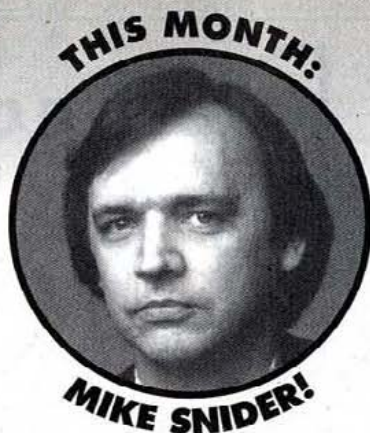


MAD's IDIOT OF THE ISSUE!

MIKE SNIDER FAQs (Famously Atrocious Questions we asked Mike!)



Q: What is your favorite MAD article that you wrote?

A: "MAD's Modern Rube Goldberg Inventions." (MAD #290)

Q: You spend a lot of time in Las Vegas. Can you explain your "can't miss" blackjack system?

A: Always split aces and eights... never double-down on a blackjack... and, when you run out of chips, leave.

Q: In the film, *Passenger 57*, is Wesley Snipes correct, should one always bet on black?

A: Why does EVERYTHING have to be racial?! Can't we all just get along?!?!?

Q: Who do you consider your influences?

A: Well, of course, all the "founding father" MAD writers...especially Frank Jacobs. Also: my Uncle Norm, who is ten times the writer I'll ever be, but who (for some inexplicable reason) had a closet full of old 1950s/60s MADs that he let me tear through when I was 7 years old...and the rest is history!

Q: Who is your favorite non-MAD artist?

A: Edward Gorey. Gahan Wilson. Oh, and the guy who paints the dogs playing poker (those just CRACK ME UP!).

Q: Who is your favorite non-MAD writer?

A: W.S. Gilbert (of "...and Sullivan" fame); more recent: P.J. O'Rourke, Carl Hiaasen.

Q: Pick a MAD contributor and describe him in one word.

A: Desmond Devlin: "Yankee-lover!"

Q: You recently wrote an article about "Girls Gone Wild" (MAD #422) — how many times did you force yourself to watch the videos?

A: Only until I needed glasses, then I stopped. (I know: it's an old joke, but a stupid one!)



Mike "Frenchie" Snider, circa 1982, all decked out for what we can only hope was a Halloween party.

Q: You've earned the nickname "Snichael." Would you care to explain its origin?

A: John Ficarra started calling me that in the mid-'80s: it's a contraction of "Snider" and "Michael." (He was legally required to do it under the Syllable Reduction Program initiated by the Reagan Administration.)

Q: If you could have dinner with three living or dead people, who would they be?

A: Definitely Bill Gaines, who was like three people all by himself: one who always picked up the check, one who ordered \$900 bottles of wine without even flinching, and one who could get through an entire seven-course french gourmet meal without whining about cholesterol!

Q: What actor should play you in a movie about your life?

A: Nick Nolte (the D.U.I.-mugshot Nick Nolte).

Q: Favorite Dixie Chick?

A: Actually, since my mother's name is Dixie, that question is WAY too "Oedipal" for my taste! So, knock it off, you perverts!

Q: What was your favorite MAD trip?

A: The first one I went on: the 1987 MAD trip to Paris & Zermatt, Switzerland. Sam Viviano and I were, I think, the first "new guys" on a trip for something like 15 years, so we got to hear ALL the stories "fresh."

Q: Does anything that happened on a MAD trip stand out in your memory?

A: On the 1993 trip in Monaco, John Caldwell and I went to a soccer game; he forced me to drink way too much beer and eat a bad concession-stand hot dog...and we almost got killed in a soccer hooligan riot. (At least that's MY recollection of what happened!)

Q: Who's the most famous person you ever met?

A: Probably Bill Gaines — and I think I first met him at the exact peak of his fame: the day after *60 Minutes* did a profile of him. As all of us MAD people were out at JFK for the start of the '87 trip, literally every 3rd or 4th person was coming up to Bill and saying "Hey, you're that MAD guy!" or "You're Bill Gaines, aren't you?" or "Weren't you on *60 Minutes* last night?" (I elicited my first belly-laugh from Bill when, after dozens of such stranger encounters in the airport, I tugged on his rumpled short sleeve and gasped like an awestruck fan, "Hey — hey, I recognize you! You're that guy who testified at the Kefauver Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency back in 1954!")



