

The Great California Scam

My parents returned Tuesday afternoon from their 2 week vacation to the Golden Gate State. Some of their highlights included: visiting San Francisco, San Diego (no zoo), the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and Grauman's Chinese Theatre. It also included a nine hour car trip to Santa Rosa where they visited my mother's cousin who owns and operates a winery ([Lauterbach Cellars](#)) along with her husband. I asked if they could not bring back some wine so I could share with friends... Probably not.

I would say that the most memorable tale concerned their "guided tour" of the walk of fame along Hollywood and Vine. My parents and my father's sister were approached by a gentleman offering to give them a personal tour of the stars for a grand total of \$50. Apparently, they thought this was a steal (read on). My aunt produced the fifty dollars. The gentleman informed them that he had to get something, said he would return, and left. I'm not sure how long the three of them waited but they came to realize that they had just been swindled. Surprisingly, they somehow managed to encounter the thief along the way (probably attempted to pull the same stunt on other unsuspecting tourists). However when they confronted the gentleman, he quickly denied ever seeing them. They really got "taken" on a tour. However, the trio did walk the stars.

Their return flight arrived in Indianapolis Tuesday morning at 10 following a five-hour layover in Atlanta. Needless to say, they were both exhausted and went to bed exceptionally early.

HAPPY FRIENDSHIP WEEK

I received this email today from a friend. I always enjoy reading Andy Rooney's column periodically in the paper and caught him from time to time on 60 Minutes... even if he seemed hypercritical I thought this was at times touching, humorous, but oh so true. A great thing to pass on today since a great friend is having a birthday today. I hope you have a great one, L and we will call it 29 and holding if you like ☺ !

In order to save on space, I am going to reprint my favorites:

I've learned... That just one person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes **MY** day. (Go ahead, make my day).

I've learned... That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world (very true especially if you can get one to do it... a miracle in itself at times, but when it happens... it is magic)

I've learned... That being kind is much more important than being right. (of course there are exceptions to every rule)

I've learned... **That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act Goofy with.** (Gawrsh... that is my favorite of the bunch... wonder why. hyuck, hyuck)

I've learned... That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand. (That is beautiful and very true)

I've learned... That love, not time, heals all wounds. (Again, very profound)

I've learned... That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile. (You may not like the person you meet, but a smile is nothing more than a frown turned upside down. I was also once told that you use more facial muscles when you frown. Myth or fact? Going along with that...)

I've learned... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks (not sure that I totally agree with that one, but never hurts).

Happy Birthday, Lis ☐ . You are my friend and I AM honored!

Indiana Jones and me.

In June of 1981, just after I graduated from College, Raiders of the Lost Ark was released in theaters. At that time video rental and purchasing was in its infancy. Machines were expensive, and there were the "format wars". So the movies in the theaters ran much longer than they do now, and they were often in cheap theaters for years after the initial release. I saw Raiders with friends during the summer of 1981 multiple times, and I eventually saw it with my future wife in 1983. It was a fun movie.

In 1984, The Temple of Doom was released. I was able to see that movie in theaters as a newlywed. While we liked the movie, the dark atmosphere of the second Indiana Jones left us wanting the first movie again. Finally the price of VCRs became more reasonable, and Raiders of the Lost Ark was the one we added to our collection. After it was released to Video, we also added the Last Crusade. It wasn't until 2004 that I added the Temple of Doom to my collection.

This spring the fourth installment of the Indiana Jones movies was released. It marked the first Indiana Jones movie I did not see with my wife. Being a widower made that impossible. Still, I went with the two daughters still living at home. I went in a partial Indiana Jones costume. At the movie I wore my hat, my brown pants and beige shirt. It was too warm for my leather jacket. And only a few noticed. But with the audience,

I'm sure most weren't seeing movies at the time the last movie hit theaters.

