

# Cover story: All eyes on us

**EYES, from page 1**

**Street Roots:** So, Agent Smithjones, thank you for sitting down with us, after walking across the room. We'd like to know, what's with your little setup here?

**Agent Smithjones** (dryly, we note — Ed.): Well, Mr. Anderso, I mean, Mr. Roots, as you know, certain agencies of the corpo-, er, government, have been collecting data of the citizenry, so we can protect you from the ever-present threat of terrorism. This includes all forms of electronic communication — phone calls, texts, emails, tweets, selfies, what have you. However, print communication represented a gaping hole in that security net. Print is dead, so they say. Off the radar. But we saw a potential threat-pipeline of subversive messages for nefarious ends. Print analysis was CIA territory in the old days, and we had to relearn how to do it from the ground up.

**Street Roots:** Why didn't you just ask the CIA how they did it, to have an established, workable foundation and save yourselves the effort?

**Agent Smithjones** (who, we note, never removed his sunglasses throughout the entire interview — Ed.): Pfffft. Seriously? They're our competitors for your tax dollars. We aren't sharing jack-diddly with each other. Keep your hands off my stack, as you pinko Pink Floyd-loving types should well know.

**Street Roots:** Why the particular interest in our publication?

**Agent Smithjones:** For instance, we've found items in your paper that could, under certain circumstances, be interpreted as subversive.

**Street Roots:** What sorts of subversive things?

**Agent Smithjones:** For one, your product costs one single dollar, comrade. A price for the proletariat. Has a bit of a communist ring, don't you think?

**Street Roots:** I think it has a bit of a capitalist ring, yo. And hey, Don Draper, who the hell's afraid of communists anymore? I thought terrorists were the new communists. That's all you've got? That we charge a dollar?

**Agent Smithjones:** Well, as you can see from the redacted documents ...

**Street Roots:** Yeah, and what the hell's that all about? We've got actual copies of the paper right here. Everything you black out on your copies is right here. We can read it all. Duh-doy.

**Agent Smithjones:** We have an ink budget for redaction, and it's a use-it-or-lose-it kind of setup, so... You know how it is. Free money and all.

**Street Roots:** Not free money. Tax money. Free money isn't free, bro. Beyond that, redaction of a public newspaper is simply ridiculous. Look at this recent issue with Richard Lewis on the cover. You

covered his face; you covered his name. What's the point? He's a comedian. And, again, we have a hundred unredacted copies right here that anyone can read. And the only un-blacked-out words you left on the whole cover were "proposal" and "controversial." It might lead one to conclude that you're trying to force a negative impression.

**Agent Smithjones:** Well, for one, comedians are often quite subversive...

**Street Roots:** And what's all this nonsense about subversive stuff, anyway? I thought you were hunting terrorists.

**Agent Smithjones:** We, your humble public servants, merely connect the dots, whatever and wherever they may be. Your publication, for instance, often features certain trigger words that raise interest in the intelligence community.

**Street Roots:** Such as?

**Agent Smithjones:** Well, I'm not at liberty ...

**Street Roots:** Interesting choice of words.

**Agent Smithjones:** Ahem, I can't go into great detail, but words such as "economy," "socialism," "people" and such can raise red flags.

**Street Roots:** Isn't it all about context, though? We might simply have printed, "The dictionary defines 'economy' as ..." Perfectly innocent. But by redacting everything except the word "economy," you isolate the term and cast a spotlight of suspicion on it.

**Agent Smithjones:** Guilty as charged. But only if proven in a court of law (smug smile). Besides, you should be concerned that your words are so easily twisted for potentially nefarious purposes.

**Street Roots:** But you're the ones who are twisting them! We're a public newspaper. We put it all out there in the open for readers to make their own conclusions. We're not hiding anything!

Grrrr. Let's change the subject. OK, so you're part of an even higher security branch than the NSA. Did you really think putting "SS" in front of your agency's acronym was going to sound good? You know, from a historical perspective?

**Agent Smithjones:** Uh ... yes.



Seriously? A redacted edition of Street Roots featuring comedian Richard Lewis, one of nearly 11,000 copies distributed throughout Portland, mostly unredacted.

**Street Roots:** Agent Smithjones, what's this massive data scoop really all about?

**Agent Smithjones:** Your protection, and I must say, you have quite a tone of ungratefulness about it.

**Street Roots:** "Protection" is a pretty general term. Can you be more specific?

**Agent Smithjones:** Terrorists.

**Street Roots:** C'mon.

**Agent Smithjones:** I could tell you, but then I would have to have you black-hooded, whisked off by unmarked jet to a dark site, tortured, and, if necessary, killed, as well as any of your loved ones deemed a security threat.

