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**2006**

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Springtober 2006**

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Elizabeth "Liz" Phair**



**Liz Phair  
does not have  
any desire to  
be your blow-job  
queen. It's just a line  
from a song that was  
not written about you  
or about anyone you  
know. She would like  
it if you bought her  
records, though.**

# *Axes & Alleys*

## **Proudly Printed on Paper!**



### **A Special *Axes & Alleys* Goodbye**

We've been producing this magazine for 103 years now. If we still had our original staff our offices would be full of putrid, rotting corpses. Unfortunately, dead people just can't bring you the best in tractor repair and maintenance information month after month. So indeed, after ten decades we've had quite a few staff changes. As this is the first issue of Volume 456-BR8, we thought we'd take a moment to say goodbye to some of our staff members who have moved on in the past year.

**David Aroumond**

Always a crowd favorite, Dave has worked on the *Axes & Alleys* team since his release from prison in 1987. In late 2005 he was incarcerated again, this time for a parole violation. Perhaps we'll hear from Dave again, if he manages to behave himself.

**H.G. Peterson**

The first poem by master H.G. Peterson to appear in *Axes & Alleys* was the now-famous "An Ode to Jellyfish," which appeared in our Springtober 1948 issue. While Mr. Peterson has retired from writing, he continues to work in film, recently directing *A Tawdry Lemon in the Park*.

**Marcia Spatzelberg**

Lovely Marcia took over the feature "How to Do It" after LeMuel LeBratt went into semi-retirement in 1996. After writing over 100 columns, Ms. Spatzelberg left *Axes & Alleys* in 2005 to star with Nicholas Brendon and Amy Acker in the NBC drama *Law and Order: Vampire Investigation Unit*.

**Dr. Scott Birdseye**

Eminent scholar and historian Dr. Birdseye began writing for *Axes & Alleys* in 1936. After mailing in his last history essay, Dr. Birdseye ventured into the jungles of Guatemala while searching for the Treasure of Piso Del Grande. He has not been heard from since and his whereabouts are unknown.

We'll miss these guys, but rest assured tractor aficionados, *Axes & Alleys* has lots of exciting stuff in store for the future.



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**Need to find something?  
Have you tried**

**LOOKING**

## NEWS OF THE WORLD

# 61!



**Willinoisopolis, WL-** With little fanfare and a bit of trepidation, many residents of Iowa (IA), Missouri (MO) and Nebraska (NE) woke up today as proud Willinoisans (WN). Temporarily dubbed the “Round State,” Willinois is the first completely circular state of the Union, and the second state to be created out of three other states.

Unfortunately the construction of the new capital city, Contumacious, is lagging several weeks behind schedule as the delivery of 3600 cobalt-plated crow statuettes has yet to arrive from Cobalt, Ontario. The crow was the only state symbol agreed upon during Willinois’ raucous constitutional convention last Spring.

One statuette is to be placed in front of the working residence of each of Willinois’ representatives to the state’s Althing. This hold up has caused problems because, due to some behind the scenes horse-trading, it was mandated in the state constitution that construction of Contumacious’ sewage system and police headquarters could not commence until the crows were put in place.

Due to the delay, statehood day celebrations took place in the town of Rock Point, formerly part of Northwestern Missouri. There had been some anxiety at the unveiling of the new ethnic dance of Willinois, the Funky Silkworm. The dance is loosely based on the jovial and humorous “The

Worm” dance so enjoyed by hip hop aficionados for over twenty years. While there is absolutely no real tradition of hip hop in any part of the state, the Funky Silkworm was met with overwhelming approval.

The Willinois’ version of the National Guard, the Willinois Omniprotectational Multivector Patrol, marched proudly in the parade wearing their crisp, recent-issue, armored combat coveralls and adorned with one of the new state’s greatest exports, chameleon polymer body paint. Children enjoyed watching as bits of the soldiers’ bodies appeared and disappeared in the glittering sunlight. Some of the children giggled while others enjoyed ice cream.

The decision to create Willinois had its impetus after governors Vilsack (D-Iowa), Heineman (R-Nebraska), and Tooty McFarlane (AFP-MO) had a late night discussion over manhattans. Sources suggest that the governors began discussing their state’s most disturbed (MO), idiotic (IA), and annoying (NE) citizens, discovering that they were all very close to one another geographically.

Governor McFarlane proposed the idea of creating a new state from these areas and within weeks each state had passed a referendum and transmitted the desire to create the new state to Congress. With the loss of Vermont to Sinonipponesia and the distraction of tidying up war business, Congress obliged quickly and Willinois’





# WILLINOIS

## *It's Real Now!*

## The State of Willinois

**Admitted to the Union:** Nov. 8, 2006

**Constitution:** 61<sup>st</sup> State Admitted, 60<sup>th</sup> Extant State

**State Motto:** "Undecided"

**State Bird:** The Crow

**State Dance:** The Funky Silkworm

**State Song:** *6'1'* by Liz Phair

**Current Governor:** Elmo Wrigley

**Current Senators:** Not Yet Elected

**Current Representatives:** Not Yet Elected

**Main Exports:** chameleon polymer body paint, fresh water shellfish, generic Ovaltine

**Main Imports:** rock salt, novelty pornographic astrolabes, Simon<sup>TM</sup>, cobalt

**Area:** 31415 sq. mi.

**Happiest Point:** Mickey's Shuck Shack

**Lowest Point:** Being a part of Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska

state constitutional convention was held.