Some time early in my marriage, my wife and I were shopping and we stopped in a small store in the local mall. There was a felt Fedora. My wife thought it looked good on me, so she bought it for me. She called it my Indiana Jones hat. It was just the thing to take on our vacations. I had that hat for years, until I left it in a coffee shop, one time too many. I hope whoever picked it up enjoyed it. After that I found a much cheaper version of the hat, since I was sure I would misplace it again. And I used that hat for a few years. 2 Christmases ago, my four daughters pitched in to buy me an official Indiana Jones fedora. I was very touched that they would do that. So if you check my 'About' page, you will see a picture of me in that hat.

At times I wish I could have been the adventurer that Indiana Jones was. Searching for lost artifacts, ancient civilizations sounds like great fun. The more conservative, stay-at-home, take care of the family person almost always won the battle of personalities. When we took trips to more wilderness areas, the adventurer showed his face (and hat). We hiked many a mile through the gorges of SE Ohio, the Black hills and Bad Lands in South Dakota, and even the wilds of amusement parks and zoos. I'll never be that adventuring soul, except in the inner reaches of the mind.

That's about it for Indiana Jones and me, until the last movie is release on video. It will be added to my collection. Maybe by that time, I'll be able to get the whip, and a more authentic leather jacket.

Bad Karma

As I recently learned there is New Kids on the Block reunion tour; however, one group you will probably not be seeing soon is Culture Club, that wonderfully odd 1980s pop group led by the ultra-colorful, ultra-fruity George O'Dowd (more commonly referred to as Boy George). Boy was planning a 30-day United States tour to begin on July 10 (thank goodness, no unwanted surprises). However, he was denied a visa due to charges that accused him of "falsely imprisoning a Norwegian male escort". Please tell me how it would not be false to imprison another person. Although he plead not guilty to the charges, the US government still denied the cross-dressing performer the visa.

Culture Club enjoyed their (what now seems much too long) 15 minutes of fame with songs such as Karma Chameleon. I think there were a few other successful songs but obviously less familiar. Yet another group that seemed good when you were about 10 years old that make you shake your head and wonder why.

Has he not been in trouble with the law before. If memory serves, he was sentenced to community service a few years ago and seen picking up garbage? I do recall the Broadway musical [Taboo](#) that he wrote the lyrics to and Rosie O'Donnell financed a few years ago that lasted entirely too long. A good suggestion for any theatre group.

I suppose if you live across the Atlantic, you could catch Mr. George on his United Kingdom tour.

The Incredible Hulk

Super hero movies are not must-sees for me, but we caught a showing of [The Incredible Hulk](#) the other day mainly because there was nothing else playing that we hadn't seen already. Since physical activity is out for me (but only for another few weeks – YAY!!), going to a movie on our weekly date night has been popular because even someone of my girth can enjoy sitting in an air-conditioned movie theater for a few hours. I was also drawn to this movie because I remember really enjoying [The Incredible Hulk tv series](#) as a very young child. So both my husband and I were entertained by the movie; it was action-packed, and the special effects weren't terrible looking like they were in the previews. [Edward Norton](#) was good, and so was [Liv Tyler](#), but then again, I don't think I've seen her in anything where she was horrible... except maybe that Aerosmith video in which she appeared in the '90's, but then again, I'm not a fan of music videos anyway. We did come away with a few questions regarding the believability of the film, but of course, you're talking about a super hero movie, and our questions were answered by a helpful friend who reads Marvel comics.

Of my 2 favorite things about the movie, one was the surprise at the end, which I'm not going to spoil, but I will say this – if you're a comic fan, you will REALLY enjoy the surprise. The other thing I really liked was an inside joke I actually got, even though I don't read comic books. Liv Tyler's character buys Bruce Banner some pants, and wouldn't you know it, she picks out a pair of bright purple ones – a nod to the old tv series where the Hulk wore purple. I thought that joke was especially funny and clever, and I'm glad they included it. Also enjoyable is the [Lou Ferrigno](#) cameo; he's the original Hulk from tv who appears in this movie as a security guard and also voices the computer generated Hulk. If you like the comics, you've probably seen this already, but I'd

also recommend it for anyone who likes fantasy/action movies or if you were a fan of the Hulk tv show from decades ago. It's not going to make me start reading comic books, but it was well worth seeing just for the nostalgia factor alone.

