

Enlightenment • Illumination • The Smell of Bacon

# The Meaning of Life

# Esquire

MAN AT HIS BEST

JANUARY 2006

**FIGHTING  
WORDS  
& DAMN  
GOOD ADVICE  
FROM...**

**Howard  
STERN**  
Rips Us  
a New One

**Neil Young  
Jerry Lewis  
B.B. King  
Alyssa Milano  
John Kerry  
Ron Howard  
Bob Saget  
Salman Rushdie  
& the Mayor  
of New Orleans**

WITH A VERY,  
VERY SPECIAL  
APPEARANCE BY  
TONY CURTIS

**Ziyi  
ZHANG**  
A WOMAN WE

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# What You've Learned

Our second-annual collection of wit, wonder, and wild foolishness from our readers' lives

**If a woman** asks you how many sexual partners you've had, the only answer is twelve. —*Mark Motroni, 39, Manhasset, New York*

**A child's laughter** is the greatest sound in the world. A child's laughter in a cornfield is the creepiest sound in the world. —*John Buckler, 26, Lansing, Michigan*

▶ **A minivan is the first indication that someone has given up.**  
—*Doug Gonterman, 38, Suwanee, Georgia*

**Some people will** volunteer for just about any job, no matter how crappy. Try to sit next to these people in meetings. —*Bob Sorensen, 47, Herndon, Virginia*

**Raising teenagers** is like trying to nail Jell-O to a tree. —*Leo Mc Carron, 52, New Hamburg, Ontario*

**There's no shame** in a Honda. —*Charles Terry, 17, Warner Robins, Georgia*

**Using a customer-service rep's** first name greatly increases the odds of getting your problem fixed. —*Tom Brickner, 32, Santa Barbara, California*

**I didn't ask** for my 38Ds, but I sure wouldn't give them back. —*Andrea Craig, 34, Birmingham*

**The most disturbing thing** about W. is that he might just be the president we deserve. —*Robert Goodwin, 63, South Windsor, Connecticut*

**Independence** is an aphrodisiac. —*Noah Kodeck, 28, Baltimore*

**The colder** the climate, the sadder the people. —*Rachel Healy, 27, Philadelphia*

**I was walking** down Madison Avenue, complaining to a co-worker about the miserable politics I faced as an art director in Manhattan, when we came up behind a couple of kids in fast-food uniforms who had just gotten off work. One was complaining to the other about the politics of the deep-fryer line. It was then that I realized it's all the same shit, just different scenery. —*Shawn Perine, 39, Sherman Oaks, California*

**Never pass up** an opportunity to keep your mouth shut. —*Ryan Lamagna, 27, Chesapeake, Virginia*

**I wash my sheets** every Thursday. It's just an optimistic way to go into the weekend. —*Christopher Hebert, 24, Minneapolis*

**The only difference** between the Vietnam War and the war in Iraq is that the body counts on all the networks during Vietnam weren't brought to you by boner pills. —*Michael Dare, 54, White Water, California*

**Some things are** best left un-Google'd. —*Greg Robicheaux, 49, Lafayette, Louisiana*

**Don't be** a perfectionist. —*Charles Caldwell, 45, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*

**Billions of people** throughout history have sensed a supreme force higher than themselves. Seems like there's got to be something to that. —*Ross Brown, 24, Moscow, Idaho*

**Religion is** in many ways like a good pair of shoes. It gives support, a little bit of a lift in your days, and it separates us from the other animals. But personally, I prefer to go barefoot. —*Gordon Hatherley, 26, Lake Station, Indiana*

**No matter** how pissed off you are, nervous, jerked around, or just plain exasperated over something, responding like an asshole does not help in any way, so you might as well be a nice guy. —*Eric Wong, 43, Berkeley, California*

**You can tap,** bang, shake, and caress the bottle all you want;

the ketchup will come out when it's good and ready. —*Kate Lacroix, 31, Boulder, Colorado*

**Fuck subtlety.** —*Daniel Wild, 38, New York City*

▶ **Watching a football game with your father is equivalent to three hugs and five I love yous.**