After weeks of intense debate in Las Vegas, some issues having been decided over refereed boxing matches between convention representatives, the convention presented the Willinois Constitution to the public.

All of Willinois' Mid-Level managers and Governor, Elmo Wrigley, were already elected by Statehood Day under special ballot and its Congressmen will be selected this November, becoming members of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. President Armstrong was on hand to swear officials in, handing out blackcats and M-80s to freshly-minted government officers.

Some tussling broke out as representatives who had received blackcats got angry over not getting M-80s, but the President caught their attention and directed them, with a point and an arched eyebrow, to a waiting fireworks truck overloaded with all kinds of recreational explosives. Festivities went long into the night and actual governmental work did not commence until the second day.

Expectations are high for our new friends in Willinois, and work has already begun apace with arguing over several bills now on the floor of the temporary congressional chamber, which is in a barn. The Round State has gotten off to an auspicious beginning.

**a & a Axes & Alleys  
Info-Rectangle<sup>TM</sup>**



# WILLINOIS CONSTITUTION OF 2006

Las Vegas, Nevada

We the people of Willinois, in order to form Willinois do hereby provide for things, protect stuff and enable other sundries for the purpose creating Willinois.

What that Georgia State Constitution says? Well, ditto.

Except for this stuff:

I. Willinois' State Legislature shall be known as the Althing and shall consist of 3600 members, to be known as Mid-Level Managers so they don't get too uppity.

II. The state bird shall be the crow. All other state symbols can get figured out when we get around to it.

III. A state capital shall be constructed in the geographic center of the state. It shall be built in the shape of a star fish and contain a residence for each Mid-Level Manager at which site shall be installed a cobalt-plated statuette of the state bird, the crow. Construction of sewage systems and police headquarters cannot commence before installation of these statuettes. The capital shall be named Contumacious in honor of Willinoisans' rambunctious spirit.

IV. Juries shall consist of 13 members in order to add more of a creepy vibe to court cases.

V. The right to petition, but they must do it in 250 words or less. NO EXCEPTIONS!

VI. Stovepipe or top hats are allowed within the borders of Willinois, except when used to perpetrate fraud.

VII. The right of the people to organize tontines shall not be infringed, except in times of calamitous emergency. The Althing shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

VIII. The Governor of Willinois shall have the power to appoint, with approval of the Althing, two Consuls who shall, for a term of nine years, have appropriate power to oversee rodeos, cake-walks, and circuses.

IX. In all criminal cases, proper respect will be accorded to Refuse-Collector, Refuse-Disposer privilege. Nor shall any Refuse-Collector be required under law to post bail for any Refuse-Disposer accused of a high crime or misdemeanor.

X. Alternate side parking shall hereby be in effect.

Elmo Wrigley  
Charles Dingey  
Lucy Caldwell  
Gen. Jay North

James R. Ghent  
Chippy Cleveland  
Stanton James-Snead, Jr.  
Louis T. Armstrong

Mary Worthright-Smythe  
Jeremy Buck  
Gregory Hut  
Marisa van Graff



# THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

## THIRD PLANET FOUND!

### Space-Astronomers Discover Earth!

**Space Flats, FL-** Scientists at the National Aerospace Science Association (NASA) announced the discovery of the Solar System's third planet; still officially known as ISB0306A. The third planet is actually one-half of a binary planet system which it shares with a smaller, less-interesting, crater-covered body. Located exactly one AU from the Sun, ISB0306A is the fifth largest body in the Solar System and by far the most dense. Most remarkably, ISB0306A, situated between the orbits of Mars and Venus, inhabits what is known as the "goldilocks zone," named for the goldilocks groundhog, which is also warm and hospitable.

Though the atmosphere is composed primarily of nitrogen, a large amount of free oxygen is also present. This has excited Astronomers who speculate that ISB0306A most likely has surface conditions ideal for life. This is indeed remarkable considering that the silicate-heavy planet is still violently tectonically active.

"Yes, this planet has rivers of molten rock, but it also has vast oceans of liquid water; in fact the amount of O<sub>2</sub> there strongly hints that we may be looking at a planet with abundant life," stated NASA project leader Kilroy Addams.

ISB0306A's strong magnetic field seems to indicate a highly active iron core; only Jupiter has a stronger magnetic field. By far the strangest anomaly is the presence of what have been dubbed "fireflies." The fireflies appear only on the night side of the planet; they are large splotches of sparkling light that may be caused by radioactive rocks, volcanism or even large colonies of bioluminescent life.

"ISB0306A is probably the most interesting body we've yet discovered in the Solar System. If there is life anywhere around the Sun, we're most likely going to find it there. We have years of study ahead, and they look to be exciting ones." Possible names for ISB0306A have already been proposed and include the Greek *Terra*, the Latin *Vulcan* or the Old English *Earth*.