Crazy Busy

In the past few days, I've been able to catch up a little, but I haven't written much before today and yesterday because we have been too busy having fun!

It started last Friday when we took the kids out to the [Fun Spot](#) in Angola Indiana. We had a great time, but I think I learned a lesson about taking 3 kids out for a full day of fun in the sun while I'm trying to nurse a full-term pregnancy. It was over 80°, and we ran out of water and I got sick. I think what pushed me over the edge was trying to watch my 20-month-old as she sat at the edge of a pool while my other children and husband went on the water slide. It's hard to explain to someone who doesn't know, but being this hugely pregnant is basically like being incapacitated – if my toddler had fallen into the water, it would have taken me way too long to get over to her. There was a lifeguard present, but still I was a nervous wreck and the stress of the situation was too much, so I picked her up and took her away from the pool. This of course made her cry, and so the exhaustion came from trying to redirect her and do something else in the heat... it was all just too much for me when all I wanted was a seat in the air conditioned arcade. And for his part, my husband only got to go down the waterslide once which also made me feel badly because he had so much fun, but I just couldn't handle our toddler any longer in the heat alone.

After the water slide fiasco, we made our way to the animal area – they have a macaw parrot and a few baby deer and some big cats. They are rescue cats; lions and tigers and a cougar, and I'm not sure where they were rescued from. I was a little disenchanted with how small the animals' enclosures were, but since they are large cats and spend roughly 20 hours a day sleeping, I think it's a good thing that they've been rescued at all and get food and shelter every day.

Then it was time for more rides, and this place is built for kids my daughters' ages! They have about 10 kiddie rides which all 3 of them could ride, and my 8-year-old still really enjoys these since she's not ready for big rides yet. Her little sister, on the other hand, cannot wait until she is a little taller and gets to ride the 4 roller coasters the Fun Spot also has. Then they have several middle-of-the-road rides for everyone, like flying boats, a scrambler, a tilt-a-whirl, and even more I'm not mentioning. Compared to the carnival that just left our town, admission into the Fun Spot is a steal – it was \$4 for me, a non-rider who just wanted to visit the zoo. Our little toddler cost only \$4, and she was able to ride about 10 rides. Our 4-year-old was \$8, and my husband and our oldest were \$16 each. So for a grand total of \$48, it was a full day of family fun and much cheaper than the traveling carnival or even the county fair, based on what you get for your money. And I have to add that in June – too bad it's over now – but in June they had a special promotion where if you bring in a report card with A's and B's on it, the kid that earned them gets in free! So subtract \$16 from our \$48, and our day of fun was only \$32 – we were really pleased. The only problem with the place is that they are at the mercy of the weather always, and with all the rain and storms we've been getting, our day of fun was no exception and was cut short when a sudden storm moved in. But it was only an hour and a half away from closing anyway. Also, we had been about to leave as it was, and the staff handed out half-price admission coupons, so we will definitely be back when I can

enjoy some of the rides myself after the baby is born. And I will be able to give hubby another few rounds on the water slide! We were so pleased with the place that we tried to go back Sunday since we wanted to take advantage of the report card promotion one more time before June was over, but alas, the weather foiled our plans and we ended up at [Crazy Pinz](#) in Fort Wayne, Indiana instead. Still a fun day, but no where near the value of Fun Spot. Crazy Pinz is an indoor entertainment place, and they have an arcade, mini-golf, bowling, and a 3-story play area for the kids. We've been there before and really liked it, but this time, everything had changed and was MUCH more expensive. But, we had 4 little kids (brought a friend along) who really thought we were doing something really fun that day, so what could we do but spend the day at Crazy Pinz regardless. I have to mention that somehow, on the way to Fun Spot on Sunday, my husband and I got to talking I guess and somehow missed the exit and overshot the place by about 20 miles. (Sorry for not using you, Mr. GPS, I thought I knew where we were going!) Then Fun Spot was closed for rain, so we had to head down to Fort Wayne, and overall we ended up spending an extra \$20-30 on gas... Kind of a big oopsie with gas prices being so high in this day and age. It was a bad luck kind of day, but we did end up salvaging it, and overall, it was an AWESOME weekend.

