdorf	Jodie Foster	Edsel	Andy Kaufman	Coco by Chanel	Numb3rs	10	10
John Colledge	Judy Dench	Mesherschmidt	Robin Williams	Coco by Chanel	Heroes	10	10
Brendan Whyte	Helen Hunt	Model T	Steven Wright	Chanel #5	Battlestar Galactica	10	10
Brad Wilson	Susan Sarandon	Saab	Rodney Dangerfield	Chanel #5	Jeopardy	9	9
Tom Swider	Naomi Watts	Element	George Carlin	Happy	Colbert Report	6	6
Jeremie Lefrancois	Pamela Anderson	Deux Chaveux	George W Bush	Angel	FoxNews	5	5

Selected Comments By Category: **Actress** – Brendan Whyte "Female actRESS. Only Thailand has many female actORS, and none of those can actually act, they're more of comic relief: a cock in a frock! The relief being when they're out of shot. So assuming you mean female *actress*, the 'best' would have to be Helen Hunt. Woof!" **Automobile** – Brendan Whyte "The 1:24 scale Airfix Ford Model T was pretty ugly. The parts didn't even fit properly. " **Comedian** – Andy York "Chaplin is funnier, but didn't do any stand-up that I'm aware of." **Perfume** – Andy York "Personally, I dislike any perfume/cologne and had to scrape the bottom of my brain to come up with [Chanel #5]."

Round 2 Categories – Deadline is November 28th, 2007

1. What is the worst-tasting fruit juice?
2. What is the prettiest eye color?
3. Who was the greatest author of the 20th century?
4. Who was the worst American President?
5. What is the best-tasting brand of beer?

**Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:
November 28th, 2007 – See You Then!**