**Street Roots:** (Leaning forward): Are you serious?

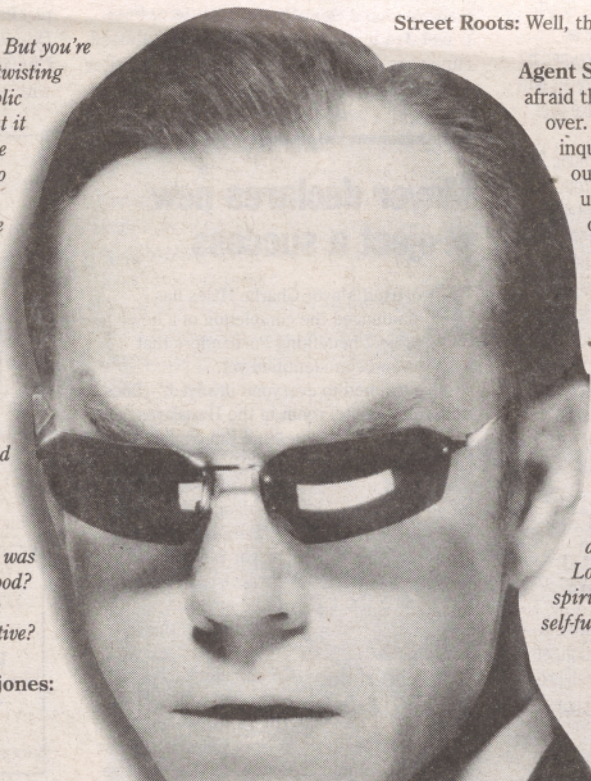
**Agent Smithjones:** Uh ... no?

**Street Roots:** Well, then...

**Agent Smithjones:** I'm afraid this interview is over. I'm finding your inquiries to be outrageous, unnecessary and overly intrusive. I will not stand for this treatment, and I think it best that we sever ties.

**Street Roots:** Damn straight.

R.U. Furreal is The New York Times non-selling author of "Eat Prey, Love," about one cat's spiritual journey toward self-fulfillment.



**YOUR FUTURE, from page 8**

Head north on NW 6th Ave toward NW Couch St 2. Turn right onto NW Couch St. Take the 1st right onto NW 5th Ave. Take the 1st left onto W Burnside St. Turn left onto NE Grand Ave. Turn right onto the Interstate 84 E/U.S. 30 E ramp to Portland Airport/The Dalles. Merge onto I-84 E/U.S. 30 E.

Take exit 28 toward Bridal Veil, Historic Columbia River Hwy. Merge onto E Bridal Veil Rd.

Continue onto E Historic Columbia River. Slight right toward I-84 E/U.S. 30 E (signs for I-84 E/US-30 E/Hood River). Merge onto I-84 E/U.S. 30 E via the ramp to Dodson/

Warrendale/Hood River. Continue to follow I-84 E Entering Idaho.

Take the Interstate 84 E exit toward Ogden/Salt Lake. Merge onto I-84 E, entering Utah. Slight right to stay on I-84 E (signs for Cheyenne) Keep left at the fork, follow signs for I-80 E/Cheyenne and merge onto I-80 E. Passing through Wyoming, Nebraska and entering Iowa, take exit 123B toward Interstate 35 S. Follow signs for I-80 E/I-35 N., Chicago/Minneapolis and merge onto I-35 N/I-80 E. Continue to follow I-80 E.

Take the exit to stay on I-80 E toward Chicago Partial toll road. Slight right onto I-80 Toll road. Merge onto I-80 E. Partial toll

road entering Indiana. Take exit 16 to merge onto I-80 E/I-90 E. Partial toll road entering Ohio. Keep left to continue on I-80 E Toll road. Take exit 218 for I-80 E. Keep left at the fork, follow signs for Mahoning Ave/OH-18 and merge onto I-80 E.

Passing through Pennsylvania, entering New Jersey, keep left to continue on I-280 E, follow signs for Interstate 280 E/The Oranges/Newark/New Jersey Turnpike. Take exit 17A toward County 508 E., Jersey City. Merge onto Newark Ave. Slight left onto the US 1 N/US 9 N ramp to Lincoln Tunnel/Secaucus. Keep right at the fork, follow signs for New Jersey 139 E., Hoboken/Holland Tunnel. Keep left at the fork and

merge onto NJ-139 E. Merge onto I-78 E.

Entering New York, take the exit on the left toward Downtown. Take exit 4 toward Downtown. Turn right onto Varick St. Turn left onto Worth St 37. Turn right at the 2nd cross street onto Broadway, New York, NY, USA.

Take exit 28 toward Bridal Veil, Historic Columbia River Hwy. Merge onto E Bridal Veil Rd.

Continue onto E Historic Columbia River. Slight right toward I-84 E/U.S. 30 E (signs for I-84 E/US-30 E/Hood River). Merge onto I-84 E/U.S. 30 E via the ramp to Dodson/Warrendale/Hood River. Continue to follow I-84 E Entering Idaho.