Mike and his mom, Dixie, outside the Arizona Diamondbacks' Bank One Ballpark before game one of the 2001 World Series — and right before Mike was chased off for selling bootleg t-shirts.



With the same wild and crazy behavior he's exhibited on MAD trips, Mike rings in 1966 with sisters (L-R) Charleen, Karen and Lara.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: For my K-12 career, I kept bouncing back and forth between Catholic and public schools (harder for those priests to nail a moving target). Then I attended — and, amazingly, graduated from! — Arizona State University, a school carefully chosen because a) it was three miles from our house in Tempe, b) my dad was on the faculty, so my tuition was only \$43 per semester and c) as a college, it ranks right up there with Harvard and Yale (on a Playboy Magazine survey that gives equal weight to "Academics," "Climate" and "Party Atmosphere"). I also have an Associate's Degree in Electronics from something called "The Community College of the Air Force," which nobody has yet proven to me actually exists in the physical world.

Q: Who would you like to see on the next *Celebrity Boxing*?

A: Mike Tyson.

Q: Do you pronounce it har-ass-ment or harass-ment?

A: Who cares! It's time for pie!

Q: What's the deal with Andrew Schwartzberg?

A: He just happens to be the premiere bantamweight karaoke singer of his generation! No, actually, he's a very bright young guy who, as you know, was an intern, then an Assistant Editor, at MAD...and I think you guys were complete fools for letting him go — no matter how many illegal side-businesses he was running out of the MAD offices after hours! (A few years ago, he moved out to Phoenix — where I was living — and, once I determined that he was not stalking me, we became great friends... and now spend most of our time together performing elaborate voodoo rituals directed against whichever MAD editor turned down our most recent, brilliant pieces of comedy writing!)

Q: What is your favorite book?

A: *Who Moved My Cheez Whiz?* by Oprah Winfrey.

Q: What is your favorite sport and team?

A: Why, the World Champion Arizona Diamondbacks, of course — who, as we speak (the end of the 2002 regular season) are either on the verge of becoming only the 8th team in major league history to repeat... or will continue "going all METS-y on us" and flame out early in the playoffs!

Q: What is your favorite one-liner you wrote that was never used?

A: "Hey, baby — wanna come up to my place and read a bunch of my unsold Rodney Dangerfield 'no respect' jokes?"

Q: What basic cable TV network could you do without?

A: The Scrambled-Porn Channel.

Q: What are the three funniest words in the English language?

A: Rubenesque...smegma...and iatrogenic (a real word meaning "disease picked up during stay in the hospital"... which just looked so bad on death certificates that doctors and hospital lawyers had to make up something else to call it, preferably in Latin).

Q: Is there an article that you always wanted to write but weren't allowed?

A: I sent you guys a premise in the middle of my nasty divorce. "The 157 SURE SIGNS That Women Are the Evil Spawns of SATAN." I'm still amazed that you didn't give me a "go ahead" on that one!

Q: Who would you not want to be stranded on a desert island with?

A: A hack cartoonist who specializes in desert island gags. (This means you, Caldwell!)

Q: If you weren't a writer, what would you be?

A: Financially secure.

Q: If you were a porn star, what would your screen name be?

A: Either "Ramon Testosterone" or...ummm, "Dick Paradise."

Q: Finish this sentence: It was so hot...

A: ...the mice were hunchback!

Q: If you were conducting this interview, what question would you have asked yourself?

A: Mike, have you FINALLY gotten over that tiresome "bitter phase" of your recent divorce... when every friggin' article you pitched to MAD had the phrase "SHEER LIVING HELL OF MARRIAGE" in the title?

THE STATS:

First MAD Article: "A 'Let the Punishment Fit the Crime' Update" (MAD #223, June, 1981)

Number of MAD Issues Appeared in: 150

Number of MAD Articles in This Spotlight Section: 8

SALUD, MIKE!

Research assistance provided by Mike Slaubaugh