Saturday we went with friends to see the movie [Wall-E](#) and then visited a friend who is recovering from heart surgery. He is doing well thankfully, and we all enjoyed our visit together – even the kids, who played with cats and bugs and other creatures found around their house in the country. We ran up to their church which was having an ice cream social and enjoyed delicious food and homeade ice cream – a dream for a pregnant lady – YUM! Wall-E was pretty good and as it turns out, the Pixar people had a brainstorming meeting years ago, and this is the last film to be made from ideas presented at that meeting. Others are [A Bug's Life](#), [Monster's Inc.](#), and [Finding Nemo](#), so needless to say, that brainstorming lunch

should go down in history! I have to say I was a little taken aback by the lack of human dialogue in Wall-E. Even after seeing the previews, I wasn't prepared for it. I think this is what may have finished off my 4-year-old since she had to leave the movie theater with dad before the movie was even half over. She's been able to make it through the last 5-10 movies we've been to in a theater, so that's why I think it was the lack of dialogue in this one that did her in. It was a cute movie though, but not on par with Pixar's latest features like Monsters Inc. or especially Finding Nemo, at least in my opinion. Then again, it was SO different, mostly because it was so futuristic that I suppose it's hard to compare to the others.

So yeah, fun extended weekend, even though piles of laundry await my folding. If you're anywhere nearby, head out to Angola, Indiana and visit the Fun Spot, it's well worth it especially if you have really little ones – it totally trumps a place like Six Flags with their high admission prices and long lines.

The Mole – Week #5

SPOILER ALERT – The following contains a synopsis of the June 30th episode of the ABC show, The Mole. Do not read if you don't want to know what happened, including results of the elimination quiz!

I got some really interesting comments about mole-y behavior on last week's post. They were thought provoking and fun to read, so keep them coming! As for this week, unfortunately my kids were going completely crazy during my viewing of the show, so I won't be able to go into much detail since I missed

a lot.

My husband thought Craig was acting very mole-y. I somewhat agree, although I just don't get the moleish vibe from him. Could someone really be SO intolerant to cold weather just from living in California? If so, that seems really unhealthy! But anyway, back to the episode. In my opinion, Kristen and Mark were the least suspectable contestants left, so I just knew one of them was going to be eliminated. I think Paul seems like too much of a loose cannon to be the mole, but who knows, it could always be an act. This week, I think my official guess will be Nicole. It stinks because I think I'm really influenced by my husband's equation using Nicole's name – (N+I) (C+O) L E = M O L E

In past seasons, the show has been known to do things like this, and I just can't get it out of my head. Plus, last night I noticed a change in her personality where she seemed to act like an actual human being for the first time during the run of the show. So that makes me think the extreme bitchiness was just a facade and as the show progresses, it's starting to crack. I mean, could anyone really be THAT much of a bitch? During the first few weeks of the show, I thought that her extremely bitchy and arrogant personality excluded her from being the mole, but now I'm not so sure, and I don't know if it's just that equation getting to me or not.

So continue to comment and post your thoughts and feelings – I really enjoy reading all the theories and observations. Here are the official guesses for this week:

Jamiah – Paul

Chris – Paul

Taylhis – Nicole

The Christian student vs. the Atheist professor

I just read this in another forum and I just had to post it here:

Let me explain the problem science has with Jesus Christ.' The atheist professor of philosophy pauses before his class and then asks one of his new students to stand.

'You're a Christian, aren't you, son?'

'Yes sir,' the student says.

'So you believe in God?'

'Absolutely.'

'Is God good?'

'Sure! God's good.'

'Is God all-powerful? Can God do anything?'

'Yes.'

'Are you good or evil?'

'The Bible says I'm evil.'

The professor grins knowingly. 'Aha! The Bible!' He considers for a moment.