## “SOMEBODY’S MIRACLE: ON THE SUBJECT OF LIZ PHAIR”



Back in high school, I knew of Liz Phair and I knew of her music but back in high school I was a young and foolish boy; one who wasn't particularly interested in hearing the opening shots of post-feminist rock fired across the bow of the ship of the dying 80s music scene. It would take another few years before a girlfriend of mine formally introduced me to *Exile in Guyville*; which was one of about twenty CDs that she owned. Eventually, owing at least in part to a 1000 mile solo drive I took, that album grew on me and stuck like a barnacle.

What is it about Liz Phair? She's not as sultry as Shirley Manson, not as rambunctious as Gwen Stefani, not as sullen as Fiona Apple and not as black as Missy Elliot. When I sat down to compile a mix of the seminal songs by the twenty most important women in rock history, I eventually had to abandon the project; it was impossible because in such a compilation Liz Phair would require a disc all her own. In a word, Liz Phair is amazing. Essentially, this status of amazing is bestowed due to three distinct concepts Liz Phair embodies in a manner that one else ever could.

For one thing, it was Liz Phair who first made me realize that girls, even women, could really be interested in sex. Remember that I discovered Liz Phair's music when I was a stupid teenager. Back then

sex was more like a war; it involved a constant battle and girls well defended in their indestructible bunkers of pure defense. Back then, every girl seemed to be saving herself for something or other. The plain fact was that they were all around fifteen or so, which with 20/20 hindsight I must say is way too young for sex. But still, we boys wanted what we wanted. And then, there was Liz Phair. There she was saying it blatantly in her songs. She wanted sex, she fantasized about sex, she actually enjoyed sex. It was a revelation. Women could be just as crazed as men. Now, looking back, as I sometimes do, I realize that Ms. Phair was in fact creating a character that would allow her to break out of her naturally shy shell. That didn't matter when I was seventeen. Sometimes it doesn't matter now.

Secondly, Liz Phair is the everyman. Perhaps I should be more equality friendly and describe her as the everyperson or everywoman, but you get the idea. Her guitar playing is adequate and her voice is slightly less than so. Her lyrics aren't the most brilliant thing ever, but they work. The fact is that Liz Phair is basically mediocre. Why then do I spend hours downloading live tracks, rare bootlegs and demo songs of ultra-low quality? I'm not sure, but I bet it has something to do with the fact that we all root for the underdog. In our world where talent and a buck gets you a cup of coffee



and where success seems to depend on being tall, blonde and large-breasted, some of us still like to root for that super cool girl next door. Liz Phair is the underdog and she is the girl next door. Except that if she had actually lived next door growing up would have been much more fun. The fact is that she's not some beauty queen, she's not a supermodel, she's just an ordinary girl who never gave up. And, when it really comes down to it, that's totally hot.

And lastly, Liz Phair never sold out. She actually created one of rock's greatest albums when she was in her early twenties and has spent the rest of her career constantly dealing with the critics who claim that she's sold out, she's gone commercial, she's left her indie-roots and gone pop. It's a really silly critique, considering the fact that her 2004 self-titled album actually contained material written prior to her debut *Exile in Guyville*. She never sold out at all, she just grew up. And for those of us who spent our time growing up with Liz Phair playing on the tape players, boomboxes, stereos and iPods, it's nice to have someone extraordinary to provide the background noise to our own petty foibles and triumphs.

Her career seems to have gone through three distinct phases; the early shy, vulnerable, free-minded experimental *Girlysounds*, to the broadside *Exile in Guyville*; *Whipsmart* and *whitechocolatespaceegg*, through the new, grown-up, confident *Liz Phair* and *Somebody's Miracle*. The times have changed, the scene has changed and the world has changed, but she's always been herself and she was always herself just when we needed her to be Liz Phair. She has always been there for every hook up, every time we were stood up and through every single break up. And she never let us forget that we were all in this together: we're all horny, obsessed, screwed-up, depressed, hopeful and happy. Every single one of us is somebody's miracle.



*...Liz Phair  
never  
sold out.*



# A BRIDGE

*who cares?*



The Society of People Who  
Aren't Interested in Bridges.



# The *Axes & Alleys* HISTORIGON

## This Month in History

2005 AD: Researchers at MCATDA begin their study of various studies of other studies, successfully completing the first meta-meta-analysis.

1943 AD: After learning of the disastrous defeat at Midway, Japanese emperor Hiro Hito spends the afternoon studying interesting squid.

1933 AD: *Axes & Alleys* explanation man Lemuel LaBratt born.

1902 AD: While looking in the mirror, a young Adolph Schickelgruber first notices a growth of thin hairs on his upper lip.

1864 AD: Confederate General Robert E. Lee eats a turkey sandwich which he describes as the "best turkey sandwich ever." Scholars later debate the veracity of this claim.

1812 AD: Popcorn invented in the Austrian Empire when an oxcart overturns, spilling dried ears of corn onto the firewalking display of a visiting troupe of traveling fakirs from India.

