

C'EST LA VIE

It's not easy being green

By DON FLOOD

Recently I had to face a grim fact: I wasn't quite the man I thought I was.

It's all because of green ketchup.

Since "Green Eggs and Ham" is, I hope, still required reading in college literature courses, I assume that most people are familiar with the story — a haunting tale of a close but dysfunctional relationship that revolves around food.

One character, a small dog-like figure with the peculiar name of Sam-I-Am, is obsessed with the idea of compelling his friend to eat green eggs and ham, hence the title.

The other character, far larger but also resembling a canine, just as adamantly refuses.

It is their give-and-take that drives the entire narrative. (For those who haven't read "Green Eggs and Ham," I will refrain from giving away the conclusion.)

I have to admit, as we discussed the book in class I always felt a certain moral superiority toward the larger character.

I was sure I would be more open-minded about trying green eggs and ham.

I was sure I would like them, Sam-I-Am.

But the other morning, after my wife made breakfast, I squirted some of that new-fangled Heinz green ketchup on my eggs.

Note: My wife thinks any ketchup on eggs is disgusting. Like many women who marry ketchup-on-eggs men, she thought she could change me after we were married.

Fortunately, we've been able to work our way through this.

Another thing, I noticed the label said "Patent Pending." You need a patent for green ketchup? I mean, this isn't exactly the kind of thing that Thomas Edison tried and whiffed on.

Anyway, I didn't think much of putting green ketchup on my eggs. After all, I had had green ketchup before, on a campout.

But it was dark on the campout and the green ketchup didn't look as disturbing on the red hot dog. (Also, we had been prudent enough to bring beer.)

But in the harsh morning light, my now green eggs resembled the vile color of Martian blood. (And, no, I am not authorized to say how I know what Martian blood looks like.)

Suddenly, I had a new-found appreciation for the much-maligned Dr. Seuss character.

He was right all along!

Green eggs are disgusting, even without green ham!

In fact, I found that:

- I do not like them on my plate,
- I do not like them in my state,
- I do not want them here or there,
- I want them gone from Delaware!

• Not on a boat,

• Not with a goat,

• No green eggs,

• Down my throat!

• Wake up, people!

• Ketchup is supposed to red.

Write your Congressperson today and tell them that the green ketchup patent should be denied.