'Here's one for you. Let's say there's a sick person over here and you can cure him. You can do it. Would you help him? Would you try?'

'Yes sir, I would.'

'So you're good...!'

'I wouldn't say that.'

'But why not say that? You'd help a sick and maimed person if you could. Most of us would if we could. But God doesn't.'

The student does not answer, so the professor continues. 'He doesn't, does he? My brother was a Christian who died of cancer, even though he prayed to Jesus to heal him How is this Jesus good? Hmmm? Can you answer that one?'

The student remains silent.

'No, you can't, can you?' the professor says. He takes a sip of water from a glass on his desk to give the student time to relax.

'Let's start again, young fella Is God good?'

'Er.yes,' the student says.

'Is Satan good?'

The student doesn't hesitate on this one. 'No.'

'Then where does Satan come from?'

The student : 'From...God...'

'That's right. God made Satan, didn't he? Tell me, son. Is there evil in this world?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Evil's everywhere, isn't it? And God did make everything, correct?'

'Yes.'

'So who created evil?' The professor continued, 'If God created everything, then God created evil, since evil exists,

and according to the principle that our works define who we are, then God is evil.'

Without allowing the student to answer, the professor continues: 'Is there sickness? Immorality? Hatred? Ugliness? All these terrible things, do they exist in this world?'

The student: 'Yes.'

'So who created them?'

The student does not answer again, so the professor repeats his question. 'Who created them? There is still no answer. Suddenly the lecturer breaks away to pace in front of the classroom. The class is mesmerized.

'Tell me,' he continues onto another student. 'Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God's son?'

The student's voice is confident: 'Yes, professor, I do.'

The old man stops pacing. 'Science says you have five senses you use to identify and observe the world around you. Have you ever seen Jesus? '

'No sir. I've never seen Him'

'Then tell us if you've ever heard your Jesus?'

'No, sir, I have not.'

'Have you ever actually felt your Jesus, tasted your Jesus or smelt your Jesus? Have you ever had any sensory perception of Jesus Christ, or God for that matter?'

'No, sir, I'm afraid I haven't.'

'Yet you still believe in him?'

'Yes.'

'According to the rules of empirical, testable, demonstrable

protocol, science says your God doesn't exist. What do you say to that, son?'

'Nothing,' the student replies. 'I only have my faith.'

'Yes, faith,' the professor repeats. 'And that is the problem science has with God. There is no evidence, only faith.'
(OK reader – here we go)

The student stands quietly for a moment, before asking a question of his own. 'Professor, is there such thing as heat?'

'Yes,' the professor replies. 'There's heat.'

'And is there such a thing as cold?'

'Yes, son, there's cold too.'

'No sir, there isn't.'

The professor turns to face the student, obviously interested.

The room suddenly becomes very quiet. The student begins to explain.

'You can have lots of heat, even more heat, super-heat, mega-heat, unlimited heat, white heat, a little heat or no heat, but we don't have anything called 'cold '. We can hit up to 458 degrees below zero, which is no heat, but we can't go any further after that. There is no such thing as cold; otherwise we would be able to go colder than the lowest -458 degrees. Every body or object is susceptible to study when it has or transmits energy, and heat is what makes a body or matter have or transmit energy. Absolute zero (-458 F) is the total absence of heat. You see, sir, cold is only a word we use to describe the absence of heat. We cannot measure cold. Heat we can measure in thermal units because heat is energy.'

Cold is not the opposite of heat, sir, just the absence of it.'

Silence across the room. A pen drops somewhere in the classroom, sounding like a hammer.

'What about darkness, professor. Is there such a thing as darkness?'

'Yes,' the professor replies without hesitation. 'What is night if it isn't darkness?'

'You're wrong again, sir. Darkness is not something; it is the absence of something. You can have low light, normal light, bright light, flashing light, but if you have no light constantly you have nothing and it's called darkness, isn't it? That's the meaning we use to define the word. In reality, darkness isn't. If it were, you would be able to make darkness darker, wouldn't you?'