1717 AD: Incredibly lost Japanese fishermen sail through the Dardanelles.

1666 AD: In order to impress his friends, John the Carter of London Towne, lights his tobacco pipe from one of the burning embers of a St. Paul's Cathedral rectory support beam.

1517 AD: After writing an important document, Martin Luther spends three and a half hours looking for his hammer. Later he finds it in a drawer.

1409 AD: Peaceful, Native American hunter-gatherer peoples engage in a brutal war of conquest and enslavement.

1015 AD: Dag Lifmunssun, his dog, and a donkey ride a giant ice sheet down into the waters of Norway. They are unable to convince anyone to settle in Sunland.

950 AD: Bantu speaking peoples arrive in Zimbabwe near the Zambezi river, bringing with them the yo-yo.

801 AD: Tlatacca the Mayan decides to go on vacation. All his friends, family and neighbors decide to go with him, leaving Copan completely deserted.

475 AD: Two members of the former Roman Legions stationed in Britain are found on an island in the English Channel, busily adding to a three foot high stack of reports to their commanders on the mainland.

180 AD: A group of men from New Guinea arrive in New Zealand after falling asleep drunk in their canoes. They are promptly killed by the native Moa birds.

2 AD: Yeshua bar Yusef of Nazareth is first allowed to operate the lathe, but only very carefully.

300 BC: On a bet, a member of the advanced civilization of Patronam (with its capital in Tunguska, Siberia) uses its genetic technology to modify the still-flourishing mastodon into the modern elephant while simultaneously using its teleportation technology to modify all written and physical records of the mastodon's existence.

490 BC: Philo of Athens endures endless ridicule for having slept through the entire battle at Marathon the previous month.

593 BC: A young Hebrew named Daniel is unable to help the king whose dream involves a snake that goes into a grassy hole, then crawls back out, then back in and then vomits milk.

1152 BC: Ithacan king Odysseus fails in his first attempt to beguile the Trojans by dressing up as a talking, dancing bear offering various berries, fruits, and toy trumpets.

3049 BC: The Proto-Elamites, in a surprisingly precocious mood, adopt Greek prefixes before the advent of Hellenic language.

5752 BC: Wandering peoples in the northern half of Africa decide the place would look better as a desert and start carting in sand and hauling off trees.

18,460 BC: After successfully slaying a large antelope, Tahn son of Ahth of the Flat Area, is consumed by a pack of wolves.

782,530 BC: Megdur thinks "Hey, wouldn't it be a great idea to cut down some of these small trees for our fire instead of waiting around for branches to fall off?"

# CUTE-PRETTY-BEAUTIFUL

## A DISCOURSE ON THE SUBTLETY OF ATTRACTION



It is a widely known fact that most heterosexual, and even some homosexual, men love attractive women. What is less widely understood is why certain women are particularly attractive; especially since many attractive women look nothing alike. You can take a big curvy Amazon, a little petite ballerina or even a scruffy tomboy and find them all to be highly pleasing to the eye, and to other parts as well. Some psychologists try to boil it down to facial symmetry, some anthropologists might point to the sphericity of breast shape, some biologists might talk of pheromones or child-bearing hips, but for some reason attractive women come in all sorts of different styles.

One way to look at the situation is to realize that there are cute women, pretty women and beautiful women; all of which are different yet still equally desirable. Cute, pretty and beautiful are closely related, often it can be difficult to distinguish one from the other. Usually this is because the person trying to distinguish one from the other is not thinking with his brain. All three types of women have a remarkable ability to shut down any male's higher brain functions.

It's most important to note that cute, pretty and beautiful are entirely separate from the other triptych; girl-next-door, virtuous virgin and wildly fun slut. It's easy to pair each of these three terms with a counterpart; the cute girl-next-door, the pretty virtuous virgin and the beautiful wildly fun slut. This doesn't work at all though. Any researcher should always keep in mind that there are plenty of cute sluts, pretty girls-next-door and beautiful virtuous virgins. The key question then is, what makes a woman cute, pretty or beautiful?

First, we will explore cute. Often, cuteness corresponds directly to stature. One will find more short cute girls than pretty or beautiful girls of small stature. Cuteness can also be dictated by the facial features; large, pronounced eyes, a small nose and mouth and generally rounded facial types are often the

hallmark of the cute woman. One could, if one were so inclined, describe such features as mousey or child-like, although this is not the best comparison, as only the insanely strange enjoy sexual relations with mice or children while almost all men enjoy such activities with cute women.

The pretty woman, on the other hand, is perhaps a bit more classical in appearance. Her features are well arranged, and sometimes even angular in their appearance. Many pretty women are of a taller, but more graceful stature, and their looks could even be called refined. While one might easily call a beautiful or cute female of any age a girl, the pretty female seems to fit the word woman quite well. She is grown up, maybe even tall and elegant and perhaps more serious in her countenance than her beautiful or cute compatriots. There is a sly, cat-like grace about the pretty woman, and even if she is a girl-next-door, her classic exquisiteness always shines through.

