



APPALL-O-METER

The In These Times index of indecencies.

By Woody Igou

Syndrome Syndrome

As part of a continuing assault on the notion of free will being waged in U.S. criminal courts, the most recent



"defense" is called the "urban survival syndrome." In a Fort Worth, Texas, case, a

black teenager who killed two young blacks was diagnosed as suffering from this problem, which makes young urban blacks terribly fearful of being hurt by others. This is followed by an irresistible urge for violence. The trial ended in a hung jury.

How about the "John Cheever Syndrome" for those in suburbia. ("I didn't mean to swim in your pool—it was the martinis and the ennui.")

Topping Timothy Leary

Harvard psychiatry professor Dr. John Mack, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has moved away from Freud's couch and into outer



space. In his new book, *Abduction*, he has claimed that his patients

have been abducted and sexually abused by space aliens. These include "Ed," whose

sperm was taken by an alien woman in high school; "Jerry," who gave birth to a human-alien hybrid; and "Peter," who has an "alien wife" in a "parallel universe." *Next book: Ghost Money, How Grants Disappear into Thin Air.*

Fetching boneheads

In a new low, even for daytime talk shows, ABC's *Mike & Matty* interviewed pet psychic Emilia Kincaid. (Pets "speak to



her in human-sounding voices.") Kincaid described the "voice" of a volunteer pet as a

combination between Marilyn Monroe and Joan Crawford. She also asserted that German shepherds "speak in a German accent" while Irish setters, of course, utilize a lilting brogue. *Run, don't walk, to the couch of Dr. Mack.*

Bonus onus

Disney CEO Michael Eisner reported stock option bonuses last year totaling in excess of \$200 million.

This occurred in the same year that his "Euro-Disney" idea floundered and

was only saved because of captive bank restructuring and French government intervention.

Look for his salary to top \$1 billion when "Albanian Disney World" opens.

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Vapid Cultural Zephyrs
2. E Channel Stupid
3. Unauthorized Biography Zone
4. Republican Convention Rerun
5. Bob Dole Spleenic
6. Mega-Dittos from Hell
7. NRA Heart and Brains
8. Pyongyang on my mind
9. Disavowed by Bosnian Serbs
10. Hurry, Melt the Polar Cap!