The professor begins to smile at the student in front of him. This will be a good semester. 'So what point are you making, young man?'

'Yes, professor. My point is, your philosophical premise is flawed to start with, and so your conclusion must also be flawed.'

The professor's face cannot hide his surprise this time.

'Flawed? Can you explain how?'

'You are working on the premise of duality,' the student explains. 'You argue that there is life and then there's death; a good God and a bad God. You are viewing the concept of God as something finite, something we can measure. Sir, science can't even explain a thought. It uses electricity and magnetism, but has never seen, much less fully understood either one. To view death as the opposite of

life is to be ignorant of the fact that death cannot exist as a substantive thing. Death is not the opposite of life, just the absence of it.'

'Now tell me, professor. Do you teach your students that they evolved from a monkey?'

'If you are referring to the natural evolutionary process, young man, yes, of course I do'

'Have you ever observed evolution with your own eyes, sir?'

The professor begins to shake his head, still smiling, as he realizes where the argument is going. A very good semester, indeed.

'Since no one has ever observed the process of evolution at work and cannot even prove that this process is an on-going endeavor, are you not teaching your opinion, sir? Are you now not a scientist, but a preacher?'

The class is in uproar. The student remains silent until the commotion has subsided.

'To continue the point you were making earlier to the other student, let me give you an example of what I mean.'

The student looks around the room. 'Is there anyone in the class who has ever seen the professor's brain?' The class breaks out into laughter.

'Is there anyone here who has ever heard the professor's brain, felt the professor's brain, touched or smelled the professor's brain? No one appears to have done so. So, according to the established rules of empirical, stable, demonstrable protocol, science says that you have no brain, with all due respect, sir. So if science says you have no brain, how can we trust your lectures, sir?'

couldn't sleep very well Monday night at all! Amie and I were at Tony's grandma's house Monday night so she could do my hair for today. It took two hours to do that and I even had about five inches cut off my hair a couple of weeks ago. (I miss my hair :'(!) But anyway, Tony came to pick me up at 10:30 yesterday morning and Amie had to stall him for a couple of minutes because I wasn't quite finished, I still had to brush my teeth. I gave him the movie National Treasure and he gave me a white rose. His mom insisted on taking pictures because she said it was a once in a lifetime occasion to see me dressed up like that. I had Amie take some pictures with my camera also. We headed off to Defiance and had Ponderosa for lunch. I missed eating there, I really haven't been there in years. After that we went to Wal-Mart so I could pick up Daddy's Father's Day present (The Ultimate Guide to Indiana Jones). At the mall, we walked around and visited the bookstore (I didn't buy anything, though I really wanted this nice journal and a book called Twilight). We also saw Claire's and F.Y.E. At 1:30 we walked over to the movie theater to watch Wall. E. We weren't sure if we wanted to see Wall. E, Wanted, or Get Smart, but we decided that the other two could wait. We will most likely see them once they come out onto DVD, but Wall. E, I really wanted to see. We didn't want to go home right away because I wanted to do something special, something different, that we wouldn't normally do. While we were trying to think of something, we walked over to Jo-Ann Fabrics, to look at material for a Mara Jade outfit. It was then that I decided I wanted some craftbook stickers so I could put yesterday into my scrapbook, whenever I get around to it. I didn't find anything I liked, so we walked to Wal-Mart where I found two things of stickers, plus two picture frames. We made a couple of copies of the pictures from my camera and now we both have a picture from this day, to put anywhere we want. Yesterday was the best day of my life! I didn't want it to end, but I know that it had to. But at least it will always be in my heart and memory!

I love you, Tony. ☐

Time for Sleep?

Two days in a row with minimal sleep, and I'm now exhausted. I'm surprised I have kept going this long. Not much going on except that my youngest is in another play. She just finished one, and starts another 2 days after closing..

Being the person that I am, I will probably help out in some shape and or manner on this show too. Lighting, rounding up kids backstage (it is Childrens' theater). I'm sure the director will find plenty of ways I can help out. Even if I complain, I'm happy to do it.

Night all...