Lastly, the beautiful woman seems to embody some of the traits of both the cute and the pretty. In many ways she combines the strengths of both styles into one package that is instantly appealing. She's more grown up than the cute, but still more unbounded than the pretty. Drifting through all the styles, the beautiful woman is at once elegant and playful. Unlike the cute, who can hide behind bashfulness or the pretty who can hide behind her stoicism, there is no sticking a beautiful woman under a bushel; no matter where she goes she will be noticed by everyone. For it is the beautiful woman, who combines the allure of the cute and pretty, who always gets the attention, whether she wants it or not.

Each of us has known and has fallen in love with women who are cute, who are pretty and who are beautiful. Though each group has its own strengths and particularities that single it out, when it all comes down to the right moment, they are all the same; no matter if a woman is cute, pretty or beautiful, the only important thing is that at least she isn't fugly.



INACCURATE AND THUS NOT PARTICULARLY  
**HELPFUL TABLES**

## The Multiplication Table

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	2	3	4	56	7	5	7	89	8	8	45	10
2	4	8	12	10	¥	15	1.3	e	18	21	22	23
3	6	18	24	32	43	16	88	88	88	30.1	36	84
4	8	∞	1	0	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5	10	13	12	36	48	52	68	72	93	108	116	117
6	12	2	14	38	5/8	24	36	48	72	108	8	0
7	14	∞	5	6	7	8	9.3	9.4	27	32	33	48
8	16	-6	74	85	∞	6	88	e	1.01	89	36	8
9	18	254	88	1.114	∅	¥	8	45	60	75	100	125
10	20	Π	96	69	111	109	54	58	66	77	88	99
11	22	4	3	2	1	3/4	-2	6x	77	89	4	22
12	24	48	72	12	Ψ	17	13	26	88	1	0	1

## Common Conversions

Cubits	Angstroms	Parsecs
1.00	29/34	89.275
.914	7	1.00
5e	1.75	77

Spans	Joules	Feet
1.0000	.394	1/8
2.54	8,124	1/12
30.008	12	1.0007

Grams	Ounces	Cents
1.0000	.0328	.002
28.35	1.000	1/42
459.9	16	1.000
1.000	1/8	2.865

Litres	Bushels	Watts
5	5	5.125
66	45,698.3	2
30.008	0	8006

Pods	Cubes	Inches
88	1.000	∞
Δ	56	3.2
7,637	1.0021	11e

Kilometers	Miles	AU	Newtons
1.0000	27	63	1/245
.318	1.000	π	8.751
e	118.3	1.000	6
6,325.5	5	.0238	8

1 meter	=	1,000	minimeters
1 millimeter	=	10	bugameters
1 centimeter	=	.001	exometers
1 decameter	=	.01	barometers
1 petameter	=	.1	thermometers
1 supermeter	=	1	logometers
1 minimeter	=	10	cantometers
1 philometer	=	100	pintometers
1 betameter	=	1000	julometers
1 erosmeter	=	1 billion	meters

Lincolns	Coolidges	Pious Is	Adams
100	4	.8	68
3/4	666	45π	9,003
√-1.3	88.88	12	600
89,569	3.122	.0002	8

Pictures	Words	Video
1	1000	1/8



## **NOT EVEN WRONG**

### **BY DR. PETER WOIT**

One of our great laments is that science writers tend to be unable to properly convey scientific ideas to a lay audience. Some of this can be blamed on a liberal arts education based in the historic Greek emphasis on competence in the trivium (language) and quadrivium (science and music). In modern practice this divides the educational tracks of students, generally producing persons better at one than the other. As our system moves education into a very specific concentration in graduate school, these differences become more pronounced. Writers, the people who are trained to explain concepts via the written word, often have little knowledge of science and scientists often have little training in the use of language. This division greatly influences our view of *Not Even Wrong*, whereas other reviewers have focused mainly on scientific arguments.

At the outset we are in complete agreement with Dr. Peter Woit, lecturer in Mathematics at Columbia University and author of *Not Even Wrong: The Failure of String Theory & The Continuing Challenge to Unify the laws Of Physics*. As educated laymen in physics, we feel there is something at the least fishy about string theory.

*Not Even Wrong* could go a long way towards explaining the failures of string theory for the general public *and* physicists if it did not try to simultaneously satisfy both.

*Not Even Wrong* is at least terribly confusing to readers with only a basic education in physics. While the argument presented in the book is, to our eyes, internally logically sound, it is very difficult to discern because of Woit's insistence on writing for a diverse audience and his often confusing writing style. Dr. Woit is attempting to reach his colleagues in mathematics and physics whilst simultaneously disabusing the general, interested reader of misconceptions given to her by popularizing physicists over the course of the last twenty years. We do not believe he accomplishes the latter, and are unsure if the message of his book has effectively reached the former.

Early in *Not Even Wrong*, Dr. Woit is quick to point out these difficulties. He encourages those that would be off put by technical terms to skip ahead at various places. Much of this could have been solved through the editorial process at Jonathan Cape. Strikingly, Woit shows an adept



hand with the written word when at his most personal in the book's introduction. Laying out his history and his point of view, he gives purpose to the book with good imagery and evocative explication. While Dr. Woit says his use of many technical terms may present a challenge to the general reader, the fact of the matter is that it definitely does so and makes understanding of his arguments against string theory truly difficult.