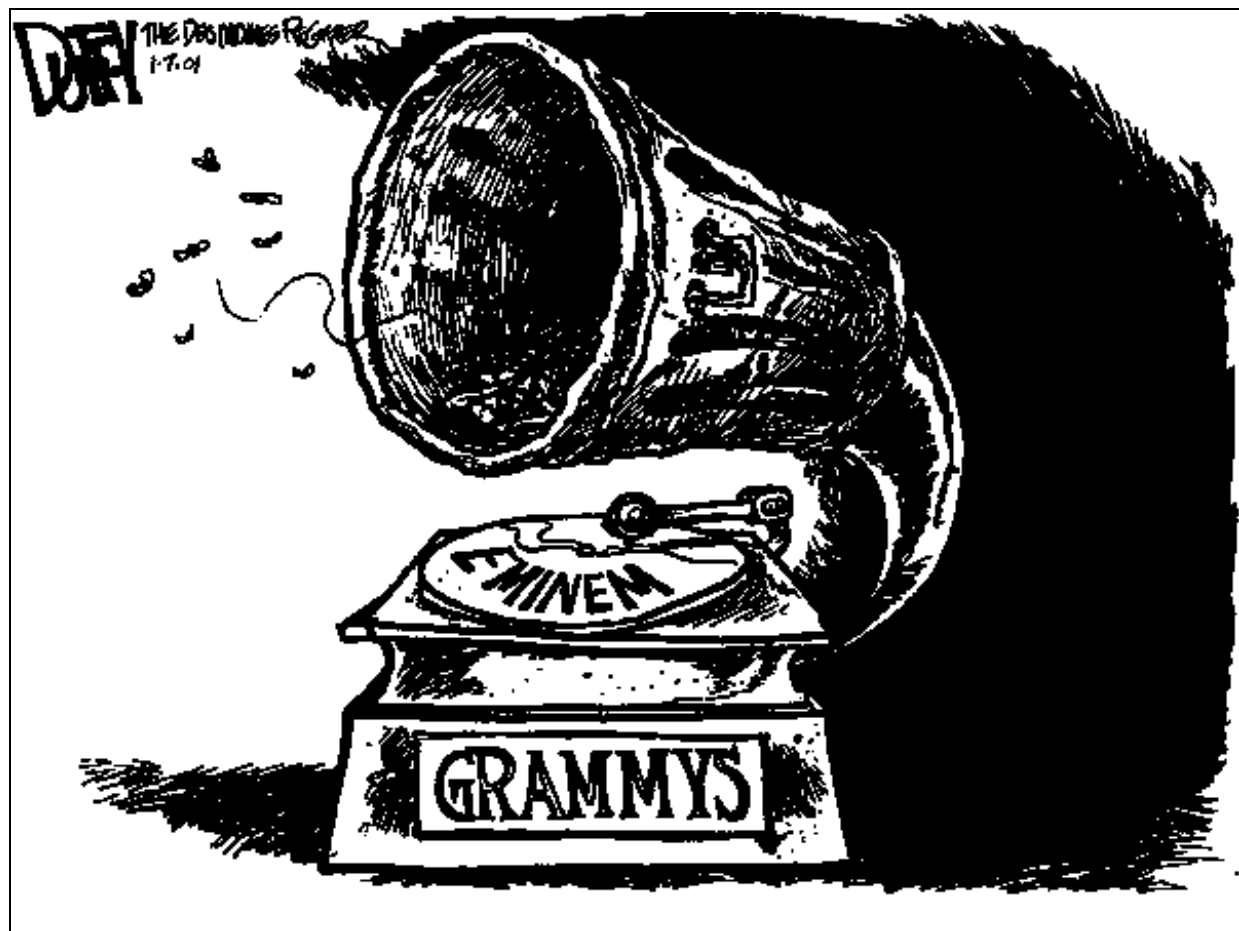
Your very breakfast is at stake!

To get more information before you write, check out "The Incredible Condiment: The Story of Ketchup and How It Has Changed Our World," by Tom A. Tosauce.

It carefully examines both sides of the green/red debate but comes down decisively on the side of those favoring red ketchup.

For questions or comments contact Don Flood at dgf@dca.net.

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Woman's World

Insurance discriminates against women

By TAMARA JONES

It's definitely not a woman's world where prescription drug coverage is concerned.

That's the finding of a number of women's advocacy groups which have been looking into a longstanding complaint by women around the country that they've been discriminated against by employers who offer insurance coverage for preventative health care (such as blood-pressure lowering drugs) but not for prescription contraceptives.

Recently, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued a ruling that lent support to these claims. The ruling reads in part, [Employers] "may not discriminate in their health insurance plan by denying benefits for prescription contraceptives when they provide benefits for comparable drugs and devices."

Although the ruling currently applies only to two women whose

complaints were heard by the commission, it provides a basis on which future complaints may be determined. It also reminds employers that under the Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act, it is forbidden to discriminate against women in the workplace because of pregnancy, childbirth, and/or related conditions.

Now, some will undoubtedly say that birth control drugs or devices are designed to prevent these conditions. For the most part, that's true. But if an employer's health insurance coverage is linked to health protection and prevention of problems, birth control methodology can also fit under this umbrella.

For some women, it might be argued, pregnancy would involve a high risk factor and birth control methods are necessary to minimize the risk.

But for many more women, some birth control drugs have been shown to reduce their risk of developing

breast and reproductive cancers, especially if there's a family history of these conditions.