—*Darrell Harris, 35, Richmond, California*

**Always approach** the intimidatingly attractive woman. If you get turned down, who cares? You aren't having any less sex with her. —*Jon Legg, 24, Normal, Illinois*

**Fundamentalism** is a bad thing in all areas except sports. —*Zach Mohs, 24, Minneapolis*

**If you're in** a crowded situation that could turn into a riot (after the Red Sox have won the World Series, for example) and women aren't flashing their breasts, get out of there. I don't know if exposed breasts reflect a crowd's collective feeling or if the presence of breasts assuages a crowd's temper, but I do know this: No tits is trouble. —*Dan McAllister, 29, Wilmington, Delaware*

**The divorce rate** is around 50 percent. I wonder what it would be if all the couples who wanted to get divorced actually did so. —*John Santello, 54, New York City*

**The best part** of the party is where the smokers are. —*Garrett Phillips, 40, Atlanta*

**New England** is overrated. New Jersey is underrated. —*Dan Blondell, 17, New York City*

**The trouble with** dealing with crazy people is that they're not crazy all the time. —*Mike Gamble, 42, Gainesville, Florida*

**Shit, shave, shower** (not shit, shower, shave). —*Greg Sexton, 36, Gilbert, Arizona*

▶ **Cartagena, I'll be back.**  
—*Paul Petrus, 32, New York City*

**Some people will** dislike you for no reason at all. Just ignore them or sleep with their boyfriends. —*Carrie Mariani, 26, New York City*

**Don't honk** at old people. It just confuses them further. —*Doug Miller, 52, Phoenix*

**People who claim** that they're still trying to find themselves, have. They just don't like what they see. —*Jonathon Ferris, 30, Flint, Michigan*

**I'm turning** into my parents, and that's okay. —*Jason Fong, 31, Sacramento*

**Eulogies say** more about the eulogizer than the deceased. —*Michael O'Neill, 37, Malverne, New York*

**Ralph Lauren.** You can't go wrong. —*Mark Ogden, 49, Little Falls, New Jersey*

**Listen to** the quiet, nagging doubts. —*Jason Hubbert, 32, Oklahoma City*

**I have cerebral palsy.** That means my muscles don't work the way I want them to. My dad is helping me write this. Here's what I've learned: To make friends, smile. A dog makes you cool. The Three Stooges crack me up. And a roller-coaster ride is an amazing experience, especially if you can't move around much by yourself. —*Jason Gackstetter, 6, San Diego*

**Never be** in awe of anyone. —*Paul Edmondson, 48, Laguna Beach, California*

▶ **AC/DC, Springsteen, Guns N' Roses, Pixies, Jane's Addiction, Sublime, Frank Sinatra, Tom Waits, Prince, and Marvin Gaye.**

—*Bryan Love, 38, Santa Cruz, California*

**If you don't involve yourself** in government as an individual, corporate America is happy to make the rules for you. —*Larry Fowler, 55, Pipe Creek, Texas*

**Ask your female friends** what they hate about men, and then don't do those things. —*Kevin Downey Jr., 39, New York City*

**The Oscars** should have an occasional category for best previously nonnominated performance. Among the first nominees would be Val Kilmer as Doc Holliday in *Tombstone*. —*Jim Chambless, 45, Lewisville, Texas*

**At fast-food restaurants** with self-service drink dispensers, why pay for more than the smallest size? —*Edward Catalano, 42, Coconut Creek, Florida*

**If men were** the ones having babies, there would be drive-through abortion clinics and people would be putting their heads in the car window to ask, Would you like fries with that? —*Olivia Fairweather, 47, Monticello, New York*

**Ben Franklin** was right about older women: They don't tell, they don't swell, and they're grateful as hell. —*Donn Ahearn, 48, Hyattsville, Maryland*

**Your grandfather's coffin** is heavier than you expect. Your father's coffin is heavier than you can bear. —*Todd Lowe, 43, Hong Kong*

**All lists** are arbitrary. —*Russ Plyler, 49, Atlanta*