It is our belief that the inclusion of more equations and further explanatory passages would have provided valuable insight about the processes involved. His choices on when and where to define technical terms are indiscernible. Where Woit does not use complex technical vocabulary, parsing his grammatical construction is difficult. For instance:

*For each of the superpartners, experiments rule out much of the mass range below this scale, but would not yet have been able to see them if their masses are higher than this, but still not so high as to wreck convincingly the solution of the hierarchy problem. (p. 176)*

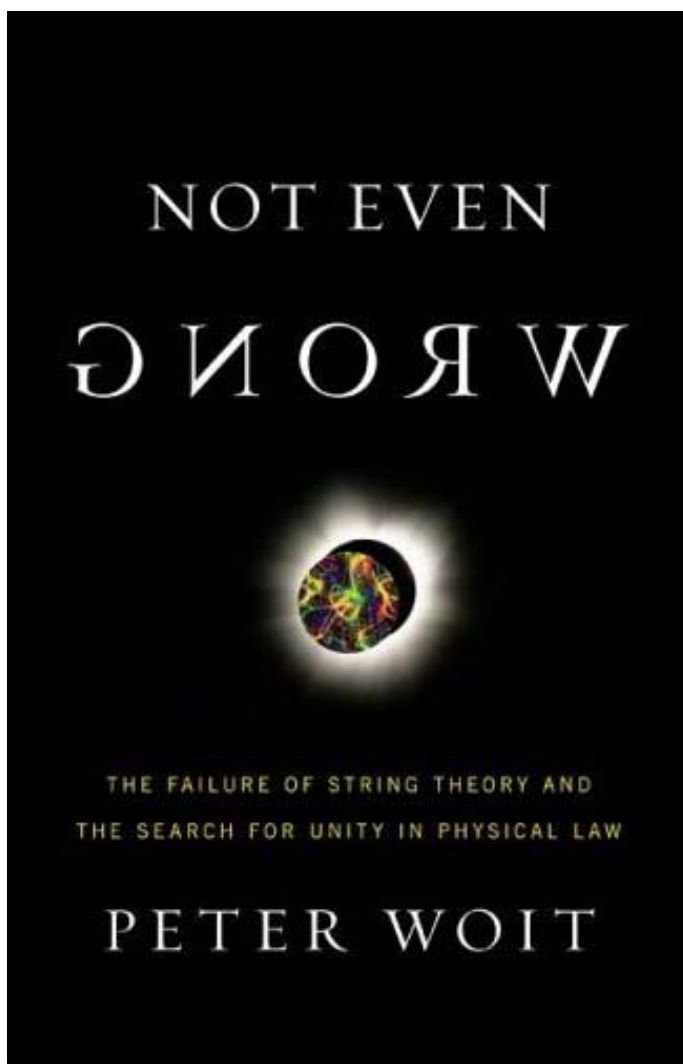
Sentences as confusing or more so are found throughout *Not Even Wrong*. Where they combine with undefined or poorly-defined technical terms from earlier on in the book it's nearly impossible to figure out what concept is being conveyed. This must be as confusing for the physicist as it is for the general reader.

Overall, the conclusions of the book make sense only after very careful reading and a good amount of additional research. Reviewing the early chapters with an eye towards how solutions to physical problems were worked out in the past contrasts heavily with the evident faults of string theory, supersymmetry, and M-theory espoused at the end of the book, but it takes more than a little work to figure this out.

Some of Woit's clearest and most compelling writing comes where he makes this comparison in Chapter 14, "Is Superstring Theory Science?" and in Chapter 17, "The Landscape of String Theory." While more philosophical in their content, both rely heavily upon comparison to the work of physics up to the 1970s described earlier. But, in the end, it leaves the reader with difficult to understand information from which to form

an opinion on this particular branch of physics.

While it may not have been practically possible, we believe two separate volumes, one focused on each audience, would have been invariably more valuable than one volume which consists of a simplistic overview of string theory for physicists that is baffling to an ordinary reader. Further reading examples provided after each chapter are wonderfully helpful and hint at something we like: not letting the audience be lazy. However, while supportive of Woit's point of view, we are disappointed in the execution of *Not Even Wrong*, which makes it hard for readers to even get started.



**In Proto-Turabian Style:**

**Woit, Peter, Dr., Not Even Wrong: The Failure of String Theory and the Continuing Challenge to Unify the Laws of Physics. London: Jonathan Cape. 2006.**

**ISBN: 9780224076050**



# Katie Stalin

## *Out and About*



**Doomed from the Get Go:** Creepsville's favorite musical combo "The Midnight Creeps" performing at Maryland Fried Chicken House on Maynard Street.

**Creepsville, USA** – My friend Jonas told me Creepsville is best known for some all-ages punk band called The Midnight Creeps. Well, I've never heard of the place or the band, but the idea of visiting America's only city-state was pretty cool, like being able to take a trip back in time to Greece, but without all the olive oil.

Boy was I surprised when I got here. One of Creepsville's most important products is olive oil and the town is surrounded by olive groves. It's the only place in the world where you can get "extremely super virgin olive oil," which is pressed before the olives are even ripe; sometimes, before they're even planted. There are two lovely, ivy-covered olive pressing factories in the city center, shared by all the olive growers. I like it when people share.