Women are also questioning the decision by most insurance companies to cover the cost of Viagra prescriptions, but not infertility treatments. As my friend who teaches in Brooklyn College likes to say — "Go figure!"

Your comments, please.

Note to Virginia B: From what I understand, unlike Judge Judy [Sheindlin], Justices O'Connor and Ginsburg of the U.S. Supreme Court do not wear pants suits to court. Too bad. It would make climbing up to their seats on that high bench much easier.

Write to Tamara Jones in care of King Features Weekly Service, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803 or send an e-mail to letters.kfws@hearstsc.com.

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Busted!

Real consequences of DUI

By KIM O'BRYAN

Staff Writing

Sure, most of us have done it. We have left a party or a bar after having a couple of drinks.

But have you really thought about what you are getting yourself into?

A year ago this month I received a DUI. Now, let me give you the insight on what really happens.

I know jail time might scare you to not drink and drive. Let's talk about something that is even scarier: going broke.

After the court appearance I had a

long talk with my lawyer, who prefers to stay anonymous. He said, "You owe me \$200." Little did I know that was only the beginning.

As we kept talking he informed me that my 10 minute appearance in front of the judge was an incredible \$450. Added on to that was another \$200 for alcohol classes I had to take.

By the way, did I mention the fact that you lose your license for three months?

My car insurance company, who also requested to remain anonymous, was another situation I had to deal with.

My agent told me that the insurance on my car would now cost me \$800 every six months just for liability.

This rate was compared to the \$400 I was paying for full coverage. It will remain this rate for many years to come. Just think of how much money you would save to call a cab.

Joyce Chism, a representative from Mothers Against Drunk Driving said in an interview that I conducted, "The majority of people who are hurt or killed in a drink driving collision are the sober victims hit by an intoxicated driver."

I mention this because even though wasting money on a DUI is shameful, one could never live with the guilt of hurting someone innocent just for one night of carelessness.

Tao Chemist

Ancient balloonists drew the lines

By DNA SMITH

Trivia buffs and fans of Monty Python "know" that ballooning began in 1783 with the Montgolfier Brothers, inventors of the hot air balloon.

Wrongo, me buckos.

The first person to fly in a hot air balloon in Europe was Father Bartolomeu de Gusmao, who gave a demonstration to the Portuguese court at Lisbon in 1709, a good 74 years before those wacky Frenchmen.

So, how did he beat the French? Simple. Father B was a Jesuit priest from Peru, home of the famous Nazca Lines.

The name might not be familiar, but you've probably seen video or pictures of those giant animal figures carved into the ground - images that can only be seen from the air. The lines were carved by the Nazca Indians sometime between 500 BC and 900 AD.

In 1968 some crank wrote a book called "Chariots of the Gods?" claiming the Nazca Lines were markers for alien "ancient astronauts" to use to land their starships. Even though the author of the book later confessed the whole thing was a hoax, there are people who still believe his fairy tale today.

Flying in Old Peru was more than a clever fiction. In fact, it was all the rage. Archeologists have dug up gobos

of ancient Nazca pottery decorated with paintings of balloons and kites. Textiles often depicted flying men.

Closer inspection of the Nazcan cloth by modern balloon companies shows the Nazcans — supposedly ignorant prehistoric numbskulls — were manufacturing textiles with weaves tighter than fabrics used today.

In a splendid bit of experimental archaeology, a group of archaeologists built a small hot air balloon and gondola based on ancient drawings and using materials and construction methods available to the Nazcans. Guess what?

That balloon carried those hole-diggers 380 feet into the air — high enough to view and appreciate the Nazca Lines.

The experiment was performed in 1975, only a few years after the initial publication of "Chariots of the Gods?". Yet, I'll bet most of you weren't aware that science has shown the probability of ancient ballooning; but a lot more of you know about the bogus ancient astronaut story.

DNA Smith isn't just full of hot air. Questions, comments, JPEGs of cute chicks and unused prescriptions can be sent to him at JoyBot2000@aol.com

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