It's probably not true that you can eat off of the streets, but they're really clean. Tom Jorgensen, David Abernathy, and Astrid Santana are the street cleaners and all of them were hospitable when I stopped by the street cleaner depot on my first day in town. Yeah, I had to ask like fifteen times, but eventually they showed me the mopitorium where they keep the mops. Each mop has a special claspy thing on the wall and there's a mop check-out log where you can sign your name to check out a mop. That Astrid was pretty cute, but she's married.

Mayor Joanna Cyclone took me on a tour of city hall. The nation's most pristine aquifer is located immediately below Creepsville, so they've got a lot of public fountains. City hall has fifteen! Made it real easy for Mayor Cyclone and me to have a whiskey and a splash at the end of the day. I ended up staying with City Planner Jones. That's actually his name. He loves his job so much he had a justice of the peace legally change his first name to City Planner. Mr. Jones showed me some plans for the updating of the sub-divisions on the east side of town. Maple Road is totally gonna be rezoned light commercial. His designs for the Creep County Historical Museum were par excellence (I picked that up in Paris).

Doug Tadpole, the chairman of the Creepsville Chamber of Commerce, showed me some of the plans for expanding their culinary offerings. I was so happy to see that they were going to open a franchise of Nacho Mamma's and probably will put it in my guide.

What can I say? Creepsville's awesome. There aren't any hotels, but the locals are so friendly you can ask anyone for a place to crash for the night. Lots of trees, three parks, excellent public transportation, friendly people and their only crime is the occasional theft of a pink plastic flamingo from someone's lawn by local teenagers (those scams). If you like nachos or fountains, you should definitely come for a visit.

**Katie Stalin recently appeared as Rosalinde in the Willinois Farmyard Players production of *Die Fledermaus*. She is currently working on a restaurant guide for nacho enthusiasts.**



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# **ASK MONTEZUMA**

## **ANSWERS FROM THE LAND OF**

### **THE FEATHERED SNAKES!**



**Montezuma was the ruler of the Aztecs at the time of the Spanish invasion. His latest mystery novel *Tyndale and the Jade Scorpion* has been made into a film starring Michael Dunaway and Lucy Flasch. He is not mentioned in the Book of Numbers.**

Dear Montezuma,  
When talking to camels, I find it best not to use the pluperfect, even though they use the tense heavily in their language. Which is better: collard greens, mustard greens, or turnip greens?

Silas Marner  
New Scotland, Nova Scotia

*Silas, I have examined records back to the Sixteenth Century extolling the virtues of one or another greens. Upon scientific analysis I have found that all three greens taste exactly the same. Greens all contain essentially the exact same building blocks and it's mostly the pork that provides the taste.*

Hey Montezuma,  
Recently I applied for a job I really wanted through one of those online applications. It showed my status as "in process" for over a month. Finally I wrote to the person who would nominally be my boss and they told me the job had already been filled. Why are computers such liars?

Joseph Rose  
Astoria, NY

*Hey Joe, computers are liars, though no one knows why. Humanity often places more than one hundred percent trust in these machines, for scientifically unexplained reasons. Day after day computers lie to us; from our bank balances to whether we are attractive to the latest popular internet video. Computers should never be trusted. Pursue long-division on a pad of paper.*

Dear Ask Montezuma,  
Why can't cleaning the inside of a window also clean the outside of a window?

Roger Penrose  
Moravia, UK

*RP, mostly it's a result of not using the spray bottle on the outside, but God also created windows so that they were impossible to clean properly. You may consider hiring a manservant.*

Dear Montezuma,  
The President of the United States recently responded to a letter I sent him. This is wonderful and I've framed his letter and hung it on my bathroom wall so I can review it at the most important times of life. However, he or his assistant incorrectly labeled my apartment as a "unit." Does this mislabeling have the force of law?  
Mildred Bankcroft  
Dunscap, EL

*Ms. Bankcroft, according to Executive Order 3012, all Presidential correspondence has a regulatory enforcement component. While this is not a legal status, it likely affects the way the Postal Service views your domicile. You might as well give in and use the unit designation.*

Montezuma,  
My neighbours have the cutest dog. Unfortunately they keep it in the courtyard of my apartment complex. It doesn't seem to be terribly excited by this development. Neither am I. The dog is forced to excrete waste all over the courtyard, which attracts flies. My apartment is old, hot and inadequately supplied with electric voltage to run a large air conditioner. Therefore I have to keep my window open a lot and the flies and plaintive whines of the dog enter my home through the window. What's the most number of knots one can tie in a shoe string?

Patty Dallis  
Columbia, SC

*Patty, a close friend of mine went to high school with you and tells me you're really quite cute. Were that I were without a significant other. I would take you paragliding and lumberjacking. Then, as the sun sets we would drink of a fine pinot noir while roasting salmon on the darkening beach. I would cajole you into swimming in the ocean at night time, at which point you would be consumed by a starving shark.*

Dear Montezuma,  
I've been told that for sufficiently high values of two, two plus two equals five. What about sufficiently high values of three?

Constance Abercrombie  
Nord Carole, NC

*Constance, sufficiently high values of three only yield imaginary numbers, which are inapplicable to most things except carrot slices.*

Dear Montezuma,  
How come there are so many reputed photographs of ghosts, but none of goblins?

Sam Barnhart  
Bayside, New York

*Sam, let's face it: ghosts are in it for the limelight. One hears all sorts of business about things left undone, revenge, and spectral non-disengagement syndrome, but the fact of the matter is they make passionate love to the camera. Goblins, on the other hand, constantly feel they are not photogenic and do whatever they can to avoid being photographed. Some emit x-rays in order to*

*overexpose any nearby film. Most are simply adept at avoidance. Some goblins, though, have perfected a light refraction technology in their secret scientific research establishments which allows them to be photographed without any worry because their images will not show up on film. These are all the rich goblins, of course.*

Dear Montezuma,  
What's the best way to iron socks and underwear (including undershirts)?

Keith Sylvester  
Atlanta, GA

*Keith, ironing your socks and undergarments is the sign of a mongoloid. Do not do so.*

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Fig. 1  
The Moon

Fig. 2  
The LGA Flight-Path



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# **FIFTY THINGS**

## **THOMAS EDISON**

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1. chickens that lay ready-made Southwest Omelettes
2. apologetic electric chairs
3. powdered bridges
4. the sideways train
5. hover horses
6. self-eating reuben sandwiches
7. steam-powered windmills
8. a board game based on the American Civil War
9. the electric alphabet
10. waterproof milkshakes
11. double-helmets for epileptic Siamese twins
12. odometers for hamster wheels
13. raspberry flavoured dental dams
14. robot crows
15. mechanical owls for scaring away the robot crows
16. pneumatic olive de-pimentoers
17. Bruce Vilanch detector
18. A space station for mice. If a cat got on board it'd be just like that movie *Alien*, but for mice.
19. sweaters that taste like whatever moths don't like
20. a meta-knob that allows you to adjust all knobs at once
21. realistic, cheese-shaped covers for light bulbs so it looks like your cheese is glowing
22. wind-resistant chinstraps
23. The Moron Slapper
24. 120 proof corn liquor
25. salmon-flavoured canals
26. fire
27. pedal-powered mechanical sacrificers for Voodoo rites
28. electric orgasm monitors
29. a 20 million lumen visual defence grid for Romania
30. the combination lemon juice extractor/jungle machete
31. bicycle windshields
32. creature detectors
33. the testicle-shaving cup
34. chicken caesar salad lasagne
35. static electric false moustache
36. a well-designed light switch with iconography
37. coati suppressing foam
38. the mechanical spider buddy
39. The ACME Handy Dandy Micro Helper
40. Automatic Rutherford B. Hayes
41. an ash tray exhaust fan
42. the low-loam diet for worms
43. a practical theoretical basis for providing power to homes
44. the communications satellite
45. spring-loaded novelty cans of peas
46. creepily-grinning mechanical statues whose heads follow passers-by
47. a Chinese finger trap remover
48. Ecomagination
49. magnetic teeth implants
50. the electric mop

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## WANTED

Real people named Professor Plum and Colonel Mustard to appear in our live reenactment of the game Monopoly. We sure like Monopoly, but often get it confused with other board games. Milwaukee Scrabble Club.

414-287-4100

## FOR LEASE

Plot of land, 1 sq. mm. 99 year lease, only ½ penny. Exact change only. Tracy Form, Chapping Realty. Blamer's Crossing, EL.

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Archivist to file and track of Icelandic singer Bjork's dental records. She's compulsive and has to go to the dentist twice a day or more. Good pay, plus car and dental benefits. Sal Gudmundsdottir, Gudmundsdottir Ltd.

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Two bedroom apartment with bath in the heart of blue whale. Whale no longer living but still spacious. Yap R. Freep. 77.333.8383

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Pancake. Slightly flatter than usual. \$.02 or five for a nickel. Tom, Box 6.

## FOR RENT

Soundproof, unlighted room. Contains two girls kissing. \$53 per time unit. Melby Katamaran 779-3458

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Statue of the Paesistratids. Found in attic. Both figures missing genitals, but otherwise intact. \$3000 or best offer. Jerry Muldauer Dry Michigan

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Beer coolzy! I've recently patented the beer coolzy and I want to sell it to you. Gimme a shout at 995-382-4825.

## FOR RENT

Three mouse fur coats, perfectly sized for mice. Free gelatin lathe included. Tony Blair 10 Downing Street London SW1 UK

## WANTED

Organism. My supply just ran out and I can't find anymore. Willing to offer increasingly higher amounts of money if you refuse previous offers. Will also cry on occasion. Mary Bagel 823-2617

## FREE

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Caleb Carr

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## FOR RENT

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## FOR SALE

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## POSITION AVAILABLE

Pilot needed for human kite project. Probably fatal. Bob at Box 34.



# ***Axes and Alleys***

was

Conceived, Written and Produced

by

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and

**Jeremy Rosen**

with special thanks to Dr. Peter Woit for a free book.



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